

The Cambridge School District recognizes the need to provide suicide prevention, intervention, postvention, and education as an integral part of a child's total educational program. In addition to primary prevention through education, the District has established a process to intervene when students exhibit warning signs of suicide. The role of the schools is not to treat students, but to assist and refer.

Prevention

In accordance with state statutes, members of the student services team will provide students with age-appropriate suicide prevention education which:

1. Encourages positive emotional development.
2. Teaches life skills such as problem-solving and sound decision making.
3. Provides knowledge of the relationship between youth suicide and the use of alcohol and controlled substances.
4. Promotes awareness of the warning signs of suicide, how to respond to potential suicidal persons, and available community counseling and mental health services.

In addition, the District will address suicide prevention through bullying prevention, positive school and classroom climates, and providing students access to student services staff to address individual student concerns.

Intervention

Any person employed by the Cambridge School District who has reason to believe, either by direct knowledge or a report from another person, that a student is in danger of harming himself or herself through an attempted suicide, is to report the situation immediately to a member of the Student Services Team (SST). The District SST will consist of the district administrator, director of student services, building principals, school psychologists, school counselors, district social worker, school nurse, and the school resource officer. The SST will be called upon to serve as a resource and to provide services during a crisis situation, which may include a threatened, attempted, or actual suicide.

Postvention

The Student Services Team, as deemed necessary, will meet for debriefing, to gather factual information regarding a threatened, attempted or actual suicide, and to plan for the District's response. The goal is to ensure a factual, sensitive response, without glorifying the tragic event of suicide, so that students can share, express, and work through their feelings in a structured environment.

For students returning to school after a mental health crisis, the school will coordinate a re-entry meeting with the student (if appropriate), parent/guardian, and other relevant personnel. As a team, they will determine appropriate measures to assist the student in being safe and successful while at school.

The District and any District employee who in good faith attempts to prevent suicide by a student is immune from civil liability for their acts or omissions in respect to the suicide or attempted suicide as per state law.

LEGAL REFERENCE:

CROSS REFERENCE:

APPROVED: 5/17/21

REVISED:

POLICY #457