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Legislative Document

No. 725

S.P. 255

In Senate, March 5, 2015

An Act To Increase Suicide Awareness and Prevention in Maine Public Schools

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator SAVIELLO of Franklin.
Cosponsored by Representative NUTTING of Oakland and
Senators: ALFOND of Cumberland, KATZ of Kennebec, Representatives: BLACK of Wilton,
HILLIARD of Belgrade.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4502, sub-§5-B**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 53, §1, is
3 amended to read:

4 **5-B. Suicide awareness education and training.** Each school administrative unit
5 shall develop a plan for suicide prevention awareness education for all school personnel
6 ~~and~~, suicide prevention and intervention training for certain personnel and a suicide
7 prevention program for students in grades 8 to 12 in accordance with this subsection.

8 A. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year for high schools and in the 2015-2016
9 school year for elementary and middle schools, a one-hour to 2-hour in-service
10 training module in suicide prevention awareness must be completed by all school
11 personnel. School personnel shall complete the training module by the
12 commencement of the school year or, for those employees who are newly hired,
13 within 6 months from the beginning of employment. Suicide prevention awareness
14 education must be repeated every 5 years.

15 B. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, a one-day course in suicide prevention
16 and intervention training that will result in at least 2 school personnel trained in
17 suicide prevention and intervention must be implemented by each school
18 administrative unit and by each island, charter and public school that is not in a
19 school administrative unit. Additional trained school personnel above the minimum
20 of 2 must receive the training if the number of students in the school administrative
21 unit is above 1,000 as follows:

- 22 (1) For 1,001 to 1,500 students, one additional school employee;
23 (2) For 1,501 to 2,000 students, 2 additional school personnel;
24 (3) For 2,001 to 2,500 students, 3 additional school personnel;
25 (4) For 2,501 to 3,000 students, 4 additional school personnel;
26 (5) For 3,001 to 3,500 students, 5 additional school personnel;
27 (6) For 3,501 to 4,000 students, 6 additional school personnel;
28 (7) For 4,001 to 4,500 students, 7 additional school personnel;
29 (8) For 4,501 to 5,000 students, 8 additional school personnel;
30 (9) For 5,001 to 5,500 students, 9 additional school personnel;
31 (10) For 5,501 to 6,000 students, 10 additional school personnel;
32 (11) For 6,001 to 6,500 students, 11 additional school personnel;
33 (12) For 6,501 to 7,000 students, 12 additional school personnel;
34 (13) For 7,001 to 7,500 students, 13 additional school personnel; and
35 (14) For 7,501 or more students, 14 additional school personnel.

36 Suicide prevention and intervention training must be repeated every 5 years.

1 C. Suicide prevention awareness education and suicide prevention and intervention
2 training under this subsection must conform to national guidelines adopted by
3 organizations that offer best practices, research-based training.

4 D. Training pursuant to this subsection must count toward satisfaction of
5 professional development requirements for the department and certification
6 requirements for teachers and other professional personnel under chapters 501 and
7 502.

8 E. A school administrative unit shall complete and file proof of completion of the
9 suicide prevention awareness education and the suicide prevention and intervention
10 training once every 5 years as required under this subsection with the department.

11 F. Health education provided by a school administrative unit to students in grades 8
12 to 12 must include a comprehensive suicide prevention program.

13 The department shall adopt rules to implement this subsection. The rules must include,
14 but are not limited to, implementation standards for suicide prevention awareness
15 education and for suicide prevention and intervention training. Standards adopted for
16 suicide prevention awareness education must be made available on the department's
17 publicly accessible website. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection before July 1,
18 2014 are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.
19 Beginning July 1, 2014, rules adopted by the department pursuant to this subsection are
20 major substantive rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

21 **SUMMARY**

22 This bill requires a school administrative unit to complete and file proof of
23 completion of suicide prevention awareness education and suicide prevention and
24 intervention training for school personnel with the Department of Education. It also
25 requires health education provided by a school administrative unit to students in grades 8
26 to 12 to include a comprehensive suicide prevention program.