

Glocester School Committee  
Ponaganset High School Library  
137 Anan Wade Road  
Glocester, RI 02857

December 6, 2022  
6:15 pm

## AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Pledge of Allegiance
- DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:
4. Approval of Minutes from the November 15, 2022 School Committee Meeting – Open and Executive Sessions
5. Approval of Bills - Approval of Bills for November 2022
6. Superintendent's Report-Personnel: Leaves/Resignations/Lay Offs/ Appointments/Recalls and other Personnel Actions
7. Finance Director's Report - Report on activities relating to the Finance Office
8. Town Council Update - Update on activities relating to the School Department
9. Accomplishments/Recognitions of Fogarty Memorial and West Glocester Schools
10. Capital Projects Update
11. Clarification on Public Comment
12. Suicide Prevention Policy – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading (Attached)
13. Review of Preliminary 2023-2024 Budget
14. Public Comment – Relating to Current or Future Agenda Items
15. Seek to Convene to Executive Session per RI General Laws 42-26-5(a) (3) School Safety
16. Reconvene to Open Session
17. Vote to Seal the Minutes of Executive Session
18. Communications From/To Members of the School Committee and/or School District
19. Future Agenda Items – Identification of Future Agenda Items
20. Adjournment

## **Glocester School District Suicide Prevention Policy**

### **PURPOSE**

This policy shall serve to protect the health and well-being of all students by having procedures in place to help prevent, assess the risk of, intervene, and respond to suicidal ideation, statements and/or suicide attempts by students in the Glocester School District (the "District").

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The Committee recognizes that the safety, health, and well-being of students are of paramount importance in all the District's endeavors, and acknowledges that, while rates of suicide in Rhode Island have been historically low, data from the period previous to and during the pandemic, shows an increase in suicide ideation and suicidal attempts among young Rhode Islanders.

Additionally, the Committee agrees that schools with positive climate and integrated social emotional learning are more likely than comparison schools to achieve higher standards of school safety, including less bullying, less student isolation, more positive peer and teacher-student relationships, and less weapon threat and use on school campuses. Accordingly, the Committee further recognizes that a Comprehensive Approach to Suicide Prevention, as part of a Suicide Prevention Policy, shall help foster such a climate so as to ensure optimal outcomes in the mental and physical wellness of the District's students

### **LEGAL AUTHORITY**

This policy is established and adopted pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws 16-21.7, The Nathan Bruno/Jason Flatt Act, requiring each school district to adopt a policy on student suicide prevention.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Comprehensive approach to suicide prevention means an approach to suicide prevention that seeks to:

- Identify and assist persons at risk
- Increase help-seeking
- Ensure access to effective mental health and suicide care and treatment
- Support safe care transitions and create organizational linkages
- Respond effectively to students in crisis
- Provide for immediate and long-term postvention
- Reduce access to means of suicide
- Enhance life skills and resilience
- Promote social connectedness and support

**In crisis but not in immediate danger** means that a student is in severe distress due to mental health symptoms, serious stressor, and/or is demonstrating suicidal intent or planning.

**In immediate danger and crisis** means that a student is an immediate danger to self or others and/or is in the process of attempting suicide.

**In-school suicide attempt** means a suicide attempt made during the school day and on the school campus, or during a school-sponsored activity or event in which the student is duly under the care of the school and its employees.

**Kids Link RI** is a behavioral health triage service and referral network that represents a collaboration of Gateway Healthcare, Lifespan, Hasbro Children’s Hospital, and Bradley Hospital. They provide triage, mental health referral services, and after care and support services for students and families, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Not in immediate danger but requires services** means that a student identifies thoughts of death, but has no plan or intent to die, does not demonstrate suicidal behaviors, and has supports.

**Out-of-School Suicide Attempt** means a suicide attempt by a student outside of the school day and off of the school campus.

**Re-entry** means a student’s re-entry to the school following an attempted suicide.

**Referral Process** means the recommended Suicide Prevention Initiative that links elementary, middle, and high school students with mental health services, as outlined in the Suicide Prevention Initiative Handbook.

**School-Based Mental Health Professional** means an employee of the school duly designated or appointed to addressing issues surrounding the mental health of students, and concerns surrounding suicide ideation or attempts by students.

**School-Based Mental Health Team or School Team** means the team of school employees duly designated or appointed to addressing issues surrounding the mental health of students, and concerns surrounding suicide ideations or attempts by students.

**Suicide Postvention** means an organized response in the aftermath of a suicide or suicide attempt to:

- Facilitate the healing of individuals from the grief and distress of suicide loss;
- Mitigate other negative effects of exposure to suicide; and
- Prevent suicide among people who are at high risk after exposure to suicide.

**Unite Rhode Island** is a coordinated care network of health and social service providers serving RI that links students and families with organizations and services that address the social determination of health that can influence student success in school.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### I. Suicide Prevention

#### A. Classroom Based Support

- 1) Pursuant to the Nathan Bruno Act, each school throughout the District shall implement an evidence-based, developmentally appropriate suicide prevention curricula for all public-school students in middle and high school grades, 6-12, each academic year, therefore The Nathan Bruno Act does not apply to elementary grade levels, 1-5.

(<https://jasonfoundation.com/about-us/jason-flatt-act/rhode-island/> )

#### B. Staff Professional Development

- 1) Pursuant to the Nathan Bruno Act, all public-school personnel hired or contracted by the District shall receive training in suicide prevention every year.
- 2) School personnel hired or contracted by the District shall include, but are not limited to: teachers, administrators, custodians, lunch personnel, substitutes, nurses, coaches and coaching staff, and volunteers.
- 3) Schools shall select suicide prevention training the RIDE approved training materials.
- 4) Training materials must include how to identify appropriate mental health services both within the school and the larger community, and when and how to refer students and their families to those services.
- 5) Provide annual training and/or professional development for new hires to include suicide risk assessment and crisis intervention to mental health professionals including school counselors, psychologists, social workers, as well as school nurses. Also, include the requirement for suicide prevention training within school food, school maintenance, and other contractual service providers.
- 6) All trainings shall be provided by qualified suicide prevention instructors, as determined by the school or District.

### II. Suicide Intervention

#### A. Assessment and Referral

- 1) Students identified by peers or staff as potentially suicidal shall be seen immediately by members of the School-Based Mental Health Team.
- 2) The school-based mental health professionals shall assess the risk and facilitate a referral if necessary and appropriate.
- 3) If a student **is not in immediate danger but requires services**:
  1. The School Team will create a safety plan with the student and connect the student and family to resources.

2. The School Team will follow up with the student to check in with the student's progress on accessing the resources and assess how the student is managing.
- 4) If the student **is in crisis but not in immediate danger**:
1. The school administrator and parent/legal guardian shall be contacted.
  2. With the permission of the parent, **if the student does not already have a current treatment provider**, the school-based mental health professional shall contact Kids Link RI at 1-855-543-5465 to connect the student and family with support services where the student may be enrolled in a same day emergency evaluation, or a same week crisis evaluation, based on the student's need.
- 5) If the student is **in immediate danger and crisis**:
1. No student in crisis and/or danger should ever be left alone, or without the presence of a school employee.
  2. The student shall be transported to the hospital immediately.
  3. A building administrator and parent/legal guardian shall be contacted immediately.
  4. With the consent of the parent/legal guardian, Kids Link RI may follow up with the student and communicate with the school.
  5. The School-Based Mental Health Team must meet with the student's family to establish re-entry support.
  6. The school may also explore after care resources provided by Unite Rhode Island
- 6) Each school shall share the Referral Process to all staff members, parents, guardians, and caregivers, at the start of each school year, so that they know how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about the school and community- based resources.
1. Each school shall display the Referral Process Protocol and Flow Chart located in the Suicide Prevention Initiative Handbook in a conspicuous location where it can be seen by all staff members.
  2. The District's Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall establish crisis intervention procedures to ensure student safety and appropriate communications if a suicide occurs or an attempt is made by a student, or at a school-sponsored activity or event.

#### B. Parental Notification and Involvement

- 1) Pursuant to the Rhode Island Department of Education Regulations and in accordance with *Pierre v. Providence School Board*, 2014 WL 2807237 at \*8 (R.I. Super. 2014), schools, may require a re-entry letter from a student's mental health provider prior to allowing the student to return to school after a mental health examination or related absence.
- 2) Following a student's mental-health related absence, parents and guardians may be required to participate in safety care planning for the

student. This shall be determined by each school on a case-by-case basis.

- 3) Schools shall ensure the student's rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 shall be acknowledged and respected.

#### C. Special Considerations for In-School Suicide Attempts

- 1) In the event of an in-school suicide attempt, school employees shall adhere to the following:
  - a. Call 911 and provide as much information as possible, e.g. a suicide note, medications taken, and access to weapons, if applicable;
  - b. Remain calm, and move all other students out of the immediate area;
  - c. Contact the school administrator or designee;
  - d. If necessary, provide medical first aid until a medical professional is available;
  - e. Contact the parent(s) or legal guardian as soon as possible.
  - f. Remain with the student and provide comfort, listen, and prompt the student to talk until the ambulance arrives and medical professionals take over care.
  - g. It is best for the student to remain calm and remember that it is okay for there to be moments of silence and for you to be comfortable with that silence.
  - h. Promise privacy and help, but do not promise confidentiality.
  - i. Students should only be released to parent(s) / legal guardian(s) or a person who is qualified and trained to provide help.

#### D. Special Considerations for Out-of-School Suicide Attempts

- 1) In the event of an Out-of- School Suicide Attempt, the school shall adhere to the following:
  1. Protect the privacy of the student;
  2. Contact the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and offer support to the family;
  3. Obtain written permission from the parent(s)/guardian(s) to share with appropriate personnel, any information regarding the incident;
  4. Designate a staff member to handle media requests;
  5. Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students; and
  6. Discuss steps for re-entry.
- 2) Each school shall maintain a confidential record of any actions taken to intervene, support, and protect the student.

### III. Suicide Postvention

#### A. Suicide Postvention

- 1) The District shall develop a Postvention Response Plan that includes:
  - a. Identification of a media spokesperson for the District;
  - b. Process to notify all staff members;
  - c. Provisions of emotional support and resources to staff;
  - d. Communication to students the availability of support services if/as needed;
  - e. Preparing staff to respond to needs of students, including a review of protocols for referring students for support/assessment;
  
- 2) Postvention may also include counseling or other care given to students after another student's suicide. Schools may delineate the roles and responsibilities of people on the school crisis team for postvention.

#### REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- [R.I. Gen. Laws 16-21.7. The Nathan Bruno/Jason Flatt Act](#)
- [National Center on School Mental Health 2021](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Initiative Handbook](#)
- [RIDE Approved List of Training Curricula](#)
- [Kids Link RI](#)
- [Unite Rhode Island](#)
- [2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)
- [US DHS's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)
- [RI Gen. Laws 16-21-34 Statewide Bullying Policy](#)
- [RI Gen. Laws 16-21-23.2. Threat Assessment Teams and Oversight Committees](#)
- [RI Gen. Laws 16-21-24, Requirements of school safety plans, school emergency response plans, and crisis response plans](#)
- [RIDE Basic Education Plan. G-14-2.1. Safe and Respectful Environment](#)
- [200-RICR-30-10. Regulations Governing Protections for Students Rights to be Free from Discrimination on the Basis of Sex, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, or Gender Expression](#)
- [Guidance for Rhode Island Schools on Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students: Creating Safe and Supportive School Environments](#)
- [RI Gen. Laws 16-21-14. Suicide Prevention and Awareness](#)
- [RI Gen. Laws 16-71-3. Educational records access and review rights - Confidentiality of records](#)
- [RI Gen. Laws 16-2-17. Right to a safe school](#)

1st Reading: November 15, 2022  
2nd Reading: December 6, 2022  
Adopted: