

Vanguard Academy

Policy Handbook

5.11 Suicide Prevention and Response Policy

Purpose

To promote the emotional well-being of students, identify students at risk for suicide, and create pathways to respond when suicide risk is identified or a suicide death occurs.

Definitions:

- "Prevention" means an effort to prevent a student from attempting suicide
- "Parent notification" means a notice provided by a public school to a students' parent(s)
- "Postvention" means mental health intervention after a suicide attempt or death to prevent or contain contagion.

Policy

1. Employee Professional Development
 - All Vanguard Academy employees will receive annual professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, postvention, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention.
2. Youth Suicide Prevention Programming
 - a. Developmentally-appropriate, student-centered education materials will be integrated into all health classes and schoolwide suicide prevention curriculum.
3. Assessment and Referral
 - a. When a student is identified as potentially suicidal, (e.g., verbalizes about suicide, presents overt risk factors such as agitation or intoxication, the act of self-harm occurs) or a student self-refers, the student will be seen by a school counselor to assess risk and facilitate referral. If there is no counselor available, an administrator will fill this role until a counselor available.
 - b. The Counselor or administrator will contact the student's parent/guardian, maintain a record and assist the family with referral resources, as needed. The counselor documents all meetings with the student and communication with parents/guardians regarding suicidality.
4. Postvention
 - a. The counselor team will meet as soon as reasonably possible to collaboratively develop strategies and implement an action plan to guide the school response following a death by suicide in order to effectively address the situation.

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Procedure

1. Youth Suicide Prevention Programming content will address
 - a. Bullying and cyberbullying, as those terms are defined in Utah State Code 53G-9-601
 - b. Prevention of youth suicide;
 - c. Importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies;
 - d. How to recognize risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others;
 - e. Help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help;
 - f. Increased risk of suicide among youth who are not accepted by family for any reason.

References

53G-9-604(2)

53G-9-605(3)(e)

R277-620

Revision History and Approval Date

Board Approved 4-11-23