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**SENATE BILL 5685**

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**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2019 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Bailey, Rolfes, Warnick, and O'Ban

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring a primary contact in schools to  
2 recognize, screen, and respond to emotional or behavioral distress in  
3 students; adding a new section to chapter 28A.320 RCW; and creating a  
4 new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that on February 14,  
7 2018, a former student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in  
8 Florida is alleged to have returned to that high school and carried  
9 out one of the nation's worst school shootings by killing seventeen  
10 people and injuring many more. The legislature further finds that  
11 this student's past revealed a pattern of disciplinary issues and  
12 unnerving behavior. His attorney stated that this student has  
13 ". . . . been through a lot of trauma. He has suffered significant  
14 mental illness, and significant mental trauma."

15 The legislature intends to increase student health and well-being  
16 by requiring each school building to have a primary contact who is  
17 trained in recognizing, screening, and responding to emotional or  
18 behavioral distress in students.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.320  
20 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, school districts must  
2 identify one person in each school building as the student health and  
3 well-being primary contact.

4 (2) The primary contact must be appointed by the school building  
5 principal and may be a mental health counselor or other professional  
6 that is trained in recognizing, screening, and responding to  
7 emotional or behavioral distress in students and identifying students  
8 who are at risk for substance abuse, violence, or youth suicide.

9 (3) At a minimum, the primary contact must:

10 (a) Build trusting relationships with students;

11 (b) Educate students about the conditions that should trigger  
12 communicating concerns;

13 (c) De-escalate tension;

14 (d) Observe classrooms upon request by a teacher or student;

15 (e) Collaborate with the primary contact regarding the  
16 antiharassment, intimidation, or bullying policy required by RCW  
17 28A.300.285;

18 (f) Coordinate the implementation of plans for recognition,  
19 initial screening, and response to emotional or behavioral distress  
20 in students as required by RCW 28A.320.127;

21 (g) Participate in the professional collaboration with school  
22 counselors, social workers, and psychologists required by RCW  
23 28A.320.290; and

24 (h) Facilitate partnerships with qualified health, mental health,  
25 and social services agencies in the community to whom school  
26 personnel may make referrals.

27 (4) This section does not create any civil liability on the part  
28 of the state or any state agency, officer, employee, agent, political  
29 subdivision, or school district.

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