

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY PARADISE CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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The Governing Board of Paradise Charter Middle School (“PCMS” or the “Charter School”) recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among youth and that school personnel who regularly interact with students can often recognize the warning signs of suicide and offer appropriate referral and/or assistance.

To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Executive Director, or designee, may consult with school health professionals, school counselors, other staff, parents/guardians, students, local health agencies and professionals, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and well-being of all Paradise Charter Middle School students by having procedures in place to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide. The Governing Board:

- recognizes that physical, behavioral, and emotional health is an integral component of a student’s educational outcomes,
- has an ethical responsibility to take a proactive approach in preventing deaths by suicide, and
- acknowledges the School’s role in providing an environment that is sensitive to individual and societal factors that place youth at greater risk for suicide and one which helps to foster positive youth development.

### **Scope**

This policy addresses actions that take place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, and at school-sponsored off-campus events where school staff are present. This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers.

### **LEA Policy Implementation**

The Executive Director is the designated suicide prevention coordinator responsible for planning and coordinating the implementation of this policy for Paradise Charter Middle School. All staff members shall immediately report students they believe to be at elevated risk for suicide to the Executive Director.

### **Measures and Strategies**

Measures and strategies for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Staff development on suicide awareness and prevention for teachers, school counselors, and other Paradise Charter Middle School employees who interact with students, as described in the accompanying administrative regulation
2. Instruction to students in problem-solving and coping skills to promote students' mental, emotional, and social health and well-being, as well as instruction in recognizing and appropriately responding to warning signs of suicidal intent in others
3. Methods for promoting a positive school climate that enhances students' feelings of connectedness with the school and that is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students
4. The provision of information to parents/guardians regarding risk factors and warning signs of suicide, the severity of the youth suicide problem, the Paradise Charter Middle School suicide prevention curriculum, basic steps for helping suicidal youth, and/or school and community resources that can help youth in crisis
5. Encouragement for students to notify appropriate school personnel or other adults when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions
  - a. Students can also access national resources for additional support, such as:

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
1.800.273.8255 (TALK)  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

The Trevor Lifeline – 1.866.488.7386  
[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

6. Crisis intervention procedures for addressing suicide threats or attempts
7. Counseling and other postvention strategies for helping students, staff, and others cope in the aftermath of a student's suicide

### **Youth Suicide Prevention Programming**

Developmentally appropriate, student-centered education materials will be integrated into the health class curriculum. The content of these age-appropriate materials will be research-based and include:

- the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies,
- how to recognize risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others,
- help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.

The Executive Director or designee shall establish crisis intervention procedures to ensure student safety and appropriate communications if a suicide occurs, or an attempt is made on campus or at a school-sponsored activity.

### **Employee Qualifications and Scope of Services**

School employees shall act only within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license. Nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging a school employee to diagnose or treat mental illness unless the employee is specifically licensed and employed to do so.

**Publication and Distribution**

This policy will be distributed annually in the *Parent/Student Handbook* and will be prominently posted on the school website.

The Governing Board shall review its policy on pupil suicide prevention at a minimum of every fifth year and, if necessary, update its policy.

**Adopted:**

**Amended: July 12, 2022**