

STUDENT SERVICES

File: JHH

SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Charlottesville City Schools Division is committed to protecting its students from the risk of suicide.

Duties of Teachers and Administrative Staff

Any licensed instructional or administrative staff member who has reason to believe that a student is at imminent risk of suicide, based on a direct communication from that student occurring within the staff member's scope of employment, shall promptly report this matter to a qualified professional identified below, while keeping the student safe.

Qualified Professional

The following licensed professionals are designated to assess suicide risks in students under this policy. 1. School psychologists assigned to schools, 2. Clinical psychologists assigned to schools. Qualified professionals may include one or more of the following: school counselor, school nurse (RN or LPN), school psychologist, and/or school social worker.

Duties of the Qualified Professional

The qualified professional shall promptly meet with the student to determine whether the student is at imminent risk of suicide.

Abuse and Neglect

If a student is determined to be at imminent risk of suicide and has indicated that the reason for this risk relates to parental abuse or neglect, the qualified professional shall not contact the parent/guardian. Instead, the qualified professional shall immediately report the alleged abuse in accordance with School Board policy JHG. The qualified professional needs to emphasize that immediate action is necessary to protect the student from harm.

Contacting the Parent/Guardian

If a student is determined to be at imminent risk of suicide, and if the above section titled "Abuse and Neglect" does not apply, then the qualified professional shall immediately call at least one of the student's parents/guardians. When contacting a parent/guardian, the qualified professional should:

1. provide his/her name and position in the school;
2. tell the parent/guardian that in his/her professional judgment, the student is at imminent risk of suicide;
3. assure the parent/guardian that the student is currently safe;

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4. state the legal requirement for the call, citing § 22.1-272.1 of the Code of Virginia;
5. ask the parent/guardian whether he or she is aware of the student's mental state;
6. ask the parent/guardian whether he or she wishes to obtain or has obtained mental health counseling for the student;
7. provide names of community counseling resources if appropriate and offer to facilitate the referral; and
8. determine the parent's intent to seek appropriate services for the student.

Inability to Reach Parent/Guardian

If the qualified professional is unable to make contact with the parent/guardian by the end of the school day, then the professional shall seek treatment for the student without the parent's guardian's authorization in accordance with local School Board policy.

Additional Concerns

If parent/guardian contact is made and, in the course of this contact, relevant issues of abuse or neglect are discovered (e.g., a parent acknowledges the child's suicidal intent but indicates not intent to act for the well-being of the child), the qualified professional shall report the abuse or neglect in accordance with policy JHG.

Duty to Keep Students Safe and Secure

A student who is at imminent risk of suicide shall remain under qualified supervision until a parent/guardian or other authorized individual accepts responsibility for the student's safety.

Follow-up

After a student has been identified or determined to be at imminent risk of suicide, the qualified professional shall make appropriate follow-up contact to ascertain the current status of the student and facilitate any in-school support that may be required.

Required Documentation

The qualified professional shall document the phone call to the parent/guardian by recording the: (a) time and date of the call; (b) parent/guardian response; (c) response plan agreed upon; and (d) anticipated follow-up.

Adopted: April 15, 2004
Reviewed: June 19, 2008
Reviewed: June 25, 2013

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Legal References: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-272.1, 63.2-1509
Virginia Board of Education “Suicide Prevention Guidelines”, October 1999

Cross References: JHG Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting
EB School Safety and Crisis Management