ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2271

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 6, 2022

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 2271.

Under current law, public school teaching staff members receive instruction in suicide prevention as part of their professional development requirements. This bill provides that other school district employees and employees of a contracted service provider who have regular and direct contact with students, as determined by the board of education, will be required to complete a one-time training program in suicide prevention, awareness, and response developed or identified by the Department of Education.

The bill also directs the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Human Services, the New Jersey Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council, suicide prevention experts, and interested stakeholders in the education community to: 1) develop or identify training programs on suicide prevention, awareness, and response that persons subject to the bill's training requirements may access and complete free of charge; and 2) develop an educational fact sheet on suicide prevention, awareness, and response. The educational fact sheet will be made available on the department's website and distributed at no charge to all school districts.

Under the bill's provisions, each school district and contracted service provider is to annually provide to its employees the educational fact sheet and guidelines on the school district's reporting and suicide prevention, awareness, and response protocols, including contact information for each school's designated staff who should be notified whenever an employee believes a student may be at risk for suicide.

The bill specifies that a person will not have a cause of action for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission resulting from the implementation of the bill's provisions.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill is not certified as requiring a fiscal note.