

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 495

BY REPRESENTATIVES SCHLEGEL, ADAMS, AMEDEE, BACALA, BEAULLIEU, BOYD, BRASS, BUTLER, CARPENTER, CARRIER, CORMIER, CREWS, DAVIS, DEVILLIER, DUBUISSON, ECHOLS, EDMONDS, EDMONSTON, FIRMENT, FISHER, FREEMAN, FREIBERG, GAINES, GAROFALO, GREEN, HARRIS, HODGES, HORTON, ILLG, JEFFERSON, MIKE JOHNSON, KERNER, LAFLEUR, LANDRY, LARVADAIN, MARCELLE, MCFARLAND, MCKNIGHT, MCMAHEN, NEWELL, CHARLES OWEN, PIERRE, SCHAMERHORN, SCHEXNAYDER, SELDERS, STAGNI, ST. BLANC, TARVER, THOMPSON, WHEAT, WHITE, WILLARD, WRIGHT, VILLIO, AND ZERINGUE AND SENATOR BARROW

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:282.4(C)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (c) and 286(A) and
3 to enact R.S. 17:282.4(G) and (H), relative to suicide prevention and violence in
4 schools; to require training on related topics for certain students; to provide for
5 requirements of the state Department of Education; to require formation of student
6 organizations; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Suicide, Safety, and
9 Violence Education (SAVE) Students Act".

10 Section 2. R.S. 17:282.4(C)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (c) and 286(A) are
11 hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:282.4(G) and (H) are hereby enacted to read as
12 follows:

13 §282.4. Youth suicide prevention programs; student safety and violence and social
14 isolation prevention training; policies; intent; rules; services; funding

15 * * *

16 C. Any city, parish, or other local public school system offering a youth
17 suicide prevention program established pursuant to this Section shall do so in

1 accordance with such rules and regulations adopted by the state board and shall
2 report its participation to the state Department of Education. The department shall
3 designate such a school as a Suicide Prevention Certified School and maintain an
4 updated list of such schools on its website. A youth suicide prevention program may
5 include but shall not be limited to the following:

6 (1) Classroom instruction, via in-person, video, or a combination of in-
7 person and video training, integrated into the curricula designed to achieve any of
8 the following objectives:

9 * * *

10 (c) Teach students ~~to recognize signs of suicidal tendencies and other facts~~
11 ~~about youth suicide~~ how to identify the signs and signals of depression, suicide, and
12 self-injury in themselves and in their peers, the importance of seeking help for
13 themselves and their peers, and the process for seeking help.

14 * * *

15 G.(1) As part of an existing, relevant course of instruction, each public
16 school shall offer age- and grade-appropriate evidence-based training on suicide
17 prevention and student safety and violence and social isolation prevention to students
18 in grades six through twelve. For purposes of this Subsection, "evidence-based"
19 shall mean the training meets one of the following criteria:

20 (a) Demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or
21 positive evaluation that such a program or practice is likely to improve relevant
22 outcomes and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of the program or
23 practice.

24 (b) Has a statistically significant effect on relevant outcomes based on one
25 of the following:

26 (i) Strong evidence from at least one experimental study.

27 (ii) Moderate evidence from at least one quasi-experimental study.

28 (iii) Promising evidence from at least one correlation study with statistical
29 controls for selection bias.

1 (2) Each student shall receive not less than one hour or one standard class
2 period, whichever is shorter, of training in suicide prevention per year. Such training
3 may be administered through student assemblies or in-person, video, or a
4 combination of in-person and video training, and shall include but need not be
5 limited to:

6 (a) How to identify observable warning signs and signals of an individual
7 who may be at risk of harming themselves.

8 (b) The steps students can take to report harmful or potentially harmful
9 activity.

10 (3) Each student shall receive not less than one hour or one standard class
11 period, whichever is shorter, of training in student safety and violence and social
12 isolation prevention per year. Such training may be administered through student
13 assemblies, digital learning, and homework, and shall include but need not be limited
14 to:

15 (a) How to identify observable warning signs and signals of an individual
16 who may be at risk of harming others.

17 (b) The importance of taking threats seriously and seeking help.

18 (c) The steps students can take to report dangerous, violent, or threatening
19 activity.

20 (d) What social isolation is and how to identify social isolation in others.

21 (e) The importance of taking social isolation seriously and seeking help for
22 peers.

23 (f) How to utilize strategies to be more socially inclusive in the classroom
24 and community and how to establish connections with others.

25 (4) Upon written request of a student's parent or legal guardian, a student
26 shall be excused from any of the training.

27 (5) The state Department of Education shall develop and maintain a list of
28 evidence-based suicide prevention and student safety and violence and social
29 isolation prevention training, including but not limited to no-cost programming, on

1 the department website. The department shall review the list at least every three
2 years.

3 H. Each public school governing authority shall allow the creation of a
4 student-led club focused on suicide prevention, student safety, and violence and
5 social isolation prevention for each school under its jurisdiction that has students in
6 grades six through twelve. Each club shall:

7 (1) Be open to any member of the student population.

8 (2) Have at least one school employee serve as an advisor.

9 (3) Develop and maintain awareness activities related to suicide prevention
10 or student safety and violence and social isolation prevention training.

11 (4) Foster opportunities for student leadership development.

12 * * *

13 §286. Violence prevention, self-esteem, and peer mediation

14 A. Any public elementary ~~or secondary~~ school ~~in Louisiana~~ may offer
15 instruction in violence prevention, self-esteem, and peer mediation. Any public
16 secondary school may offer instruction in self-esteem and peer mediation. The
17 curriculum for such instruction shall be developed and approved by the State Board
18 of Elementary and Secondary Education.

19 * * *

20 Section 2. The provisions of this Act shall become effective on July 1, 2023, and
21 shall be initially implemented for the 2023-2024 school year.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____