

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2599

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require State educational agencies and tribal educational agencies receiving funds under section 520A of such Act to establish and implement a school-based student suicide awareness and prevention training policy and school threat assessment team policy, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 8, 2019

Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. FITZPATRICK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to require State educational agencies and tribal educational agencies receiving funds under section 520A of such Act to establish and implement a school-based student suicide awareness and prevention training policy and school threat assessment team policy, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Suicide and Threat
3 Assessment Nationally Dedicated to Universal Prevention
4 Act of 2019”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 The Congress finds as follows:

7 (1) Since 2010, suicide has been the second-
8 leading cause of death for young people ages 10–24.
9 In 2016, 6,159 young people ages 10–24 completed
10 suicide.

11 (2) Based on the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior
12 Survey of the Centers for Disease Control and Pre-
13 vention (in this section referred to as “CDC”), 7.4
14 percent of youth in grades 9–12 reported that they
15 made at least one suicide attempt in the past 12
16 months.

17 (3) While there is no complete count of suicide
18 attempts in the United States, CDC data suggests
19 that for every reported suicide death, approximately
20 11.4 people visit a hospital for self-harm-related in-
21 juries.

22 (4) In 2016, suicide was the 10th-leading cause
23 of death overall in the United States, with over
24 44,000 people completing suicide, and there were
25 more than twice as many suicides in the United
26 States as there were homicides.

1 (5) Youth often display warning signs and sig-
2 nals before harming themselves or others. Research
3 shows that 70 percent of those who complete suicide
4 tell someone of their plans or give another warning
5 sign, and 80 percent of school shooters tell someone
6 of their plans.

7 (6) According to the CDC, the rates of suicide
8 among American Indians and Alaska Natives have
9 been increasing since 2003 and are the highest of
10 any racial or ethnic group in the United States. In
11 addition, recent studies of CDC data from 2001
12 through 2015 show that suicide rates for Black chil-
13 dren aged 5 through 12 were roughly two times
14 higher than those of similarly aged White children.

15 (7) Research has shown that evidence-based
16 school threat assessment teams reduce suicide; inter-
17 personal violence, bullying, and aggression; school
18 staff anxiety about violence; and expulsion and sus-
19 pension rates. Evidence-based school threat assess-
20 ment teams have been shown to increase the willing-
21 ness of students to seek help for threats of violence
22 and mental illness, use of school counseling, and pa-
23 rental involvement.

24 (8) Research has shown that evidence-based
25 school threat assessment teams can lead to a reduc-

1 tion in racial disparities between White, Black, and
 2 Hispanic students in school disciplinary outcomes
 3 and legal actions. Additionally, research shows that
 4 evidence-based school threat assessment teams can
 5 help combat the school-to-prison pipeline.

6 **SEC. 3. STUDENT SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION**
 7 **TRAINING AND TEAMS.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title V of the Public Health Serv-
 9 ice Act is amended by inserting after section 520A of such
 10 Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb–32) the following:

11 **“SEC. 520B. STUDENT SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVEN-**
 12 **TION TRAINING AND TEAMS.**

13 “(a) IN GENERAL.—As a condition on receipt of
 14 funds under section 520A, each State educational agency
 15 and tribal educational agency that receives such funds, di-
 16 rectly or through a State or Indian Tribe, shall—

17 “(1) establish and implement—

18 “(A) a school-based student suicide aware-
 19 ness and prevention training policy; and

20 “(B) a school threat assessment team pol-
 21 icy; and

22 “(2) collect and report information in accord-
 23 ance with subsection (d).

24 “(b) SCHOOL-BASED STUDENT SUICIDE AWARENESS
 25 AND PREVENTION TRAINING POLICY.—A school-based

1 student suicide awareness and prevention training policy
2 implemented pursuant to subsection (a)—

3 “(1) shall be evidence-based;

4 “(2) shall provide evidence-based training to
5 students in grades 6 through 12 regarding—

6 “(A) suicide education and awareness, in-
7 cluding warning signs of self-harm or suicidal
8 ideation;

9 “(B) methods that students can use to
10 seek help for themselves and others; and

11 “(C) student resources for suicide aware-
12 ness and prevention;

13 “(3) shall provide for retraining of such stu-
14 dents every school year;

15 “(4) may last for such period as the State edu-
16 cational agency or tribal educational agency involved
17 determines to be appropriate; and

18 “(5) may be implemented through any delivery
19 method, including in-person trainings, digital
20 trainings, or train-the-trainer models.

21 “(c) SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM POLICY.—

22 A school threat assessment team policy implemented pur-
23 suant to subsection (a) shall—

24 “(1) be evidence-based;

1 “(2) identify and establish a school threat as-
2 sessment team within each school, consisting of two
3 or more school personnel, with the team designated
4 to provide triage, and serve as a liaison to interven-
5 tion, for all reported threats of suicide and inter-
6 personal violence within the school;

7 “(3) provide evidence-based training to each
8 such team on how to identify, assess, and respond
9 to threats of suicide and interpersonal violence, in-
10 cluding training on—

11 “(A) identification of threats, signs, and
12 behaviors that could result in harm towards
13 one’s self or others;

14 “(B) evaluation of the seriousness of the
15 threat or danger posed;

16 “(C) intervention to reduce the risk of vio-
17 lence; and

18 “(D) followup to assess intervention re-
19 sults;

20 “(4) provide for retraining of the members of
21 each such team no less frequently than every 3
22 school years;

23 “(5) establish guidelines to ensure that—

1 “(A) where a credible threat is identified,
2 the response conforms with any applicable State
3 and school disciplinary policies; and

4 “(B) disciplinary action is not applied dis-
5 proportionately to students on the basis of race,
6 color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability;
7 and

8 “(6) create procedures and protocols for coordi-
9 nating with local law enforcement, State reporting
10 websites, and tip lines.

11 “(d) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION AND REPORT-
12 ING.—Each State educational agency and tribal edu-
13 cational agency that receives funds under section 520A
14 shall, with respect to each school served by the agency,
15 collect and report to the Secretary the following informa-
16 tion:

17 “(1) For the school-based student suicide
18 awareness and prevention training policy required by
19 subsection (a)(1)(A):

20 “(A) The number of student trainings con-
21 ducted.

22 “(B) The number of students trained,
23 disaggregated by age and grade level.

1 “(C) The number of help-seeking behaviors
2 undertaken by students after implementation of
3 such policy.

4 “(D) The number and type of threats of
5 suicide, mental illness, or interpersonal violence
6 reported by students.

7 “(2) For the school threat assessment team pol-
8 icy required by subsection (a)(1)(B):

9 “(A) The number and type of threats of
10 suicide, mental illness, or interpersonal violence
11 reported.

12 “(B) The number of suicide attempts and
13 completions in the school.

14 “(C) The method of reporting within the
15 school a threat of suicide, mental illness, or
16 interpersonal violence, such as in-person report-
17 ing, electronic reporting, and anonymous re-
18 porting.

19 “(D) The number of false reports received.

20 “(E) The response to each threat reported.

21 “(F) The demographic information of the
22 students being reported or self-reporting,
23 disaggregated by age, grade level, gender, race,
24 and ethnicity.

1 “(G) The point of contact for each school’s
2 team.

3 “(e) EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM LISTING.—The
4 Secretary of Health and Human Services shall coordinate
5 with the Secretary of Education to make publicly available
6 the policies established by State educational agencies and
7 tribal educational agencies pursuant to this section and
8 the training that is available to students and teams pursu-
9 ant to such policies, including identification of whether
10 such training is available to trainees at no cost.

11 “(f) IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE.—A State edu-
12 cational agency or tribal educational agency shall establish
13 and begin implementation of the policies required by sub-
14 section (a)(1) not later than the beginning of the third
15 fiscal year following the date of enactment of this section
16 for which the agency receives funds under section 520A.

17 “(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

18 “(1) The term ‘evidence-based’ has the meaning
19 given to such term in section 8101 of the Elemen-
20 tary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

21 “(2) The term ‘State educational agency’ has
22 the meaning given to such term in section 8101 of
23 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
24 1965.

1 “(3) The term ‘tribal educational agency’ has
2 the meaning given to such term in section 6132 of
3 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
4 1965.”.

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