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<b>SUICIDE AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AWARENESS AND PREVENTION POLICY</b>			
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**I. Purpose**

Youth suicide impacts the safety of the school environment. It also affects the school community, diminishing the ability of surviving students to learn and the school’s ability to educate. Suicide and mental health issue awareness and prevention are important network goals.

**II. Policy**

**A. Suicide and Mental Health Issue Awareness and Prevention Program**

The Chief Education Officer/Designee shall develop, implement, and maintain a suicide and mental health issue awareness and prevention program that advances Acero Schools’ goals of increasing awareness and prevention of mental health issue and suicide. This program shall contain the following components:

1. Administering Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Education
  - a. For students: incorporate curriculum content requiring education for students to develop a sound mind and a healthy body (105 ILCS 5.2-3.139 and 105 ILCS 5/27-7).
  - b. For staff: School Principals will review this Policy and the warning signs of suicidal behavior in adolescents and teens in staff meetings with instructional teaching staff in grades 7 through 12 (105 ILCS 5/3-14.8). Risk factors and warning signs can be found at the following link: [Preventing Youth Suicide: Tips for Parents & Educators](#)
2. Method of Suicide Prevention and Referrals of Possible At-Risk Students

Acero Schools will ensure provide and mandate in-service training for school personnel who work with students in grades 7 through 12 in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39. The training will include the identification of the warning signs of suicidal behavior in adolescents and teens along with appropriate intervention and referral techniques, including methods of prevention, procedures for early identification, and referral of students possibly at risk of suicide. Refer to the [In-Service Training Policy](#).

3. Methods of intervention, including procedures that address an emotional or mental health safety plan for use during the school day and at school-sponsored events for a student identified as being at increased risk of suicide.
  - a. Implementation shall include the goals and benchmarks of the Illinois Learning Standards, requiring student social and emotional development in the Acero Schools educational program (405 ILCS 49/15(b)).
  - b. Implementation shall include guidance and counseling programs for students, which allow a qualified guidance specialist or any licensed staff member to provide school counseling services (105 ILCS 5/10-22.24a and 22.24b).
  - c. Implementation of protocols for responding to students with social, emotional, or mental health issues that impact learning ability (405 ILCS 49/).
4. Methods of Responding to a Student or Staff Suicide Attempt
  - a. **911 shall be called immediately.** School staff shall remain with the student or staff member at all times during a medical emergency or perceived medical emergency. School staff will move all other students out of the immediate area as soon as possible. If a student or staff member is transported to a hospital, a full time school staff member shall accompany the student or staff member until the parent/guardian or emergency contact arrives.
  - b. The School Principal/Designee shall review the [Suicide Ideation Response Action Plan](#) and will contact the student's or staff member's parent/guardian or emergency contact. When appropriate, the School Principal shall refer the parent/guardian or emergency contact to the resources on youth suicide awareness and prevention, including contact information indicated in Section II.6.
  - c. The School Principal/Designee will meet with the student's parent/guardian or emergency contact, and if appropriate, meet with the student or staff member to discuss re-entry and appropriate next steps to ensure the student's readiness to return to school or work as applicable.

## 5. Reporting Procedures

Employees who believe that a student is at an elevated risk for suicide, or have knowledge of a suicide-related incident involving a student or other Acero Schools employee, shall contact emergency responders if necessary, and follow the [Reporting Incidents procedure](#) (09.002).

## 6. Resources on Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Programs

a. Employees, students, and parents/guardians should contact the CARES line at 1-800-345-9049 if there are indicators of imminent danger.

b. ISBE-recommended resources on youth suicide awareness and prevention programs can be found at the following link:  
<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Suicide-Prevention.aspx>

## B. Review and Update of Policy

Acero Schools will review and update this Policy pursuant to the Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Act.

## C. Communication and Dissemination of Policy

1. Acero Schools shall ensure that each employee is informed about this Policy.
2. This Policy shall be posted on the Acero Schools website.
3. A copy of this Policy shall be provided to the parent/guardian of each student enrolled in Acero Schools via the student handbook.

## **III. Legal Reference**

- A. [Illinois Public Act 99-443 Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention](#)
- B. Illinois statutes as referenced.

## **IV. Related Policies and Procedures**

Employee Manual: [09.002 Reporting Incidents](#)

## **V. Applicability**

This policy is applicable to all Acero Schools employees. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action up to, and including termination of employment.