

PROTOCOL FOR ADDRESSING SUICIDAL/HOMICIDAL IDEATIONS OR ATTEMPTS

This protocol is designed for the protection of students in crisis and the school employees who serve them. If a school employee has reason to believe that a student is at risk for suicide or will harm himself or herself, that person should take action in accordance with this procedure.

Additionally, at the beginning of each school year the principal should arrange to have the staff briefed on student behaviors which are considered self-destructive and indicative of the desire or intent to harm oneself or others. Please contact the System Social Worker for assistance in this area. The principal should also advise school employees of the necessity of reporting any occurrence of such behaviors to the Principal, Administrator, or School Counselor immediately upon occurrence.

If the student has made an attempt that is life threatening or it is suspected the student may make an attempt on school property, the school official should immediately:

- a. call 911 for any medical emergency situation
- b. contact custodial parent or guardian
- c. contact Lee County School District Office (Superintendent's office/School Social Worker)
- d. contact School Resource officer(s)

When a student exhibits suicidal behaviors or threatens to harm others, it is strongly recommended that such an event be addressed by the following action:

1. The school counselor, Principal or administrator should be notified and the student involved should be:

- privately question to determine the level of risk (see attachment rating scale)
- offer immediate assistance
- **put under constant adult observation/supervision**

a. The school counselor or administrator should call the enrolling parent or person, or emergency contact, and ask him or her to come to the campus immediately.

b. Upon their arrival, the school counselor or administrator will help the parent/guardian with community resources for immediate professional assessment. If needed, the school psychologist can be consulted for assistance –call 229-903-2103

c. If the parent or guardian or emergency contact cannot be reached, notify the school principal/administration and the School Social Worker if help is needed. The student's level of functioning should be assessed:

1. Are you thinking of hurting / killing yourself?

2. *How do you plan to do this? When? Where?*

3. *Do you have a weapon / lethal means?*

4. *Have you had previous attempt or thoughts?*

School personnel should continue to supervise the student until parents and/or protective custody can be arranged to pick up the student.

2. The enrolling person, parent, or emergency contact should leave campus with the student only after she/he has been strongly encouraged to take the student from campus to the facility/treatment provider of his or her choice for a mental health assessment or the emergency room for immediate assessment.

Resources for assessments:

a. Emergency Room at closest Hospital- parent/guardian must indicate child is suicidal and needs immediate evaluation

b. Georgia Crisis Line – (24 hours) – 800-715-4225

c. Aspire (if student currently patient) 229-430-5100

3. The school official should strongly encourage the family to provide the results of the assessment to the school upon the student's return to school. Explain to the parent(s)/guardian/enrolling person, that it is very helpful if they will sign the release of information to allow the facility/treatment provider to release relevant information to the school. (see release form). However, a student may not be kept out of school if the parent/guardian refuses to provide this information or to obtain an assessment. The school counselor or administrator should document his or her attempt(s) to obtain the relevant information from the parent/guardian/enrolling person.

4. If a parent or guardian refuses to have their student assessed for suicidal/homicidal ideations, the school shall have the option to file a neglect report with the Lee County Department of Family and Children Services. The school officials may also involve the Lee County Sheriff's Department to possibly provide protective custody.

5. The counselor or school administrator should complete an Intervention Summary to document the incident and provide copy to the system social worker.

6. Once the school has obtained a copy of the assessment results or received information about the assessment (hospitalization and release of student), the school should call a re-entry meeting and invite necessary personnel to discuss any relevant needs of student.