



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

www.sde.idaho.gov

Media Contact:

Kristin Rodine
Public Information Officer
208-332-6807
krodine@sde.idaho.gov

SDE announces grants for suicide prevention programs across Idaho

(BOISE) – Students at 21 middle and high schools across Idaho will fight against teen suicide by decreasing risk factors and building positive influences, thanks to state Sources of Strength grants for the upcoming school year. Also, for the first time, the Sources program will be extended to younger Idaho children through an elementary curriculum.

“Sources of Strength is a peer-based program that addresses students’ social-emotional and mental health needs and trains students to help each other,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra said. “I’m particularly excited that we are extending this proven approach to elementary schools, launching a new classroom curriculum called Sources of Strength Elementary. It will debut in 16 elementary schools across Idaho.”

“Sources of Strength cultivates supportive relationships with adults and builds the protective strengths children need, such as hope, persistence and the understanding that it’s OK to ask for help.”

The elementary Sources curriculum is designed for grades 3 through 6, delivering social emotional learning content “that focuses on the development of protective factors to help students better understand themselves, their strengths, and their power to positively influence their world. The topic of suicide is explicitly addressed through a strength-based lens and in a developmentally appropriate and accessible way,” according to the [Sources of Strength website](#).

The elementary curriculum, funded through the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant Program with additional funds from a federal Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) grant, will go to these Idaho schools: Athol Elementary; Spirit Lake Elementary; Betty Kiefer, Garwood, John Brown and Twin Lakes elementary schools in Rathdrum; Winton Elementary in Coeur d’Alene; Atlas Elementary and Northwest Expedition Academy in Hayden; Skyway Elementary in the Vallivue School District; Compass Public Charter in Meridian; North Star Charter in Eagle; Pierce Park Elementary and Inspire Connections Academy in Boise; Rockford Elementary/Snake River Middle School in Blackfoot; and Kershaw Intermediate School in Sugar City.

Of the 21 Idaho middle and high schools that will receive \$2,500 each in Sources of Strength funds for the coming year, 12 will be funded through a GLS grant awarded in January to the State Department of Education. The \$3.6 million, five-year grant will greatly expand Idaho's youth suicide prevention efforts to include trained behavioral health case managers in each region of the state and peer-to-peer groups for survivors of suicide attempts. Ten additional schools will be added each year of the grant period.

Schools funded by the GLS grant for the coming year include: Anser Charter School in Garden City; Bear Lake High School in Montpelier; Boundary County Middle School in Bonners Ferry; Firth Middle School; Gooding Middle School; Initial Point High School in Kuna; Murtaugh Middle School/High School; St. Maries High School; Sugar-Salem High School; Sugar-Salem Junior High School; White Pines STEM Academy in Amon; and William Thomas Middle School in American Falls.

The other nine schools in this Sources of Strength cohort will receive state funds through a subgrant from the Department of Health and Welfare. They are: Forest M Bird Charter School in Sandpoint; St. Maries Middle School; Inspire Connections Academy in Boise; North Star Charter School in Eagle; Eagle Rock Middle School in Idaho Falls; Ririe Junior/Senior High School; Snake River Junior High School and Snake River High School in Blackfoot; and Teton High School in Driggs.

Sources of Strength has been established in 105 Idaho middle and high schools since the state implemented the peer-based youth suicide prevention project in 2013. With peer leaders and adult advisers, the program cultivates supportive relationships, builds protective factors and makes it easier for students considering suicide to seek help

The program is part of the [Idaho Lives Project](#), a State Department of Education partnership with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Suicide Prevention Program and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration through their Garrett Lee Smith State/Tribal Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Grant Program.

###