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**STATE COLLEGE  
Area School District**

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**LEARNING ENRICHMENT/GIFTED SUPPORT PROGRAM AND STUDENT SERVICES**  
154 WEST NITTANY AVENUE • STATE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA • 16801-4899  
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To: Dr. Robert O'Donnell VI-C

From: Jeanne Knouse

Date: December 1, 2015

Re: Policy 819 Revisions for Review

The second reading of the following policy will be presented at the January 25, 2016 State College Area School District School Board meeting as an information/discussion item:

- **New** Policy 819 – Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response Policy. This policy is a requirement based on the 2014, Act 71 Public School Code of 1949 – Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention and Child Exploitation Awareness Education, Section 1529 (1) adopt an age-appropriate youth suicide awareness and prevention policy. Recommended revisions made following the December 7, 2015 SCASD Board meeting include all italicized information in the document. The revisions were presented to the CAC for Safe Schools and include descriptions and definitions from the PDE suggested policy. Attached please find three documents related to this policy:
  - Policy 819 as seen on December 7, 2015 with additional suggested Board revisions italicized
  - Policy 819 with no mark ups
  - Policy 819 Guidelines

STATE COLLEGE  
AREA  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: OPERATIONS

TITLE: SUICIDE AWARENESS,  
PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

ADOPTED:

REVISED:

<p>1. Purpose SC 1526 Pol. 103.1, 248, 249, 806</p> <p>2. Authority Title 22 Sec. 12.12 Pol. 207, 216, 236</p> <p>3. Publications  SC 1526</p> <p>4. <i>Definitions</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">819. SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND RESPONSE</p> <p><i>The SCASD Board adopts this policy in acknowledgment of the District’s commitment to maintaining a safe school environment; to protect the health, safety and welfare of its students; to promote healthy development and to safeguard against the threat or attempt of suicide among school-aged youth. The impact of students’ mental health on their academic performance and the effect of mental health issues and suicide on students and the entire school community are significant. Therefore, in order to ensure the safety and welfare of students, the school entity will work to educate school personnel and students on the actions and resources necessary to prevent suicide and promote mental well-being.</i></p> <p><i>This policy shall apply in any situation where a student is expressing suicidal thoughts or intentions of self-harm on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or on any public vehicle providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity. This policy shall also apply following a student’s suicide threat or attempt that does not occur on school grounds or during a school-sponsored activity, but that is reported to any school personnel</i></p> <p>The district shall utilize a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention, which integrates school and community-based supports.</p> <p>The district shall notify district employees, students and parents/guardians of this policy and shall post the policy on the district’s website.</p> <p><i>At-Risk for Suicide shall mean any youth with risk factors or warning signs that increase the likelihood of suicidal behavior.</i></p> <p><i>Chief School Administrator shall mean the superintendent of a school district or joint school district, the chief executive officer of a charter school, regional charter school or cyber charter school, and/or the executive director of an intermediate unit or area vocational-technical school.</i></p> <p><i>Crisis Response Team shall include, but may not be limited to, the administrators, guidance counselors, the school nurse, social worker, and school resource officers, and/or other members of the Student Assistance</i></p>
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<p>5. <b>Suicide Awareness Education</b> SC 1526</p>	<p><i>Program (SAP), as designated, and may include other members as deemed appropriate by the chief school administrator/school entity. Community mental health agency resources may be called for assistance to be a part of the team.</i></p> <p><i>Expressed Suicidal Thoughts or Intentions shall mean a verbal or nonverbal communication that an individual intends to harm him/herself with the intention to die, but has not acted on the behavior.</i></p> <p><i>Prevention refers to efforts that seek to reduce the factors that increase the risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors and increase the factors that help strengthen, support, and protect individuals from suicide.</i></p> <p><i>Protective Factors shall refer to characteristics (biological, psychological, and social) that reduce risk and the likelihood of the individual developing a mental illness.</i></p> <p><i>Resilience shall refer to an individual's innate ability to persevere in the face of adversity and reduce the risk of unhealthy outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>Risk Factors shall mean the personal or environmental characteristics associated with suicide. People affected by one or more of these risk factors have a greater probability of suicidal behavior.</i></p> <p><i>School Connectedness shall mean the belief by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals.</i></p> <p><i>School Personnel include, but may not be limited to, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, coaches, bus drivers, custodians, and cafeteria workers.</i></p> <p><i>Suicide shall refer to death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior.</i></p> <p><i>Suicidal Act or Suicide Attempt shall mean a potentially self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person probably intended to kill him/herself; a suicidal act may result in death, injuries, or no injuries.</i></p> <p><i>Warning Signs are evidence-based indicators that someone may be in danger of suicide, either immediately or in the very near future.</i></p> <p><u>Protocols for Administration of Student Education</u></p> <p>Students shall receive age-appropriate education on the importance of safe and</p>
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<p>SC 1526 Pol. 333</p> <p><b>6. Methods of Prevention and Intervention SC 1526</b></p>	<p>healthy choices, coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs, as well as help-seeking strategies for self or others including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.</p> <p>Lessons shall contain information on comprehensive health and wellness, including emotional, behavioral and social skills development.</p> <p><u>Protocols for Administration of Employee Education</u></p> <p>All district employees including, but not limited to, secretaries, coaches, bus drivers, custodians and cafeteria workers, shall receive information regarding risk factors, warning signs, response procedures, referrals, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention.</p> <p>As part of the district’s professional development plan, professional educators in school buildings serving students in grades six (6) through twelve (12) shall participate in four (4) hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every five (5) years.</p> <p>Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to identified school personnel.</p> <p><u>Resources for Parents/Guardians</u></p> <p>The district will provide parents/guardians with resources including, but not limited to, health promotion and suicide risk, including characteristics and warning signs, as well as and information about local behavioral/mental health resources.</p> <p>The methods of prevention and intervention utilized by the district will be outlined in the Suicide Prevention/Intervention Guidelines.</p> <p>The methods of prevention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, early identification and support for students at risk; education for students, staff and parents/guardians; and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.</p> <p>The methods of intervention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, responding to suicide threats, suicide attempts in school, suicide attempts outside of school, and completed suicide. Suicide intervention procedures shall address the development of an emotional or mental health safety plan for students identified as being at increased risk of suicide.</p>
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<p><b>7. <i>Methods of Response to Suicide or Suicide Attempt</i></b> <b>SC 1526</b></p>	<p>The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations with recommended guidelines for responding to a suicidal act or attempt on school grounds or during a school-sponsored event and re-entry procedures following an attempt.</p>
<p><b>8. <i>Report Procedures</i></b> <b>SC 1526</b></p>	<p>Effective documentation assists in preserving the safety of the student and ensuring communication among school staff, parents/guardians and mental health service providers.</p> <p>As stated in this policy, district employees shall be responsible for effective documentation of incidents involving suicide prevention, intervention and response.</p> <p>The suicide prevention coordinator shall provide the Superintendent with a copy of all reports and documentation regarding the at-risk student. Information and reports shall be provided, as appropriate, to school counselors and school nurses.</p>
<p><b>9. <i>Suicide Awareness and Prevention Resources</i></b> <b>SC 1526</b></p>	<p>A listing of resources regarding suicide awareness and prevention shall be attached to the procedures of this policy.</p> <p>References:</p> <p>School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 1526</p> <p>State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 12.12</p> <p>Board Policy – 103.1, 113, 113.2, 113.3, 114, 117, 146, 204, 207, 216, 236, 248, 249, 333, 805, 806</p>

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819. SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND RESPONSE	
<p>1. Purpose            SC 1526            Pol. 103.1, 248,            249, 806</p>	<p>The SCASD Board adopts this policy in acknowledgment of the District’s commitment to maintaining a safe school environment; to protect the health, safety and welfare of its students; to promote healthy development and to safeguard against the threat or attempt of suicide among school-aged youth. The impact of students’ mental health on their academic performance and the effect of mental health issues and suicide on students and the entire school community are significant. Therefore, in order to ensure the safety and welfare of students, the school entity will work to educate school personnel and students on the actions and resources necessary to prevent suicide and promote mental well-being.</p>
<p>2. Authority            Title 22            Sec. 12.12            Pol. 207, 216, 236</p>	<p>This policy shall apply in any situation where a student is expressing suicidal thoughts or intentions of self-harm on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or on any public vehicle providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity. This policy shall also apply following a student’s suicide threat or attempt that does not occur on school grounds or during a school-sponsored activity, but that is reported to any school personnel</p>
<p>3. Publications             SC 1526</p>	<p>The district shall utilize a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention, which integrates school and community-based supports.</p> <p>The district shall notify district employees, students and parents/guardians of this policy and shall post the policy on the district’s website.</p>
<p>4. Definitions</p>	<p>At-Risk for Suicide shall mean any youth with risk factors or warning signs that increase the likelihood of suicidal behavior.</p> <p>Chief School Administrator shall mean the superintendent of a school district or joint school district, the chief executive officer of a charter school, regional charter school or cyber charter school, and/or the executive director of an intermediate unit or area vocational-technical school.</p> <p>Crisis Response Team shall include, but may not be limited to, the administrators, guidance counselors, the school nurse, social worker, and school resource officers, and/or other members of the Student Assistance</p>

<p>5. Suicide Awareness Education SC 1526</p>	<p>Program (SAP), as designated, and may include other members as deemed appropriate by the chief school administrator/school entity. Community mental health agency resources may be called for assistance to be a part of the team.</p> <p>Expressed Suicidal Thoughts or Intentions shall mean a verbal or nonverbal communication that an individual intends to harm him/herself with the intention to die, but has not acted on the behavior.</p> <p>Prevention refers to efforts that seek to reduce the factors that increase the risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors and increase the factors that help strengthen, support, and protect individuals from suicide.</p> <p>Protective Factors shall refer to characteristics (biological, psychological, and social) that reduce risk and the likelihood of the individual developing a mental illness.</p> <p>Resilience shall refer to an individual’s innate ability to persevere in the face of adversity and reduce the risk of unhealthy outcomes.</p> <p>Risk Factors shall mean the personal or environmental characteristics associated with suicide. People affected by one or more of these risk factors have a greater probability of suicidal behavior.</p> <p>School Connectedness shall mean the belief by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals.</p> <p>School Personnel include, but may not be limited to, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, coaches, bus drivers, custodians, and cafeteria workers.</p> <p>Suicide shall refer to death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with any intent to die as a result of the behavior.</p> <p>Suicidal Act or Suicide Attempt shall mean a potentially self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person probably intended to kill him/herself; a suicidal act may result in death, injuries, or no injuries.</p> <p>Warning Signs are evidence-based indicators that someone may be in danger of suicide, either immediately or in the very near future.</p> <p><u>Protocols for Administration of Student Education</u></p> <p>Students shall receive age-appropriate education on the importance of safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs,</p>
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