

March 23, 2022

## ADOPT A NEW COMPREHENSIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

### THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Chicago Board of Education (“Board”) adopt a new Comprehensive Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Policy. The policy was posted for public comment from January 24, 2022 to February 24, 2022.

**PURPOSE:** The Board is committed to supporting the Whole Child through policies and programs that holistically address the physical, mental, and social-emotional health and wellbeing of every student. This Policy builds on the District’s wellness programming and social-emotional learning initiatives, and was developed to meet the needs of the CPS community and to comply with state law. Section 2-3.1666 of the Illinois School Code, referred to as AnnMarie’s Law, requires that the Board establish a policy for youth suicide awareness and prevention, intervention, reporting, and response. This Policy establishes a comprehensive approach to mental health, suicide awareness, and prevention that is applied consistently throughout the District.

This Policy will include a multi-tiered system of support model that includes universal, targeted, and individualized student support. This is achieved through:

1. The development and implementation of prevention activities to create a safe and supportive school environment for all students;
2. The identification and implementation of healing-centered practices and strategies to help <l @ these proo

who exhibit warning signs of mental health issues su  
the potential for a suicidal ideation, attempt, or death

### POLICY TEXT:

#### I. SCOPE

This Policy provides required responses and guidelines regardless of age, grade level, or school governance school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions at bus stops, and at school-sponsored out-of-school situations that may occur out of school time (as outlined virtual learning. The entire school community, including volunteers are responsible for implementing this Policy

#### II. DEFINITIONS

**Behavioral Health Team (BHT):** A school-based team

delivering Tier II and III interventions to students. BHT's are composed of Administrator(s), School Counselor(s), and Social Worker(s), and may include Nurse, School Psychologist, SEL Coordinator, Dean,

**Crisis:** A school crisis is a traumatic incident that disrupts school functioning. Crises can be sudden, unexpected, or unanticipated. They can affect one individual or the entire school. Crises can occur before, during, or after school and on or off school grounds. School cr



Student Health and Wellness will establish and oversee a Mental Health Governance Council, with representatives from the Offices of Social and Emotional Learning (OSEL), School Counseling and Postsecondary Advising (OSCPA), Diverse Learner Supports and Services (ODLSS), Student Protections and Title IX (OSP), School Safety and Security (OSSS), Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS), Nutrition Support Services (NSS), and any other relevant departments, to continuously revise

being, as well as warning signs that may be indications of suicidal behavior - and in turn provide

accordance with the CPS Crisis Manual. This team may also function as the Behavioral Health Team in the school setting.

6. **Access to a Medical Home and Mental Health Services:** Collaborate with the Office of Student Health and Wellness to ensure students have access to primary care and behavioral health services through enrollment into health insurance and engagement with a medical home.
7. **Communication of Support and Resources:** Establish and communicate clear strategies and resources for students seeking support for themselves or a peer struggling with suicidal ideation or other mental health issues, including how to talk to a trusted adult, what supports are available, and that their confidentiality will be protected to the greatest

## **VI. METHODS OF INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE TO SUICIDAL IDEATION, ATTEMPT, OR DEATH BY SUICIDE**

Suicide is a continuum of behaviors, which includes suicidal ideation, suicidal behaviors, and suicide attempts. These behaviors vary and are not mutually exclusive, nor do all suicidal youth advance sequentially through them. Although the frequency of each behavior decreases as individuals move along the continuum, the level of lethality and the probability of death increases<sup>12</sup>. The methods of intervention used by the District include responding to suicide threats (including all forms of communication, for example, phone, email, text, social media), suicide attempts in school/outside of school, and death by suicide. For all instances of suicidal ideation, suicide attempt, or death by suicide, whether they occur during or outside of school hours, schools must follow the protocols outlined in the CPS Crisis Manual.

- A. The District acknowledges that staff are not expected to be “on call” or accessible outside of school hours. If staff are made aware of a crisis situation outside of school hours, regardless of the method of communication, they must immediately contact the Student Safety Center (773-553-3335) to inform them of the situation. When possible, the steps outlined in the Crisis Manual should also be followed to the best of the staff person’s ability.
- B. Schools must follow the Police Notification Guidelines outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. When calling 911 in response to a mental health crisis or suicidal activity, staff should request a Crisis Intervention Trained officer (CIT) when possible.

## **VII. REPORTING PROCEDURES**

- A. All steps taken when responding to a crisis must be documented in Aspen according to CPS documentation guidelines.
  - 1. The school must document in Aspen that a risk assessment occurred but must not include an upload of the actual assessment form in the interest of confidentiality.
  - 2. Suicide/Mental Health crises must be documented as an ICT (Incident, Concern, or Threat) in Aspen and not as a journal or other non-official record.
  - 3. If the Chicago Police Department is contacted, the school must include the RD number (please refer to the ICT Entry Manual).
- B. District Schools, network offices, central office departments, and administrative offices must ensure appropriate measures are taken to protect the confidentiality of all Student Records and to prevent unauthorized access to or release of Student Records in compliance with the Student Records Management and Retention Policy and Privacy of Health Related Information Policy.

## **VIII. STUDENT ABSENCES/GRADES/DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

In alignment with the District’s vision for supporting the Whole Child, it is imperative that schools take a holistic approach to assessing and responding to student behavior to ensure that students receive the

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- B. Schools must accommodate students who are absent from school due to mental or behavioral health issues.
  - 1. Standard absence reporting must be adhered to, however students must not be penalized,





Approved for Consideration:



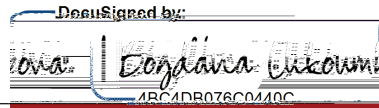
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Deputy Chief Health Officer

Approved:



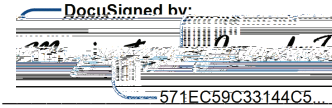
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