

## Parental Notification Policy

The Capistrano Unified School District strives to foster trust between the district and parent(s)/guardian(s) of its students. To that end, the board supports the fundamental rights of parent(s)/guardian(s) to direct the care and upbringing of their children, including the right to be informed of and involved in all aspects of their child's education to promote the best outcomes.

Due to the current nation-wide mental health crisis exacerbated by the global pandemic, the Capistrano Unified School District recognizes the need for frequent, ongoing and oftentimes immediate communication between school administration, staff and parents/guardians. Furthermore, with reports of depression, anxiety and suicide rates at an all-time high among public school students, action is needed to address this emerging crisis and support the health and welfare of district students.

It is the intent of Capistrano Unified School District in enacting this Parental Notification Policy to do all of the following:

- (i) Provide guidelines and procedures designed to maintain and, in some cases, restore trust between school districts and parent(s)/guardian(s) of students.
- (ii) Bring parent(s)/guardian(s) into the decision-making process for mental health and social-emotional issues of their children at the earliest possible time in order to prevent or reduce potential instances of self-harm.
- (iii) Promote communication with parent(s)/guardian(s) of students that promote the best outcomes for students' academic and social-emotional success.

It is the policy of the Capistrano Unified School District that district employees, administrators and certificated staff collaborate with parent(s)/guardian(s) in evaluating the needs of students having academic, attendance, social, emotional, or behavioral difficulties and in identifying strategies and programs that may assist such students in maximizing their potential.

This Parental Notification Policy requires the following:

1. The principal/designee, certificated staff, and/or school counselors, shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s), immediately or as soon as reasonably possible if any district employee, administrator, or certificated staff, becomes aware that a student is:
  - a. Exhibiting symptoms of depression, anxiety, a dramatic shift in academic performance, social withdrawal or other significant changes affecting a student's well-being.
  - b. In use of or in possession of a substance prohibited by law for a minor.
  - c. Experiencing sexual harassment as defined by BP 5183.
2. All district employees shall take every student's statement regarding suicidal intent seriously.
  - (a) Whenever an employee, administrator or certificated staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions based on the student's verbalizations or act of self-harm, the employee, administrator, or staff member shall promptly notify the principal or school counselor, who shall implement district's intervention protocols, as appropriate, and shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) immediately, or as soon as reasonably possible.
  - (b) When a suicide attempt or threat is known, the principal or designee shall ensure student safety by taking the following actions:
    - (i) Immediately secure medical treatment and/or mental health services as necessary;
    - (ii) Keep the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene;
    - (iii) Notify law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened and remove other students from the area in the event of an active suicidal act.
  - (c) The principal/designee, certificated staff, and/or school counselors shall document the incident in writing, including the steps that the school took in response to the suicide attempt or threat.

(d) School employees shall act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. An employee is not authorized to diagnose or treat mental illness unless specifically licensed and employed to do so. (Education Code 215)

3. The principal/designee, certificated staff, and/or school counselors shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any incident or complaint of cyber bullying, or a verbal or physical altercation involving their child, including bullying by or against their child, immediately or as soon as reasonably possible.

(a) Any student, parent/guardian, or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to bullying or who has witnessed bullying may report the incident to a teacher, the principal, district compliance officer, or any other available school employee.

(b) Any complaint of bullying, whether it is discriminatory or nondiscriminatory, shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with law and the district's Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) specified in Administrative Regulation (AR) 1312.3.

4. The principal/designee, certificated staff, and/or school counselors shall notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student immediately or as soon as reasonably possible, that the student has experienced any significant physical injury while on school property or participating in a school sponsored activity.

5. Unless otherwise specified, the notification required in Sections 1 through 4 above, can be by telephone, text, email, or conference. The district employees who make such notification shall either keep a record of such notification (if written) or document such notification (if verbal) and place the record or documentation in the student's official student information system.

6. For purposes of this Board Policy, Family Code section 6924, Health and Safety Code section 124260, and Education Code section 49602(c), inclusion of parent(s)/guardian(s) is appropriate unless specifically prohibited by law.

Ed code 49069  
Ed code 48985  
Ed code 51101  
BP 5183  
AR 1312.3