

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2017

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HOUSE BILL 894
Committee Substitute Favorable 6/28/17

Short Title: Veterans/Health Care/Youth Suicide Prevention.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

April 26, 2017

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO DEVELOP A PILOT PROGRAM IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY TO
3 PROVIDE HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO VETERANS AND TO PROVIDE FOR A
4 TRAINING PROGRAM ON YOUTH SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION
5 AND RISK REFERRAL PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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8 **PART I. PILOT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO**
9 **VETERANS**

10 **SECTION 1.(a)** Pilot Program. – The Department of Health and Human Services
11 and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, in coordination with Community Care of
12 North Carolina and Maxim Healthcare Services, shall develop a two-year pilot program in
13 Cumberland County to provide health care services to veterans. The pilot program shall consist
14 of the following initiatives:

- 15 (1) A health care initiative to provide to veterans increased access to health care
16 resources through the care coordination efforts of community health
17 workers.
18 (2) A workforce initiative to recruit and train unemployed and underemployed
19 veterans as community health workers for the health care initiative described
20 in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

21 **SECTION 1.(b)** Report. – By March 1, 2018, the Department of Health and
22 Human Services and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs shall report to the Joint
23 Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services on the departments' planning
24 activities for the pilot program authorized by this section. The report may include findings,
25 recommendations, and legislative proposals.

26 **SECTION 1.(c)** This section is effective when it becomes law.

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28 **PART II. TRAINING PROGRAM ON YOUTH SUICIDE AWARENESS AND**
29 **PREVENTION AND RISK REFERRAL PROTOCOL FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

30 **SECTION 2.(a)** G.S. 115C-5 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

31 "(11) The term "public school unit" means a local school administrative unit,
32 charter school, or regional school."

33 **SECTION 2.(b)** Article 25A of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended
34 by adding a new section to read:

35 **"§ 115C-375.10. Youth suicide awareness and prevention training and risk referral**
36 **protocol for school personnel.**



1 (a) State Board Training Program and Protocol. – The State Board of Education, in
2 consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health,
3 shall develop a youth suicide awareness and prevention training program and a model risk
4 referral protocol for public school units to provide to school personnel who work directly with
5 students in grades six through 12, including teachers, teacher assistants, bus drivers, cafeteria
6 workers, janitorial staff, media coordinators, athletic coaches, administrators, administrative
7 assistants, school safety resource officers, school nurses, social workers, psychologists, and
8 counselors. The training program shall consist of at least two hours of evidence-informed
9 instruction to increase awareness of suicide, identification of risk factors and signs, and
10 information for student referral for suicide prevention resources and support. The model risk
11 referral protocol shall provide guidelines to public school unit on identification of at-risk
12 students, suicide prevention procedures, and referral sources. The training program and model
13 risk referral protocol shall be periodically reviewed and updated as necessary. Any mental
14 health training requirements established by the State Board of Education shall be fulfilled in
15 part by the youth suicide awareness and prevention training program.

16 (b) Training and Protocol Requirements. – Each public school unit shall provide the
17 training program and model risk referral protocol developed by the State Board of Education
18 under subsection (a) of this section, or a locally developed plan that meets the requirements of
19 subsection (c) of this section, to school personnel who work directly with students in grades six
20 through 12 at no cost to the employee. A school employee who works directly with students in
21 grades six through 12 shall receive training within 12 months of employment with a board of a
22 public school unit and every two years thereafter while employed with that board. The training
23 may be offered in various formats, including electronically, through videoconferencing, or
24 through an individual program of study of designated materials consisting of at least two hours
25 of instruction.

26 (c) Locally Developed Training and Risk Referral Protocols. – A board of a public
27 school unit may comply with the training and protocol requirements of this section by
28 developing a local plan that includes, at a minimum, (i) conveying information on State and
29 national data on suicide deaths and attempts, suicide methods, and at-risk populations, (ii)
30 myths and attitudes about suicide, (iii) warning signs and symptoms for suicide, (iv)
31 identification of at-risk students and steps for referring students to support services, (v)
32 protective factors for prevention of suicide, and (vi) safe messaging to children. In addition, a
33 local plan shall include protocols for implementation and mandatory training that include at
34 least the following:

- 35 (1) A plan to include specialized training for student support personnel,
36 including administrators, school nurses, counselors, social workers, and
37 psychologists.
- 38 (2) A safety plan for the school in the event of (i) identification of a student as
39 being at risk of suicide, including a student help plan and immediate
40 assistance, and (ii) a suicide death or suicide attempt by a student enrolled in
41 the school, including a care plan for peers and school personnel.
- 42 (3) Designation of a school employee as the school suicide prevention
43 responder.
- 44 (4) A plan for communication with a parent or legal guardian of a student
45 identified as at-risk, including safe transfer of the student to the parent or
46 legal guardian.
- 47 (5) A plan for post-intervention for a student who has been identified as at-risk
48 or has attempted suicide, including reentry into the classroom.

49 (d) Audits. – The Department of Public Instruction shall periodically randomly audit
50 public school units to ensure compliance with the mandatory training requirements and
51 prevention activities required by this section. The Department may also audit a public school

1 unit if the Department has reason to believe the public school unit is not in compliance. The
2 Department of Public Instruction shall report on the results of the audits by December 15
3 annually to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the
4 Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

5 (e) Limitations. – Notwithstanding the requirements in subsection (a) of this section,
6 nothing in this section shall be construed to impose any obligation or responsibility on public
7 school units to provide referral, treatment, follow-up, or other services related to identification
8 of students at risk of suicide and suicide prevention procedures beyond what may be required
9 by other State law or federal law.

10 (f) Liability. – No board of a public school unit, nor its members, employees,
11 designees, agents, or volunteers, shall be liable in civil damages to any party for any loss or
12 damage caused by any act or omission relating to the provision of, participation in, or
13 implementation of any component of the plan, referral protocol, or training program required
14 by this section, unless that act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or
15 intentional wrongdoing. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose any specific duty
16 of care or standard of care."

17 **SECTION 2.(c)** G.S. 115C-218.75 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

18 "(g) Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training and Risk Referral Protocol. – A
19 charter school is subject to and shall comply with all requirements of G.S. 115C-375.10."

20 **SECTION 2.(d)** G.S. 115C-238.66 is amended by adding a new subdivision to
21 read:

22 "(14) Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training and Risk Referral
23 Protocol. – A regional school is subject to and shall comply with all
24 requirements of G.S. 115C-375.10."

25 **SECTION 2.(e)** G.S. 116-239.8 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

26 "(17) Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training and Risk Referral
27 Protocol. – A lab school is subject to and shall comply with all requirements
28 of G.S. 115C-375.10. For purposes of G.S. 115C-375.10, a lab school shall
29 be a public school unit."

30 **SECTION 2.(f)** This section is effective when it becomes law and applies
31 beginning with the 2018-2019 school year.

32 **PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

34 **SECTION 3.** Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes
35 law.