

**Policy**

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STUDENTS WITH SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIORS

The Mount Laurel Township School District Board of Education recognizes that depression and self-destruction are problems of increasing severity among children and adolescents. Students who experience severe family crises; drug and alcohol abuse (see board policy 5131.6 Substance Abuse and 5131 .7 Weapons and Dangerous Instruments); suicide ideations, gestures, and attempts; and severe emotional traumas are at-risk. A pupil under severe stress cannot benefit fully from the educational program and may pose a threat to him or herself or others.

The board directs all school personnel to be alert to the pupil who exhibits signs of potential self-destruction or who threatens or attempts suicide. The school nurse or his or her designee shall provide training to staff for the identification of the signs/symptoms of depression and suicidal ideation; the connection of depression and suicidal behavior to harassment, intimidation and bullying; and school reporting procedures. Any suspicion of the signs/symptoms and the report of signs/symptoms from another pupil or staff member should be taken with the utmost seriousness and reported immediately to the building principal, who will notify the pupil's parent and other professional staff members in accordance with administrative regulations.

The child study team will be consulted for appropriate evaluation and/or recommendation for independent medical or psychiatric services for a potentially at-risk pupil. In the event that the parent or guardian objects to the recommended evaluation or indicates an unwillingness to cooperate in the best interests of the pupil, school personnel should contact the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency to request that the agency intervention on the pupil's behalf.

The chief school administrator will, in consultation with appropriate teaching staff members and mental health organizations, develop and implement a program for pupils exhibiting self-destructive behaviors in grades K through 8. The program will address problems of depression, help pupils toward alternative ways of resolving stressful situations, and encourage pupils to help one another.

The chief school administrator shall prepare and disseminate regulations for the guidance of staff members in recognizing the pupil who displays self-destructive behaviors, which may pose a threat to him or herself and others.

Adopted: November 28, 1989  
Revised: April 30, 1997; May 23, 2006  
NJSBA Review/Update: June 2013  
Readopted: January 28, 2014

Key Words

Crisis, Self-Mutilation, Self Destructive, Suicide, Depression, Cutting

**Legal References:** N.J.S.A. 2A:62A-23 to 26 AED emergency medical services, 1999 statute  
N.J.S.A. 18A:16-6, -6.1 Indemnity of officers and employees against civil actions  
N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.6 et seq. Parents Right to Conscience Act of 1979  
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-1 Employment of medical inspectors, optometrists and nurses; salaries; terms; rules  
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-3 Lectures to teachers  
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-5 Method of examination; notice to parent or guardian  
N.J.S.A. 18A:40-6 In general

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES (continued)

<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40A-1 <u>et seq.</u>	Substance Abuse
<u>N.J.S.A.</u> 44:6-2	Maintenance by boards of education of clinics for indigent children
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:16-1.1 <u>et seq.</u>	Programs to Support Pupil Development
<u>See particularly:</u>	
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:16-1.1, -1.3, -1.4, -2.1, -2.3, -2.4	
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:26-12.1 <u>et seq.</u>	Operation and Maintenance of School Facilities
<u>See particularly:</u>	
<u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:26-12.3	

**Possible**

<b><u>Cross References:</u></b>	*1410	Local units
	*3510	Operation and maintenance of plant
	*3516	Safety
	*4112.4/4212.4	Employee health
	*4131/4131.1	Staff development; inservice education/visitations/conferences
	*5125	Pupil records
	*5131	Conduct/discipline
	*5131.1	Harassment, intimidation and bullying
	*5131.6	Substance abuse
	*5131.7	Weapons and dangerous instruments
	*5141.1	Accidents
	*5141.2	Illness
	*5141.21	Administering medication
	*5142	Pupil safety
	*5145.11	Questioning and apprehension
	*5145.12	Search and seizure
	*6142.4	Physical education and health

\*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.