

VLACS recognizes the importance of suicide prevention of school-age children and that suicide is a complex issue that necessitates resources from schools, families, and the community to be harnessed in an appropriate and timely fashion in order to prevent suicide. VLACS promotes cooperative efforts between school districts, chartered public schools, and community suicide prevention program personnel to help prevent the suicide of school-age children. Given its unique position as a virtual school, VLACS will work closely and coordinate with local school districts. VLACS implements this policy to guide the development and implementation of a coordinated, evidence-informed plan to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide.

Beginning no later than April 1, 2021, VLACS will require faculty, staff, and designated school volunteers to receive at least 2 hours of evidence-informed training in suicide awareness and prevention annually, which may include training in youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, post-intervention, and resources available within the school and community.

Designated school volunteers under this policy are volunteers so designated by the Chief Executive Officer. Designated school volunteers under this policy are designated separately from and do not necessarily include Designated Volunteers under Policy IJOC - Volunteers.

VLACS will provide instruction as part of its curriculum for its full-time students in the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies, recognizing risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others, and providing help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help. Due to the unique position of VLACS as a virtual school educating many students on a part-time basis, it is expected that part-time VLACS students who attend a public school in the State of New Hampshire will receive this instruction through their local school district. Additionally, part-time students who are primarily home-schooled, attend a private school, attend school out-of-state, or who are otherwise unaffiliated with another New Hampshire public school will not receive this instruction through VLACS.

VLACS will make referral and crisis intervention information available to students, parents, faculty, staff, and designated school volunteers. This

information will be included on VLACS's online portal and at VLACS's physical location.

VLACS designates the director of school counseling, school counselors, and school administrators to serve as the points of contact when a student is believed to be at an elevated risk for suicide.

Legal References:

RSA 193-J, Suicide Prevention Education

Date Adopted: January 23, 2020