

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 585

Introduced by Hughes, 24.

Read first time January 17, 2023

Committee:

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to schools; to amend section 79-2,146, Reissue
2 Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and section 79-2,144, Revised Statutes
3 Cumulative Supplement, 2022; to change a duty of the state school
4 security director; to require behavioral and mental health training
5 for certain school personnel; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal
6 the original sections.

7 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Section 79-2,144, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
2 2022, is amended to read:

3 79-2,144 The state school security director appointed pursuant to
4 section 79-2,143 shall be responsible for providing leadership and
5 support for safety and security for the public schools. Duties of the
6 director include, but are not limited to:

7 (1) Collecting safety and security plans, required pursuant to rules
8 and regulations of the State Department of Education relating to
9 accreditation of schools, and other school security information from each
10 school system in Nebraska. School districts shall provide the state
11 school security director with the safety and security plans of the school
12 district and any other security information requested by the director,
13 but any plans or information submitted by a school district may be
14 withheld by the department pursuant to subdivision (9) of section
15 84-712.05;

16 (2) Recommending minimum standards for school security on or before
17 January 1, 2016, to the State Board of Education;

18 (3) Conducting an assessment of the security of each public school
19 building, which assessment shall be completed by August 31, 2019;

20 (4) Identifying deficiencies in school security based on the minimum
21 standards adopted by the State Board of Education and making
22 recommendations to school boards for remedying such deficiencies;

23 (5) Establishing security awareness and preparedness tools and
24 training programs for public school staff;

25 (6) Establishing research-based model instructional programs for
26 staff, students, and parents to address the underlying causes for violent
27 attacks on schools;

28 (7) Overseeing behavioral and mental health training, with a focus
29 on suicide awareness and prevention training in public schools pursuant
30 to section 79-2,146;

31 (8) Establishing tornado preparedness standards which shall include,

1 but not be limited to, ensuring that every school conducts at least two
2 tornado drills per year;

3 (9) Responding to inquiries and requests for assistance relating to
4 school security from private, denominational, and parochial schools;

5 (10) Recommending curricular and extracurricular materials to assist
6 school districts in preventing and responding to cyberbullying and
7 digital citizenship issues; and

8 (11) Carrying out the department's responsibilities under the School
9 Safety and Security Reporting System Act.

10 Sec. 2. Section 79-2,146, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
11 amended to read:

12 79-2,146 (1) Beginning in school year 2023-24 ~~2015-16~~, all public
13 school employees who interact with students ~~nurses, teachers, counselors,~~
14 ~~school psychologists, administrators, school social workers,~~ and any
15 other appropriate personnel, as determined by the school superintendent,
16 shall receive at least one hour of behavioral and mental health training
17 with a focus on suicide awareness and prevention training each year. Such
18 training may include, but need not be limited to, topics such as
19 identification of early warning signs and symptoms of behavioral and
20 mental health issues in students, appropriate and effective responses for
21 educators to student behavioral and mental health issues, trauma-informed
22 care, and procedures for making students and parents and guardians aware
23 of services and supports for behavioral and mental health issues. This
24 training shall be provided within the framework of existing inservice
25 training programs offered by the State Department of Education or as part
26 of required professional development activities.

27 (2) The department, in consultation with organizations including,
28 but not limited to, the Nebraska State Suicide Prevention Coalition, the
29 Nebraska chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, the
30 Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska, the National Alliance on
31 Mental Illness Nebraska, and other organizations and professionals with

1 expertise in behavioral and mental health and suicide prevention, shall
2 develop a list of approved training materials to fulfill the requirements
3 of subsection (1) of this section. Such materials shall include training
4 on how to identify appropriate mental health services, both within the
5 school and also within the larger community, and when and how to refer
6 youth and their families to those services. Such materials may include
7 programs that can be completed through self-review of suitable behavioral
8 and mental health and suicide prevention materials.

9 (3) The department may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to
10 carry out this section.

11 Sec. 3. Original section 79-2,146, Reissue Revised Statutes of
12 Nebraska, and section 79-2,144, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement,
13 2022, are repealed.