

## CHAPTER 111

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

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

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

C.18A:6-112 Public school teaching staff, school employee, contracted service provider employee, regular, direct contact with students, suicide prevention instruction, required.

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

b. Not including teaching staff members subject to the requirements of subsection a. of this section and not including licensed mental health care professionals, a school employee or an employee of a contracted service provider who has regular and direct contact with students, as determined by the board of education, shall complete a one-time training program in suicide prevention, awareness, and response identified by the Department of Education pursuant to subsection c. of this section. A person subject to the requirements of this subsection shall complete the required training program not less than 12 months from the date of the identification by the department of training programs or 12 months from the person's date of hire, whichever occurs later.

c. 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, shall identify training programs on suicide prevention, awareness, and response that persons subject to the requirements of subsection b. of this section may access and complete, free of charge, to fulfill the requirements. The department may enter into an agreement with one or more private entities to make a training program available, free of charge, to persons subject to the requirements of subsection b. of this section.

d. Not less than 12 months following the date of the identification by the department of the training programs or not less than 12 months from the person's date of hire, and annually thereafter, each school district and contracted service provider shall provide to their employees who are subject to the requirements of subsection a. or b. of this section, in a hard copy paper form or in an electronic form guidelines on the school district's reporting and suicide prevention, awareness, and response protocols including, but not limited to, contact information for each school's designated staff who should be notified whenever an employee believes a student may be at risk for suicide.

e. A school district shall provide information concerning its compliance with the requirements of this section in the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum Statement of Assurance submitted by the district to the executive county superintendent of schools. A

contracted service provider shall annually provide a statement of assurance to the school district concerning its compliance with the provisions of subsections b. and d. of this section.

f. Each person who is required pursuant to subsection a. or subsection b. of this section to complete a suicide prevention training program shall have a duty to warn and protect when the following conditions exist:

(1) a student has communicated to that person a clearly identifiable threat of imminent, serious physical violence against oneself and the circumstances are such that a reasonable person would believe the student intended to carry out the threat; or

(2) the circumstances are such that a reasonable person would believe the student intended to carry out an act of imminent, serious physical violence against oneself.

A person acting in good faith and who takes reasonable steps to discharge a duty to warn and protect shall be immune from civil and criminal liability in regard to that disclosure.

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

Approved July 20, 2023.