

Suicide Prevention

- I. **SUICIDE ATTEMPT OR IMMINENT DANGER OF A SUICIDE ATTEMPT** – If a student has attempted suicide, or if it is determined that the student has a specific plan to commit suicide or has immediate access to a method of suicide, the following procedures must be followed:
 - A. **Obtaining Assistance:** The staff member will remain with the student and will immediately send for the school nurse and a building administrator.
 - B. **Medical Attention:** If the student requires medical attention, the school nurse will begin school medical emergency procedures. Emergency assistance will be requested from 911 to transport the student to the hospital.
 - C. **Parental Notification:** The administrator will contact the parent(s) and request that they come to the hospital or school immediately. If the student is not hospitalized and the parents cannot be contacted, the student shall be transported to a hospital emergency room or mental health facility. Under no circumstances is a student allowed to go home alone.
 - D. **Return to School:** The student may not return to school until a formal mental health evaluation has taken place and a written notification of the appropriateness of the student's returning to school has been received from a licensed physician, a clinical psychologist, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN), or from another licensed mental health professional handling suicide cases for their institution or practice.
 - E. **Follow-up:** The staff member who assumes responsibility for the case will maintain contact with the student's mental health professionals to support programming needs and follow-up procedures.
- II. **POTENTIAL SUICIDE** – When a staff member in the Wallingford school system observes student behavior which suggests that the student is contemplating suicide or is made aware that a student is or might be contemplating suicide, the following action must take place:
 - A. **Referring Student for Help:** The staff member must refer the student to a guidance counselor, a psychologist, or a social worker, or a building administrator.
 - B. **Determination of Suicide Potential:** The guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, or building administrator will meet with the student as soon as possible to determine whether the student is contemplating suicide. Whenever possible, the conclusion(s) reached will be shared with another counselor, psychologist, social worker, or building administrator for the purpose of corroboration of the conclusion(s).
 1. **Imminent Danger:** If the counselor, psychologist, social worker, or building administrator concludes that the student is in imminent danger of committing suicide, the procedures in Section I shall be followed.

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III. POTENTIAL SUICIDE (Continued)

B. Determination of Suicide Potential:

2. **Contemplating but Not in Imminent Danger:** If the conclusion reached is that the student is contemplating suicide but that the student is not in imminent danger of committing suicide:
 - a. **Parental Notification:** The parent(s) shall still be notified of the situation and encouraged to seek suicidal risk evaluation from a mental health professional.
 - b. **Release of Student:** A counselor, psychologist, social worker, or principal shall remain with the student until such contact has been made. However, if the parent(s), guardian, or other responsible adult authorized on the emergency card to act on behalf of the parent(s) cannot be contacted after reasonable effort to make such contact, the student shall be transported to a hospital emergency room. The student shall not be allowed to go home unless accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other authorized adult.
3. **Not Contemplating:** If the conclusion reached is that the student is not contemplating suicide and this is the conclusion reached by two or more professionals from the district counseling, social work, psychology, or building administration staff:
 - a. **Release of Student:** The student may be released on his/her own.
 - b. **Parental Notification:** The parent shall be notified of the initial report on the same day as the referral if at all possible and informed of the conclusion reached and any recommendations for further counseling or treatment. The parent will be asked to meet with the appropriate school staff to discuss the referral.
- C. **Follow-up:** The staff member who assumes responsibility for a case will maintain contact with the student's mental health professionals to support programming needs and follow-up procedures.

IV. REPORTS

- A. **Initial Report** – A detailed report will be written within 24 hours by the guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker or principal who assumes responsibility for the case and shall include:
 1. Name of student
 2. Name of staff member(s) involved
 3. Time and date of conference
 4. Summary of all conferences
 5. Recommendation made to parents, student, and staff

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B. Follow-up Contact – A report will be written indicating those activities performed to ensure the safety and well-being of the student.

C. Copies of Reports – Copies of all reports related to the situation will be submitted to:

1. The parents
2. The principal
3. The director of the pupil personnel services

IV. FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY – Failure on the part of the family to provide for the safety of the student in the case of a potential suicide may be considered emotional neglect and reported to the Department of Family Services.

V. STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS – Each middle school and high school shall maintain a student assistance team that will have as one of its responsibilities to identify students who may be at risk of contemplating suicide. The members of the student assistance team shall be trained in identifying risk factors for youth suicide.

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