

2019 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 53

BY REPRESENTATIVES MOSS, CARMODY, AND DWIGHT

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

SCHOOLS/EMPLOYEES: Provides relative to suicide prevention in schools

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:282.4(C)(introductory paragraph) and 437.1 and to enact R.S.  
3 17:282.4(F) and (G) and 3996(B)(54), relative to suicide prevention in schools; to  
4 provide for training for school employees, to provide relative to services provided  
5 to students; to provide relative to student identification cards; to provide for  
6 programs and policies; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:282.4(C)(introductory paragraph) and 437.1 are hereby amended  
9 and reenacted and R.S. 17:282.4(F) and (G) and 3996(B)(54) are hereby enacted to read as  
10 follows:

11 §282.4. Youth suicide prevention programs; policies; intent; rules; services; funding

12 \* \* \*

13 C. Any city, parish, or other local public school system offering a youth  
14 suicide prevention program established pursuant to this Section shall do so in  
15 accordance with such rules and regulations adopted by the state board; and shall  
16 report its participation to the state Department of Education. The department shall  
17 designate such a school as a Suicide Prevention Certified School and maintain an  
18 updated list of such schools on its website. A youth suicide prevention program may  
19 include but shall not be limited to the following:

20 \* \* \*

1           F. The governing authority of each public and approved nonpublic school  
2           shall adopt a policy on student suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention  
3           which addresses the following:

4           (1) Increasing awareness of the risk factors, including but not limited to:

5           (a) Mental health and substance use conditions.

6           (b) Childhood abuse, neglect, and trauma.

7           (c) Potential causes of stress, such as bullying, harassment, and relationship  
8           problems.

9           (d) Secondary trauma from a suicide or sensationalized or graphic accounts  
10          of suicide in media.

11          (e) History of suicide attempts and related family history.

12          (2) How school employees should respond to suspicion, concerns, or warning  
13          signs exhibited by students.

14          (3) How school employees should respond to a crisis situation in which a  
15          student is in imminent danger to himself.

16          (4) Policies and protocol for communication with parents, including  
17          specifications for circumstances in which parental notification is not in the best  
18          interest of the student.

19          (5) Counseling services available within the school for students and their  
20          families related to suicide prevention.

21          (6) Dissemination of information concerning crisis intervention, suicide  
22          prevention, and mental health services in the community for students and their  
23          families and school employees.

24          (7) Identification and development of partnerships with community  
25          organizations and agencies for referral of students to health, mental health, substance  
26          use, and social support services, including development of at least one memorandum  
27          of understanding between the school system and such an entity in the community or  
28          region.

1           (8) Development of a plan to assist survivors of attempted suicide and to  
2           assist students and school employees in coping with an attempted suicide or a suicide  
3           death within the school or community.

4           (9) Development of any other related program or activity for students or  
5           school employees.

6           G. Beginning not later than the 2020-2021 school year, the governing  
7           authority of each public and approved nonpublic secondary school that issues student  
8           identification cards shall have printed on the cards the following information:

9                   (1) The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline number.

10                   (2) The Crisis Text Line number.

11                   (3) A local suicide prevention hotline number.

12   \*       \*       \*

13           §437.1. Suicide prevention; in-service training; materials and supplies; limitation  
14           on liability

15           A. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall develop  
16           and adopt guidelines for in-service training in suicide prevention as provided for in  
17           Subsection B of this Section. The board, in coordination with the Louisiana  
18           Department of Health, shall identify suitable ~~materials~~ programs for use in such  
19           training. The state Department of Education shall post on its website a listing of  
20           approved programs. The list shall include instructions on accessing such programs.  
21           The board shall update the list every five years.

22           B. ~~The board shall adopt rules to require that all~~ All public and approved  
23           nonpublic school ~~teachers, school counselors, and principals and, as determined by~~  
24           ~~the board, other school administrators~~ for whom such training is deemed beneficial  
25           employees shall participate annually in at least two hours of in-service training in  
26           suicide prevention. ~~Such rules shall include provisions permitting~~ The board may  
27           permit such training to be ~~provided~~ completed by self-review of suitable ~~materials~~  
28           programs.

1 C.(1) No person shall have a cause of action for any loss or damage caused  
2 by any act or omission resulting from the implementation of or good faith attempt  
3 to implement the provisions of this Section or resulting from any training; or lack  
4 thereof; required by this Section, unless such loss or damage was caused by willful  
5 or wanton misconduct.

6 (2) The training; or lack thereof; required by the provisions of this Section  
7 shall not be construed to impose any specific duty of care.

8 D. (1) The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall  
9 annually survey employees of all public and approved nonpublic secondary schools  
10 as defined in R.S. 17:236(C) to ascertain their compliance with the suicide  
11 prevention training requirements of this Section.

12 (2) The governing authority of each such secondary school shall document  
13 and verify to the state Department of Education, by December thirty-first of each  
14 year, that all school employees have received the mandatory suicide prevention  
15 training as outlined in this Section.

16 (3) The board shall annually develop a written report of the survey findings  
17 and any recommendations and shall submit such report to the Senate Committee on  
18 Education, the House Committee on Education, the Senate Committee on Health and  
19 Welfare, and the House Committee on Health and Welfare not later than March first  
20 of each year.

21 E. This Section shall be known and may be cited as the "Jason Flatt Act".

22 \* \* \*

23 §3996. Charter schools; exemptions; requirements

24 \* \* \*

25 B. Notwithstanding any state law, rule, or regulation to the contrary and  
26 except as may be otherwise specifically provided for in an approved charter, a  
27 charter school established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this  
28 Chapter and its approved charter and the school's officers and employees shall be  
29 exempt from all statutory mandates or other statutory requirements that are

1 applicable to public schools and to public school officers and employees except for  
2 the following laws otherwise applicable to public schools with the same grades:

3 \* \* \*

4 (54) Student identification cards, R.S. 17:282.4(G).

5 \* \* \*

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 53 Original

2019 Regular Session

Moss

**Abstract:** Provides relative to requirements for youth suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, in-service training for school employees and services available to students.

Present law requires the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to prescribe rules, collaboratively with the La. Dept. of Health (LDH) Adolescent Health Initiative, for a youth suicide prevention plan for public schools. Requires that such plan include procedures for development of suicide prevention programs by local school systems.

Present law requires local suicide prevention programs to comply with BESE regulations and provides relative to the content of such programs.

Proposed law retains present law and further requires schools offering youth suicide prevention programs to report such participation to the state Dept. of Education (DOE). Requires DOE to designate such a school as a Suicide Prevention Certified School and to maintain a list of such schools on its website.

Proposed law requires the governing authority of each public and approved nonpublic school to adopt policies on student suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, which policies address:

- (1) Increasing awareness of risk factors.
- (2) Employee response to suspicion, concerns, or warning signs exhibited by students and to crisis situations.
- (3) Policies and protocol for communication with parents.
- (4) Services available at the school and in the community.
- (5) Development of a plan to assist survivors.

Proposed law requires the governing authority of each public and approved nonpublic secondary school that issues student identification cards to have printed on the cards the phone numbers for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline, the Crisis Text Line, and a local suicide prevention hotline. Proposed law is applicable to charter schools.

Present law requires BESE to adopt guidelines for in-service training of school employees in suicide prevention. Requires that the board identify suitable materials for use in such training. Requires that the board adopt rules requiring public and approved nonpublic school employees to participate in at least two hours of such training annually.

Proposed law requires that the board identify suitable programs and requires coordination with LDH in identification of such programs. Requires DOE to post a list of approved programs on its website. Requires school employees to participate in such training, rather than requiring BESE to adopt rules to require such training.

Present law provides for immunity from liability for loss or damage caused by implementation of present law regarding in-service training. Proposed law further provides for such immunity for loss or damage caused by a good faith attempt to implement present law and proposed law.

Proposed law requires BESE to annually survey secondary schools regarding compliance with requirements for in-service training and requires submission of a report on survey findings to the legislative education and health and welfare committees.

(Amends R.S. 17:282.4(C)(intro. para.) and 437.1; Adds R.S. 17:282.4(F) and (G) and 3996(B)(54))