

# SENATE, No. 528

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## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2022 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**Senator NELLIE POU**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Senator Codey**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires certain additional school district personnel to complete training program on suicide prevention.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Senate Education Committee with technical review.



1    **AN ACT** concerning annual suicide prevention instruction for public  
2       school teaching staff members and amending P.L.2005, c.310.

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4       **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7       1. Section 2 of P.L.2005, c.310 (C.18A:6-112) is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9       2. a. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the New  
10 Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council established in the  
11 Department of Children and Families pursuant to P.L.2003, c.214  
12 (C.30:9A-22 et seq.), shall, as part of the professional development  
13 requirement established by the State board for public school teaching  
14 staff members, require each public school teaching staff member to  
15 complete at least two hours of instruction in suicide prevention, to be  
16 provided by a licensed health care professional with training and  
17 experience in mental health issues, in each professional development  
18 period. The instruction in suicide prevention shall include  
19 information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and  
20 incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying and information  
21 on reducing the risk of suicide in students who are members of  
22 communities identified as having members at high risk of suicide.

23       b. Not including teaching staff members subject to the  
24 requirements of subsection a. of this section, a school employee or  
25 an employee of a contracted service provider who has regular and  
26 direct contact with students, as determined by the board of education,  
27 shall complete a one-time training program in suicide prevention,  
28 awareness, and response developed or identified by the Department  
29 of Education pursuant to subsection c. of this section. A person  
30 subject to the requirements of this subsection shall complete the  
31 required training program not less than 12 months from the date of  
32 the development or identification by the department of training  
33 programs and the development of the fact sheet or 12 months from  
34 the person's date of hire, whichever occurs later.

35       c. The Department of Education, in consultation with the  
36 Department of Children and Families, the Department of Human  
37 Services, the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory  
38 Council, suicide prevention experts, and interested stakeholders in  
39 the education community, shall:

40       (1) develop or identify training programs on suicide prevention,  
41 awareness, and response that persons subject to the requirements of  
42 subsection b. of this section may access and complete, free of charge,  
43 to fulfill the requirements. The department may enter into an  
44 agreement with one or more private entities to make a training

**EXPLANATION** – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is  
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 program available, free of charge, to persons subject to the  
2 requirements of subsection b. of this section; and

3 (2) develop an educational fact sheet on suicide prevention,  
4 awareness, and response. The educational fact sheet shall include,  
5 but not be limited to, model guidance, best practices, and educational  
6 resources that will assist school districts in developing their own  
7 suicide prevention, awareness, and response protocols. Among the  
8 best practices that districts are encouraged to consider in staff  
9 training and in the development of school district protocols is the use  
10 of table-top exercises where appropriate staff rehearse scenarios in  
11 the event of a suicide impacting the school district.

12 The educational fact sheet shall be made available on the  
13 department's website and shall be distributed, at no charge, to all  
14 school districts. The department shall update the educational fact  
15 sheet on an annual basis in accordance with trends in the field of  
16 youth suicide prevention.

17 d. Beginning in the first full school year following the date of  
18 the development or identification by the department of the training  
19 programs and the development of the educational fact sheet, and  
20 annually thereafter, each school district and contracted service  
21 provider shall provide to their employees who are subject to the  
22 requirements of subsection a. or b. of this section, in a hard copy  
23 paper form or in an electronic form:

24 (1) the educational fact sheet developed pursuant to paragraph (2)  
25 of subsection c. of this section; and

26 (2) guidelines on the school district's reporting and suicide  
27 prevention, awareness, and response protocols including, but not  
28 limited to, contact information for each school's designated staff who  
29 should be notified whenever an employee believes a student may be  
30 at risk for suicide.

31 e. A school district shall provide information concerning its  
32 compliance with the requirements of this section in the New Jersey  
33 Quality Single Accountability Continuum Statement of Assurance  
34 submitted by the district to the executive county superintendent of  
35 schools. A contracted service provider shall annually provide a  
36 statement of assurance to the school district concerning its  
37 compliance with the provisions of subsections b. and d. of this  
38 section.

39 f. (1) No person shall have a cause of action for any loss or  
40 damage caused by any act or omission resulting from the  
41 implementation of the provisions of this section or resulting from any  
42 training, or lack thereof, required by this section.

43 (2) The training, or lack thereof, required by the provisions of this  
44 section shall not be construed to impose any specific duty of care.

45 (cf: P.L.2010, c.122, s.4)

1       2. This act shall take effect immediately, but shall remain  
2 inoperative until the Department of Education has developed or  
3 identified and made available to school districts the training  
4 programs and developed the educational fact sheet required pursuant  
5 to subsection c. of section 2 of P.L.2005, c.310 (C.18A:6-112).