

## SECTION 560 TRAUMATIC EVENT OR SUICIDE POLICY

The Portage Community School District recognizes that the issues involving both a traumatic event and suicide are serious and sensitive. When a student threatens, attempts, or commits suicide or any other traumatic event occurs, the district needs to respond quickly and with compassion to prevent or minimize adverse effects upon the health, safety, and welfare of the students, staff, and others who may be affected. For these reasons, this plan of action has been developed to provide direction for school staff in the event of a traumatic event or suicidal situation.

In the event that a staff member becomes aware of a traumatic event or a threatened, attempted, or actual suicide, they will immediately notify their building principal and/or counselor. Such notification is to be made whether or not school is in session. The parent or guardian of the student involved will be notified as soon as possible. The administrator, counselor, or other pupil services staff member will establish a team to address the problem. Depending upon the severity of the situation, the team will consist of pupil services and administrative personnel and may include two or more staff members. The team will call upon outside resources (e.g. mental health professionals, social services agencies, the police, personnel from other school districts, etc.) for further assistance if necessary. The district administrator (or his/her designee) will serve as the media contact person.

Related to this policy, specific procedures to follow have been developed and distributed to all school staff. In many cases, it may be appropriate to follow the same procedures when a sudden death has occurred due to a cause other than suicide (e.g. accidents or natural causes).

Also see administrative rules for this policy

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