

## SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY 2016-2017

### INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to 41 Del. C. §4124, each local education agency in the State of Delaware is required to adopt a policy regarding youth suicide prevention. Each such policy must, among other things, recognize the serious problem of youth suicide and provide for the development of (i) a suicide prevention program, (ii) a committee for coordinating such program, (iii) procedures for anonymous and confidential reporting of the warning signs of suicide and (iv) procedures for communication between school and medical professionals.

### POLICY

Suicide has become one of the leading causes of death among young people and therefore is of paramount concern to Delaware Design-Lab High School (the "School") and the communities it serves. For those potentially suicidal youth who come to the attention of school personnel, workable procedures must be developed that enable educational staff to recognize youth in crises and provide appropriate intervention. However, suicide is a complex issue and while the School may be aware of a potentially suicidal youth, it cannot generally make clinical assessment of risk and provide in-depth counseling. Therefore, procedures must include referral to a community agency for assessment and counseling. Recognizing the serious problem of youth suicide, the School shall develop a policy (the "Prevention Policy") to prevent and address youth suicide. The Prevention Policy shall be in effect anytime the School's Code of Conduct is in effect and shall include, without limitation, a comprehensive system for the identification and assessment of at-risk youth, procedures for the anonymous and confidential reporting of suicide warning signs, procedures for the referral of at-risk youth to appropriate mental health services, and procedures for communication between the School, medical professionals, parents/guardians and others responsible for such youth's well-being.

The Prevention Policy and all related matters shall be the purview of a newly created Suicide Prevention Committee (the "Committee"). The Committee shall be responsible for drafting the Prevention Policy, creating a developmentally-appropriate, student-centered curriculum regarding youth suicide (the "Curriculum"), and overseeing the effective implementation of such Prevention Policy and Curriculum. The Committee shall be comprised the following persons: the School principal, the School guidance counselor, the School Dean of Students, the School nurse, and such other and further persons as may be appointed to the Committee by the School principal in his or her discretion. The Committee shall meet at least annually, and more often if necessary, to review the Prevention Policy and the associated Curriculum.

No school employee, school volunteer or student shall be subject to firing, demotion, harassment or other forms of retaliation for reporting in good faith pursuant to the Prevention Policy. Furthermore, pursuant 41 Del C. §4124, "a school employee, school volunteer or student is individually immune from a cause of action for damages arising from reporting warning signs of suicide to the appropriate person or persons using the procedures specified in the local education agency's suicide prevention policy, but there shall be no such immunity if the act of reporting constituted gross negligence and/or reckless, willful or intentional conduct."