

SUICIDE AWARENESS & PREVENTION WORKGROUP REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2020

*Prepared By: Logan Endres, Strategic Advocacy Coordinator for
the Washington State School Directors' Association*

*“All students deserve our best – especially those who experience racial
inequity, toxic stressors, cultural invalidation, homelessness, and other
trauma. **Today’s students deserve teachers who care about their
overall wellness as much or even more than their academic well-
being and success.**”*

~ Kim Reykdal, OSPI School Counseling Program Supervisor

TO OUR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

DEAR SCHOOL DIRECTORS & DISTRICT LEADERS,

We understand that school will look substantially different for most school districts in the 2020-2021 school year. We're thrilled to see comprehensive plans for the fall coming together as a result of your dedication and commitment to students, staff, and families. One additional and important requirement that you'll need to implement by no later than June 2021 is the listing of suicide crisis hotline information on all student and staff ID cards. To help you navigate this important work, WSSDA created its very first student representative group – the Suicide Awareness & Prevention Workgroup.

WORKGROUP PURPOSE

Implementation is not normally an area that WSSDA/school boards engage in, but we felt this topic was a good one to engage with students. WSSDA's Suicide Awareness & Prevention Workgroup was created with the intention to elevate student voices from around the state to share a list of recommendations that will help you:

- design student and staff identification cards with this new requirement in mind;
- engage students in suicide awareness & prevention programming in your schools; and
- ensure you're doing what you can to create safe spaces for students.

LOOKING AHEAD

Additional opportunities for student advocacy and engagement will become available through WSSDA's strategic advocacy efforts. If you and/or one of your student representatives would like to stay informed regarding these opportunities, consider joining our [student advocacy distribution list](#) or contact me at 360-742-4435 or l.endres@wssda.org.

Every youth needs a champion. It's our collective job not to stay silent and ensure everyone gets the help they need.

Warm Regards,

Logan Endres

Strategic Advocacy Coordinator

Washington State School Directors' Association

9/21/2020

HB 2589: SCHOOL DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

OVERVIEW

Sponsored by Representative Lisa Callan in the 2020 legislative session, SHB 2589 passed in the House with a vote of 95-0 and in the Senate with a vote of 42-7.

LEGISLATIVE INTENT

The legislative intent of this bill is to require all school districts to print contact information for suicide prevention and crisis intervention organizations on all student and staff identification cards. By providing the contact information, school districts can further engage students, staff, and families in critical dialogue and education regarding the importance of suicide prevention and awareness.

K-12 & HIGHER EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Within existing resources, every public school that issues student identification cards, staff identification cards, or both, must have printed on either side of the identification cards:

- The contact information for a national suicide prevention organization; and
- The contact information for one or more campus, local, state, or national organizations specializing in suicide prevention, crisis intervention, or counseling, if available.

The requirements above apply to student and staff identification cards issued for the first time and issued to replace a damaged or lost identification card. If a school or institution of higher education has a supply of unissued identification cards that do not comply with the requirements above, they may issue those identification cards until that supply is depleted (but no later than June 30, 2021).

STUDENT TESTIMONY

On February 28, Cedric Nagata and Sierra Owens (Riverview School District) testified in strong support of SHB 2589.



“I heard directly from students in my district about the need for more access to information and tools relating to crisis intervention,” said Rep. Callan. “This is not a new problem in our state, but this will provide our youth, faculty, and staff with some of the resources they need to act when a mental or behavioral health crisis occurs.” (Governor’s press release)

AWARENESS & PREVENTION INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Suicide awareness and prevention is extremely important work, especially given the mental health needs of students in schools today.

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for those aged 15-19 in the United States
- Suicide takes the lives of two students per week in Washington state
- According to the 2018 Healthy Youth Survey,
 - 23% of tenth-graders and 22% of 12th graders have considered suicide in the past year
- In order to assist, one must understand suicide first. Especially risk factors and warning suicide.
- “Depression” is not translatable to all languages.
- Suicidal thoughts can be triggered by racism, poverty, macroaggressions, and more on a daily basis.

ID CARD RECOMMENDATIONS

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

- List the following information on all staff and student ID cards:
 - The contact information for a national suicide prevention organization; and
 - The contact information for one or more campus, local, state, or national organizations specializing in suicide prevention, crisis intervention, or counseling, if available

DESIGN CONCEPTS

- Use the back-side for the hotline listing and refrain from taking up space on the front.
- Use color or graphic design to draw extra attention to the hotline section of the ID.
- Make it personable, such as mascots and school vision statements – keep any local considerations, etc. on the ID card.
- Add QR technology for suicide awareness & prevention apps, websites, etc.

SPREAD THE MESSAGE

It's recommended that this new information be intentionally messaged to students, staff, and families. A school district may consider:

- Communicating with students via advisory or homeroom class
- Sending a notification to families in their native language
- Using social media
- Encouraging students and staff to carry their ID cards at all times

STUDENT, STAFF & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

- [Only 7 Seconds](#) – Club / Program
 - The Only 7 seconds is a mindset movement challenging individuals to use their abilities to intentionally fight against isolation.
- Take [OSPI's Healthy Youth Survey](#)
 - The Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) is a statewide, collaborative effort of OSPI, the Department of Health, the State Department of Health (DOH), Health Care Authority (HCA), and the Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB)
- [HOPE squad](#)
 - The HOPE Squad is a national suicide prevention program that promotes public awareness, education, reduced stigma, and resources for those touched by suicide. The program is currently in over 800 schools across the US and Canada.

FOR SCHOOL LEADERS & STAFF

School districts should develop and implement:

- Relationship-building and resources that will help students and staff navigate suicide.
- A suicide education curriculum for students and staff.
- An [equity policy](#) to ensure a district-wide focus on equity for each and every student regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, family income, homelessness, language, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification and other demographics.
- A safety plan to ensure a plan is in place in the event of an emergency.
- A process to guide how a district/school is using the [Healthy Youth Survey](#) information to help students

KEY QUESTIONS

How can our school building/district be proactive (not reactive) when it comes to suicide awareness and prevention?

How can our school create safe spaces for students, staff, and families?

How can our school continue to advocate for additional funding and resources to support suicide awareness and prevention efforts?

How can we build upon the requirement to include suicide prevention hotlines on student ID cards by providing education and expanding awareness?

“Hope is the belief that your future will be better than today and you have the power to make it so.” ~ Dr. Chan Hellman

NEXT STEPS & RESOURCES

ADVOCACY TIPS – WHAT’S NEXT?

WSSDA and school districts should continue advocating for legislation to support:

- Student mental health
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Updates to the Prototypical School Funding Model
 - Funding for school nurses, mental health counselors
- Opportunities to elevate student voice in school district decisions and policy-making

For more information, please contact Logan Endres, Strategic Advocacy Coordinator at l.endres@wssda.org.

RESOURCES

- [Jordan Brinnon Project – NAMI Pierce County](#)
- [Learn Psychology – Suicide and Depression Awareness for Students](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists – Model Suicide Prevention Policy](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists – Preventing Youth Suicide: Tips for Parents & Educators](#)
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Number and Resources](#)
- [notOK app](#) (available on Apple & Android)
- [Suicide Prevention Resource Center – After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools](#)
- [The Jed Foundation – Mental Health Resource Center](#)
- [The Trevor Project](#)
- [University of Washington – Forefront Suicide Prevention](#)
- [Washington State Department of Health – Youth Suicide Prevention](#)
- [All Students Must Thrive – by Tyrone C. Howard](#)
- [Science of Hope – by Dr. Chan Hellman](#)

ABOUT THE WORKGROUP & WSSDA

STUDENT WORKGROUP REPRESENTATIVES:

NAME	SCHOOL DISTRICT/ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED
Rayyan Cunningham	Renton SD
Alyssa Lofgren	Rainier SD
Loryn Maples	Othello SD
Isaac Marroquin	Pasco SD
Amethyst Martinez	Ellensburg SD
Raymond Morrow	Mabton SD
Cedric Nagata	Riverview SD
Finn O'Donnell	Port Townsend SD
Sierra Owens	Riverview SD
Edgar Quiroz Sanchez	Pasco SD
Jaxon Roberts	Everett SD
Abby Sanders	Port Angeles SD
Sage Scott	Pateros SD (Association of Washington Student Leaders Representative)
Autymn Wilde	Central Valley SD (State Board of Education Representative)

Thank you, thank you, thank you to our wonderful student workgroup representatives! This workgroup was WSSDA's first-ever student advocate group and these students couldn't have been more of a pleasure to work with. Throughout the three months that this work was culminated they were engaged, articulate, and brave. We appreciate each and every one of you and are grateful to be a part of your advocacy journeys.

ABOUT THE WORKGROUP & WSSDA

OTHER WORKGROUP REPRESENTATIVES:

NAME	SCHOOL DISTRICT/ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED
Finlay Adamson	Strategic Advocacy Intern, WSSDA
Greg Baker	Director, Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL)
Lisa Callan	House of Representatives, 5 th Legislative District
Logan Endres	Strategic Advocacy Coordinator, WSSDA
James Layman	Director, Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL)
Lori Oviatt	School Director, Riverview School District
Brenda Rogers	School Director, Bethel School District & WSSDA President 2020
Marissa Rathbone	Strategic Advocacy Director, WSSDA

GUEST PRESENTERS:

- Aberdeen, Auburn, Centralia, Wenatchee, and Yakima School Districts
- Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL)
- Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)
- Equity in Education Coalition (EEC)
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Well, it wouldn't be possible for our student representatives to do this work without the support of our educational partners, right? Thank you to the districts/organizations that were either represented on the workgroup, or provided guest presentations. Your assistance and expertise strongly supported the curation of this work.

ABOUT THE WORKGROUP & WSSDA



SERVING WASHINGTON'S 1,477 ELECTED SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

STRATEGIC ADVOCACY BRANCH CONTACT INFORMATION:

Marissa Rathbone

Strategic Advocacy Director

m.rathbone@wssda.org

360-481-5842

Logan Endres

Strategic Advocacy Coordinator

l.endres@wssda.org

360-742-4435

Finlay Adamson

Strategic Advocacy Intern

ABOUT WSSDA

Mission: WSSDA builds leaders by empowering its members with tools, knowledge and skills to govern with excellence and advocate for public education.

Vision: All Washington school directors effectively govern to ensure each and every student has what they need to be successful within our state's public education system.

Equity Statement: Equity is foundational to the work of WSSDA. Educational equity can only exist when a student's level of opportunity and achievement cannot be predicted based on race, characteristics, or circumstances. Therefore, we must identify and eliminate any discriminatory practices and prejudices within our state's public education system.

Washington State School Directors' Association

225 College Street NE

Olympia, WA 98516

360-890-5781

wssda.org