
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 58
Author: Salas (D)
Amended: 8/11/22 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/8/22
AYES: Leyva, Ochoa Bogh, Cortese, Dahle, Glazer, McGuire, Pan

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/11/22
AYES: Portantino, Bates, Bradford, Jones, Laird, McGuire, Wieckowski

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 67-0, 1/24/22 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Pupil health: suicide prevention policies and training

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires a local educational agency (LEA), on or before January 1, 2025, to review and update its policy on pupil suicide prevention, and encourages LEAs commencing with the 2024-25 school year, to provide suicide awareness and prevention training to teachers of pupils in all of the grades served by the local educational agency.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the governing board of an LEA that serve pupils in grades 7 to 12 to adopt, before the 2017-18 school year, procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts. (Education Code (EC) § 215(a))
- 2) Requires the governing board of an LEA that serve pupils in Kindergarten and grades 1 to 6 to adopt, before the 2020-21 school year, a policy on pupil suicide

prevention in kindergarten in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts. (EC § 215 (a)(2)(A))

- 3) Requires, beginning July 1, 2019, a public school, including a charter school, or a private school, that issue identification cards to pupils grades 7 to 12 to include information to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, Crisis Text Line, and local suicide prevention hotline. (EC § 215.5)
- 4) Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to identify one or more evidence-based online training programs that a local educational agency can use to train school staff and pupils as part of the LEAs policy on pupil suicide prevention adopted (EC § 216)

This bill requires an LEA, on or before June 1, 2024, to review and update its policy on pupil suicide prevention, and encourages LEAs commencing with the 2024–25 school year, to provide suicide awareness and prevention training to teachers of pupils in all of the grades served by the local educational agency. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires an LEA, on or before January 1, 2025, to revise its training materials to incorporate best practices identified by CDE.
- 2) Encourages an LEA, commencing the 2024–25 school year to provide suicide awareness and prevention training to teachers of pupils in all of the grades served by the LEA.
- 3) Requires CDE, on or before June 1, 2024, to complete the development of, and issue to local educational agencies, resources and guidance on how to conduct suicide awareness and prevention training remotely.
- 4) Requires, on or before January 1, 2025, the governing board or body of a local educational agency that serves pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12 to adopt best practices identified by CDE on pupil suicide prevention.

Comments

- 1) *Need for this bill.* According to the author “Youth suicide and self-harm have continued to rise alarmingly in California and across the country. In California, the rate of suicide among those aged 10 to 24 increased 38 percent between 2007 and 2018, according to the a report released by the CDC in 2020. Instances of youth committing acts of self-harm increased by 50 percent during the same period from 2009 to 2018. Suicide is the second leading causes of

death among youth ages 10 to 24 and one out of every 15 high school students reports attempting suicide each year.

“While the importance of improving youth suicide prevention and student mental health treatment has been brought to the forefront by COVID-19, it is an issue that also goes beyond the pandemic as youth suicides have increased alarmingly over the past few decades. A U.S. Public Health Service study in 1999 found that there was a nearly 200 percent increase in the rate of suicide attempts among 11-14 year olds between 1980 and 1999, a trend that has tragically continued to increase over the last decade. Utilizing best practices and ensuring schools have training in place for suicide prevention is critical to addressing the serious health crisis posed by the increase of youth suicide and self-harm. School personnel are well positioned to provide much-needed suicide prevention and to address the mental health needs of students.”

- 2) *Increasing occurrences of pupil mental health issues.* According to a Pew Research Center analysis of data from the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, in 2017, 3.2 million teens aged 12-17 said they had at least one depressive episode within the past 12 months. This is up by 1.2 million from the same survey conducted by the National Survey on Drug Use and Health in 2007. One-in-five (2.4 million) teenage girls reported experiencing one depressive episode in 2017, compared to 845,000 teenage boys. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 13 percent of students in grades 9-12 in California in 2017 reported experiencing at least one depressive episode within the last 12 months. 32 percent felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row so they stopped doing some usual activities within the past year, compared to 31 percent for the United States. 17 percent of pupils in grades 9-12 reported considering suicide attempts, while 9 percent reported they attempted suicide at least once within the past 12 months.

This trend is confirmed by data from the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development. In 2019, emergency rooms throughout California treated 84,584 young patients ages 13 to 21 who had a primary diagnosis involving mental health. That is up from 59,705 in 2012, a 42 percent increase.

- 3) *State Auditor Report: Youth Suicide Prevention.* In September 2020, the State Auditor released a report titled *Youth Suicide Prevention: Local Educational Agencies Lack the Resources and Policies Necessary to Effectively Address Rising Rates of Youth Suicide and Self-Harm* which found that “schools can more effectively assist students if they have appropriate suicide prevention

policies in place if they train their faculty and staff to recognize and respond to youth who are at risk of suicide or self-harm” and “the deficiencies we found in these areas during our review suggest LEAs could do more to address youth suicide and self-harm.”

Pursuant to AB 2639 (Berman; 2018), the California Department of Education published a model policy in May 2017 for the LEAs’ to adopt - highlighting best practices suicide prevention organizations recommend. This included identifying primary and secondary liaisons to whom staff report known or suspected suicidal intentions and providing students with education about mental health challenges. The Auditor Report notes that “Although the State does not mandate training for school personnel, state law does outline which elements such training must include if LEAs provide it. The Audit Report found that out of the six schools that were analyzed, “all six of the LEAs we reviewed lacked suicide prevention policy elements that either state law or the model policy identify. The Audit report believes, “Without these elements, the LEAs may be unprepared to identify warning signs or provide resources for students at risk.”

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, this bill could result in a reimbursable state mandate for LEAs update their suicide prevention plans. The costs will vary by LEA but could be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars statewide on a one-time basis (Proposition 98 General Fund). This bill could also result in additional, unknown local cost pressures for LEAs to provide suicide awareness and prevention training for teachers. The cost for the CDE to update its model policy to serve as a guide for LEAs and provide them with resources and guidance is likely to be minor and absorbable within existing resources.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/11/22)

American Academy of Pediatrics, California, Chapter 2
Association of California School Administrators
Association of Regional Center Agencies
Black Leadership Council
California Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
California Catholic Conference
California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals
California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies
California State Association of Psychiatrists

California State Parent Teacher Association
California Teachers Association
City of Santa Monica
Madera County
Steinberg Institute
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter
Peace Officers of California

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/11/22)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: The California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance “supports AB 58, which would encourage Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to provide suicide awareness and prevention training at the beginning of each school year to teachers. The bill also requires LEAs to review and update their policies on pupil suicide prevention and revise their training materials to incorporate best practices identified by the California Department of Education.”

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 67-0, 1/24/22

AYES: Aguiar-Curry, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Bigelow, Bloom, Boerner Horvath, Bryan, Burke, Calderon, Cervantes, Choi, Cooley, Cunningham, Daly, Davies, Flora, Fong, Friedman, Gabriel, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Gipson, Gray, Grayson, Holden, Irwin, Jones-Sawyer, Kalra, Kiley, Lackey, Lee, Levine, Low, Maienschein, Mathis, McCarty, Medina, Mullin, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, Nguyen, O'Donnell, Patterson, Petrie-Norris, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Reyes, Luz Rivas, Robert Rivas, Rodriguez, Blanca Rubio, Salas, Santiago, Seyarto, Smith, Stone, Ting, Valladares, Villapudua, Voepel, Ward, Akilah Weber, Wicks, Wood, Rendon

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Mia Bonta, Carrillo, Chen, Cooper, Megan Dahle, Eduardo Garcia, Mayes, Waldron

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