

Board Policy: Students # 520



Suicide Prevention Policy - #520

The Board of Directors of University Preparation Charter School (“UPCS”) recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Board of Directors has developed prevention strategies and intervention procedures.

The policy has been developed in consultation with UPCS and community stakeholders, the county mental health plan, UPCS -employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts and shall, at a minimum, address procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and ~~postvention~~ postvention. This policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least every five (5) years in conjunction with the previously mentioned stakeholders.

Prevention and Instruction

Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students’ feelings of connectedness with UPCS and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.

UPCS instructional and student support program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students including, but not limited to, the development of problem-solving skills, coping skills, and resilience.

The Executive Director or designee may offer parents/guardians education or information which describes the severity of the youth suicide problem, UPCS’s suicide prevention efforts, risk factors and warning signs of suicide, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, reducing the stigma of mental illness, and/or UPCS and community resources that can help youth in crisis.

UPCS’s instructional curriculum may include information about suicide prevention, as appropriate or needed, taking into consideration the grade level and age of the students. If

Adopted/Ratified: 8/30/17

Revised: INSERT DATE

Commented [C1]: This policy now must be posted on the School’s website per AB 34.

Commented [C2]: This is now required per AB 1767.

Commented [C3]: Education Code section 215 requires that this policy be reviewed at least every 5 years, but CDE recommends that it be reviewed at least annually. As such, you may change this to have a more frequent review if you prefer.

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offered or included in UPCS's instructional curriculum, suicide prevention instruction shall be designed to help students:

1. Identify and analyze signs of depression and self-destructive behaviors and understand how feelings of depression, loss, isolation, inadequacy, and anxiety can lead to thoughts of suicide.
2. Identify alternatives to suicide and develop coping and resiliency skills.
3. Learn to listen, be honest, share feelings, and get help when communicating with friends who show signs of suicidal intent.
4. Identify trusted adults, UPCS resources, and/or community crisis intervention resources where youth, including those at high risk, such as youth bereaved by suicide; youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders; youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings such as foster care; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth can get help and recognize that there is no stigma associated with seeking mental health, substance abuse, gender identity, or other support services.

Staff Development

Suicide prevention training for staff will be provided and be designed to help staff identify and find help for students at risk of suicide. The training may be offered under the discretion of the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors and/or in cooperation with one or more community mental health agencies and may include information on:

1. Research identifying risk factors, such as previous suicide attempt(s), history of depression or mental illness, substance abuse problems, family history of suicide or violence, feelings of isolation, interpersonal conflicts, a recent severe stressor or loss, family instability, and other factors.
2. Warning signs that may indicate suicidal intentions, including changes in students' appearance, personality, or behavior.
3. Research-based instructional strategies for teaching the suicide prevention curriculum and promoting mental and emotional health.
4. UPCS and community resources and services for students and families in crisis and ways to access them.

Commented [C4]: Per AB 1767, this policy must address any training on suicide awareness and prevention that will be provided to teachers of pupils in all of the grades served by the School.

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5. UPCS procedures for intervening when a student attempts, threatens, or discloses the desire to die by suicide.
6. Materials approved by UPCS for training shall include how to identify appropriate mental health services, both at the UPCS site and within the larger community, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services.
7. Materials approved for training may also include programs that can be completed through self-review or suitable suicide prevention materials.

Intervention, and Emergency Procedures, and Postvention

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, he/she/the staff member shall promptly notify the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director or designee shall then notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible and may also refer the student to mental health resources at UPCS or in the community. The Executive Director shall ensure proper coordination and consultation with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary.

Commented [C5]: This is now required per AB 1767.

When a student is in imminent danger (has access to a gun, is on a rooftop, or in other unsafe conditions), a call shall be made to 911.

When a suicide attempt or threat is reported on campus or at a school-related activity, the Executive Director or designee shall, at a minimum:

1. Ensure the student's physical safety by one or more of the following, as appropriate:
 - a. Securing immediate medical treatment if a suicide attempt has occurred;
 - b. Securing law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened;
 - c. Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene.
2. Designate specific individuals to be promptly contacted, for example the UPCS counselor, psychologist, nurse, Executive Director, and/or the student's parent/guardian, and, as necessary, local law enforcement or mental health agencies.
3. Document the incident in writing as soon as feasible.

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4. Follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed.
5. Provide access to counselors or other appropriate personnel to listen to and support students and staff who are directly or indirectly involved with the incident at UPCS.
6. Provide an opportunity for all who respond to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted on the UPCS campus, the Executive Director or designee shall follow the crisis intervention procedures contained in UPCS safety plan. After consultation with the ~~Executive Principle Director~~ or designee and the student's parent/guardian about facts that may be divulged in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the ~~Principal Executive Director~~ or designee may provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. UPCS staff may receive assistance from UPCS counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

Students shall be encouraged through the education program and in UPCS activities to notify a teacher, Executive Director, another UPCS administrator, psychologist, UPCS counselor, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions.

Employees Acting Within Scope

UPCS shall ensure that employees act only within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging a UPCS employee to diagnose or treat mental illness unless the employee is specifically licensed and employed to do so.

~~Student Identification Cards~~

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Commented [C6]: This section begins on July 1, 2019 and is only legally required for those schools that issue pupil identification cards. Accordingly, please omit if you do not issue pupil identification cards.

EC 215 states that as of January 1, 2019, if the Charter has a supply of unissued student identification cards that do not comply with this section, the Charter can issue those cards until they run out.

As of 2/15/19, the number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 1-800-273-8255; the number for the Crisis Text Line can be accessed by texting HOME to 741741.

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UPCS will include the telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) and the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-7233) on all student identification cards. UPCS will also include the number for the Crisis Text Line, which can be accessed by texting HOME to 741741 and a local suicide prevention hotline on all student identification cards.

Commented [C7]: This is required beginning on October 1, 2020, but we recommend including it on any newly printed identification cards. EC 215.5(c) allows schools who have a supply of identification cards without this information to continue using noncompliant cards until the supply is depleted.

The National Domestic Violence Hotline number is 1-800-799-7233

Commented [C8]: EC 215.5 does not require these numbers to be printed on the identification cards. Accordingly, you may omit this from the policy. However, we recommend including these numbers on the cards to provide students with access to multiple sources.

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