Life Source International Charter School Student Suicide Prevention Policy

Scholars: Suicide Prevention

Life Source and its Board members recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth and that school personnel who regularly interact with students are often in a position to recognize the warning signs of suicide and to offer appropriate referral and/or assistance. In an effort to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Superintendent or designee shall develop measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

In developing policy and strategies for suicide prevention and intervention, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with school and community stakeholders such as administrators, other staff, parents/guardians, and students; school-employed mental health professionals such as school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses; suicide prevention experts such as local health agencies, mental health professionals, and community organizations; law enforcement; and, in developing policy for grades K-8, the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

The Board shall ensure that measures and strategies for students in grades K-6 are age appropriate and delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young students. (Education Code <u>215</u>)

Policy and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention shall include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, school counselors, and other employees who interact with students as described in the accompanying administrative regulation.
- Instruction to students in problem-solving and coping skills to promote students' mental, emotional, and social health and well-being, as well instruction to recognizing and appropriately responding to warning signs and suicidal intent to others. As a result of this instruction, students should know how to access school-based and community prevention and intervention resources and supports.
- 3. Methods for promoting a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with the school and that is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.
- 4. The provision of information to parents/guardians regarding risk factors and warning signs of suicide, the severity of the suicide problem among youth, the school's prevention curriculum, the basic steps for helping suicidal youth, and/or school and community resources that can help youth crisis.

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- 5. Encouragement for students to notify appropriate school personnel or other adults when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another of another student's suicidal intentions
- 6. Crisis intervention procedures for addressing suicide threats or attempts.
- 7. Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide.

As appropriate, these measures and strategies shall specifically address the needs of students who are at high risk of suicide, including, but not limited to, students who are bereaved by suicide; students with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders; students who are experiencing homelessness or who are in out-of-home settings such as foster care; and students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth. (Education Code 215)

School employees shall act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging school employees to diagnose, or treat mental illness unless they are specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)

The board shall review and update as needed, this policy at least every 3 years. (Education Code 215)

Designee shall post this policy on the school's website, in a prominent location and in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students. (Education 234.6)

Legal Reference: Education Code, Sections 215; 215.5; 216; 234.6; 32280-32280-32289.5; 49060-

49079; 49602; 49604

Government Code, Sections 810-996.6 Penal Code, Sections 11164-11174.3

Welfare and Institutions Code, Sections 5698; 5850-5883

Court Decisions: Corales v. Bennett (Ontario-Montclair School District)

(2009) 567 F.3d 554