

### 5350 PUPIL SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Clementon Board of Education believes that the physical and mental well-being of all pupils must be maintained as a prerequisite to achievement through the formal educational process. Since the incidence of pupil suicide is continuing to rise at an alarming rate, the Board wishes to assure that appropriate identification and intervention procedures are established and followed within the school district.

Although school personnel cannot be expected to treat the suicidal pupil, they can aid in the identification of pupils who are "at risk" and can intervene in order to connect these pupils and their families with treatment programs within the community.

All professionals in the school system are responsible for reporting pupils who have threatened suicide or who are potentially suicidal. No staff member shall hesitate to inform appropriate personnel when suicide is a possibility. Pupil confidentiality does not apply when the pupil threatens himself/herself or others.

A collaborative team consisting of the Superintendent/Principal, Assistant Principal, Child Study Team members, school counselor, school nurse and other appropriate school personnel will be available for any suicide crisis.

A staff member may gain information from a variety of sources. The staff member must realize that any information conveyed through sources other than the individual is important and must be investigated. Any information concerning suicide or threats of suicide both in school and outside of school should be forwarded immediately through use of the procedures outlined by the Board.

The Board of Education recognizes that depression and self-destruction are problems of increasing severity among children and adolescents. A pupil under severe stress cannot benefit fully from the educational program and may pose a threat to himself or herself or others.

The Board directs all school personnel to be alert to the pupil who exhibits behavioral warning signs of potential self-destruction or who threatens or attempts suicide. Any such signs or the report of such signs from another pupil or staff member should be taken with the utmost seriousness and reported immediately to the Superintendent/Principal and/or designee, or guidance counselor, who shall notify the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and other professional staff members in accordance with administrative regulations.



A potentially suicidal pupil shall be referred to the Child Study Team for appropriate evaluation and/or recommendation for independent medical or psychiatric services. In the event that the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) objects to the recommended evaluation or indicates an unwillingness to cooperate in the best interests of the pupil, the Child Study Team may contact the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services to request that agency's intervention on the pupil's behalf.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-111 and 18A:6-112, as part of the required professional development for teachers as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.1 et seq., every teaching staff member must complete at least two hours of instruction in suicide prevention, to be provided by a licensed health care professional with experience in mental health issues, in each professional development period. The instruction in suicide prevention shall include information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying and information on reducing the risk of suicide in pupils who are members of communities identified as having members at high risk of suicide.

The Superintendent shall prepare and disseminate regulations for the guidance of staff members in recognizing the pupil who contemplates suicide, in responding to threatened or attempted suicide, and in preventing contagion when a pupil commits suicide.

N.J.S.A. 18A:6-111; 18A:6-112  
N.J.A.C. 6A:9-15.1 et seq.

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