MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS RESPONSE PROCEDURES

General Overview

All procedures are included in this document to enable all parties to view the range of responses required in a generally sequential order. The party most associated with the task is listed in parentheses next to each item. *An asterisk indicates there is a form associated with this task.*

Emergency Response

If a life threatening emergency, call 911, contact the school district Safe Schools Manager Nina Delgadillo and refer to the school safety plan. A *mental health crisis* is defined as: a sudden, generally unanticipated event that profoundly and negatively affects the social and emotional well-being of a significant segment of the school population and often involves serious injury or death. If a crisis meets the above definition, please follow procedures below:

1. **VERIFY FACTS (Principal)**
   - If the crisis involves a possible crime, contact the police and/or chaplaincy (857-1801) to verify facts.
   - If appropriate, contact family to verify facts and obtain additional information.
   - Ask family what information they want shared with teachers and students.
   - Ask family what support they need.
   - Contact Area Superintendent to discuss activation of mental health crisis team.

2. **REQUEST CRISIS TEAM ASSISTANCE (Area Superintendent)**
   - To request assistance from a crisis team, notify one of the administrators in charge of mental health crisis intervention in the order listed below:
     - Jacqueline Rodriguez, Coordinator II, Student Support & Health Services 643-9141 (office); 752-3353 (cell); 761-2787 (home)
     - Victoria Flores, Director III, Student Support & Health Services 643-9144 (office); 752-3643 (cell); 376-7373 (home)
     - Becky Bryant, Director III, Special Education 643-9163 (office); 752-3442 (cell); 440-6636 (home)
   - Provide above administrator with the following information:
     - Nature of incident (violent or non-violent)
     - Number of staff and students affected
     - Crisis history of school
     - Culture of school
     - Safety (perceived threat to students and staff)
     - Other schools that may be affected
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3. ACTIVATE TEAM (Mental Health Crisis Intervention Administrator)
   - Mental Health Crisis Intervention Administrator will assign a crisis team leader, who will contact principal.
   - Mental Health Crisis Intervention Administrator will discuss with the crisis team leader what is known of the crisis and review possible responses and appropriate procedures. If school site has a Student Support Center (SSC), Administrator will also notify SSC coordinator.
   - Mental Health Crisis Intervention Administrator will contact Gabe Ross, Chief Communications Officer 643-9043 (office); 752-3705 (cell) to ensure appropriate communication at all levels.

4. DETERMINE CRISIS RESPONSE (Crisis Team Leader/Principal)
   - Verify that principal has completed procedures listed above under section #1.
   - Complete risk assessment to determine crisis response; decide if additional resources are needed.
   - Determine what staff resources are available at school for inclusion in crisis team. If school has a Student Support Center (SSC), include SSC Coordinator & staff in crisis team.
   - Identify students and staff who may be at risk (use Follow-Up List form).*
   - Request parking stickers for staff, if needed.
   - Review principal tasks under section #3 and assist as needed.

5. COMMUNICATE AND PREPARE STAFF (Principal/Crisis Team Leader)
   - Schedule emergency staff meeting.
   - Contact staff about the meeting using phone trees, classroom visits, memos, etc. Include all staff (classified, cafeteria, temporary, yard duty, Student Support Center Staff, Before/After School Program Staff, PTA, etc.).
   - Principal and crisis team leader prepare memo for teachers/staff to inform them of known facts of crisis, availability of support and other critical information.
   - Prepare script for teachers and staff to use in informing students.
   - Determine location of counseling rooms and utilization/referral procedures.
   - If appropriate, develop structured activities (e.g., memorial wall, ceremony, etc.).
   - Identify teachers who may be at risk and determine need for substitute teachers.
   - Assign staff to assist crisis team in locating supplies (paper, markers, water/food, etc.) and places to store personal items.
   - Prepare copies of staff roster with emergency numbers, school map and school schedule for crisis team.

*An asterisk indicates there is a form associated with this task.
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6. INITIAL MEETING WITH CRISIS TEAM (Crisis Team Leader)
   - Distribute Responder sign-in sheet*, name tags & parking stickers to crisis team responders.
   - Review facts of crisis and determine what information should be shared.
   - Distribute handouts from principal.
   - Discuss crisis response plan:
     - Role of crisis team leader and members
     - Counseling spaces (rooms, locations, areas) & how to refer students.
     - Distribute map and identify team members for specific locations.
     - Documentation and record keeping for student contact.
     - Supplies for staff
   - Provide list of at-risk students, staff & classrooms* using the MH Crisis Response Follow-Up List or Crisis Intervention Referral Forms*; determine who will contact them.
   - Discuss procedures for referring students for counseling.
   - Distribute Student sign-in sheets for counseling rooms.*
   - Schedule check-in and debrief meetings with team.
   - Coordinate services with chaplaincy (if present).

7. EMERGENCY STAFF MEETING (Principal/Team Leader)
   - Provide memo for teachers/staff and script for teachers to use with students.
   - Ensure that front office has script for community inquiries.
   - Discuss the school’s response plan including changes in the school day. Discuss coverage during non-class time (i.e., recess, lunch, after-school).
   - Encourage staff to maintain attendance records and student’s whereabouts.
   - Share location of counseling rooms and procedures for utilization and referrals.
   - Identify additional students who may be at risk; add to list.*
   - Provide guidelines for helping students who are upset.
   - Provide copies of activities for use in classrooms.
   - Encourage staff to dispel rumors whenever possible and discourage any “glorification” of the event (especially in cases of suicide).
   - Allow staff ample time to share reactions and feelings with one another.
   - Determine teachers in need of additional support, including those who need a crisis team member to assist in informing students.
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7. (continued)
   - Encourage teachers to allow for expressions of grief, anger, etc., in classes throughout the day. Emphasize the acceptability/normalcy of a range of expressions.
   - Announce time and location of debriefing.

8. CONTACT PARENTS (Principal)
   - Prepare & send letter to parents; include known facts, steps taken and future plans.

9. MONITOR PROGRESS OF DAY’S ACTIVITIES (Team Leader)
   - Monitor counseling areas and make modifications throughout the day.
   - Check-in with crisis staff to assess needs; check-in with administrator as needed.
   - Follow-up with principal; determine if changes in response plan are needed.

10. DEBRIEF MEETING WITH CRISIS TEAM & STAFF (Principal/Team Leader)
    - Discuss how the day went allowing time for staff to share reactions and feelings with one another.
    - Discuss future plans for memorial.
    - Determine what else needs to happen at the school.
    - Identify specific students at risk, plan for tracking them and who to contact.
    - Distribute list of resources if additional support is needed for students and/or staff.

11. DEBRIEF MEETING WITH CRISIS TEAM & STAFF (Team Leader/Principal)
    - Discuss future plans for memorial.
    - Determine what else needs to happen at the school.
    - Identify specific students at risk, plan for tracking them and who to contact.
    - Discuss variety of grief reactions and hand out other useful information.
    - Distribute list of resources if additional support is needed for students.

12. COMPLETE EVALUATION REPORT* & SUBMIT TO MH CRISIS COORDINATOR (Principal)

13. FOLLOW-UP WITH PRINCIPAL FOR EVALUATION FORM* AND FEEDBACK (Team Leader)

14. FOLLOW-UP WITH TEAM LEADER FOR EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK (MH Crisis Team Coordinator)

*An asterisk indicates there is a form associated with this task.