**Student Suicide Scenario: K-12**

*For guidelines on facilitating a tabletop exercise, including developing goals, objectives, rules, after-action reports, and follow-up actions, please see United Educators’* [*Crisis Response Planning: A Facilitators Guide for Conducting Tabletop Exercises*](https://www.ue.org/risk-management/the-workplace/crisis-response-testing-resources-tabletop-exercises/)*.*

*Note: facilitators can either read the scenarios/injects or play the videos for participants.*

Scenario

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*[Launch Video](https://vimeo.com/849505936/b0fc2fb6e6) (hold the “Control” key down while clicking this link if you’re using Windows)*

Albert “AJ” Jones III is a senior at Halliwell High School and has been on the varsity football team since his sophomore year. A skilled athlete, AJ has played multiple sports at a competitive level since he was a preteen. He comes from a long line of strong athletes and takes pride in that heritage. Last fall was tough for AJ as he suffered two concussions — one at the beginning of the year and one toward the end of the season. Both concussions required him to miss multiple games and practices; the most recent concussion prevented him from competing in the playoffs.

Due to his injuries and the concerns for his health moving forward, it is uncertain if he will be able to play football at the college level next year. His family, coaches and teammates have all noticed a change in AJ and have tried to support and encourage him.

Winter Parents Weekend starts tomorrow, and campus is buzzing with preparations. The third block teacher (who happens to be AJ’s coach) takes roll and notices AJ isn’t in class. Concerned that AJ will miss an important test, the teacher calls the front office to see if AJ is there or in the nurse’s office and asks that the Safety Director check the boys locker room.

Your Safety Director arrives at the locker room. AJ isn’t there. The Safety Director eventually locates AJ in the bathroom. He’s unresponsive. The Safety Director notifies the front office that he will begin CPR. The front office immediately calls 911 and notifies the Head of School, who also notifies your crisis management team.

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| Discussion questions:   * What are your priorities at this point, and how will you proceed? * Is there a defined protocol for this type of situation? * Who notifies AJ’s parents? When are they notified? * How and what do you communicate with faculty, staff, and students on- and off-campus? |

Inject 1

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Police and an ambulance have arrived on campus. AJ hasn’t responded to resuscitation efforts. Word is spreading on campus that emergency vehicles have arrived and police are securing the area, not allowing anyone to enter the building for the next several hours at a minimum. That evening, it’s announced that AJ has died from suicide. This news also quickly spreads throughout the campus community.

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| Discussion questions:   * What are your priorities at this point? * What will be shared with the media? Will they be allowed on campus? * What are the reunification plans? * How do you communicate with parents and the greater community? * Do you have a timeline for when people will have access to the building again? |

Inject 2

[](https://vimeo.com/849505775/9aa10cb4a2)

[*Launch Video*](https://vimeo.com/849505775/9aa10cb4a2) *(hold the “Control” key down while clicking this link if you’re using Windows)*

Your crisis management team decides on Monday to let students gather in the library on Tuesday to support each other and receive counseling, if needed.

On Tuesday morning, staff finds, to their surprise, that only a couple students came to the library. The students share that no one wanted to come to the library because electronic devices weren’t allowed. Staff discover that students were communicating with each other, but they were doing so primarily through texting on cell phones and posting online messages on social networking sites. Staff realize that students are not attending the traditional “crisis room” because they spontaneously created a “virtual crisis room” over the weekend.

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| Discussion questions:   * How will your crisis response team adapt to these circumstances? * Does your crisis management plan address responding to a student suicide? If yes, who is involved in decision-making and communication? * Do you have resources or partnerships with resources readily available to support your students? * How should your campus community and parents be notified of this development? * Are there Public Relations concerns in the scenario? If so, are they adequately addressed in your response? |