

Students

Suicide Prevention/Intervention

The New Fairfield Board of Education recognizes that suicide has become a leading cause of death among young people and consequently, is a concern to the school system and the community it serves. The Board recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that while the school may recognize potentially suicidal youth, it cannot make a clinical assessment of risk and provide in depth counseling but must refer the youth to an appropriate place for such an assessment and counseling.

It is the policy of the Board of Education to actively respond in any situation where a student verbally or behaviorally indicates an intent to attempt suicide or to physically harm himself/herself.

~~A student who is at risk to be harmful to himself, is a student that the school district is concerned about.~~

Risk factors for youth suicide will be based on the statewide strategic suicide prevention plan developed by the Connecticut Suicide Advisory Board, which includes, but is not limited to youth who are:

1. bereaved by suicide,
2. disabled or have chronic health conditions, such as mental health or substance use disorders,
3. involved in the juvenile justice system,
4. experiencing homelessness or placed in an out-of-home setting, such as foster care, or
5. lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning.

It is the policy of the New Fairfield school district to monitor such actions carefully and to provide a climate that is safe and healthy within which the focus is to help students deal with difficulties and concerns, while at the same time giving due consideration for the student's legal rights and responsibilities.

The intent of this policy is to protect the safety and welfare of the students attending the New Fairfield Public Schools. This intent demands that the school district through its general philosophy and the curriculum focuses on the identification of significant behaviors that may indicate a student at risk. This in no way limits the district personnel from taking a reactive mode, but makes every effort to focus on a prevention mode through a healthy, positive, productive school climate. The Board of Education recognizes the need for youth suicide prevention procedures and will **direct the superintendent to** establish program(s) to identify risk factors for youth suicide, procedures to intervene with such youth, referral services and training for teachers, other school professionals and students to provide assistance in the programs.

This policy represents one part of a district-wide effort to respond effectively to suicide.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-221(e) Boards of education to prescribe rules

Policy adopted: June 16, 2005

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut