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Within our growing, diverse community, we sow the seeds of opportunities to raise prepared, resilient students.

Suicide Prevention Plan for Gervais School District 2023-2024

Gervais School District is committed to the health and well-being of all students and understands that by having procedures in place to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide, they are not only complying with Senate Bill 52, but, more importantly, saving lives. The Gervais School District:

- recognizes that physical and mental health are integral components of student outcomes, both educationally and beyond graduation.
- further recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among young people has an ethical responsibility to take a proactive approach in preventing deaths by suicide.
- acknowledges its role in providing an environment that is sensitive to individual and societal factors that place youth at greater risk for suicide and helps to foster positive youth development and resilience.
- acknowledges that comprehensive suicide prevention policies include prevention, intervention, and postvention components.
- will publish its policy and plan on their website and will revisit and refine the plan regularly.

Prevention

- The administrator and/or designated staff member for the 2023-2024 school year for the Gervais School District is Dr. Creighton Helms. School administrators at each building (or they may designate a staff member) are designated points-of-contact for each building respectively. Please contact Dr. Helms or your student's building administrator to request a review of actions by the school in responding to a suicidal risk.
- All staff shall be made aware of school suicide prevention protocols on an annual basis including the names and contact information of the administrator and/or designated staff member of whom to report to when they believe a student to be at elevated risk for suicide.
- All staff who have contact with students shall receive annual gatekeeper training in suicide prevention. This training shall include, but is not limited to, the identification of risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, district referral processes, and postvention response protocols.
 - Gervais School District provides the following gatekeeper trainings for staff:
 - Initial training for all staff (in-person):
 - Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR).
 - SafeSchools (Online)
- Additional training is recommended and shall be offered to administrators, school counselors, and other designated staff.
- Additional support or resources needed regarding youth suicide, including those living with mental and/or substance use disorders, those who engage in self-harm or have attempted suicide, those in out-of-home settings, those experiencing homelessness, American Indian/Alaska Native students, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning) students, students bereaved by suicide, and those with medical conditions or certain types of disabilities can be obtained by contacting the WESD Suicide Prevention consultant.

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- Developmentally appropriate, student-centered education materials will be made available to all students that include safe and healthy choices and coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs of suicide, and help seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help. (See the Suicide Prevention Step by Step Guide for information and recommendations)
 - The student-centered education materials for the 2023-2024 school year for Gervais Elementary School is the PAX Good Behavior Game, supplemented by a grant from Lines for Life to provide classroom books and materials and training for the school counselor.
 - The student-centered education materials for the 2023-2024 school year for Gervais Middle School and Gervais High School are Signs of Suicide curriculum materials.
 - BASE (K-12) Suicide Prevention modules, to include age-appropriate self-assessment surveys and social-emotional learning throughout the year.

Intervention

- Any employee who reasonably believes that a student is at risk of suicide shall report such belief to the designated staff member and/or administrator as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day.
- Upon notification, the designated staff member and/or administrator shall complete a Suicide Risk Assessment Level 1. If warranted, the student will be placed under continuous adult supervision during this time. Emergency services will be contacted immediately if an imminent threat and/or an in-school attempt is made.
- If a referral for a Suicide Risk Assessment Level 2 is determined, after a Level 1 is completed, see WESD's School- Based Suicide Intervention flowchart for county contact information.
- Prior to contacting the student's parent/guardian, a determination will be made if further harm will result from notification.
- If parent/guardian notification is determined, the designated staff member or administrator will:
 - Inform if emergency services were contacted.
 - Share results of the Suicide Risk Assessment Level 1, including if a referral for a Level 2 was made.
 - Provide names of community mental health resources, if appropriate
 - Request written permission from student/parent/guardian to discuss the student's health with outside care providers, if appropriate
 - It is highly recommended to establish a communication line and agreement with local hospitals for shared information (with parent and/or child permission) with the school after a student is seen in the Emergency Department for suicide ideation and/or attempt. This is generally the hospital social work staff or community liaison. Hospitals often do not know who to contact at the school, and vice versa, and the 7-day period after a child is seen in the Emergency Department is the most at-risk time for suicide.
- After an attempt, prior to the student returning to school, a school support team shall meet with the student and the parent/guardian to develop a safety plan, using the WESD Student Re-Entry Plan as a guide. In-school and community-based counseling will also be made available, as needed.



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Postvention

- Immediately after a suicide death, the superintendent will contact the WESD Crisis Response Team or county crisis response team. The crisis response team shall meet with district personnel and develop a postvention plan including but not limited to:
- Verification of death.
- Preparation of school and/or district response, including support services.
- Informing staff of death.
- Informing students that a death has occurred.
- Providing counselors and/or trained crisis responders to support students and staff at the school site or virtually.
- Providing additional resources to staff and students.
- Crisis team will work with staff to identify students most likely to be impacted by the death to provide additional assistance and counseling, if needed. Additionally, an administrator and/or designated staff member will review suicide warning signs and reporting requirements with staff.

References and Resources

- <https://afsp.org/model-school-policy-on-suicide-prevention>
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline 800-273-8255 www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- Oregon YouthLine www.oregonyouthline.org
- Willamette Education Service District www.wesd.org/suicideprevention
- Mid-Valley Suicide Prevention Coalition <https://mvsuicideprevention.com/>
- <https://www.nasponline.org/publications/periodicals/communique/issues/volume-43-issue-2/model-school-district-policy-for-suicide-prevention>

District Point-of-Contact:

Dr. Creighton Helms
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