

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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SENATE BILL 316

Short Title: Suicide Prevention/Awareness School Personnel. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Krawiec, D. Davis, Pate (Primary Sponsors); Lee, Smith-Ingram, and Waddell.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 20, 2017

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR A TRAINING PROGRAM ON YOUTH SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION AND RISK REFERRAL PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 25A of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-375.10. Youth suicide awareness and prevention training and risk referral protocol for school personnel.

(a) State Board Training Program and Protocol. – The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, shall develop a youth suicide awareness and prevention training program and a model risk referral protocol for local school administrative units and charter schools to provide to school personnel who work directly with students in grades K through 12, including teachers, teacher assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, janitorial staff, media coordinators, athletic coaches, administrators, administrative assistants, school safety resource officers, school nurses, social workers, psychologists, and counselors. The training program shall consist of at least two hours of evidence-informed instruction to increase awareness of suicide, identification of risk factors and signs, and information for student referral for suicide prevention resources and support. The model risk referral protocol shall provide guidelines to local school administrative units on identification of at-risk students, suicide prevention procedures, and referral sources. The training program and model risk referral protocol shall be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.

(b) Training and Protocol Requirements. – Each local school administrative unit shall provide the training program and model risk referral protocol developed by the State Board of Education under subsection (a) of this section, or a locally developed plan that meets the requirements of subsection (c) of this section, to school personnel who work directly with students in grades K through 12 at no cost to the employee. A school employee who works directly with students in grades K through 12 shall receive training within 12 months of employment with a local board of education and annually thereafter while employed with that local board of education. The training may be offered in various formats, including electronically, through videoconferencing, or through an individual program of study of designated materials consisting of at least two hours of instruction.

(c) Locally Developed Training and Risk Referral Protocols. – A local board of education may comply with the training and protocol requirements of this section by



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1 developing a local plan that includes, at a minimum, (i) conveying information on State and
2 national data on suicide deaths and attempts, suicide methods, and at-risk populations, (ii)
3 myths and attitudes about suicide, (iii) warning signs and symptoms for suicide, (iv)
4 identification of at-risk students and steps for referring students to support services, (v)
5 protective factors for prevention of suicide, and (vi) safe messaging to children. In addition, a
6 local plan shall include protocols for implementation and mandatory training that include at
7 least the following:

- 8 (1) A plan to include specialized training for student support personnel,
9 including administrators, school nurses, counselors, social workers, and
10 psychologists.
- 11 (2) A safety plan for the school in the event of (i) identification of a student as
12 being at-risk of suicide, including a student help plan and immediate
13 assistance and (ii) a suicide death or suicide attempt by a student enrolled in
14 the school, including a care plan for peers and school personnel.
- 15 (3) Designation of a school employee as the school suicide prevention
16 responder.
- 17 (4) A plan for communication with a parent or legal guardian of a student
18 identified as at-risk, including safe transfer of the student to the parent or
19 legal guardian.
- 20 (5) A plan for post-intervention for a student who has been identified as at-risk
21 or has attempted suicide, including reentry into the classroom.

22 (d) Reporting. – By September 15 of each year, as part of the Healthy Active Children
23 Policy survey report required by State Board of Education policy, SHLT-000, each local school
24 administrative unit shall report to the Department of Public Instruction on prior school year
25 compliance with the mandatory training requirements and prevention activities required by this
26 section.

27 (e) No local board of education, nor its members, employees, designees, agents, or
28 volunteers, shall be liable in civil damages to any party for any act or omission of an act
29 relating to the provision of, participation in, or implementation of the components of the
30 training program or protocol required by this section unless that act or omission amounts to
31 gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing."

32 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-218.75 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

33 "(g) Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training and Risk Referral Protocol. –
34 Each charter school shall provide a youth suicide awareness and prevention training program
35 and risk referral protocol to school personnel who work directly with students in grades K
36 through 12 on an annual basis in accordance with G.S. 115C-375.10. By September 15 of each
37 year, the charter school shall report to the Department of Public Instruction on prior school year
38 compliance with required training requirements and prevention activities. No charter school
39 board of directors, nor its members, employees, designees, agents, or volunteers, shall be liable
40 in civil damages to any party for any act or omission of an act relating to the provision of,
41 participation in, or implementation of the components of the training program or protocol
42 required by this section unless that act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton
43 conduct, or intentional wrongdoing."

44 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with
45 the 2018-2019 school year.