

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD POLICY

1

Series 5000

Students

BP 5141.52()

Suicide Prevention

The Governing Board recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth, that prevention is a collective effort that requires stakeholder engagement, 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, its impact on students and families, and other associated trauma, the Superintendent or designee shall develop measures, strategies, practices, and supports for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

In developing and updating district policy and procedures for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, the Superintendent or designee shall consult with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts. If the policy will affect K-6 students, the county mental health plan shall also be consulted. (Education Code 215)

School and community stakeholders and school mental health professionals with whom the Superintendent or designee shall consult may include district and school administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, school nurses, other staff, parents/guardians and caregivers, students, local health agencies, mental health professionals, community organizations, law enforcement, legal counsel, and/or the district's risk manager or insurance carrier. The Superintendent or designee may also collaborate with county and/or city governments in an effort to align district policy with any existing community suicide prevention plans.

When developing or reviewing district policy on suicide prevention, the Superintendent or designee may make a recommendation regarding the need to hire a mental health professional for the district, or for any school that is not currently served by a mental health professional, and the possible funding source(s) for such hiring.

Measures 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, interns, school counselors, and others who interact with students, including, as appropriate, substitute teachers, coaches, expanded day learning staff, crossing guards, tutors, and volunteers
2. Instruction to students in problem-solving, coping, and resiliency skills to promote students' mental, emotional, and social health and well-being; help-seeking strategies and resources; and instruction in recognizing and appropriately responding to warning signs of suicidal intent in others
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 relationships among students
4. The review of materials and resources used in awareness efforts and communications to ensure they align with best practices for safe and effective messaging about suicide

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD POLICY

2

Series 5000

Students

BP 5141.52()

5. The provision of information to parents/guardians and caregivers regarding risk and protective factors, warning signs of suicide, the severity of the suicide problem among youth, the district's suicide prevention curriculum, the district's suicide prevention policy and procedures, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, the importance of communicating with appropriate staff if suicide risk is present or suspected, access to suicide prevention training, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis
6. 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 student's suicidal intentions
7. Crisis intervention protocols for addressing suicide threats or attempts
8. Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide
9. Establishment of district and/or school-site crisis intervention team(s) to ensure the proper implementation and review of this policy and other district practices related to the emotional and behavioral wellness of students, including, but not limited to, the oversight of mental health and suicide prevention training, ensuring the suicide prevention policy, protocols, and resources are posted on the district and school websites, collaboration with community mental health organizations, identification of resources and organizations that provide evidence-based treatment, collaboration to build community response, and compliance with Education Code 215

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 exceptional needs, 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. (Education Code 215)

In order to address mental health disabilities, the district may, as appropriate and in accordance with law, develop trauma-informed crisis management procedures that include an individualized assessment of the student's circumstances; provide and facilitate access to mental health evaluations and services; reasonably modify policies, such as attendance policies, for individual students; and train staff to recognize and respond appropriately to signs of distress and suicidal ideation in students.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a process for school staff to maintain daily or regular contact with all students, including during distance learning and school closures, and for such staff to communicate any concerns about a student's emotional wellbeing and/or safety to the appropriate authorities.

Additionally, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that school-based mental health professionals maintain regular contact with high-risk students, students who are on their caseloads, and those who are

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD POLICY

3

Series 5000

Students

BP 5141.52()

identified by staff as demonstrating need.

The Board shall ensure that suicide prevention 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 215)

If a referral is made for mental health or related services for a student in grade K-6 who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary, the Superintendent or designee shall coordinate and consult with the county mental health plan. (Education Code 215)

District 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 district employees to diagnose or treat mental illness unless they are specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)

When the district determines that a student is in need of mental or behavioral health services, the services shall be provided in accordance with protocols specified in Board Policy 5141.5 - Mental Health.

The Board shall review, and update as necessary, this policy at least every five years. The Board may, at its discretion, review the policy more frequently. (Education Code 215)

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically review district data pertaining to school climate and reports of suicidal ideation, attempts, or death to identify patterns or trends and make recommendations regarding program development.

The Superintendent or designee shall post this policy on the district's website, in a prominent location and in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students. (Education Code 234.6)

Adopted: 9-16-14

Amended: 5-16-17, 2-19-19, 4-21-20, 10-14-2025

Policy Reference:

State

Ed. Code 215
Ed. Code 215.5
Ed. Code 216
Ed. Code 218.3

Description

[Suicide prevention policies](#)
[Student identification cards; inclusion of safety hotlines](#)
[Suicide prevention online training programs](#)
Training curriculum to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning students

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD POLICY

4

Series 5000

Students

BP 5141.52()

Ed. Code 234.6	Bullying and harassment prevention information
Ed. Code 32280-32289.5	School safety plans
Ed. Code 49060-49079	Student records
Ed. Code 49428.15	Identification of evidence-based and evidence-informed training programs for schools to address youth behavioral health
Ed. Code 49428.2	Referral protocols for addressing student behavioral health concerns in grades 7-12; certification of youth behavioral health training for employees
Ed. Code 49428.5	Student mental health poster
Ed. Code 49429	Telehealth technology in schools
Ed. Code 49602	Counseling and confidentiality of student information
Ed. Code 49604	Suicide prevention training for school counselors
Gov. Code 810-996.6	Government Claims Act
Pen. Code 11164-11174.3	Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act
W&I Code 5698	System of care for children and youth with serious emotional disturbance
W&I Code 5850-5886	Children's Mental Health Services Act
Federal	Description
42 USC 290bb-33	Suicide Training and Awareness Nationally Delivered for Universal Prevention Act of 2021
Management Resources	Description
California Department of Education Publication	Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy for Local Educational Agencies that Serve Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade Students, February 2023
California Department of Education Publication	Health Education Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, May 2019
California Department of Education Publication	Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2008
CALSCHLS Publication	California School Staff Survey (CSSS)
CALSCHLS Publication	California School Parent Survey (CSPS)
CALSCHLS Publication	California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)
CDC and Prevention Publication	School Connectedness: Strategies for Increasing Protective Factors Among Youth, 2009
Court Decision	Corales v. Bennett (Ontario-Montclair School District) (2009) 567 F.3d 554
Each Mind Matters Publication	Making Headlines: Guide to Engaging the Media in Suicide Prevention in California, 2012
Heard Alliance Publication	K-12 Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention, 2017

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD POLICY

5

Series 5000

Students

BP 5141.52()

Mental Health Svcs Oversight & Accountability Pub	<u>Accelerating Transformational Change: Strategic Plan for 2024-2027</u>
Mental Health Svcs Oversight & Accountability Pub	<u>Striving for Zero: California's Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention 2020-2025</u>
Nat'l Assoc. of School Psychologists Publication	<u>Preventing Suicide: Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams, 2015</u>
Nat's Assoc. of School Psychologists Publication	<u>Conducting a Virtual Suicide Assessment Checklist</u>
Nat's Assoc. of School Psychologists Publication	<u>Comprehensive School Suicide Prevention in a Time of Distance Learning, 2020</u>
Suicide Prevention Resource Center Publication	<u>After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools, 2nd Edition, 2018</u>
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Publication	<u>Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools, 2012</u>
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Publication	<u>National Strategy for Suicide Prevention: Goals and Objectives for Action, rev. 2012</u>
USDOE Ofc for Civil Rights, USDOJ Civil Rights Pub	<u>Supporting and Protecting the Rights of Students at Risk of Self-Harm in the Era of COVID-19, October 2021</u>
Website	<u>SchoolSafety.gov</u>
Website	<u>California Department of Public Health, Office of Suicide Prevention</u>
Website	<u>Mental Health Evaluation, Training, Research, and Innovation Center for Schools (METRICS)</u>
Website	<u>CalHOPE Schools Initiative</u>
Website	<u>California Surgeon General, Safe Spaces: Trauma-Informed Training</u>
Website	<u>CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services</u>
Website	<u>Suicide Prevention Messaging</u>
Website	<u>National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention</u>
Website	<u>Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission</u>
Website	<u>HEARD Alliance</u>
Website	<u>Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement</u>
Website	<u>Crisis Text Line</u>
Website	<u>California School Climate, Health, and Learning Surveys (CalSCHLS)</u>
Website	<u>California Mental Health Services Authority</u>
Website	<u>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</u>
Website	<u>Suicide Prevention Resource Center</u>
Website	<u>National Child Traumatic Stress Network</u>
Website	<u>Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration</u>

OAK PARK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD POLICY

6

Series 5000

Students

BP 5141.52()

Website	<u>Trevor Project</u>
Website	<u>American Academy of Pediatrics</u>
Website	<u>American Association of Suicidology</u>
Website	<u>American Foundation for Suicide Prevention</u>
Website	<u>American Psychological Association</u>
Website	<u>California Department of Education, Mental Health</u>
Website	<u>California Department of Health Care Services, Mental Health Services</u>
Website	<u>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health</u>
Website	<u>National Association of School Psychologists</u>
Website	<u>National Institute for Mental Health</u>
Website	<u>American School Counselor Association</u>