



## PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### OFFICE OF Student Success and Health Department

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**Date:** January 5, 2021

**To:** Board Policy Committee

**From:** Mila Rodriguez-Adair, Qualified Mental Health Professional-On Special Assignment  
Amy Ruona, Sr Mgr Mental Health/Wellness Supports & Services  
Brenda Martinek, Chief of Student Support Services

**Subject:** Student Suicide Prevention Policy 4.30.050-P

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### **BACKGROUND**

SB 52, also known as Adi's Act, requires school districts to adopt a Student Suicide Prevention Policy, and Section 36 of the Student Success Act, also requires establishing support for Suicide Prevention through the development of a new statewide School Safety and Prevention System coordinated through the Oregon Department of Education's Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

### **RELATED POLICIES/BEST PRACTICES**

It is best practice to implement policy to address the current law. This Policy on Suicide Prevention was created in collaboration with documents created by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, The American School Counselor Association, and the National Association of School Psychologists, and The Trevor Project. Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention: Step by Step: Creating a Comprehensive Approach in your School created by Lines for Life and Willamette Education Service District.

### **ANALYSIS OF SITUATION**

Senate Bill 52 requires school districts to establish policies regarding student suicide prevention, intervention, and activities to reduce risk and promote healing after suicide. PPS currently has a suicide prevention curriculum available district-wide; student engagement groups; a suicide intervention protocol; a suicide screening tool; a safety and support plan; and guidance for return from mental health settings amongst other suicide prevention/intervention strategies. See [the attached document](#) for more details.

PPS school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and QMHP's (Qualified Mental Health Professionals) will receive annual training on these protocols and documents.

- PPS will continue to build out suicide prevention training for ALL staff district-wide through a variety of training opportunities. Suicide prevention is everyone’s responsibility not solely counseling or social work responsibility.
- PPS will continue to build out mental wellness supports at all tiers that support suicide prevention and particularly focus on our historically underserved students.
- PPS needs district-wide training for school teams to respond after death including suicide.
- As BIPOC students and LGBTQIA+ students are considered populations at high risk for suicide; increased school-based RESJ training with a multi-tiered approach to hate speech and discriminatory acts is essential.
- Suicide prevention occurs when students are seen, heard, and valued for being their true authentic selves. PPS needs to continue to build upon supports and interventions that celebrate all student identities. This looks like increased mentoring, GSA/QSAs, racial and cultural affinity groups, restorative practices, and other opportunities for supported self-expression.

Each school district must also implement a review procedure where an individual can request the school district evaluate the actions of a school in responding to suicidal risk.

The State Board of Education is called upon, by rule, to add any other requirements based on consultations with suicide prevention organizations, experts, and school-based mental health providers. School districts and Education Service Districts anticipate that policy development can be absorbed with current resources, but policy implementation costs could be substantial.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Costs related to the measure are indeterminate at this time. There may be some fiscal impact related to curriculum and additional suicidal prevention training for staff including LGBTQIA+ training.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

This policy is driven by legislative directives, and, given the pandemic, some stakeholder engagement was limited. SS&H worked closely with the Department of Community Engagement Department to receive student and family feedback. Staff input was collected via an inventory tool in the Fall of 2019. Student, family, PPS Staff, and community stakeholders’ input continues to be collected.

**TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION / EVALUATION**

SB 52 went into effect on July 1, 2020. The Department of Student Success and Health has centralized staff who support continued implementation and evaluation strategies in relation to suicide prevention/intervention/postvention. This team is also available for consult.

In the 20-21 school year in response to this policy and other best practices, PPS is planning the following:

- Train all School Psychologists, Social Workers, Counselors, and QMHP's once a year on the policy, procedure, and best practices for intervening with students and/or staff at risk for suicide.
- Offer ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills and Training) opportunities 2x a year to the above-mentioned staff. This staff group should have an ASIST 2 day training every 5 years and refresher training every other year. \*\* Youth Save is a virtual option to replace ASIST training during CDL.
- Offer specific mental health training for 1 hour to school secretaries, nutrition services, community agents, community partners, and campus security.
- Teachers should receive up to 1 hour of general mental health/substance use training annually
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- Build a student advisory group which will include the continuous collection of student feedback

### **CONNECTION TO BOARD GOALS**

Board goals include a focus on building our organizational capacity, placing a focus on the professional learning of our educators, conditions in our classrooms and schools, partnerships with our families and community partners, and persistent attention to continuous improvement and accountability.

Suicide prevention and keeping students alive and mentally healthy will support reaching these goals. Our PPS Youth Risk Behavior Survey data indicates that our students continue to need this support.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board approve the policy.

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*As a member of the PPS Executive Leadership Team, I have reviewed this staff report.*

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initials)

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Student Suicide Prevention Policy 4.30.050-P
- B. Resolution to Adopt Student Suicide Prevention Policy 4.30.050-P