

Date of Hearing: May 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 2003 (Berman) – As Amended March 26, 2026

Policy Committee: Education

Vote: 9 - 0

Urgency: Yes

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (BHSOAC), in consultation with the California Department of Education (CDE) and the State Department of Public Health (CDPH), to develop a free online suicide prevention training program for use by staff, students, and parents as part of a local educational agency's (LEA) pupil suicide prevention policy. The bill also requires an LEA to conduct suicide risk screenings of pupils and report data from those screenings to the CDE annually, which the CDE must aggregate and post on its internet website.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Minor and absorbable costs for Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission.
- 2) Ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund costs of an unknown but potentially significant amount, possibly in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, for LEAs, collectively statewide, to conduct suicide risk screenings of pupils and report results to CDE annually. To the extent existing LEA policies include conducting these screenings costs would be lower.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Too many communities across California have been devastated by youth suicides, including my hometown of Palo Alto. We must do everything we possibly can to prevent these tragedies. AB 2003 responds to the ongoing youth mental health crisis by developing and providing a free, evidence based, online suicide prevention training program for all students 13 and older, K-12 school staff, and parents. Specifically, this bill would require the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, in consultation with the California Department of Education and the California Department of Public Health, to develop a permanent suicide prevention training program available statewide. Suicide is preventable, and this training is essential to give Californians the knowledge, tools, and resources to know what to look for and feel confident in supporting youth in their life who need help.

- 2) **Background.** Current law requires an LEA to adopt a pupil suicide prevent policy in consultation with school and community interest holders, including school-employed mental health professionals and suicide prevention experts. The policy must, at a minimum, address procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. Current law also requires the CDE to develop a model suicide prevention policy for use by LEAs and to identify one or more online suicide prevention training programs an LEA may use for staff and pupil training. This bill requires the BHSOAC, in consultation with CDE and CDPH, to develop a free online suicide prevention training program and requires LEAs to conduct suicide risk screenings of pupils.

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