

Ashland Elementary School

Suicide Prevention Plan



Student safety and well-being is a top priority of the Ashland School District. Any faculty member who suspects a student is suicidal or has heard the same from students, parents or community members, should immediately report that information to a school counselor, school nurse or an administrator.

Faculty/Staff

- Each year all faculty and staff will receive a two-hour training. This training will be facilitated by the National Alliance on Mental Illness or by a staff member who has completed the NAMI “Train-the-Trainer” program.
- The annual training will include statistics, risk factors, protective factors, warning signs, proper terminology and how to talk to students when concerned. See attachment 1 *Preventing Youth Suicide Tips for Parents and Educators* to review a portion of the information received during the staff training.
- All faculty/staff are expected to immediately report a concern in person or by calling the guidance office, nurse’s office or an administrator. Email is not an effective or private method to report this information. It is the responsibility of the faculty/staff member who originally became aware of a concern to connect with the school counselor, nurse or an administrator to ensure action has been taken.
- The district has developed a flow chart to assist faculty/staff members in understanding how to handle various situations. See attachment 2.

School Counselor/Nurse/Administrator

- When a concern is reported, the school counselor, nurse or administrator will meet with the students immediately and assess the situation using the *Best Practices Student Safety Questionnaire*. See attachment 3.
- The parent/guardian will be notified by phone of the concern.
- Using the questionnaire and flowchart the counselor, nurse or administrator will review the next course of action, including but not limited to; calling the parent/guardian, closely monitoring/supervising the student until the parent arrives, assisting the family to secure an emergency mental health evaluation, contacting the student’s mental health provider if one is established, calling 911 or calling DCYF if the parent/guardian refuses to seek mental health intervention.

- If a student discloses suicidal thoughts along with a plan to act on these thoughts, it is the district procedure that the student be evaluated by a psychiatric professional to determine the level of risk to their safety. This assessment needs to be completed before the student returns to school. The parent needs to provide the school with documentation that the student was assessed for safety.
- Safety planning will be done with the parent. Recommendations such as seeking on going, consistent therapy and removing potential dangerous items from the home such as guns, knives, ropes.
- The school counselor (with a signed release) will follow up with the mental health provider to discuss safety plans and recommendations to support the student's emotional health while at school.

Students

- An evidenced based, suicide prevention program will be delivered to middle school students. Currently, Signs of Suicide (S.O.S.) a universal, school-based prevention program, designed for middle school students is used. Students learn to identify the warning signs of suicide and depression (including self-harm) as well as how and when to get help from a trusted adult.

Parents/Guardians

- Parents/Guardians will always be notified by phone when a concern regarding suicide ideation has been discussed at school with their student.
- Parents/Guardians may be asked to pick up their child to seek immediate evaluation and intervention from a mental health professional. In this case, parents/guardians will be asked to sign the Student Safety Parent/Guardian Signature Form. See attachment 4
- Mental health resources will be provided to parents/guardians.
- In the instance a parent refuses to seek immediate intervention for their child, the Division of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) will be contacted.

Preventing Youth Suicide: Tips for Parents and Educators

If you or someone you know is suicidal, get help immediately via 911, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK or the Crisis Text Line (text “HOME” to 741741).

Suicide is preventable. Youth who are contemplating suicide frequently give warning signs. Do not be afraid to ask about suicidal thoughts. Never take warning signs lightly or promise to keep them secret.

Risk Factors



- Hopelessness
- Non-suicidal self injury (e.g., cutting)
- Mental illness, especially severe depression, but also post traumatic stress, ADHD, and substance abuse
- History of suicidal thinking and behavior
- Prior suicide among peers or family members
- Interpersonal conflict, family stress/dysfunction
- Presence of a firearm in the home

Warning Signs



- Suicidal threats in the form of direct (e.g., “I want to die”) and indirect (e.g. “I wish I could go to sleep and not wake up”) statements
- Suicide notes, plans, online postings
- Making final arrangements
- Preoccupation with death
- Giving away prized possessions
- Talking about death
- Sudden unexplained happiness
- Increased risk taking
- Heavy drug/alcohol use

What to Do



- Remain calm, nonjudgmental and listen.
- Ask directly about suicide (e.g., “Are you thinking about suicide”).
- Focus on your concern for their well-being
- Avoid being accusatory (e.g., don’t say, “You aren’t going to do anything stupid are you?”).
- Reassure them that there is help; they will not feel like this forever.
- Provide constant supervision. Do not leave the youth alone.
- Remove means for self-harm, especially firearms.
- **Get help!** Never agree to keep suicidal thoughts a secret. Tell an appropriate caregiving adult. Parents should seek help from school or community mental health resources as soon as possible. School staff should take the student to a school-employed mental health professional.

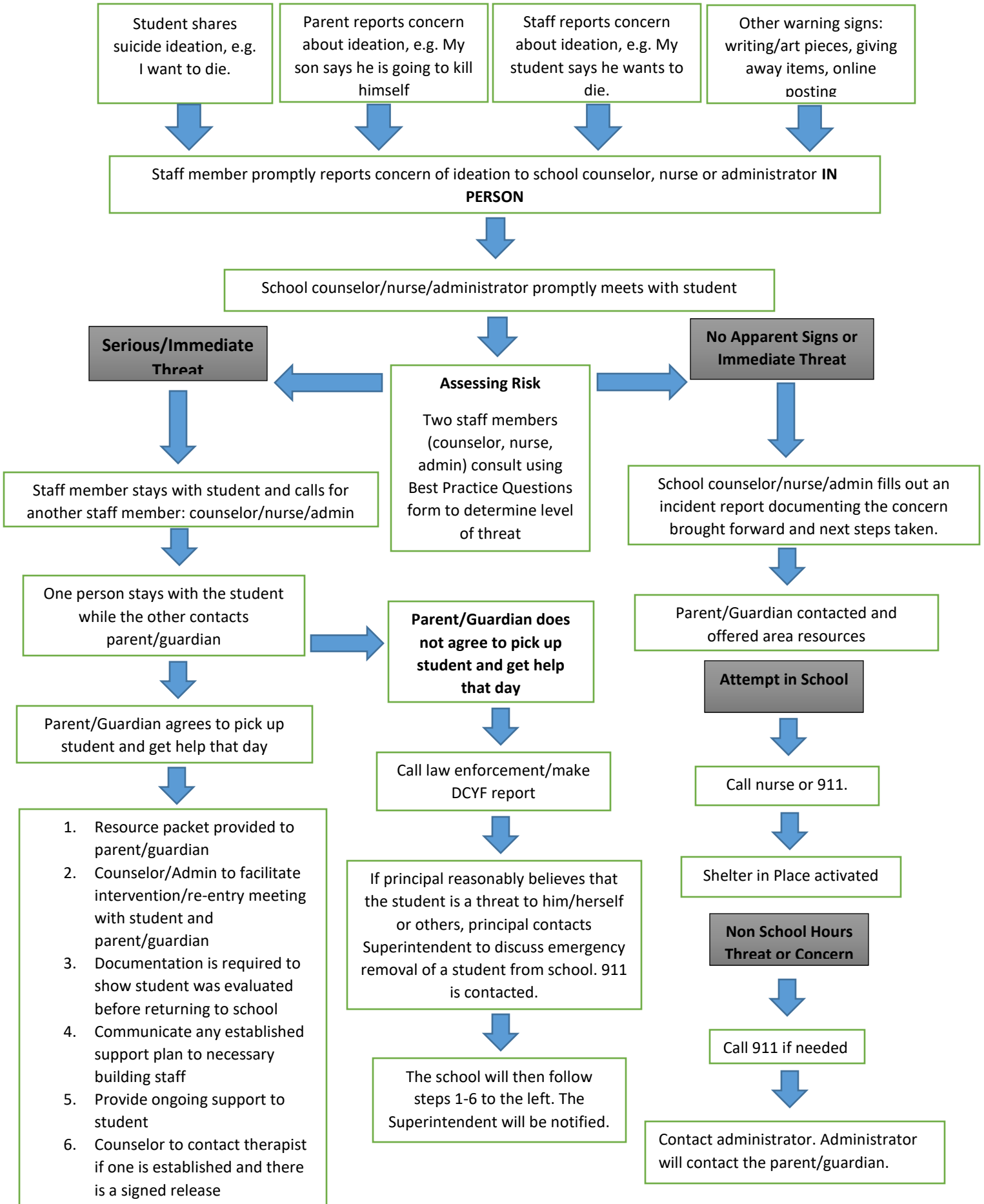
Reminders for Parents



After a school notifies a parent of their child's risk for suicide and provides referral information, parents must:

- **Continue to take threats seriously.** Follow through is important even after the child calms down or informs the parent “they didn't mean it.”
- **Access school supports.** If parents are uncomfortable with following through on referrals, they can give the school psychologist permission to contact the referral agency, provide referral information, and follow up on the visit.
- **Maintain communication with school.** After an intervention, the school will also provide follow-up supports. Your communication will be crucial to ensuring that the school is the safest, most comfortable place possible for your child.

Ashland District Suicide Threat/Attempt Flow Chart



**Ashland Elementary School District
Best Practices Student Safety Questionnaire**

1. Have you ever thought of hurting or killing yourself?

2. Are you currently thinking of hurting or killing yourself?

If the student expresses thoughts of self-harm, and/or suicide, or even if ambivalent (e.g. says "I don't know." or "I don't remember." or "Maybe. I am not sure." or "Sometimes, but not right at this moment.") continue with these questions:

3. How frequently do you have these thoughts and feelings?

4. Have you ever acted upon these thoughts? If yes, please describe how.

5. Do you currently have a plan and timeframe in mind to hurt or kill yourself? If yes, please describe.

6. Are your parent(s)/guardians, siblings or friends aware of your plan?

**Ashland Elementary School District
Student Safety Parent/Guardian Signature Form**

Student Name:

DOB:

Grade:

Today's Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Today your child made statements that indicate he or she may be contemplating death by suicide. We are extremely concerned about your child's safety and ask that you complete the following:

- Immediately seek a mental health evaluation either with your child's established therapist or via the emergency room.
- Supervise your child at all times until the mental health evaluation has occurred and you are given next steps to ensure safety.
- Remove all weapons, substances or means of self-harm in the home, securing items under lock and key until a mental health professional deems it is safe to return items to the home (this may include guns, knives, razors, rope, medications etc.)
- To notify the school of when your child is expected to return to school. The school counselor, nurse and/or an administrator will meet with parents and student prior to re-entry to school. A safety plan/plan of support will be discussed.
- To share with the school documentation that the student is cleared to return to school and any suggestions for the school to maintain safety.

I read and agree with the items listed above. I understand that a lack of parental follow through will be reported as child neglect to the Division of Children, Youth and Families due to the seriousness of this matter.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Ashland School District

Student Safety Resources for Parents/Guardians

Emergency - 911

National Suicide Prevention Hotline - 1-800-273-8255 or TEXT 741741

Lakes Region Mental Health, Plymouth - 536 -1118

Speare Memorial Hospital - 536 -1120

NAMINH.org - NH Alliance on Mental Illness

School Contacts

Ashland Elementary School
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Kelly Avery, Principal

Carrie Sanborn, School Counselor

Dr. Philip Sanguedolce, School Psychologist

Susan Rubbe, School Nurse