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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and well-being of all students by having procedures in place to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide. Wasatch Charter School recognizes that physical and mental health are integral components of student outcomes. Wasatch Charter School recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among young people and acknowledges that comprehensive suicide prevention policies include prevention, intervention, and postvention components. This policy is meant to be paired with other policies supporting the overall emotional and behavioral health of students.

This policy is intended to comply with [Utah Code section 53G-9-702, 53G-9-703, 53G-9-704, 53G-9-603, 53G-9-202, 53G-9-203, Utah Administrative Code R277-620.](#)

2.0 Definitions

1. **"Suicide Attempt"** is when any individual has knowingly engaged in a behavior to which they believe would cause them serious bodily harm or death.
2. **"Nonfatal suicide attempt"** means a suicide attempt in which the person survives.
3. **"Suicide"** means self-directed injurious behavior with an intent to die as a result of the behavior.
4. **"Suicidal thoughts" & "Suicidal ideation"** is any form of thinking, speaking, or planning suicide. These things can range from a detailed plan to a fleeting consideration. It does not include the final act of suicide.
5. **"Intervention"** refers to an effort to prevent a student from attempting suicide.
6. **"Postvention"** means mental health intervention after a suicide attempt or death.

7. **"Parent notification"** means a notice provided by a public school to a students' parent(s) consistent with Section 53G-9-604(2) and 53G-9-605(3)(e).
8. **"Actively Suicidal"** is when someone has a plan and is ready to act out on that plan.
9. **"Passively Suicidal"** is when someone expresses a desire to die or no longer be alive but has no specific plan or method.
10. **"Student Support Executive Group"** is a group of faculty members who meet regularly to oversee student wellness, respond to teacher concerns / referrals and coordinate services. This group may include the Executive Director, Student Support Director, Pedagogical Director, SPED teachers, Three Streams Coordinator, Social Worker's / Interns, and others.
11. **"School employee"** means an individual working in the individual's official capacity as:
 - a. a school teacher;
 - b. school staff member;
 - c. an administrator; or
 - d. all other individuals who are employed, directly or indirectly, by Wasatch Charter School or are employed as independent contractors who work on Wasatch Charter School's campus.

3.0 Policy Content

1. Protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to Wasatch Charter School. Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, resiliency training, support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends. The encouragement of help-seeking behavior will be promoted at all levels of the school leadership. Suicide prevention training will also include:
 - a. Bullying and cyberbullying;
 - b. prevention of youth suicide;

- c. increased risk of suicide among youth who are not accepted by family for any reason, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth;
- d. youth suicide intervention;
- e. postvention for family, students, and faculty;
- f. underage drinking of alcohol;
- g. methods of strengthening the family; and
- h. methods of strengthening a youth's relationships in the school and community.

2. Students will also have access to national and local resources that they can contact for additional support such as:

- a. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- b. Safe UT: <https://safeut.med.utah.edu>

4.0 Relevant Procedures, Guidelines & Restrictions

- 1. When a student demonstrates thoughts or behaviors relating to suicide it will be taken seriously and should be dealt with according to the following procedures and guidelines.
 - a. If a school employee believes a student is at-risk of attempting suicide, physical self-harm, or harming others, the school employee may intervene and ask a student questions regarding the student's suicidal thoughts, physically self-harming behavior, or thoughts of harming others for the purposes of:
 - (i) referring the student to appropriate prevention services; and
 - (ii) informing the student's parent or legal guardian.

- b. Any staff who discovers a student expressing suicidal behaviors or thoughts will report it to a member of the Student Support Executive Group (SSEG) as soon as possible. The SSEG member will then collaborate with the Student Support Executive Group (SSEG) to delegate the below procedures.

4.1 Intervention Procedures for a student expressing suicidal thoughts/ideations.

1. A member of the SSEG will meet with the student to offer support as well as gather further information.
2. During this process the school's Suicide Screening Form will be used as a tool to gather more information about the student's situation. *This form will serve as the school's required record and will include information on parent notification as specified below and in the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

4. 2 Intervention Procedures for a student expressing Passively Suicidal Ideation.

1. If a student is passively suicidal the initial person to make contact with the student will immediately get in contact with a member of SSEG.
2. A member of the Student Support Executive Group will meet with the student to provide support as well as to go over the suicide screening form with the student.
3. The parent(s) and or legal guardian(s) of the student will be contacted immediately in order to make them aware of their child's safety. Appropriate referrals/ resources will be given to the family informing them about suicide as well as where they can go for further services.

4.3 Intervention Procedures for a student who is Actively Suicidal

1. If a student is actively suicidal the initial person to make contact with the student will immediately get in contact with a member of the SSEG.

2. A member of the Student Support Executive Group will meet with the student to provide support as well as to go over the suicide screening form with the student.
3. The Student Support Executive Group will collaborate with appropriate community crisis response services in order to ensure the student's safety. These community response services can include the National Suicide Prevention Hotline as well as the UNI Crisis Line and Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT).
4. The parent(s) and or legal guardian(s) of the student will be notified as soon as possible in order to make them aware of their child's safety. Appropriate referrals/ resources will be given to the family.

4.4 Suicide or Suicide Attempt (on school grounds during the school day)

1. Any school staff member who witnesses or is aware of a suicide attempt on school grounds will immediately contact emergency services followed by notifying the school administrative team.
2. The area in which the attempt was made should be cleared and all students should be evacuated out of the area.
3. The parent(s) and or legal guardian(s) of the student will be notified as soon as possible in order to make them aware of their child's status. Appropriate referrals/ resources will be given to the family.

4.5 Suicide off of school property

1. In the event that a student/ faculty member were to die by suicide within the community, the school's Student Support Executive group will collaborate to develop an appropriate method for addressing the loss among the student body.
2. The Student Support Executive Group will be readily available for all students seeking support.
3. Resources including but not limited to the National Suicide Hotline, Safe UT, and University Neuropsychiatric Institute (UNI) will be readily available for families to access if needed.

5.0 Training

1. Employees of Wasatch Charter School shall take a minimum of two hours of professional development training on Youth Suicide Prevention every three years.
2. All school personnel and students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support, in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they or a friend are feeling suicidal, or are in need of help
3. While confidentiality and privacy are important, students should know that when there is risk of suicide, safety comes first.
4. Parents will be notified of a free, neighboring district's seminar(s) on Suicide Prevention annually. .

6.0 Reporting

1. Wasatch Charter School is required to notify a parent when a child has been injured or is ill and injury or illness requires attention or treatment that is not available on school premises.
2. School employees may provide information and observations to a student's parent or guardian about things observed related to health, progress, well-being, behavior, and information related to 53E-9-203(6). They may also refer a student to appropriate Wasatch teams such as the SSEG, consistent with the Wasatch Charter policy on referrals. School employees may NOT conduct psychiatric or behavioral health evals or mental health screens or assessments of a student. However, if they are a school counselor or other mental health professional acting in accordance with the Mental Health Professional Practice Act, the school employee may recommend but not require: an evaluation, treatment, assessment, or even conduct them in accordance with 53E-9-203.

(a) This section does not limit the ability of a student under Section 53G-10-203 to spontaneously express sentiments or opinions otherwise protected against disclosure under this section.

(i) If a school employee or agent believes that a situation exists which presents a serious threat to the well-being of a student, that employee or agent shall notify the student's parent or guardian without delay.

(ii) If, however, the matter has been reported to the Division of Child and Family Services within the Department of Human Services, it is the responsibility of the division to notify the student's parent or guardian of any possible investigation, prior to the student's return home from school. (iii) The division may be exempted from the notification requirements described in this Subsection (6)(b)(ii) only if it determines that the student would be endangered by notification of his parent or guardian, or if that notification is otherwise prohibited by state or federal law.

3. If Wasatch Charter School notifies a parent of an incident or threat required to be reported, the school shall produce and maintain a record that verifies the parent was notified of the incident or threat. The school shall expunge a record maintained in accordance with this section that relates to a student if the student:
 - a. Has graduated from high school; and
 - b. Requests the record to be expunged.

7.0 Penalties

1. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee to knowingly ignore or fail to promptly report/document any suicidal expressions mentioned by a student.
2. Violation of this policy will result in formal disciplinary action, penalties and/or dismissal procedures as outlined in the school's Human Resource Policy.

See also A-33 Bullying and Harassment Policy, Human Resource Policy