

<p>3. Guidelines</p>	<p><u>Post Intervention Procedures</u></p> <p>The following procedures have been developed recognizing that the impact of a suicide or tragedy on the school district and community will be far reaching and painful. They are designed to assist designated staff members (teachers, counselors, and nurses) in reacting swiftly and effectively to provide appropriate services for faculty and students.</p> <p><u>Communication Plan</u></p> <p>In the event of a suicide or tragedy, the following procedures will be implemented:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Superintendent shall notify the building principal immediately, handle all media releases and coordinate all post intervention activities. 2. The building principal has the responsibility to immediately inform the counselor, nurse, members of the Student Assistance Team, and teachers as to the identity of the deceased (should this be a student). 3. The principal will contact the family in order to provide support and to obtain any information which the family wishes to share relative to the tragedy. 4. The principal will not share information concerning the tragedy with the media. Neither will s/he allow media representatives into the building for the purpose of interviewing staff or students. The principal shall inform students regarding their right to refuse to be interviewed off school property. All contact with the media will be coordinated by the Superintendent or his/her designee. <p><u>Action Plan</u></p> <p><i>Death/Suicide:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Death/Suicide that occurs prior to the school day.</u> The building principal shall meet with the faculty prior to the opening of school to provide accurate information and appropriate plans for the school day. The Superintendent will be present to discuss anticipated and/or clinically researched student reactions which are associated with the grief process. Location and time of the meeting will be arranged via the phone chain. 2. <u>Death/Suicide that occurs during the school day.</u> The building principal will notify staff via intercom that there is a code situation and TOUCH Team members are to report to the office. The Superintendent will be notified of the
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situation. The principal will prepare a written statement which will be taken to each classroom by the members of the TOUCH Team. The classroom teachers will then read the statement to their class.

The Student Assistance Team will be assigned to the building affected by the incident in order to assist the staff in dealing with the general school situation and any individual problems that may arise.

Substitute teachers shall be employed the day following a school tragedy to fill in for members of the Student Assistance Team who will be counseling, monitoring, and interviewing with targeted students and staff.

Staff members are encouraged to be helpful by providing understanding to those expressing grief, confusion, anger and abandonment.

Students who were close friends of the victim should be identified and counseled by a member of the Student Assistance Team and referred to Crisis Intervention if deemed appropriate.

A counselor, or team member, will be available in the designated locations of the building to provide students with a place and an opportunity to discuss their feelings. Staff members should permit any student who expresses a need for this service to go to the area for counseling.

Grieving students should be encouraged to continue with their normal schedule as soon as possible following their contact with a member of the Student Assistance Team.

A normal class schedule shall be in place on the day immediately following the tragedy.

Students shall not be excused from school without written permission from parents. Parents must state in writing that parental supervision will be provided and sustained.

The building principal and members of the Student Assistance Team shall meet at the end of the school day to evaluate the general school atmosphere and the action plan in an effort to determine if additional intervention is appropriate or necessary.

Follow-up Activities

1. Counselor, or member of the Student Assistance Team shall contact the victim's family to offer supportive counseling and/or referral to outside agencies when deemed appropriate.
2. Counselors, Student Assistance Team members, and other designated staff members will be given an opportunity to discuss the situation with individual students or small groups of affected students during a two week period or when deemed necessary.
3. Staff should be alert for other "At Risk" students and refer them to the appropriate counselor or a Student Assistance Team member.
4. When, in the judgement of the Superintendent, principal, member of the Student Assistance Team, or counselor, meetings with classmates, friends and siblings is deemed appropriate, the following student needs must be considered and acted upon:
 - a. Knowledge of all the facts.
 - b. Opportunities to discuss feelings of loss.
 - c. Opportunities to discuss the good and bad characteristics of the victim.
 - d. Opportunities to participate in discussions relative to depression, death and suicide.
 - e. Adult support network for those who were close friends with the victim and who appear to be having difficulty in dealing with their grief.
5. Substitute teachers shall be utilized to fill in for members of the Student Assistance Team if, in the opinion of the building principal, an additional day of group counseling is deemed appropriate.
6. Close friends, siblings, relatives, and any students exhibiting overt emotional distress, are to be counseled individually and referred for outside consultation if warranted. Those students who are identified as emotionally distraught shall be monitored and provided support services, according to their needs, for an appropriate period of time.

7. In the case of any school tragedy, there is a predisposition to place the situation in its most positive light and to respect the memory of the deceased. It is extremely essential in the case of suicide, however, not to legitimize this method of dealing with one's problems. To do so may risk further suicidal actions by impressionable individuals. In an effort to dissuade such actions, the following guidelines shall be implemented:
 - a. Schools shall remain open and follow a regular schedule.
 - b. All school activities shall be carried out in routine fashion.
 - c. Do not dedicate yearbooks and/or other publications to the deceased.
 - d. Do not accept any bequest from the family or friends of the individual to establish a memorial, scholarship, or other worthwhile program in the name of the deceased.
 - e. Do not place a plaque in the school in memory of the deceased.
 - f. Do not name an object, building, etc. in memory of the deceased.
 - g. Do not take any action which may be interpreted as legitimizing or respecting the use of suicide as a solution to one's problems.

Identification of Individuals at Risk

If any district employee has reason to believe that a student is considering suicide, these procedures must be followed:

Administrative Procedures:

1. All staff members are responsible for reporting any student who may be considering suicide to the building principal and/or counselor immediately. A verbal report must be followed by a written statement.
2. The building principal or his/her designee will:
 - a. Request confidential reports from teachers.
 - b. Call an emergency meeting of the Student Assistance or Child Study Team.
 - c. Interview the student.

d. Inform parents of the situation.

The Student Assistance Team will assess the seriousness of the situation and determine, based on the following factors, a plan of action to be followed:

High Risk: (one or more indicators are present: some threat of suicide through explicit statements, feelings of hopelessness, a detailed suicide plan, written statements, history of a previous attempt, chronically self-destructive lifestyle combined with severe loss, anniversary of a loss, inability to accept help, lack of adequate support system and/or method of suicide is available.

1. Do not let the student out of your sight. Be sure a responsible adult is with the student at all times.
2. The parent must be notified immediately by the principal or his/her designee. If parents cannot be reached, or if they refuse to cooperate, Fulton County Services for Children and Youth, 485-3553, shall be informed while proceeding with Steps 3 through 5.
3. Immediately contact Cumberland Valley Mental Health Center at 1-800-994-2555.
4. The process of physically uniting the client with Cumberland Valley Mental Health Center must be clearly established.
5. The student may be released only to a parent or legal guardian, or in case of a medical emergency, to the hospital or emergency medical personnel (ambulance).
6. The counselor will assist parents by referring them to an appropriate agency/psychiatrist for evaluation of risk. The outcome of this evaluation, and a written recommendation from the mental health provider for the student's return to school must be presented to the building principal, or Superintendent, before the student is allowed to return to school. If the parent has not followed through with an evaluation and recommended treatment plan, the matter will be referred to the Superintendent's office for a hearing.

Medium Risk: (Some threat of suicide through explicit statements, no concrete plan, does not have a method for completing an attempt, probably lacking any support from a professional or significant other, and/or has not exhibited any radical behavior changes.)

1. Parent must be notified by principal or counselor.

2. Student and parent must be made aware of available community assistance in an emergency. If the family says that a mental health agency (person) has been contacted, the student's counselor must contact the agency (person) to confirm and coordinate the services between the school and the agency. If the parent refuses to follow through on the team referral to a mental health agency, this must be documented in writing. The team will decide whether to refer the case to Fulton County Services for Children and Youth, or the Superintendent's office for a hearing.

3. Every effort will be made to provide supportive assistance on a daily basis until such time as the student is no longer considered a medium risk.

Low Risk: (Indicators: Vague feelings of hopelessness, no explicit written, or verbal threat, supportive help available.)

1. Referral is made to the student's school counselor, who should give immediate support.

2. Options for the counselor to consider:

a. Help the student plan positive activities.

b. Notify the parent of the student's apparent mood and suggest counseling. Ask if the parent is concerned about the student.

c. Provide follow-up:

1) Supportive individual counseling.

2) Group discussions to raise self-esteem and improve mood.

3) Teacher support.

3. Support and assistance will be given by the team as deemed appropriate by the school counselor.

The principal will serve as a consultant and resource person through all levels of this process. When a principal is unavailable to oversee these administrative procedures, the Superintendent will be called to assume responsibility for implementation either in person or by naming a counselor and/or other designees. When cases are referred to the Superintendent's office, the Superintendent will be responsible for setting up the hearing.

Intervention Procedures

If a student or staff member would make an attempt to commit suicide during school hours, on school grounds, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. Staff members who observe or are contacted relative to an attempted suicide should attempt to intervene immediately. If the victim's condition is potentially life-threatening, emergency personnel should be contacted via telephone (for an ambulance and Crisis Intervention).
2. The staff member who made initial contact with the victim or was informed of the situation shall notify the principal, who shall inform the Superintendent. The principal will contact the school nurse, Superintendent, and appropriate members of Central Fulton Student Assistance Team (depending on availability). In addition, the principal will contact parents or guardians relative to the situation. The team should identify and locate any school-age siblings in order to take appropriate action following consultation with parents or guardians.

The principal, following consultation with the Superintendent, will notify the police department in whose jurisdiction the incident occurred.

3. A staff member(s) will remain with the victim at all times. In the event that the incident has occurred in an area where there is considerable student and staff traffic, and the victim is not able to walk to a more private area, the principal will direct staff to move other students to an auxiliary area in order that the situation may be handled in an efficient and expeditious fashion. In the event that students witnessed the event, they shall receive counseling from a member of Central Fulton Student Assistance Team.
4. If the victim requires treatment in a hospital, the school nurse or a designated staff member will accompany the individual.
5. The principal will contact and meet with the victim's (if student) counselor and a representative from Cumberland Valley Mental Health Center and consult with the Superintendent prior to making an announcement, if any, to the student population. The Central Fulton Student Assistance Team shall decide if post intervention procedures are to be implemented. All available Student Assistance Team members shall be utilized to help support students and staff during this traumatic time.
6. Central Fulton's Student Assistance Team shall meet the morning following the incident to determine if additional post intervention procedures should be involved.

7. A student or staff member who has made an overt suicide attempt will be allowed to return to school upon the recommendation of a psychiatrist. Homebound instruction will be provided upon the request of the parent with supporting data from a psychiatrist. Assuming the suicide attempt was not school related, the individual should be returned to the normal routine within the school as soon as possible.
8. Staff members expressing concern or reservations about the reinstatement of the individual should be encouraged to discuss their feelings with members of Central Fulton Student Assistance Team. The Superintendent shall identify resource people with whom staff can confer on an ongoing basis.
9. An appropriate guidance counselor and/or member of Central Fulton Student Assistance Team will monitor, in an unobtrusive fashion, the progress of the identified individual. It is recommended that the principal meet with teachers, nurses and coaches in order to assess the individual's overall adjustment.
10. Parental or guardian contact must be ongoing in an effort to provide the student and family with adequate support services. Documentation of home contacts shall be forwarded to the Director of Student Services so that an accurate record of school involvement can be maintained.
11. As in the post intervention procedures, media contacts, if any, will be conducted through the Superintendent's office. Media representatives will be denied access to the student(s) during the school day. In addition, the principal shall inform students of their right to refuse to be interviewed off school property by media representatives.

**OUTLINE OF RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE
FIRST THREE DAYS OF POSTVENTION-SUICIDE**

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	FOLLOW UP
Superintendent	Handles all media releases. Coordinates all post intervention activities as outlined in guidelines. Notify principal(s).			
Building Administrator	Activates phone relays. Runs AM & PM faculty meetings. Prepares written statement for faculty-student communications. Makes PA announcements. Visits family of victim. Limit student access to site.	Monitors teacher welfare.	Runs PM faculty meeting.	Runs end-of-day faculty meeting.
Psychologist Counselor Nurse	Give instructions at AM meeting for faculty-student discussions. Provide support for faculty. Interview High Risk students.	Refers High Risk to Mental Health and Core Team.		
Touch Team	AM meeting prior to faculty meeting. Report available service at all faculty meetings. Available for crisis intervention. Parent notification of High Risk students.	Monitor and investigate High Risk student.	Provide strategy for teachers handling of High Risk student.	Follow up.
Teachers	Read 1 st period announcement. Discuss facts and feelings with kids. Be alert for High Risk students.	Encourage return to regular class activities.		