

Good morning/afternoon Mr./Ms./Dr. [Principal's Name],

My name is [your name] and I live in [name school district you are contacting or Colorado Springs/town/ or your connection to this school if applicable]. I know this year has been difficult for educators and I thank you for the work you do to ensure student safety and learning in the midst of the challenges.

I recently learned about The Suicide Prevention Collaborative of El Paso County's efforts to reduce child and teen deaths by suicide in our county. I volunteered to help in the outreach to schools. As a concerned [citizen/parent] I am reaching out to encourage the work you are doing in suicide prevention and highlight some resources. A critical prevention component is to ensure our school environments and school policies are supportive, inclusive and safe for LGBTQIA2+ youth and Indigenous youth, Black youth and other students of color. The Suicide Prevention Collaborative Issue Brief points out reasons and recommendations:

<https://spcollab.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Suicide-Postvention-Brief.pdf>

The LGBTQIA2+ Toolkit and Recommendations for Support: (include spcollab website once toolkit is posted)

The Diversus Health Suicide Prevention and Response toolkit is also valuable for you, students and parents: <https://spcollab.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Diversus-Health-Suicide-Prevention-and-Response.pdf>

I also support our school district adopt secure firearm storage messaging for parents and caregivers. Suicide by gun is the most prevalent means of suicide among our youth. Secure storage messaging is an important part of how we prevent access to firearms and suicide by gun.

I hope you and your school leaders will take time to review and discuss your prevention practices. I would like to follow up with you by phone in the week ahead to hear any feedback you have at this time. Nicole Johnson, Project Manager at The Suicide Prevention Collaborative of El Paso County, is able answer questions, provide policy templates and problem solve barriers to implementation for any of the best practice recommendations with you. She can be reached at nicole.johnston@ppchp.org.

Thank you,

