

**Policy**

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SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

The Mendham Borough Board of Education believes that physical and mental well-being supports student achievement. The board believes that self-inflicted injuries and suicidal behavior indicate a condition of emotional distress that prevent physical and mental wellbeing and are very dangerous to the individual. Recognizing that the incidence of adolescent suicide is increasing, the board wishes to ensure that levels of appropriate awareness are established and that prevention programs are initiated, developed and continuously implemented in this school district to address these serious concern.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention

The board directs the superintendent to develop and implement a comprehensive and continuing adolescent suicide awareness and prevention program for the school community that includes school staff, students, parents/guardians and community organizations. The superintendent or his or her designee shall identify community health and mental health agencies and other community resources that can provide the necessary mental health and crisis intervention assistance. The superintendent or his or her designee shall endeavor to establish a continuing and cooperative relationship with community health and mental health agencies.

The board of education directs that the school suicide awareness and prevention program help the school staff, parents/guardians and students to:

- A. Understand the developmental stages of adolescence and the causes of teen suicide;
- B. Recognize the early warning signs of adolescent suicide;
- C. Learn how to help in a suicidal crisis;
- D. Identify community resources and procedures that can help a suicidal person.

Self-Injury

The superintendent or his or her designees shall oversee the development of initiatives to address the issue of self-injury including:

- A. How to recognize the signs and symptoms of self-injuries;
- B. Procedures for staff response to incidents and/or reports of self-injurious behavior, suspected or confirmed;
- C. How to support students who self-injure in the educational environment and improve their self-esteem and emotional literacy;
- D. How to prevent self-injury from spreading within the school;
- E. Education about self-injury for pupils and staff.

Implementation

Every teaching staff member shall complete at least two hours of instruction in suicide prevention in each professional development period. This instruction shall be provided by a licensed health care professional with experience in mental health issues. The instruction in suicide prevention shall include information on the

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relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (see board policy 5131.1 Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying) and information on reducing the risk of suicide in students who are members of communities identified as having members at high risk of suicide.

The superintendent shall oversee the development of appropriate procedures for the implementation of the program and ensure their dissemination to staff, students and parents/guardians.

NJSBA Review/Update: October 2014  
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Key Words

Suicide, Crisis, Suicidal Ideation, Staff Training, Self-Injury

**Legal References:** N.J.S.A. 18A:1011-1 General mandatory powers and duties  
N.J.S.A. 30:9A-12 Youth suicide prevention program

**Possible**

**Cross References:** 5000 Concepts and roles in student personnel  
 5010 Personal goals and objectives for students  
 \*5020 Role of parents/guardians  
 \*5113 Absences and excuses  
 \*5114 Suspension and expulsion  
 \*5120 Assessment of individual needs  
 \*5124 Reporting to parents/guardians  
 \*5125 Student records  
 \*5131 Conduct/discipline  
 \*5131.6 Drugs, alcohol, tobacco (substance abuse)  
 \*5141 Student health  
 \*5142 Safety  
 \*6164.2 Guidance Services  
 \*6164.4 Child study team  
 \*6171.1 Remedial instruction  
 \*6171.2 Gifted and talented  
 \*6171.4 Special education  
 \*6172 Alternative educational programs  
 \*6173 Home instruction

\*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.