

Series 5000: Students, Curriculum, and Academic Matters

5700 Student Health and Safety

5710 Student Suicide Prevention

The Board is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment to all students. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death among youth. This Policy established procedures for timely and appropriately responding to students at risk of suicide.

A. Suicide Prevention Coordinator

The Superintendent or designee will appoint a Suicide Prevention Coordinator for the District. In ELPS, this role is filled by the Mental Health Coordinator. The Suicide Prevention Coordinator is responsible for providing this Policy annually to all building principals and coordinating annual staff training on suicide intervention and prevention and this Policy. The Suicide Prevention Coordinator is:

Heather Findley, LMSW
District Mental Health Coordinator
East Lansing Public Schools
heather.findley@elps.us
(517) 333-7429

B. Staff Professional Development

The District will annually provide professional development about suicide prevention consistent with state law and best practices.

C. Initial Response

Employees, volunteers, and contractors must immediately notify the building principal or the Suicide Prevention Coordinator if a student is exhibiting signs of unusual depression, expressing suicidal thoughts, or threatening or attempting suicide or self-harm.

The student will be continuously supervised to ensure the student's safety. District staff will ensure that the student does not have access to potentially dangerous items.

Students who exhibit concern for threats, statements, actions, or behaviors related to suicide will be administered a Suicide Risk Assessment. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis as determined by District Administration and the Suicide Prevention Coordinator.

D. Parent Notification

The Suicide Prevention Coordinator or designee will promptly contact the student's Parent if a student is exhibiting signs of unusual depression, expressing suicidal thoughts, or threatening or attempting suicide or self-harm. If the Parent is not available or responsive, the Suicide Prevention Coordinator will contact the student's emergency contact(s). If school administrators or the Suicide Prevention Coordinator are unable to reach the Parent or an emergency contact within an hour after the end of the school day, the student will remain onsite and supervised by school personnel. District administration may contact emergency services for support at this time.

District personnel who suspect that the student may have a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Act will immediately refer the student for an evaluation.

When a student is exhibiting signs of unusual depression, expressing suicidal thoughts, or threatening or attempting suicide or self-harm. The Suicide Prevention Coordinator will discuss with the student's Parent safety at home and will ask if the student has access to a firearm, weapon, medication or other lethal means. The Suicide Prevention Coordinator or designee will:

- Ask if firearms, weapons, medications, or other lethal means are kept in the home or are otherwise accessible to the student;
- Recommend that Parent secure or store away from the home firearms, weapons, medications, or other lethal means while the student is struggling; and
- Recommend to the Parent that the student may need further evaluation/support by a mental health professional or, if considered urgent or emergent, the student may be referred to emergency services. If the Parent declines, Child Protective Services (CPS) may be contacted.

- Provide the Parent with school and community-based resources on suicide prevention, and how to access services as needed.

E. The District will provide age-appropriate instruction and professional development about suicide prevention, consistent with Policy 2203 and state law. Age-appropriate instruction may include, but is not limited to: promoting healthy mental, emotional, and social growth of students; suicide risk factors and warning signs; ways to help suicidal youth; and reducing mental health stigma.

F. MDHHS Suicide Prevention Materials

The District will post on its website homepage and in a conspicuous location in the school counselor's office MDHHS model information materials about suicide prevention services, suicide, depression, and anxiety.

Legal authority: MCL 380.1171, 380.1893

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