

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Staci Fisher and I am a counselor at Bend Senior High School in Bend Oregon. I have been a high school counselor for the past seven year.

I 100% support this policy. I have done countless Suicide Risk Assessments over the years and have fortunately have worked in districts that have procedures in place that support students and families.

At Bend High, in the 2016-2017 we had two students completed, Bend High also had a suicide completion on campus in 2014 where a student shot himself in front of his class. Because of this, we taken the initiative to help develop district wide policy regarding suicide procedures.

We have taken this a step further at my school. Currently, school counselors go into classrooms to talk about suicide, depression, anxiety, de-stigmatizing mental illness, coping skills and resources available to students. We also have provided training to our students on how to use the Safe Oregon app that they have downloaded on their IPAD. I believe that this work has paid off in helping keep students alive and by providing and removing barriers to services.

When the time comes to doing a Suicide Risk Assessment, I always follow the policy that my district has created. Let me tell you, they never get any easier, but there is a sense of security in knowing that I am following best practice and a policy that is in place to make sure students are safe and supported.

My only critique of this policy is that in order to plan prevention and follow up, counselors need time and resources to create prevention curriculum, identify at risk populations and provide the follow up needed.

Thank you for your time.

Staci Fisher