1. **Introduction**

Baker 5J School District is committed to the health and safety of all members in our school community. This policy covers actions that take place in the school, on school property, at school sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles and at bus stops, and at school sponsored out-of-school events where school staff are present. This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school and district staff, students, and parents/guardians. Volunteers will be directed by school or district staff as it pertains to this policy. This policy will also cover appropriate school responses to suicidal behaviors that take place outside of the school environment when notified.

2. Prevention

2.1. District Policy Implementation – A district-level suicide prevention coordinator shall be designated by the Superintendent or their designee. The district level director of counseling will be responsible for planning and coordinating the implementation of this policy for the school district.

2.2. Each school's mental health team shall act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation.

2.3. All staff members shall immediately report the names of students they believe to be at elevated risk for suicide to the mental health team and/or administrator, if the counseling department is unavailable.

2.4. School employees act only within the authorization and scope of their credentials or licenses. This policy does not authorize or encourage a school employee to diagnose or treat mental illness unless the employee is specifically licensed and employed to do so.

2.5. Staff Professional Development – All staff will receive a minimum of an **in-person training in suicide prevention.** (This is something that will be set up to take place during new hire orientation.This will also be renewed every 3 years at building level.) The counseling department will have additional training beyond this PD every 2 years.

2.6. After the initial training, subsequent annual professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention will be required. The professional development will include additional information regarding groups of students at elevated risk for suicide, including those living with mental and/or substance use disorders, those who engage in self-harm or have attempted suicide, those in out-of-home settings, those experiencing homelessness, American Indian/Alaska Native students, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning) students, students bereaved by suicide, and those with medical conditions or certain types of disabilities.

2.6.1. Additional professional development in suicidal/ risk behavior screening and crisis intervention will be provided to designated mental health team personnel.

2.7. Youth Suicide Prevention Programming – Developmentally appropriate, student-centered education materials will be integrated into the K-12 curriculum. The content of these age-appropriate materials will include: 1) the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies, 2) how to recognize risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others, 3) help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help. In addition, schools may provide supplemental small-group suicide prevention programming for students.

2.8. Publication and Distribution – This policy will be distributed annually and included in all student and teacher handbooks and on the school and district websites.

3. Assessment and Referral

3.1. When a student is identified by a staff person as potentially suicidal, the student will be seen by a member of the school mental health team or a community crisis team to perform a suicide screening.

3.2. For youth requiring a suicide screening:

3.2.1. School staff will continuously supervise the student to ensure their safety.

3.2.2. The building administrator and/or district level director of counseling will be made aware of the situation as soon as reasonably possible.

3.2.3. The school mental health team and/or administrator will contact the student's parent or guardian, as described in the Parental Notification and Involvement section.

3.2.4. The parent/guardian interview form will be completed, and the family will be assisted with safety planning based on the suicide screener. When appropriate, this may include calling emergency services, bringing the student to the local emergency department, or utilizing partnerships with county mental health agencies to complete additional suicide screening.

3.2.5. The school mental team and/or administrator will ask the student's parent or guardian for release of information documentation to discuss the student's health with outside care, if appropriate.

4. Re-Entry Procedure After Mental Health Crisis

4.1. Before a student is permitted to return to a school after a mental health crisis (e.g., suicide attempt or psychiatric hospitalization), the school mental health team, administrator and other pertinent staff e.g. Special Education department, nurses, etc. will meet with the student and/or the student's parent or legal guardian and to develop the student's safety and support plan with school. This includes attempts made outside of school related hours. The student's safety at all times is a priority of the school team.

4.1.1. The school mental health team and/or an administrator will coordinate re-entry with the student and their parent or guardian. The designated school staff and/or administrator will seek authorization to coordinate with any outside mental healthcare providers.

4.1.2. The parent or guardian will provide documentation from a mental health care provider that the student has undergone examination and at time of discharge they are no longer a danger to themselves or others. Provide documentation of discharge and approved safety plan.

4.1.3. Confidentiality is critical in protecting the student and enabling school personnel to render assistance. The school mental health team and administration will discuss with the student and parent or guardian the information that identified staff need to know to support the student's academic, social, emotional, and physical needs.

4.1.4. The school mental health team and administration will periodically check in with student and parent or guardian to help the student readjust to the school community and address any ongoing concerns

4.2. Students bereaved by suicide attempts will be supported by the school's mental health team and/or an administrator.

5. Parent Notification and Involvement

5.1. In situations where a student is screened or has made a suicide attempt, the student's parent or guardian will be informed as soon as practical by the school's mental health team and/or administrator.

5.2. The parent or guardian will be counseled on "means restriction," limiting the child's access to mechanisms for carrying out a suicide attempt.

5.3. The school mental health team will also seek parental permission to communicate with outside mental health care providers regarding their child.

5.4. Through discussion with the student, the school mental health team and administrator will assess whether parent or guardian notification will cause there is further risk of endangerment. If the counseling team and administrator, in their professional capacity, deems that contacting the parent or guardian would endanger the health or well-being of the student, they may delay such contact as appropriate. If contact is delayed, the reasons for the delay should be documented.

6. Postvention in the Event of a Death by Suicide

6.1. Immediately following a student's death by suicide, the administrator and Flight Team will develop an action plan to guide the school's response according to the Flight Team Manual. The action plan may include, but is not limited to:

6.1.1 A member of the school (or district) mental health team will contact the family of the deceased to provide support.

6.1.2.The school mental health team, school administrator, and district mental health administrator will meet to determine the level of Flight Team Response.

6.1.3 A District Administrator will contact the district level communications department to notify appropriate offices

6.1.4 The administrator, public information & communications coordinator, and Flight team will assess the situation to determine postvention supports.

6.1.5 Designated staff will collaborate with county mental health organizations and administrators to initiate community support services for the impacted school(s).

7. Review of Suicide Intervention Actions

7.1. Persons may request a school district to review the actions of a school in responding to suicidal risk by contacting the appropriate level director.

7.2. Any review would be reflective of a student's state and federal rights including those under HIPAA and FERPA as well as employee confidentiality laws.

Revision History:

Date	Description
9/19/22	**New policy**
12/13/2024	**Changes made**
08/20/2026	**Changes made**

Approved By: Cabinet _____