

School Health Advisory Council Student Risk Survey

November 8, 2011

SUMMARY:

This item requests approval of the Student Risk Survey utilized on all secondary campuses

BOARD GOAL: Growth, Change, and Fiscal Responsibility: “To create and continuously modify strategies to mitigate increasing stresses on our children, our schools, and our community”.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION:

August 9, 2011, Board Acceptance of Health Services Report which included comments on the School Health Advisory Council intending to add membership this school year which was the last board action for SHAC.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On September 19, 2011, Larry Mankoff presented a revised version of the Student Drug Use and Violence Survey to the School Health Advisory Council that includes questions on the potential for student suicide. While this is a controversial subject, the SHAC believes the information is a valuable tool for establishing a baseline for high risk students and the district’s response to that risk. Attached is that survey with the new questions highlighted in yellow.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES:

The State of Texas has approved House Bill (1386) in September 2011 that addresses concerns for student mental health and in particular, the threat of student suicide. While the DISD Department of Counseling Services has worked diligently over the years to train the counseling staff for responding to high risk students, this Bill requires all staff to be aware of signs and symptoms of students who might be at risk of suicide. As of this date, suicide risk awareness training has been completed on all campuses. The attached survey, with the additional questions, will help establish a baseline for trends and our capacity to respond to threats of suicide with high risk students.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

- None

BENEFIT OF ACTION:

Approval of this survey will allow the District to adjust programming at all grade levels to respond to high risk students in a developmentally appropriate manner

PROCEDURAL AND REPORTING IMPLICATIONS:

- None

PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED:

The recommendations were advanced during the September 19, 2011 School Health Advisory Council meeting. It was noted by Larry Mankoff that the Choose To Care survey the DISD has used over the past 10 years is cumbersome and does not adequately address more urgent student issues. The instrument being advanced has refined questions that are on the current Choose To Care survey and added the questions regarding suicide.

ALTERNATIVES:

Continue to use the Choose To Care survey we have used for the past 10 years.

OTHER COMMENTS:

- None

SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATION:

Superintendent recommends approval of the revised School Health Advisory Council Student Risk Survey.

STAFF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE:

Jonita Widmer, Director of Health Services
Larry Mankoff, Supervisor of Student and Staff Assistance

ATTACHMENT:

See attached survey with added questions highlighted in yellow

APPROVAL:

Signature of Staff Member Proposing Recommendation: _____

Signature of Divisional Assistant Superintendent: _____

Signature of Superintendent: _____