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## **Model Youth Suicide Prevention Policy**

### **Introduction**

California *Education Code (EC)* Section 215, as added by Assembly Bill 2246, (Chapter 642, Statutes of 2016) mandates that the Governing Board of any local educational agency (LEA) that serves pupils in grades seven to twelve, inclusive, adopt a policy on pupil suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. The policy shall specifically address the needs of high-risk groups, including suicide awareness and prevention training for teachers, and ensure that a school employee acts within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license.

For more information on AB 2246 Pupil Suicide Prevention Policies, go to the California Legislative Information Web page at [https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201520160AB2246](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2246).

For resources regarding youth suicide prevention, go to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) letter regarding Suicide Prevention Awareness Month on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr16ltr0901.asp> and the Directing Change For Schools Web page at <http://www.directingchange.org/schools/>.

Additionally, the CDE encourages each LEA to work closely with their county behavioral health department to identify and access resources at the local level.

While the mandate does not apply to private schools or students below grade seven, we do encourage them to consider adopting a suicide prevention policy as a safety net for all students. This is particularly important since suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth ages fifteen to twenty-four. Students in earlier grades are also known to consider, attempt, and die by suicide—which is also a leading cause of death among ten to twelve-year-olds. Research demonstrates that suicidal ideation may start as early as preschool (however, suicide deaths are very rare among children nine years of age and younger). Although elementary and private schools are not legally required to adhere to AB 2246, they may want to consult with their legal staff about the advisability of adopting such a policy.