California Law Spurs Reforms after Suicide Cluster

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In an effort to address youth suicide, a new law in California requires schools to establish suicide prevention programs for students in grades 7 to 12. The state law mandates that schools have suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention procedures in place by the start of the next school year. In accordance with the law, the California Department of Education recently released a model youth suicide prevention policy, which recommends that schools increase awareness about student mental health issues and train teachers how to identify and assist those at risk. Schools are also encouraged to work closely with parents, mental health professionals, local government agencies, and community-based organizations in program planning and implementation. “I think the one thing we’ve learned is we have to have increased involvement, collaboration, and communication between different agencies,” said Jonathan Logan, a school psychologist and suicide prevention lead in the Clovis Unified school district. “We’ve come to understand this is not a school problem, not a home problem, but a community problem and it’s going to take all of us.”

Spark Extra! Learn more about the law and model youth suicide prevention policy.

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