



RISK SIMPLIFIED

RESOURCES

[Assembly Bill \(AB\) 2246](#)

[Assembly Bill \(AB\) 1767](#)

[California Department of Education
- Youth Suicide Prevention](#)

[Vector Solutions – Recognizing
and Preventing Youth Suicide\(EDU\)](#)

QUESTIONS

[Email PRISM Risk Control](#)
or call 916.850.7300

Pupil Suicide Prevention Policy

by **Scarlett Sadler**

Suicidal thoughts, much like mental health conditions, can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or background. Suicidal thoughts, although common, should not be considered normal and usually indicate more pressing issues. Having suicidal thoughts does not mean someone is weak or flawed, and is often the result of an untreated mental health condition.

In 2016, Governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill [\(AB\) 2246](#), chaptered as California Education Code (EDC) section 215. The section mandated local educational agencies (LEAs) serving pupils of grades 7 to 12, to adopt a policy on pupil suicide prevention. In 2019, Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill [\(AB\) 1767](#) which expanded the scope of EDC section 215 to mandate LEAs that serve pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6, to also adopt a policy on pupil suicide prevention.

As of the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, all LEAs should have a Pupil Suicide Prevention Policy that minimally addresses procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. The policy for pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6 should be age appropriate and delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young people. In addition, pupil suicide prevention policies should specifically address the needs of high-risk groups which is described as youth bereaved by suicide, youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders, youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth. The policy should also include suicide awareness and prevention training for teachers, as well as a requirement that school district employees act only within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license.

The California Department of Education (CDE) has developed a comprehensive [Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy](#) to serve as a guide for LEAs. Included in the model policy is direction on policy modifications as well as guidance for expanding suicide prevention efforts to include:

- Appointing suicide prevention liaisons at the district level as well as the school site level. These selected individuals or teams can work together to coordinate and implement suicide prevention activities within their districts and school sites. These liaisons can also act as the point person for staff that may suspect a student's suicidal intentions.

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- Providing advanced suicide intervention training to suicide prevention liaisons.
- Providing continuing education on suicide prevention to school personnel that regularly interact with students or are in a position to recognize risk factors and warning signs associated with suicide.
- Inviting parents, guardians/caregivers to participate in policy development/suicide prevention efforts.
- Providing access to suicide prevention resources and the districts/ school site suicide prevention policy and procedures to parents, guardians/caregivers.
- Providing student-focused suicide prevention education to raise awareness and increase outreach.

If your school district's Pupil Suicide Prevention Policy was created prior to or during the 2017-18 school year and the district has not reviewed the policy since its adoption, we advise you to compare your current policy against the CDE's model policy. At a minimum, EDC section 215 requires districts to review their Pupil Suicide Prevention Policy every fifth year; however, we encourage districts to annually review their Pupil Suicide Prevention Policy to ensure continued compliance and accuracy. Having a policy in place can help educators feel more confident in intervening with a student they believe to be at risk. For additional details or assistance, please contact [Risk Control](#).

