



County of Santa Clara Mental Health Board

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February 28, 2013

Dear Superintendent,

On behalf of the Santa Clara County Mental Health Board, we are offering all of our county's districts and schools no-cost, local resources that address State Superintendent Tom Torlakson's letter regarding the new Suicide Prevention component of SB187 School Safety Plans.

Three times as many people lose their lives to suicide than as to homicide. In our county, suicide is the fourth leading cause of death for children ages 10-14 and the third leading cause of death for youth ages 15-19; our county ranks 54th (with 58 being the worst) in the rate of adolescent self-inflicted injury in CA. (*SCC Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention 2010*)

In the aftermath of Sandy Hook, it is also prudent to remember that depression and suicide ideation can quickly turn to rage and tragedy, making it even more necessary to have Suicide Prevention policies, procedures and training in place.

In 2010, the Board of Supervisors approved the first-ever county-wide Strategic Plan for Suicide Prevention, creating, among other strategies, a pathway for the Santa Clara County community to access an array of Suicide Prevention trainings and resources.

We invite you to take full advantage of the attached materials:

- Sample Policy and Administrative Regulation language for Suicide Prevention
- Free QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Suicide Prevention trainings
- Referral resources

Our hope is that you will find the sample policy and A/R helpful in meeting the compliance component of SB187. We hope you encourage site administrators to make full use of QPR so that the training component of SB187 can be easily met. Suicide is usually preventable, given the right education, services and support.

As former members of the education community, we appreciate your continued commitment to our students and your interest in addressing these critical mental health issues. We would also enjoy getting an update on your district's progress so your good work can be shared with the community!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Carla A. Holtzclaw in blue ink.

Carla A. Holtzclaw, Chair
MHB-Family, Adolescent, Children Subcommittee

Handwritten signature of Gail A. Price in blue ink.

Gail A. Price, Co-Chair
MHB-Family, Adolescent, Children Subcommittee

BOTH ELECTRONIC AND HARD COPIES BEING SENT

cc: Pam Parker, SCC School Boards Association
Don Dawson, California Teachers Association, District B
Charlie Goetchius, CSEA South Bay Field Office
Dr. Nancy Peña, Ph.D., Director of Mental Health
Ken Yeager, President, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

Attachments: State Superintendent Tom Torlakson's Letter
Sample Policy and Administrative Regulation Language
QPR Training Information
Resource and Hotline Information