

BROAD LOSS AND GRIEF CRISIS PLAN

The purpose of a postvention plan is to provide for the needs of students and school personnel in the event of a death of a staff member or student. A districtwide crisis management team will be responsible for reviewing, implementing and evaluating the plan. The crisis management team shall consist of the:

- District Administrator
- Building Principals
- Guidance Counselors
- School Psychologist
- School Nurse

The crisis management team is expected to contain and address most crisis situations; however, when local intervention is insufficient, plans must also be in place for augmenting the local crisis management team with counselors and school psychologists from neighboring school districts.

The following guidelines are designed to assist crisis management team members in the event of a death of a staff member or student. Included with the guidelines are actions which would be appropriate to implement should a student death be caused by suicide. Guidelines and plans need to be flexible and responsive to the special needs of each situation.

Guidelines and Procedures

1. Any school employee receiving information about the death(s) of a student or staff member should contact a crisis team member. The crisis team member will attempt to confirm the information and will contact the district administrator or designee.
2. The crisis management team will meet as soon as practicable. The principal of St. Paul Elementary School will be contacted as will the secretarial staff responsible for calling substitute teachers.
3. A designee of the crisis management team will contact the family to offer support and to inform the family of the district's plan to respond to the loss. The contact person will also request that the district be informed of funeral, visitation and interment plans when the family has made such decisions.
4. The district administrator or designee will contact administrators from Shawano-Gresham, Gillett, Oconto Falls, and ERVING consortium to inform them of the loss and to alert them that representative(s) from their counselor/psychologist staff may be needed to assistance.

Shawano-Gresham School District	(715) 526-3194
Gillett School District	(414) 855-2138
Oconto Falls School District	(414) 846-4471
Pulaski Community School District	(414) 822-4200
Bowler School District	(715) 793-4101
Clintonville School District	(715) 823-7206
Marion School District	(715) 754-2511
Menominee Indian School District	(715) 799-3824
Tigerton School District	(715) 535-2122
Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District	(715) 253-2213
ERVING Consortium Office	(715) 823-7170

5. The district administrator or designee will contact other counselors in the area as decided by the crisis management team based on the situation.
6. The crisis management team will prepare a statement to be given in response to incoming calls. All media contact will be handled only by the district administrator or designee.
Media Guidelines:
 - a. Only one person will speak to the media and will coordinate all media information.
 - b. All school personnel must be informed of the media contact person and told to route all calls to the contact person.
 - c. The spokesperson will inform media of the district's policy regarding media contact and issue a press release on the situation and the district's intended response.
7. The crisis management team will meet with staff prior to the start of school to inform them of the facts of the situation and the availability of counseling and support services for students and staff.
8. A statement will be given to staff to read to first period classes concerning the facts of the situation and the availability of counseling services. Staff will be directed:
 - a. Not to deviate from the statement.
 - b. Not to be judgmental concerning the situation.
 - c. Refrain from discussing the incident in places where students may hear their comments.
9. A letter to parents will be prepared by the district administrator or designee and sent home with students at the end of the school day .
10. In addition, the crisis management team will consider:
 - a. Informing substitute teachers of the situation and the guidelines contained within this policy and inviting them to the informational meeting before school.
 - b. Reviewing the schedules of any students involved in the situation in order to be aware of special circumstances such as involvement with ERVING.
 - c. Hiring substitute teacher(s) for staff in anticipation of staff having emotional difficulty with the situation.

- d. Contacting class advisor(s) of student(s) involved in order to consider class responses.
 - e. Setting up a conference room for students and staff to meet with counselors.
11. In the event that the incident occurs at a time when school is not in session any crisis management team member who is contacted will attempt to contact the district administrator and principals. If such contact is not possible the crisis team member will initiate the districtwide calling tree no later than 8:00 PM and will schedule a crisis management team meeting for 7:00 AM along with staff meetings in each building at 7:45 AM on the next school day.
12. If the incident occurs during an extended vacation period, the members of the crisis management team will convene at the earliest possible date to review the situation and take action based on this policy.

Special Guidelines and Procedures in the Event of a Suicide

1. Convene the crisis management team. Follow previous procedure and consider the following additional guidelines:
 - a. Contain the story and protect the privacy of the family. Do not refer to the death as a suicide.
 - b. Identify the immediate peer group of the person who has died and provide immediate counseling.
 - c. Between classes staff should observe students in the halls and direct any distraught students to counselors.
2. Specific actions to avoid in the event of a suicide:
 - a. Do not dismiss school. Students need to follow a normal pattern or routine with supervision and available counselors.
 - b. Do not schedule a large assembly.
 - c. Do not encourage a general student body attendance at the funeral if it is held during the school day.
 - d. Do not honor or memorialize the student. Suicide needs to be presented as a negative option without criticism but also without looking sympathetic.
 - e. Do not allow any actions which describe suicide as a heroic act.
 - f. Do not dramatize or dwell on the details of the suicide, observe a moment of silence, fly the flag at half-mast, or dedicate a page in the yearbook.

Follow-Up

1. Schedule the next meeting of the crisis management team no later than the next working day.
2. Schedule an evaluation session following each incident to review procedures and list suggestions for improving the guidelines of the crisis management plan.

Inservice and Staff Development Training

1. The crisis calling tree will be reviewed annually as close to the first day of school as is practical.
2. The crisis management team will meet within the first month of the school year to review the crisis management policy.
3. Inservice training for either individuals, small groups, or large groups will be provided as necessary.

Approved: January 15, 1990

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