Parent Notification1: Low/Moderate Risk (Sample Guidelines)

Parents or guardians should be contacted as soon as possible after a student has been identified as being at risk for suicide. The person who contacts the family is typically the principal and/or a member of the student services team with a special relationship with the student or family. Staff need to be sensitive toward the family’s culture, including attitudes towards suicide, mental health, privacy, and help-seeking.

1. Notify the parents by phone about the situation; explain why their child may be at risk for suicide.
2. Discuss available options for individual and/or family therapy.
   1. Provide the parents with the contact information of mental health service providers in the community. If possible, call and make an appointment while the parents are with you.
3. Follow up with an email confirming 1) they were notified of their child’s risk 2) if an intervention and safety plan were developed and 3) referrals for treatment were provided.
4. Tell the parents that you will follow up with them (ex. within the week/2-3) days by either phone or email. If this follow up conversation reveals that the parent has not contacted a mental health provider:
   1. Stress the importance of getting the child help; and
   2. Discuss why they have not contacted a provider and offer to assist with the process.
5. Document all contacts with the parents.