

Memorandum

Date: Wednesday, June 1, 2022
To: Public School District Administrators, Private School Administrators, Interested Parties
From: Paul Manriquez, Assistant State Superintendent Division for Learning Support
Subject: Notification of Youth Suicide Prevention Resources

Attached, please find the Model Notice of Suicide Prevention Resources for 2022. [Wis. Stat. sec. 115.365\(3\)](#) requires that “Each school board and the governing body of each private school annually shall inform their professional staff of the resources available from the department and other sources regarding suicide prevention.” It also requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to create a model notice for schools. This notice is attached and available for download, along with many other resources on the [suicide prevention website](#).

Data from the 2019 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) presented mixed results regarding youth suicide in our state. When compared to 2009 YRBS data, there has not been a statistically significant increase in the percentage of students who reported seriously considering suicide. However, multiple indicators suggest work remains to be done to reduce youth suicide. From 2009 to 2019, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of high school students reporting themselves as clinically depressed (21 percent in 2009 and 28.5 percent in 2019). Across those same ten years, there has also been an increase in the percentage of students who report that they have made a plan for ending their lives (11 percent in 2009 to 13 percent in 2019). Finally, while the overall percentage of high school students reporting they attempted suicide is statistically the same as in 2009, the 2019 percentage of female students who report attempting suicide is over 1.5 times that of males (9 percent for females and 5 percent for males). After being delayed by the pandemic, the 2021 YRBS statewide results will be available in the Fall of 2022 on the [YRBS webpage](#).

To help address suicide prevention in Wisconsin schools, DPI has an annual Peer-to-Peer Suicide Prevention Grant Program. Any tribal, private, or public school at which pupils attend high school grades is eligible for these Peer-to-Peer Suicide Prevention Grants. Recipients of a grant under this program may use the grant funds of up to \$1,000 to support an existing peer-to-peer suicide prevention program or implement a new program. Grantees are highly encouraged to implement an evidence-based program (such as Hope Squad or Sources of Strength). More information on this grant program can be found on the [Peer-to-Peer Suicide Prevention Grant webpage](#).

Please share this model notice with all your staff members; anyone who works with students must be able to recognize suicide warning signs and know how to respond quickly. Since this model notice is not covered by copyright, you can easily customize it by including resources from your school, local mental health providers, county mental health services, crisis services, or local chapters of Mental Health America of Wisconsin (MHA). You may also put the notice on your district letterhead, make copies, or forward it at will.

Please join me in continuing our important work in youth suicide prevention.

Attachment