

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 285

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

Sponsors: Representatives Murphy, Hardister, Dollar, and Dobson (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Health, if favorable, Education - K-12

March 9, 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 developing a local plan
that includes, at a minimum, (i) conveying information on State and national data on suicide
deaths and attempts, suicide methods, and at-risk populations, (ii) myths and attitudes about



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1 suicide, (iii) warning signs and symptoms for suicide, (iv) identification of at-risk students and
2 steps for referring students to support services, (v) protective factors for prevention of suicide, and
3 (vi) safe messaging to children. In addition, a local plan shall include protocols for implementation
4 and mandatory training that include at least the following:

5 (1) A plan to include specialized training for student support personnel, including
6 administrators, school nurses, counselors, social workers, and psychologists.

7 (2) A safety plan for the school in the event of (i) identification of a student as
8 being at-risk of suicide, including a student help plan and immediate assistance,
9 and (ii) a suicide death or suicide attempt by a student enrolled in the school,
10 including a care plan for peers and school personnel.

11 (3) Designation of a school employee as the school suicide prevention responder.

12 (4) A plan for communication with a parent or legal guardian of a student identified
13 as at-risk, including safe transfer of the student to the parent or legal guardian.

14 (5) A plan for post-intervention for a student who has been identified as at-risk or
15 has attempted suicide, including reentry into the classroom.

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

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

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

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

38 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the
39 2018-2019 school year.