

POLICY GUIDE

RIVER VALE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUPILS

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8420 School Clearance Following Crisis Situation

8420 SCHOOL CLEARANCE FOLLOWING CRISIS SITUATION

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of students during the school day, and will take action necessary to provide for the safety and security of its students, staff and/or property. In “crisis situations,” the Board reserves the right to exclude a student who has been determined to pose an imminent or potential threat to student or staff safety, pending appropriate mental health clearance.

I) Examples of “Crisis Situations” (*not exclusive*)

- A) Actions creating an imminent danger to the student or others, e.g., suicidal or homicidal ideation(s) or attempt(s);
- B) Verbalization(s) or other action(s) threatening the health, safety or well-being of the student, staff or other students;
- C) Verbalization(s) or other action(s) reflecting an intent or plan to harm the student or others;
- D) Verbalization(s) or other action(s) indicating that the student may be at risk of causing harm to the student or others; or
- E) Possession of object(s) or material(s) posing a threat to the health, safety or well-being of the student, staff or other students.

II) Discipline

- A) A student’s exclusion based upon an identified crisis situation shall not be considered a disciplinary consequence.
- B) This Policy is intended to address mental health related issues only (i.e., to ensure that the student does not represent a danger to him/herself or others), and does not supersede the implementation of appropriate disciplinary action for infractions of school regulations or action required by *N.J.S.A. 18A:40A-12* or *N.J.A.C. 6A:16-4.3* as described in policies and explained in student handbooks and/or Code of Student Conduct.

III) Procedures

- A) In situations where a student presents as an **imminentdanger** to himself or others, school emergency procedures will be followed, and supersede the provisions of Section III.C of this Policy.
- B) Staff members shall immediately notify the school principal, or his/her designee, of any potential crisis situations.
- C) In response to every report, the school principal (or designee) shall immediately:
 - 1) Notify the Crisis Intervention Team (or other designated team/individual responsible for the initial assessment of the student);
 - 2) Notify the Superintendent of Schools; and
 - 3) Notify the student's parent or legal guardian.
- D) In response to every report, the Crisis Intervention Team, consisting of the principal and the vice-principal, guidance counselor, school psychologist, student assistance coordinator and/or social worker, shall conduct a student interview to assess whether the student presents as a potential danger to him/herself or others, and to determine whether the student requires a mental health assessment prior to reinstatement.
- E) Provisions shall be made for the appropriate care and supervision of the student pending either: (1) a determination by the Crisis Intervention Team that the student's exclusion is not required; or (2) the student's release to his or her parent/guardian.

IV) Assessment and Reinstatement

- A) If the Crisis Intervention Team determines that the student presents as a potential danger to him/herself or others and requires a mental health assessment prior to reinstatement, the principal shall notify the student's parent/guardian of this determination.
- B) The assessment must be completed by a licensed or certified mental health professional who is a psychiatrist. The principal shall provide the student's parents/guardians with appropriate referral information for qualified mental health providers.
 - 1) Assessments completed by evaluators selected by the school district shall be at the expense of the school district.
 - 2) Assessments completed by evaluators selected by the student's parent/guardian shall be at the expense of the parent.

- C) For purposes of the assessment, it is necessary for the evaluator to have access to all relevant information regarding the student and the incident giving rise to the exclusion. The student's parent/guardian shall be asked to provide consent for a member of the Crisis Intervention Team to contact the professional completing the evaluation to provide necessary background information.
 - 1) If a parent/guardian cannot be reached and the student is screened and/or assessed by the appropriate school personnel as being in imminent danger of harming him/herself or others, the school may initiate an immediate assessment.

- D) The assessment and clearance must include:
 - 1) Identifying information;
 - 2) Medical, family, and mental health history;
 - 3) Review and description of presenting problem or incident;
 - 4) Mental status examination;
 - 5) Diagnosis, as appropriate;
 - 6) Triggers for reoccurrence, as appropriate;
 - 7) Recommendations for follow-up services, as appropriate;
 - 8) A specific statement that the student does not present a danger to him/herself or others;
 - 9) Evaluator's name and license number, and date of assessment;
 - 10) Other information deemed relevant by the evaluator.

- E) If the parents or guardians assume the cost of the assessment (through a provider of their own choosing), the resulting report is their property, and will require their consent before being released to the school district. Parents are encouraged to share such information with the school district. However, the required information (see Section above) must be included in the clearance letter.

V) Re-Entry to School

Following receipt of the school clearance letter, the District shall schedule a re-entry meeting with the child and his/her parents/guardian and an appropriate school district designee. Discussion may include, but is not limited to:

- A) Consideration of CST referral, as appropriate

- B) Discussion with parents regarding follow-up treatment, as necessary
- C) Discussion with parents regarding access to additional evaluative information (beyond clearance letter)

VI) Instruction During Exclusion:

Students will be provided with appropriate home or other out- of-school instruction in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1 et seq.* during any period of exclusion.

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