

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 285
Committee Substitute Favorable 3/22/17

Short Title: Suicide Prevention/Awareness School Personnel.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 9, 2017

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR A TRAINING PROGRAM ON YOUTH SUICIDE
3 AWARENESS AND PREVENTION AND A RISK REFERRAL PROTOCOL FOR
4 SCHOOL PERSONNEL.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

8 "§ 115C-375.10. Youth suicide awareness and prevention training and risk referral
9 protocol for school personnel.

10 (a) State Board Training Program and Protocol. – The State Board of Education, in
11 consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health,
12 shall develop a youth suicide awareness and prevention training program and a model risk
13 referral protocol for local school administrative units and charter schools to provide to school
14 personnel who work directly with students in grades six through 12. The training program shall
15 consist of at least two hours of evidence-based instruction to increase awareness of suicide,
16 identification of risk factors and signs, and information for student referral for suicide
17 prevention resources and support. The model risk referral protocol shall provide guidelines to
18 local school administrative units on identification of at-risk students, suicide prevention
19 procedures, and referral sources. The training program and model risk referral protocol shall be
20 periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.

21 (b) Training and Protocol Requirements. – Each local school administrative unit shall
22 provide the training program and model risk referral protocol developed by the State Board of
23 Education pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, or a locally developed plan that meets the
24 requirements of subsection (c) of this section, to school personnel who work directly with
25 students in grades six through 12 at no cost to the school employee. School personnel who
26 work directly with students in grades six through 12 shall receive youth suicide awareness and
27 prevention training within 12 months of employment with a local board of education and every
28 five years thereafter while employed with that local board of education. The training may be
29 offered in various formats, including electronically, either via videoconference or through an
30 individual program of study that consists of at least two hours of instruction.

31 (c) Locally Developed Plan; Training and Risk Referral Protocols. – A local board of
32 education may comply with the training and risk referral protocol requirements of this section
33 by developing a local plan in accordance with subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection.

34 (1) A locally developed youth suicide awareness and prevention training
35 program shall include, at a minimum:



- 1 a. Information on State and national data on suicide deaths and
2 attempts, suicide methods, and at-risk population.
3 b. Myths and attitudes about suicide.
4 c. Warning signs and symptoms for suicide.
5 d. How to identify at-risk students and steps for referring at-risk
6 students to support services.
7 e. Methods and factors to prevent suicide.
8 f. Safe messaging protocols for students.
9 (2) A locally developed risk referral protocol on identification of at-risk
10 students, suicide prevention procedures, and referral sources shall include, at
11 a minimum:
12 a. A plan to provide specialized training for student support personnel,
13 including administrators, school nurses, counselors, social workers,
14 and psychologists.
15 b. A safety plan for the school in the event of (i) the identification of a
16 student as being at-risk of suicide, including a student help plan and
17 immediate assistance, and (ii) a suicide death or suicide attempt by a
18 student enrolled in the school, including a care plan for peers and
19 school personnel.
20 c. The designation of a school employee as the school suicide
21 prevention responder.
22 d. A protocol for communication with a parent or legal guardian of a
23 student who is identified as at-risk, including safe transfer of the
24 student to the parent or legal guardian.
25 e. A plan for post-intervention for a student who has been identified as
26 at-risk or has attempted suicide, including reentry into the classroom.
27 (d) Reporting. – As part of the Healthy Active Children Policy survey report required
28 by State Board of Education policy, SHLT-000, each local school administrative unit shall
29 report to the Department of Public Instruction on its compliance during the previous school
30 year with the mandatory training and risk referral protocols required by this section on or
31 before September 15 of each year. The Department of Public Instruction shall compile the
32 reports received pursuant to this section and submit an overview of State compliance during the
33 previous school year with the mandatory training and risk referral protocols to the Joint
34 Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Joint Legislative
35 Education Oversight Committee on or before December 1 of each year.
36 (e) No local board of education, nor its members, employees, designees, agents, or
37 volunteers, shall be liable in civil damages to any party for any act or omission of an act
38 relating to the provision of, participation in, or implementation of the components of the
39 training program or protocol required by this section unless that act or omission amounts to
40 gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing.
41 (f) For purposes of this section, the term "school personnel" includes teachers, teacher
42 assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, janitorial staff, media coordinators, athletic coaches,
43 administrators, administrative assistants, school safety resource officers, school nurses, social
44 workers, psychologists, counselors, and any other school employee who has direct contact with
45 students in grades kindergarten through 12."
46 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-218.75 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:
47 "(g) Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training and Risk Referral Protocol. –
48 Each charter school shall provide a youth suicide awareness and prevention training program
49 and risk referral protocol to school personnel who work directly with students in grades six
50 through 12 once every five years in accordance with G.S. 115C-375.10. Each charter school
51 shall report to the Department of Public Instruction on its compliance during the previous

1 school year with the mandatory training and risk referral protocols required by
2 G.S. 115C-375.10 on or before September 15 of each year. No charter school board of
3 directors, nor its members, employees, designees, agents, or volunteers, shall be liable in civil
4 damages to any party for any act or omission of an act relating to the provision of, participation
5 in, or implementation of the components of the training program or protocol required by this
6 section unless that act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional
7 wrongdoing."

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