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<u>CRITICAL SCHOOL EMERGENCIES SUICIDE PREVENTION/RESPONSE</u>	JHCCC
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Due to the myriad of emergency situations which arise in a public school building, the district has developed a procedure to follow should a crisis emerge where any member of the school community may be deemed At Risk. Any member of the school community who may have knowledge of a critical school emergency, such as a suicide threat, the untimely death of a faculty member, contraband or weapons in a school building or any other threat which may post a potential danger to the physical or emotional well being of any member of the school community must report this information to a member of the faculty (who must confer with the building principal), building principal or assistant principal immediately.

In the event of a suicide threat, the building administrator will refer the information or individual to the appropriate clinician who will investigate the situation. The clinician and principal will follow the Suicide Policy steps to ensure compliance with necessary documentation.

In the event that a student who exhibits at-risk behavior is an immediate danger to self or others, or that classroom disruption cannot be terminated without removal of the student, any necessary non-violent intervention shall occur in accordance with district procedures.

Should the situation require the activation of the ~~Crisis Team~~ **Building Threat Assessment Team**, the building principal will contact the Director of Student Services to activate the Team. The ~~Crisis Team~~ **Threat Assessment Team** is established to provide support to the school community in those emergency situations which warrant the immediate intervention of more than three adults. Crisis may include a serious accident on school grounds, suicide, attempted suicide, the untimely death of a faculty member or student, a natural or manmade disaster, etc.

The ~~Crisis Team~~ **Threat Assessment Team** is accessed by the building administrator through the Director of Student Services. The **Team** consists of the building principal, the school psychologist assigned to the building, the school social worker assigned to the building, the school nurse, the Director of Guidance or the guidance counselor assigned to the building and the Director of Student Services. The Director of Student Services may also assign additional school psychologists, school social workers, nurses and guidance counselors to the ~~Crisis Team~~ **Threat Assessment Team** if necessary. (See Appendix 1)

The Lincoln Police Department and the appropriate Fire/Rescue company may be activated by the building principal as appropriate for the crisis.

The building principal will communicate directly with the Director of Student Services, the Assistant Superintendent and the Superintendent as the crisis transpires. The Superintendent or his/her designee will be responsible for **any and all** official communication with the media. All official statements will be issued by the Office of the Superintendent.

The building principal will be responsible for completing the Crisis Intervention Response

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Checklist (See Appendix 2 and 3) which must be forwarded to the office of the Director of Student Services and the Office of the Superintendent within three days.

Suicide Policy

The Lincoln Public Schools recognize the serious nature of a suicide attempt from a student or staff member in our school community. The school department has determined to make every effort to **educate** students in an attempt to reduce the risk of youth suicide, **identify** students at risk due to their life circumstances or specific situations, **refer** students who threaten or attempt suicide to the appropriate crisis-Threat Assessment team member and **provide crisis support** to the school community when a suicide occurs.

Members of the school community have a responsibility to share with the building principal observations of student behavior which appears to be related to the possibility of suicide. The principal and staff have a responsibility to follow the procedures attached to the policy on suicide.

Students At Risk for Suicide/Students Who Have Attempted Suicide

When a student threatens suicide or manifests the signs of his/her intent, immediate action should be taken to intervene on behalf of the student. Any school employee or member of the school community, who may have knowledge of a suicide threat, must take the proper steps to report this information to the building principal, assistant principal or administrator who will, in turn, refer the student to the appropriate clinician for assessment. Immediate steps will be taken to secure the student in a safe environment with supervision until the clinician arrives. The building principal, in conjunction with the clinician, may contact the Director of Student Services to request the support of the Crisis Management-Threat Assessment Team. The clinician, in conjunction with the building principal, will notify the appropriate agencies and the parent to inform them of the need for further assessment.

Referral

A student may self refer, or be referred by any member of the school community or parent. The referral information should be investigated as extensively as possible prior to the student interview. This investigation may include interviewing the referring party regarding the concerns that led them to refer the student. The interview will be conducted the same day that the referral is made. Should the information be provided after school hours, the parents will be contacted to inform them of the possibility of imminent harm to the student. If the parents cannot be reached, the Lincoln Police Department will be informed that a student is at imminent risk for suicide. The Lincoln Police will respond to the situation.

Lethality Assessment

The clinician, (a school social worker or a school psychologist), will conduct an initial interview in order to determine the student's level of risk. The lethality assessment shall be done in a consistent manner by all clinical staff. Despite the level of risk, the student will not be left alone until the

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parent has been contacted and informed of the situation. The student will not be unsupervised until released to the parent, mental health clinician or Lincoln Police.

Crisis-Threat Assessment Team Consult

If deemed necessary by the building principal and clinician, the Director of Student services will be consulted to determine the need for activation of the Crisis-Threat Assessment Team. The team members should discuss the situation and formulate a plan of action. Depending on the situation, Crisis-Threat Assessment Team Members may interview or watch siblings, converse with parents or contact close relatives.

Northern Rhode Island Community Mental Health Center Consult

If the threat is serious the clinician may consult NRIHM staff for an opinion and recommendation. The clinician will provide all available information to NRIHM but will not identify the student by name. Identification of the student should be withheld until a release of information has been secured by a member of the Student Services Department from the parent or guardian. However, if the student's right to be safe conflicts with the parent or guardian's right to confidentiality, the student's right to safety takes precedence. The clinician and building administrator or Director of Student Services will determine the need for abrogation of confidentiality and make the decision to do so if it is in the best interest of the student. If the student is already in therapy, the clinician may contact the therapist for a recommendation for continuing care.

Informing the Parent

The clinician must inform the parents or guardians if a student threatens suicide and, in the opinion of the clinician, the student is assessed to be at risk, the clinician may suggest immediate referral to the family physician or mental health agency. *The clinician will always inform parents in the presence of a second staff member as witness.* The clinician may inform the student that the parent will be contacted.

The clinician will evaluate the parent's response to the information. If the clinician believes that the parent's response is damaging to the child or is likely to cause a suicide attempt, the clinician, in concert with the building principal or Director of Student Services, will contact the Department of Children, Youth and Families (1-800-RICHILD). If the student needs immediate attention and the parent or student refuses to access treatment, the clinician, in conjunction with the building principal or Director of Student Services, will contact the Lincoln Police.

Documentation

The process outlined above will be documented by the clinician utilizing the Critical Incident Checklist (See Appendix 6), the Confidential Suicide Rating Scale (See Appendix 5) and the Confidential Suicide Risk Screen (See Appendix 4). The clinician will forward a copy of the Suicide Risk Screen to the Director of Student Services within three days. The building principal will complete the Crisis Intervention Response Checklist and forward to the Director of Student

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Services within three days. The clinician and the building principal have the duty to complete and forward the necessary forms.

Students/Staff Who Have Committed Suicide: (Postvention School Procedures)

The aftermath of a suicide is long lasting. While the most intense phase may last a few weeks some effects may continue for a year or more. Individuals will differ considerably in the time it takes them to work through their feelings. Special counseling initiatives and outreach should continue as long as there is a demand or a perceived need. The guidance counselor(s), school psychologist(s), school social worker(s) and the Northern Rhode island Mental Health staff may provide long term care to individuals in need. Certain situations such as athletic contests, extracurricular activities, graduation and the anniversary of the suicide itself, may reawaken the distress. The school may respond by reintroducing selected postvention measures as indicated.

APPENDIX

- ~~1. At Risk Student Management System~~
- ~~2. Crisis Intervention Response Checklist~~
- ~~3. Crisis Intervention Assessment~~
- ~~4. Confidential Suicide Risk Screen~~
- ~~5. Confidential Suicide Rating Scale~~
- ~~6. Confidential Critical Incident Checklist~~

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TOWN OF LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE, Lincoln, Rhode Island

FIRST READING