

Griffin Technical Academies (GTA) Board Policy: *Suicide Prevention*

POLICY: The GTA Board of Director is committed to all reasonable proactive steps to create a school environment that does not alienate students and provides timely information and intervention to teachers, students and families in order to assure that student vulnerabilities are timely identified and addressed appropriately as well as postvention measures established.

Policy Rationale: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people aged 10-24. The CDC also reports that 17% of high school students have seriously considered attempting suicide – and 8% have attempted suicide -in the prior 12 months. Certain students are at higher risk of suicide, including those with disabilities, with mental health or substance abuse disorders, in foster care, and those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning. Students who are bereaved by suicide are also at greater risk. School personnel who interact with students on a daily basis are in a prime position to recognize warning signs of suicide and make appropriate referrals.

Guidance to the Superintendent: The GTA Board of Directors hereby directs the GTA Superintendent to develop structures and procedures required to implement GTA Board Policy on Suicide Prevention with such structures and procedures to include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. **Optimizing the safety of a school environment** that is designed to prevent violence, bullying, and the abuse of alcohol or other drugs
2. **Assuring that staff are aware of suicide prevention information and strategies (Staff Development).** Staff includes teachers, counselors, administrators, and all other school employees who interact with students.
3. **Creating a protocol for staff identification and intervention with students at risk of suicide.**

- 4. Delivering Instruction to students for critical thinking/problem solving and coping strategies to promote emotional well-being as well as an awareness of warning signs and suicidal ideation of others**
- 5. Developing a positive School climate that enhances student feelings of connectedness with the school**
- 6. Engaging Parents/families via provision of information regarding the Board's policy and rationale, the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, steps that family members may take and the school and community resources available for addressing youth in crisis.**