

8.38.01

Postvention Steps:

- (1) Building principal or designee gains confirmation of death.
- (2) Upon notice of a suicide or other sudden death, the building crisis team should be convened.
- (3) The building principal or designee should brief the crisis team on the situation. The crisis team will assess the situation and determine the resources needed.
- (4) The superintendent of schools should be the spokesperson for the school district. All press/television contacts are to be referred to the superintendent. Individual interviews of students or staff should be discouraged. (If interviews do take place, they should be conducted in a location other than the affected building.)
- (5) Professional staff should be contacted at home, prior to the school day if death occurs at night or over a weekend. Each school building shall have a telephone tree developed for informing teachers, educational assistants, cooks, and custodians. Staff will be informed in the most expedient way (i.e. principals, counselors, psychologists) if death occurs during the school day.
- (6) Information to be addressed in a before-school staff meeting:
 - (a) briefing as to the facts of the death, accompanied by a written statement of pertinent information. Students must be informed in a straightforward, factual manner. The ways students will be informed will be determined at the meeting of the building crisis team.
 - (b) identify possible students at risk.
 - (c) address the need for substitute teachers, teacher support in classrooms.
 - (d) identify three to four room(s) where grieving students may go for support (staff in encouraged to stop by as well). These areas will be staffed by district counselors, psychologists, and may include outside-of-school personnel.
 - (e) need to process as normally as possible under the conditions.
- (7) The immediate peer group of a person who has died or been seriously injured needs to be identified and given the option of coming in for special sessions with pupil services and/or community agency staff.
- (8) All people need to be informed as to whom to ask for help and support
- (9) These general rules should be followed:
 - (a) Do not dismiss school. People need to follow as normal a pattern as possible.

- (b) Do not encourage general attendance at a funeral or hospital during school hours. Excuse only those students who have a parental request for an excused absence for a funeral or hospital visit.
 - (c) Students are permitted to release their grief. Staff should be willing to share their grief also.
 - (d) The guidance office will post phone numbers of resources in prominent places in each building.
 - (e) A deceased student's locker should be cleaned out as soon as possible.
 - (f) A deceased student's behavior folder should be returned to the parent if they would want it or the folder should be destroyed.
 - (g) People should be allowed to do something concrete to help work out their feelings. If it is a donation to the school, this should be coordinated by the site council.
 - (h) An annual review and discussion with the staff regarding crisis intervention will be held.
- (10) In a suicide situation:
- (a) Emphasize that **no one is to blame**, not friends, parents, or teachers. The person chose to die by suicide, and no one forced it on that person.
 - (b) **Emphasize that suicide is not a good choice** to solve problems, that help is available, that people care.
 - (c) Do provide **small group opportunities** to discuss the suicide.
 - (d) Do not schedule a large assembly.
 - (e) If students or staff want to do something, **suggest helping to plan a suicide prevention effort** in the community, but discourage any memorials.
- (11) A review of the plan by the team should take place within one week after a death or other crisis.

Adopted: June 12, 1995
 Revised: April 26, 1999