

Pataula Charter Academy Suicide Prevention Policy

Purpose

To protect the health and well-being of all students by developing policy and procedures to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide and suicide threats or attempts.

Pataula Charter Academy recognizes:

- (1) That physical, behavioral, and emotional health is an integral component of a student's educational outcomes,
- (2) That suicide is a leading cause of death among young people ages 10-19,
- (3) That the school has an ethical responsibility to:
 - a. Take a proactive approach in preventing deaths by suicide,
 - b. To provide an environment which is sensitive to individual and societal factors that place youth at greater risk for suicide, and
 - c. To foster positive youth development.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Pataula Charter Academy to actively respond in any situation where a student verbally or behaviorally indicates an intent to attempt suicide or to do physical harm to himself/herself.

As such, Pataula Charter Academy shall:

1. Provide annual training in suicide awareness and prevention to all certificated school personnel within the framework of existing in-service training programs offered by the Georgia Department of Education or as part of required professional development in accordance with state laws and rules established by the Georgia Department of Education.
2. Establish a youth suicide prevention program to:
 - a. Identify risk factors for youth suicide
 - b. Establish procedures to intervene with such youth
 - c. Identify referral services and resources
 - d. Identify resources and establish training for school personnel
 - e. Identify resources for education of students regarding suicide and suicide prevention.

Guidelines

The Superintendent, or his/her designee, will provide training to the staff and shall use resources from the Georgia Department of Education which include a list of approved training materials that fulfill the requirements of O.C.G.A. §20-2-779.1. The designated person delivering the training may include any other training materials currently being used by the school if such training materials meet the criteria established by the GaDOE.

Approved materials shall include training on how to identify appropriate mental health services, both within the school and also within the larger community, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services.

Approved materials may include programs that can be completed through self-review of suitable suicide prevention materials.

In accordance with state law, no person shall have a cause of action for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission resulting from the implementation of this policy or its implementing procedures or resulting from any training, or lack thereof, required by state law or this policy. The training, or lack thereof, required by the provisions of state law shall not be construed to impose any specific duty of care. Neither the training nor the procedures are designed to impose ministerial duties but to provide a framework in which educators can exercise their professional judgment in the best interest of students.

Legal Reference: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-779.1; House Bill 198

Policy Adopted: November 16, 2015