

POLICY

Board of Education

Bernards Township

File Code: 5350
SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Board of Education recognizes that depression and self-destruction are problems of potentially increasing severity among children and adolescents. A pupil under severe stress cannot benefit fully from the educational program and may pose a threat to himself/herself or to others. In response to this serious problem, the Board of Education has determined that our schools must be prepared to meet this challenge.

The Board of Education directs all school personnel to be alert to the warning signs of childhood and adolescent depression or potential suicide and the procedures to follow in the event he or she becomes aware or suspects the existence of such a condition. Any such signs or the report of such signs from another pupil or staff member must be taken with the utmost seriousness and reported immediately to the building principal, who shall notify the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and other professional staff members in accordance with administrative regulations.

A potentially suicidal pupil shall be referred to the Student Assistance Counselor, certified school psychologist, certified school social worker or guidance counselor (elementary schools only) for appropriate evaluation and/or recommendation for independent medical or psychiatric services. In the event that the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) objects to the school's recommendation or indicates an unwillingness to cooperate in the best interest of the pupil, school personnel may contact the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services to request that agency's intervention on the pupil's behalf.

The Superintendent shall establish guidelines and procedures to deal with these types of behaviors of students. Inservice training will be undertaken by appropriately certified school personnel or state approved providers to assist staff to identify and deal with these serious concerns in school.

All public school teaching staff members must complete at least two hours of instruction on suicide prevention as part of the required 100 clock hours of professional development.

N.J.S.A. 18A:6-111

ADOPTED: May 14, 2007