

The House Committee on Education offers the following Substitute to HB 1131:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to health of students in elementary and secondary education, so as to
3 provide for evidence based suicide awareness and training programs and a state-wide
4 anonymous reporting program; to provide for a definition; to provide for evidence based
5 youth violence prevention training programs; to provide for student violence prevention
6 clubs; to provide for local policies for anonymous reporting; to provide for an effective date;
7 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Part 3 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
11 relating to health of students in elementary and secondary education, is amended by revising
12 Code Section 20-2-779.1, relating to suicide prevention and awareness training and no duty
13 of care imposed, as follows:

14 "20-2-779.1.

15 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'evidence based' means a program or practice
16 that:

H. B. 1131 (SUB)

- 17 (1) Demonstrates a statistically significant effect on relevant outcomes based on:
18 (A) Strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented
19 experimental study;
20 (B) Moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented
21 quasi-experimental study; or
22 (C) Promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented
23 correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or
24 (2) Demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive
25 evaluation that such program or practice is likely to improve relevant outcomes, and
26 includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such program or practice.
- 27 ~~(a)~~~~(1)~~~~(b)~~ The Department State Board of Education shall adopt rules to require that:
28 (1) All ~~all~~ certificated public school personnel receive annual training in suicide
29 awareness and prevention. This training shall be provided within the framework of
30 existing in-service training programs offered by the Department of Education or as part
31 of required professional development offered by a local school system;
32 (2) Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, and continuing each school year thereafter,
33 all public schools serving students in grades six through 12 which receive funds in any
34 manner from the state shall provide to students at least one hour of evidence based
35 suicide awareness and prevention training each school year. Such training may be
36 delivered in person, remotely, or digitally and may be included as part of the health and
37 physical education course of study provided for in subsection (c) of Code
38 Section 20-2-142; and
39 (3) All public schools serving students in any one of grades six through 12 which receive
40 funds in any manner from the state shall provide to students at least one hour of evidence
41 based youth violence prevention training each school year. Such training may be
42 delivered in-person, remotely, or digitally and may be included as part of the health and

43 physical education course of study provided for in subsection (c) of Code
44 Section 20-2-142.

45 ~~(2)(c)(1)~~ The Department of Education shall, in consultation with the Department of
46 Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Suicide Prevention Program
47 established pursuant to Code Section 37-1-27, and suicide prevention experts, develop
48 a list of approved evidence based training materials to fulfill the requirements of ~~this~~
49 paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of this Code section which may include training materials
50 currently being used by a local school system if such training materials meet any criteria
51 established by the department. Such materials shall include training on how to identify
52 appropriate mental health services, both within the school and also within the larger
53 community, and when and how to refer youth and their families to those services. Such
54 materials may include programs that can be completed through self-review of suitable
55 suicide prevention materials.

56 ~~(3) Approved materials shall include training on how to identify appropriate mental~~
57 ~~health services, both within the school and also within the larger community, and when~~
58 ~~and how to refer youth and their families to those services.~~

59 ~~(4) Approved materials may include programs that can be completed through self-review~~
60 ~~of suitable suicide prevention materials.~~

61 (2) By January 1, 2025, the Department of Education shall, in consultation with the
62 Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Suicide
63 Prevention Program established pursuant to Code Section 37-1-27, develop and post a list
64 of approved evidence based training materials, including no-cost programming, if any,
65 to fulfill the requirements of paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of this Code section. Such
66 materials shall, at a minimum, do the following:

67 (A) Teach students how to recognize the observable signs and signals of depression,
68 suicide, and self-injury in themselves and their peers; and

69 (B) Teach students the importance of seeking help for themselves and their peers, as
70 well as the process for seeking help.

71 (3) By January 1, 2025, the Department of Education shall, in consultation with the
72 Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities and the Suicide
73 Prevention Program established pursuant to Code Section 37-1-27, develop a list of
74 approved evidence based training materials, including no-cost programming, if any, to
75 fulfill the requirements of paragraph (3) of subsection (b). Such materials shall, at a
76 minimum, include all of the following:

77 (A) How to recognize the observable warning signs and signals of persons who may
78 be at risk of harming themselves or others;

79 (B) The importance of taking threats seriously and seeking help; and

80 (C) The steps that can be taken to report dangerous, violent, threatening, harmful, or
81 potentially harmful behavior.

82 (4)(A) The Department of Education shall make the lists of approved evidence based
83 training materials required under this subsection, including no-cost programming, if
84 any, publicly available on its website.

85 (B) The Department of Education shall keep the list of approved evidence based
86 training materials timely updated by reviewing such list, at a minimum, every 36
87 months.

88 (5) To assist public schools and local school systems in developing their own policies
89 for student suicide awareness and prevention as provided for in this subsection, the
90 Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Behavioral Health and
91 Developmental Disabilities and the Suicide Prevention Program established pursuant to
92 Code Section 37-1-27, shall establish a model policy for use by public schools and local
93 school systems in accordance with this Code section.

94 (6)(A) By July 1, 2025, the Department of Education shall develop and operate, or
95 contract with a provider to develop and operate, and make available to all schools in

96 this state a state-wide anonymous reporting program. Such anonymous reporting
97 program shall, at a minimum:

98 (i) Be accessible by any person to report anonymously a dangerous, violent,
99 threatening, harmful, or potentially harmful activity which occurs on, or is threatened
100 to occur on, school property or which relates to a student or school personnel;

101 (ii) Provide support 24 hours per day, seven days per week for anonymous reporting
102 through, at a minimum, a mobile telephone application and a multilingual crisis
103 center, which shall be staffed by individuals with evidence based counseling and
104 crisis intervention training;

105 (iii) Promptly forward reported information to the appropriate school based team;

106 (iv) Support a coordinated response to an identified crisis by schools, local
107 emergency 9-1-1 public safety answering points, and local law enforcement agencies
108 when response by schools and law enforcement is to be reasonably expected;

109 (v) Require and certify the training of school based teams in each school to receive
110 notice of any report submitted to the state-wide anonymous reporting program
111 concerning the school, a student, or school personnel;

112 (vi) Require and certify the training of local emergency 9-1-1 public safety answering
113 point personnel to receive notice of any report submitted to the state-wide anonymous
114 reporting program that requires response from a local law enforcement agency;

115 (vii) Promote public awareness and education about the state-wide anonymous
116 reporting program and its reporting methods, prior to its launch; and

117 (viii) Comply with all federal and state laws.

118 (B)(i) In the first year in which the state-wide anonymous reporting program is
119 implemented, the Department of Education shall require all school systems to submit
120 a report on the total number of disciplinary actions in the previous 12 months,
121 disaggregated by school, type of disciplinary action, as well as the gender and race of
122 the student subject to the disciplinary action.

123 (ii) Each year following implementation of the state-wide anonymous reporting
124 program, the Department of Education shall require all school systems to submit
125 annual reports documenting, at a minimum:

126 (I) The total number of tips received for the previous school year;

127 (II) The total number of tips received since the state-wide anonymous reporting
128 program began, disaggregated by school and for each school: tips by type, the
129 method by which the tip was received; and the total number of false reports
130 received; and

131 (III) The total number of responses to incoming tips, disaggregated by disciplinary
132 actions, nondisciplinary actions, and interventions, as well as the gender and race
133 of each student subject to such actions or interventions.

134 (C) Not later than May 1, 2025, the Department of Education shall identify and compile
135 a state data base that includes, at a minimum, the following identified individuals for
136 the purposes of implementing and coordinating the delivery of the state-wide
137 anonymous reporting program provided for in this paragraph:

138 (i) A designated point of contact within each local emergency 9-1-1 public safety
139 answering point; and

140 (ii) A designated point of contact within each school in this state, who shall be
141 responsible for managing the school based team.

142 (D) The Department of Education shall operate, or contract with a provider to operate,
143 the following:

144 (i) A website to educate students on the availability of the state-wide anonymous
145 reporting program and which provides guidance on how and when to use such
146 program; and

147 (ii) A toll-free telephone hotline that can be used to provide anonymous tips
148 regarding dangerous, violent, threatening, harmful, or potentially harmful activity

149 which occurs on, or is threatened to occur on, school property or which relates to a
150 student or school personnel.

151 ~~(5)(A)(d)(1)~~ Each local school-system board of education or public school governing
152 body shall:

153 (A) Adopt policies, rules, and regulations ~~adopt a policy~~ on student suicide awareness
154 and prevention. Such policy policies, rules, and regulations shall be developed in
155 consultation with school and community stakeholders, school employed mental health
156 professionals, and suicide prevention experts, and shall, at a minimum, address
157 procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention;

158 (B) Adopt policies, rules, and regulations for providing relevant and current
159 information to students and their families and to school personnel regarding publicly
160 available resources for the anonymous reporting of a dangerous, violent, threatening,
161 harmful, or potentially harmful activity which occurs on, or is threatened to occur on,
162 school property or which relates to a student or school personnel;

163 (C) Adopt policies, rules, and regulations for the implementation of the state-wide
164 anonymous reporting program provided for in paragraph (6) of subsection (c) of this
165 Code section; and

166 (D) Implement an evidence based youth violence prevention training program to
167 instruct students how to recognize the observable warning signs and signals of someone
168 who may be at risk of harming himself, herself, or others; the importance of taking
169 threats seriously and seeking help; and how to report someone who is at risk, including
170 by using the state-wide anonymous reporting program.

171 (2) Each local board of education or public school governing body shall require each
172 public school that sponsors or otherwise permits student organizations or clubs to
173 designate a student-led youth violence prevention club to sustain awareness activities
174 related to suicide prevention and violence prevention. Such student violence prevention
175 club, including existing clubs, shall:

- 176 (A) Be open to all members of the student body;
177 (B) Engage in awareness activities related to youth suicide prevention, youth violence
178 prevention, and social inclusion;
179 (C) Foster opportunities for student leadership development; and
180 (D) Have at least one administrator, teacher, or other school personnel serve as a
181 faculty advisor. ~~(B) To assist local school systems in developing their own policies for~~
182 ~~student suicide prevention, the Department of Education, in consultation with the~~
183 ~~Suicide Prevention Program within the Department of Behavioral Health and~~
184 ~~Developmental Disabilities, shall establish a model policy for use by local school~~
185 ~~systems in accordance with this Code section.~~
- 186 ~~(b)~~(e) No person shall have a cause of action for any loss or damage caused by any act or
187 omission resulting from the implementation of the provisions of this Code section or
188 resulting from any training, or lack thereof, required by this Code section.
- 189 ~~(c)~~(f) The training, or lack thereof, required by the provisions of this Code section shall
190 not be construed to impose any specific duty of care."

191 **SECTION 2.**

192 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2024.

193 **SECTION 3.**

194 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.