

Vale School District 84

Code: **JHH**
Adopted: 12/6/94
Readopted: 9/10/08
Orig. Code(s): JHH

Student Assistance Program/Student Welfare - Suicide

The Board recognizes that childhood/adolescent suicide and suicidal tendencies are continuing problems within the elementary and secondary schools of the nation. Therefore the Board directs the superintendent to initiate and establish an aggressive, comprehensive suicide prevention program.

To ensure maximum effectiveness, the comprehensive program will:

1. Involve the entire community;
2. Provide appropriate in-service programs for staff, students, parents, community;
3. Respond to individuals in crisis;
4. Recognize those who are potentially suicidal;
5. Provide meaningful prevention and intervention strategies;
6. Provide procedures to deal with loss, or prevention strategies.

The program efforts shall improve the general mental health atmosphere of the district and place suicide prevention by the school district and the community as a high priority.

Decisions regarding individual or a group in crisis will be made through a team approach. No individual staff member will make crisis decisions in isolation.

The district recognizes that students can experience a number of personal, behavioral or medical problems which can have an adverse effect on their behavior, conduct or academic performance in school. Such problems could include learning disabilities, physical illness or problems, emotional and psychological problems, family or legal problems and alcohol and other drug abuse problems. The school becomes concerned when any of these problems, which may involve a student or family member, repeatedly and definitely interferes with a student's school performance, or jeopardizes the health, safety, welfare, educational opportunity or rights of other students or personnel.

Therefore the district establishes a Student Assistance Program to handle problems arising from behavioral/medical problems, including alcohol and other drug abuse, to function within the following guidelines:

1. The responsibility to maintain satisfactory or acceptable levels of academic performance and general conduct remains with the student at all times, whether in school, at school-sponsored events or on school grounds. When school performance falls below satisfactory or acceptable levels, the student

may be given the choice of improving conduct or performance, accepting the appropriate disciplinary action or accepting referral to the staff resources of Student Assistance (SA) Program.

2. Students may be referred to the SA Program by any staff member who is aware of a student who exhibits a pattern of definite and repeated unacceptable or unsatisfactory performance; who violates a school rule, or state or federal statute; or who manifests any signs, symptoms, or indications of the presence of a behavioral/medical problem.
3. The Student Assistance Program staff resources will attempt, by consulting with the student, to arrive at the probable cause of the performance or behavior problem. They may not counsel, provide or otherwise treat the student in the absence of a professional diagnosis and evaluation. They may, however, recommend referral to the appropriate source of care, in consultation with the Student Assistance Program coordinator, the principal, the student and his/her parent.
4. At all times it is the prerogative of the student to accept referral to the SA Program staff or to professional assistance or to reject it. If a student accepts or rejects assistance, it still remains his/her responsibility to bring performance up to satisfactory or acceptable levels or to face such disciplinary action as may be warranted. Professional assessment may be required by the principal as a condition of continuing in the normal school program.
5. If a student accepts referral and treatment, the fact will be regarded as it would for any illness, with respect to benefits or privileges. So long as a student is involved with the SA Program, and is cooperatively and/or successfully addressing his/her problem, the student may remain in school and continue with normal activities and privileges.
6. No records of a student's involvement with the SA Program are to be kept in his/her personal file. What minimal records must be kept are to be considered of a medical nature and will be maintained separately. No records of conversations a student may have with a member of the SA Program staff will ever become part of the student's personal file or cumulative record. The fact of a student's participation in the SA Program, in addition to specifics, will remain absolutely confidential and subject to state or federal regulations governing confidentiality and the release of information.
7. An essential feature of the Student Assistance Program is that students who think they have a behavioral/medical problem, including alcohol and other drug abuse, may contact the SA Program staff resources voluntarily with the same assurance of confidentiality. In case of suicide issues, protection of student health may forgo the normal assurance of confidentiality.
8. The district also recognizes that a student can be adversely affected by the stress resulting from a family member with a behavioral/medical or personal problem, including alcohol and other drug abuse. Therefore, help under the SA Program is extended to all students and their immediate family members, at either's request.
9. The awareness and support of parents for a student with a behavioral/medical or personal problem is extremely important. However, should either students or parents/guardians not wish to cooperate in improving school performance, or in making assistance available, the student's status in school will be re-evaluated, taking into consideration the best interests of the student, the nature of the problem, and the health, safety, welfare, educational opportunity, and rights of other students or personnel.

10. It is against school policy for anyone, students or staff, to be in school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Federal and state laws also prohibit the possession, use, sale or delivery of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances. The school district recognizes its responsibility to inform and involve the appropriate law enforcement officials of violations.
11. Prescription medications are construed as exceptions to this policy when used by the individual for whom they are prescribed and in the manner prescribed.
12. It is the responsibility of each building administrator and/or designee to use procedures consistent with this policy. Nothing in this policy is intended to result in any special regulations or exceptions from standard administrative practices regarding student discipline.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 332.107](#)

Kelson v. Springfield, 767 F.2d 651 (9th Cir. 1985).