



## **Youth Protection & Suicide Prevention Policy, including Parental Notification Protocols**

**References:** Utah Code 53G-9-604

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1.) Establish and outline Merit's YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM and
- 2.) Specify notification protocols as codified in Utah law [53G-9-604](#).

### **POLICY:**

#### **I. YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM**

In collaboration with school administrators, counselors, and student leaders, the school shall implement a youth suicide prevention program for all students, grades 7-12, at Merit Preparatory Academy. This program shall consider appropriate coordination with instruction for the prevention of bullying and cyber-bullying, underage drinking of alcohol, substance abuse, and suicide prevention. The program shall also include provisions to ensure prompt communication with parents. The program shall include topics addressing:

- A. Life-affirming education, including the concepts of resiliency, healthy habits, self-care, problem solving, and conflict resolution;
- B. Support and resources in educating families;
- C. Methods of strengthening a youth's relationships in the school and community;
- D. Prevention and intervention of youth suicide;
- E. Postvention for family, students, and faculty;
- F. Bullying and cyber-bullying;
- G. Underage drinking of alcohol; and
- H. Adverse effects of traumatic experiences.

In implementing this program and related training, the school shall refer to and, as appropriate, make use of the model programs developed by the Department of Health - State Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health and the State Suicide Prevention Coordinator. It shall also provide parent notification by the school regarding any incident involving the above. [Utah Code § 53G-9-702 \(7/1/2023\)](#), [Utah Code § 53G-9-604](#), and § [53G-9-605 \(5/1/2024\)](#) [Utah Admin. Rules R277-620-3\(3\) to \(6\) \(12/10/2018\)](#)

## II. STAFF YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING

Each licensed employee of the school shall complete a professional development training on youth suicide prevention every three years, using the training materials adopted by Merit's Administration and Counselors. [Utah Code § 53G-9-704](#) (2020)

## III. YOUTH SUICIDE PROGRAM FUNDING

The Board shall

- A. distribute funds to support the program
  - a. According to evidence-based practices and;
  - b. Emerging best practices
- B. assure compliance with the state reporting requirements according to [53G-9-702](#).

## IV. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION PROTOCOL

- A. Merit Preparatory Academy shall:
  - 1. notify a parent if the parent's student threatens suicide; or
  - 2. notify the parents of each student involved in an incident and the action plan to address the incident.

## V. RECORDS

- A. When a student threatens suicide or is involved in an incident, Merit Preparatory Academy shall produce and maintain a record that:
  - 1. verifies that Merit's Administrator notified each parent of the student(s) involved;
  - 2. tracks implementation of the action plan addressing the incident, if applicable;
- B. The record shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements of:
  - a) [Title 53E, Chapter 9, Part 2, Student Privacy](#);
  - b) [Title 53E, Chapter 9, Part 3, Student Data Protection](#);
  - c) [the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232g; and](#)
  - d) [34 C.F.R. Part 99](#);
- C. Merit Academy shall provide the parent with:
  - 1. suicide prevention materials and information; and
  - 2. information on ways to limit the student's access to fatal means, including a firearm or medication.
- D. At the request of a parent, Merit Academy may provide information and make recommendations related to an incident or threat.

E. Merit Academy shall:

1. provide a student a copy of a record maintained in accordance with this policy that relates to the student, if the student requests a copy of the record; and
2. expunge a record maintained in accordance with this policy that relates to a student if the student:
  - a) has graduated from high school; and
  - b) requests the record be expunged.

Board Approved: 12/20/22

Updated & Approved: 11/14/2024