CARBON CAREER & TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

SECTION: OPERATIONS

TITLE: SUICIDE

ADOPTED: November 18, 2004

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819. SUICIDE

1. Purpose

The Joint Operating Committee recognizes its responsibility to address the issue of suicide. In an effort to intervene in a sensitive, caring manner, the school shall make every effort to prevent suicide from occurring, identifying individuals at risk, and intervene to manage a crisis should one occur.

2. Authority

While school entities within the Commonwealth cannot and should not assume primary responsibility for the self-destructive behavior of their students and staff, they are the only institution with daily contact. The Joint Operating Committee believes that life-threatened individuals require necessary help as quickly and professionally as possible. To that end, it waives student confidentially in this type of situation.

3. Guidelines

A Student Assistance Program (SAP) shall be developed and implemented to include a suicide component with the following goals:

1. Develop a coordinated procedure to intervene in life-threatening situations.
2. Enlist the support, awareness, and involvement of all staff in the identification of suicidal signs.
3. Utilize existing community resources to facilitate immediate intervention in life-threatening situations.
4. Encourage and train staff to react in a calm, knowledgeable, professional manner when confronted with specific life-threatening situations.
5. Provide intervention services to students contemplating suicide.
6. Cooperating in all efforts that join home, school, and community in safeguarding and promoting the mental health needs of students.

A staff member showing suicidal signs or ideations shall be handled discriminately and professionally.

The school shall provide specific procedures when it has been determined that an individual is seriously planning suicide. The procedures outlined shall be followed:

1. Immediately notify the nurse, guidance counselors, or building principal that possible suicidal situation exists. A Student Assistance Program team member shall be contacted as soon as possible. A responsible adult must stay with the student at all times.

2. The building principal, or designee shall make an initial contact with the parents/guardians/family member to advise them and to substantiate behavioral changes that may be occurring at home.

3. A thorough investigation shall be conducted as follows:

    a. Discussions shall be conducted discretely with faculty, students, or other adults involved with the individual in the school setting to gather information.

    b. An interview with the individual shall be conducted by the administrator, guidance counselor, or other designated person to assess in the risk involved.

    c. The parents/guardians/family member may be asked to report to the school.

4. Coordination with a local mental health facility may be accomplished to further assess the situation. The Assessment may result in the following:

    a. An individual interview and assessment to determine if the individual requires hospitalization, either voluntary or involuntary, or referred for out-patient counseling.

    b. A parents/guardians/family member conference to determine action.

The school shall provide specific procedures to follow in the event that a student or staff life ends in suicide.

1. Upon learning of the situation, staff shall:

    a. Contact the building principal or designated others who will establish the facts.

    b. Discuss their concerns, questions, etc. with the appropriate staff only, in order to avoid rumor.

	2. Staff involvement shall be utilized to monitor those individuals closest to the deceased. These individuals shall be considered at risk. 3. The counselor may contact the impacted family and the families of at risk individuals to offer support and/or referral to outside agencies. 4. Individual professionals or outside agencies may be used as consultants to the school staff if severe trauma to students, families, or faculty is evident. 5. In the event that the school is contacted by the media, the Administrative Director or designee shall make a public statement. The response shall be brief, making every effort to protect the rights of the deceased and the requirement of family privacy.