

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 353

BY REPRESENTATIVES MARCELLE AND KNOX

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:226(A)(1), 271.1(B)(2), 282.4(C)(1)(d) and (F), and 404(A)  
3 and to enact R.S. 17:271.1(B)(5) and 437.2(F) and R.S. 40:31.3(B)(6), relative to  
4 student behavioral and mental health; to provide relative to exemptions from  
5 compulsory attendance requirements for behavioral and mental health reasons; to  
6 provide relative to required instruction on mental health; to provide relative to  
7 programs on suicide prevention and substance abuse prevention; to require the state  
8 Department of Education to develop and administer a pilot program for  
9 implementing certain screenings; to require the registration of school health centers  
10 with the office of public health; and to provide for related matters.

11 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

12 Section 1. R.S. 17:226(A)(1), 271.1(B)(2), 282.4(C)(1)(d) and (F), and 404(A) are  
13 hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:271.1(B)(5) and 437.2(F) are hereby enacted to  
14 read as follows:

15 §226. Exemptions from compulsory attendance

16 A. The following classes of children provided for in this Section shall be  
17 exempted from the provisions of this Subpart:

18 (1)(a) Children mentally, physically, or emotionally incapacitated to perform  
19 school duties, and children unable to profit from further school experience, such  
20 exemptions to be certified in writing by a psychiatrist, psychologist, recognized  
21 evaluation center or clinic, or other professionally qualified person or agency  
22 designated by the city, parish, or other local public school board.

1                    (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph,  
 2                    a student may be absent for up to three days in any school year related to the  
 3                    student's mental or behavioral health, and such absences shall be excused if  
 4                    certification is provided in writing in accordance with the student handbook. The  
 5                    student shall be given the opportunity to make up any school work missed during  
 6                    such absences. Following the second day of absence in any school year, the student  
 7                    shall be referred to the appropriate school support personnel for help addressing the  
 8                    underlying issue, which may include referral to medical services outside of the  
 9                    school setting.

10                    \*           \*           \*

11                    §271.1. Mental health; required instruction

12                    \*           \*           \*

13                    B. The instruction shall include, at minimum, information on the following:

14                    \*           \*           \*

15                    (2) The relationship and the difference between mental health and physical  
 16                    health.

17                    \*           \*           \*

18                    (5) The management of stress and anxiety.

19                    \*           \*           \*

20                    §282.4. Youth suicide prevention programs; student safety and violence and social  
 21                    isolation prevention training; policies; intent; rules; services; funding

22                    \*           \*           \*

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

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

4 \* \* \*

5 (d) Inform students of the available community youth suicide prevention  
6 services and post information about these services on the school system's website.

7 \* \* \*

8 ~~F.(1) Beginning not later than the 2020-2021 school year, the governing~~  
9 ~~authority of each~~ Each public and approved nonpublic secondary school ~~that issues~~  
10 ~~student identification cards shall post on its website~~ have printed on the cards the  
11 following information:

12 ~~(1) (a)~~ (a) The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline hotline number.

13 ~~(2) (b)~~ (b) A local suicide prevention hotline number, if available.

14 (2) The governing authority of each public and approved nonpublic  
15 secondary school that issues student identification cards shall have printed on the  
16 cards the information provided in Subparagraphs (1)(a) and (b) of this Subsection.

17 \* \* \*

18 §404. Establishment of programs of substance abuse

19 A. Each city and parish school board shall establish and maintain in every  
20 school such grade appropriate programs of alcohol, drug, and substance abuse  
21 prevention, education, information, and counseling as are developed by the section  
22 on drug free schools and communities, and approved by the State Board of  
23 Elementary and Secondary Education for inclusion in the school program as required  
24 in Subsection B of this Section. The programs shall include providing the website  
25 and phone number of at least one national organization specializing in substance  
26 abuse for adolescents. Each school board shall also post this contact information on  
27 its website.

28 \* \* \*

