

SENATE BILL No. 197

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 20-33-2; IC 20-34-3-27; IC 21-7-13; IC 21-18-18; IC 21-48-1.

Synopsis: Student health. Requires the governing body of a school corporation or chief administrative officer of a nonpublic school system to authorize the absence and excuse of a student due to the student's mental or behavioral health concerns. Limits the number of excused absences for mental or behavioral health concerns, without documentation, to three instructional days in a school year. Allows a student to be excused for more than three instructional days if the student provides certain documentation. Requires that a school selected to participate in the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behaviors Survey or a successor survey participate in the survey. Provides that the commission for higher education shall, before January 1, 2024, work with the statewide suicide prevention coordinator to develop a suicide prevention training for students at each state educational institution (institution). Requires each student at an institution, after July 1, 2024, to participate in the training in the student's first year at the institution. Requires each institution to collect and report certain information concerning suicide prevention to the statewide suicide prevention coordinator. Establishes a mental health and suicide prevention in higher education task force (task force). Provides that the task force shall create a statewide suicide prevention resource guide for institutions. Makes conforming changes.

Effective: July 1, 2023.

Ford J.D.

January 10, 2023, read first time and referred to Committee on Education and Career Development.



First Regular Session of the 123rd General Assembly (2023)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2022 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

SENATE BILL No. 197



A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

1 SECTION 1. IC 20-33-2-14, AS AMENDED BY P.L.90-2011,
2 SECTION 42, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 JULY 1, 2023]: Sec. 14. (a) This section and sections 15 through ~~17.5~~
4 **17.9** of this chapter apply to a student who attends either a public
5 school or a nonpublic school.
6 (b) The governing body of each school corporation shall have a
7 policy outlining the conditions for excused and unexcused absences.
8 The policy must include the grounds for excused absences required by
9 sections 15 through ~~17.5~~ **17.9** of this chapter or another law. Any
10 absence that results in a person not attending at least one hundred
11 eighty (180) days in a school year must be in accordance with the
12 governing body's policy to qualify as an excused absence.
13 (c) Service as a page for or as an honoree of the general assembly
14 is a lawful excuse for a student to be absent from school, when verified
15 by a certificate of the secretary of the senate or the chief clerk of the
16 house of representatives. A student excused from school attendance
17 under this section may not be recorded as being absent on any date for



1 which the excuse is operative and may not be penalized by the school
2 in any manner.

3 SECTION 2. IC 20-33-2-17.9 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA
4 CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS
5 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023]: **Sec. 17.9. (a) The governing body of
6 a school corporation or the chief administrative officer of a
7 nonpublic school system shall authorize the absence and excuse of
8 a school student if the absence is caused by the student's mental or
9 behavioral health concerns.**

10 **(b) Except as provided in subsection (c), the number of excused
11 absences a student may receive under this section may not exceed
12 three (3) instructional days in a school year.**

13 **(c) A student may be excused for more than three (3)
14 instructional days in a school year if the student provides to school
15 authorities documentation from a physician, psychologist, or
16 psychiatrist verifying the need for the student's absence.**

17 **(d) A student excused from school attendance under this section
18 may not be:**

19 **(1) recorded as being absent on any date for which the excuse
20 is operative; or**

21 **(2) penalized by the school in any manner.**

22 SECTION 3. IC 20-34-3-27 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
23 AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
24 1, 2023]: **Sec. 27. (a) As used in this section, "school" means any of
25 the following:**

26 **(1) A charter school.**

27 **(2) A nonpublic school with at least one (1) employee.**

28 **(b) A school or school corporation that is selected to participate
29 in the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
30 Youth Risk Behaviors Survey or a successor survey shall
31 participate in the survey.**

32 SECTION 4. IC 21-7-13-26.7 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA
33 CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS
34 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023]: **Sec. 26.7. "Postvention" means an
35 organized response in the aftermath of a suicide to facilitate the
36 healing of individuals from the grief and distress of suicide loss or
37 mitigate other negative effects of exposure to suicide.**

38 SECTION 5. IC 21-7-13-28.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA
39 CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS
40 [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023]: **Sec. 28.5. "Reentry" refers to a
41 student's return to class after the student has been exposed to
42 suicide or attempted suicide.**



1 SECTION 6. IC 21-18-18 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
2 AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 JULY 1, 2023]:

4 **Chapter 18. Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Higher**
5 **Education Task Force**

6 **Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "task force" refers to the mental**
7 **health and suicide prevention in higher education task force**
8 **established by section 2 of this chapter.**

9 **Sec. 2. The mental health and suicide prevention in higher**
10 **education task force is established.**

11 **Sec. 3. The task force consists of the following members:**

12 (1) **The members of the commission.**

13 (2) **One (1) member appointed by the commissioner of the**
14 **Indiana department of health who represents the Indiana**
15 **department of health.**

16 (3) **One (1) member appointed by the governor who is a**
17 **suicide prevention expert.**

18 (4) **One (1) member appointed by the governor who**
19 **represents an organization dedicated to supporting veterans.**

20 (5) **One (1) member appointed by the governor who is**
21 **affiliated with an emergency medical services provider.**

22 (6) **One (1) member appointed by the governor who is a**
23 **community mental or behavioral health provider.**

24 (7) **Four (4) members appointed by the governor as follows:**

25 (A) **One (1) member who is employed as the director or**
26 **executive director of a mental health counseling center at**
27 **a state educational institution.**

28 (B) **One (1) member who is employed as the director or**
29 **executive director of a mental health counseling center at**
30 **a nonprofit college or university.**

31 (C) **One (1) member who is employed as the director or**
32 **executive director of a mental health counseling center at**
33 **a private college or university.**

34 (D) **One (1) member who is employed as the director or**
35 **executive director of a mental health counseling center at**
36 **a community or technical college.**

37 **Sec. 4. The members appointed by the governor under section**
38 **3 of this chapter must reflect the racial, gender, geographic, urban,**
39 **rural, and economic diversity of Indiana.**

40 **Sec. 5. If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the task force,**
41 **the appointing authority that appointed the member whose**
42 **position is vacant shall appoint an individual to fill the vacancy.**



1 **Sec. 6. The task force shall elect one (1) member to serve as the**
 2 **chairperson of the task force and one (1) member to serve as the**
 3 **vice chairperson of the task force.**

4 **Sec. 7. The task force shall meet upon the call of the**
 5 **chairperson.**

6 **Sec. 8. The commission shall staff the task force.**

7 **Sec. 9. The affirmative votes of a majority of the members of the**
 8 **task force are required for the task force to take action on any**
 9 **measure.**

10 **Sec. 10. (a) The task force shall develop a statewide resource**
 11 **guide on mental health and suicide prevention for state educational**
 12 **institutions.**

13 **(b) The statewide resource guide required by subsection (a)**
 14 **must include the following:**

15 **(1) A free curriculum to train students, staff, and faculty of a**
 16 **state educational institution concerning:**

17 **(A) screening methods for suicide risk; and**

18 **(B) appropriate referrals;**

19 **including methods of addressing the specific needs of**
 20 **veterans.**

21 **(2) A model crisis protocol, per sector, on the identification of**
 22 **mental health issues and suicidal behavior, intervention,**
 23 **reentry, and postvention.**

24 **(3) Model marketing materials to promote student mental**
 25 **health in higher education.**

26 **(4) Culturally relevant mental health and suicide prevention**
 27 **resources for diverse communities and underrepresented**
 28 **populations.**

29 **(c) The task force shall make the statewide resource guide**
 30 **publicly available on the commission's website.**

31 **Sec. 11. In addition to the duty outlined under section 10 of this**
 32 **chapter, the task force shall do the following:**

33 **(1) Serve as a resource for a state educational institution to**
 34 **provide suicide prevention training for students, as required**
 35 **by IC 21-48-1-2.**

36 **(2) Develop an annual conference for state educational**
 37 **institutions concerning student mental health and suicide**
 38 **prevention.**

39 **(3) Plan and host the first annual conference described in**
 40 **subdivision (2).**

41 **Sec. 12. (a) Each member of the task force who is not a state**
 42 **employee is entitled to reimbursement for traveling expenses as**



1 provided under IC 4-13-1-4 and other expenses actually incurred
 2 in connection with the member's duties as provided in the state
 3 policies and procedures established by the Indiana department of
 4 administration and approved by the budget agency.

5 (b) Each member of the task force who is a state employee but
 6 who is not a member of the general assembly is entitled to
 7 reimbursement for traveling expenses as provided under
 8 IC 4-13-1-4 and other expenses actually incurred in connection
 9 with the member's duties as provided in the state policies and
 10 procedures established by the Indiana department of
 11 administration and approved by the budget agency.

12 (c) Each member of the task force who is a member of the
 13 general assembly is entitled to receive the same per diem, mileage,
 14 and travel allowances paid to members of the general assembly
 15 serving on interim study committees established by the legislative
 16 council.

17 SECTION 7. IC 21-48-1-2 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
 18 AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
 19 1, 2023]: **Sec. 2. (a) Before January 1, 2024, the commission, in
 20 consultation with the coordinator of the statewide program for
 21 suicide prevention employed under IC 12-21-5-5, shall develop a
 22 suicide prevention training program to be administered to students
 23 at each state educational institution.**

24 (b) After July 1, 2024, each student at a state educational
 25 institution shall participate in the training developed under
 26 subsection (a) during the student's first year at the state
 27 educational institution.

28 SECTION 8. IC 21-48-1-3 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE
 29 AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY
 30 1, 2023]: **Sec. 3. (a) Each state educational institution shall, for each
 31 academic year and in accordance with the state educational
 32 institution's established data collection requirements, collect the
 33 following information:**

- 34 (1) The ratio of counselors to students at the state educational
 35 institution.
- 36 (2) The number of students who were referred to a behavioral
 37 health provider off-campus.
- 38 (3) The number of students who withdrew from the state
 39 educational institution and identified emotional distress as a
 40 reason for withdrawal.
- 41 (4) The number of student deaths caused by suicide.
- 42 (5) The number of students who attempted suicide and, as a



- 1 result, were hospitalized.
- 2 (6) Information concerning the dissemination of mental health
3 and suicide prevention resource materials available at the
4 state educational institution and off-campus.
- 5 (7) Confirmation that the state educational institution has
6 developed, or is developing, a suicide prevention training
7 program.
- 8 (8) The student groups or organizations the state educational
9 institution has identified to participate in the suicide
10 prevention training program.
- 11 (9) The office or division at the state educational institution
12 that is responsible for developing and maintaining a crisis
13 protocol for the identification of suicide risk, appropriate
14 intervention, reentry, and postvention.
- 15 (10) The name of the individual who is responsible for the
16 crisis protocol described in subdivision (9).
- 17 (11) Information on mental health services on-campus that
18 support and are available to veterans.
- 19 (b) Not later than December 31 each year, each state
20 educational institution shall submit the information collected under
21 subsection (a) during the preceding academic year to the
22 coordinator of the statewide program for suicide prevention
23 employed under IC 12-21-5-5.
- 24 (c) If a state educational institution does not collect or have
25 access to the information in subsection (a), the state educational
26 institution shall indicate in the report that the state educational
27 institution:
- 28 (1) did not collect; or
29 (2) does not have access to;
30 the information.

