

PUBLIC SCHOOL CODE OF 1949 - YOUTH SUICIDE AWARENESS AND  
PREVENTION AND CHILD EXPLOITATION AWARENESS EDUCATION

Act of Jun. 26, 2014, P.L. 779, No. 71

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No. 2014-71

HB 1559

AN ACT

Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An act relating to the public school system, including certain provisions applicable as well to private and parochial schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the laws relating thereto," in terms and courses of study, providing for youth suicide awareness and prevention and for child exploitation awareness education.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding sections to read:

**Section 1526. Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention.--(a)**  
**Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, each school entity shall:**

(1) Adopt an age-appropriate youth suicide awareness and prevention policy consistent with subsection (c), inform each school entity employe and the parent or legal guardian of each student enrolled in the school entity of such policy and post such policy on the school entity's publicly accessible Internet website. The policy adopted by a school entity under this paragraph may be based upon the model policy developed by the department under subsection (b)(1).

(2) Include in the professional development plan submitted by the school entity to the secretary for approval pursuant to section 1205.1 four (4) hours of training in youth suicide awareness and prevention every five (5) years for professional educators in school buildings serving students in grades six through twelve. Training under this paragraph may be used to satisfy a professional educator's continuing professional education requirement under section 1205.2. A school entity may use the materials made available by the department under subsection (b)(2) to conduct such training.

(b) The department shall:

(1) In consultation with a youth suicide prevention organization operating in this Commonwealth, develop a model youth suicide awareness and prevention policy which shall be consistent with subsection (c).

(2) Compile, develop and post on its publicly accessible Internet website the following, which may include materials already publicly available:

(i) Recommended guidelines and educational materials for the training required under subsection (a)(2).

(ii) Recommended resources and age-appropriate educational materials on youth suicide awareness and prevention.

(3) Develop a model youth suicide awareness and prevention curriculum and make such curriculum available to all school entities and, upon request, to nonpublic schools. A school entity may incorporate such curriculum into its existing

instructional program pursuant to the school entity's youth suicide awareness and prevention policy.

(c) The model policy developed by the department under subsection (b) (1) and any policy adopted by a school entity under subsection (a) (1) shall include the following:

- (1) A statement on youth suicide awareness and prevention.
- (2) Protocols for administering youth suicide awareness and prevention education to staff and students.
- (3) Methods of prevention, including procedures for early identification and referral of students at risk of suicide.
- (4) Methods of intervention, including procedures that address an emotional or mental health safety plan for students identified as being at increased risk of suicide.
- (5) Methods of responding to a student or staff suicide or suicide attempt.
- (6) Reporting procedures.
- (7) Recommended resources on youth suicide awareness and prevention programs, including current contact information for such programs.

(d) As used in this section, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Department." The Department of Education of the Commonwealth.

"Nonpublic school." A nonprofit school, other than a school entity, wherein a resident of this Commonwealth may legally fulfill the compulsory school attendance requirements of this act and which meets the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352, 78 Stat. 241).

"Professional educator." As defined in section 1205.2(o).

"School entity." A school district, joint school district, charter school, regional charter school, cyber charter school, intermediate unit or area vocational-technical school.

"Secretary." The Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth.

Section 1527. Child Exploitation Awareness Education.--(a) Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, each school entity may:

(1) Develop an age-appropriate child exploitation awareness education program and incorporate such program into the school entity's existing curriculum for students in kindergarten through grade eight. In developing the program, the school entity may use the model curriculum developed by the department under subsection (b) (2).

(2) Include training in child exploitation awareness in the professional development plan submitted by the school entity to the secretary for approval pursuant to section 1205.1; provided that a school entity shall provide four (4) hours of such training every five (5) years for professional educators assigned to teach courses into which child exploitation awareness education has been incorporated under paragraph (1). Training under this paragraph may be used to satisfy a professional educator's continuing professional education requirement under section 1205.2. A school entity may use the materials made available by the department under subsection (b) (1) to conduct such training.

(b) The department, in consultation with at least one organization addressing child exploitation, shall:

(1) Develop a model child exploitation awareness curriculum, which may include materials already publicly available, and make such curriculum available to all school entities and, upon request, to nonpublic schools.

(2) Compile, develop and post on its publicly accessible Internet website recommended guidelines and educational materials for the training provided for under subsection (a) (2), which may include materials already publicly available.

(c) As used in this section, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Department." The Department of Education of the Commonwealth.

"Nonpublic school." A nonprofit school, other than a school entity, wherein a resident of this Commonwealth may legally fulfill the compulsory school attendance requirements of this act and which meets the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352, 78 Stat. 241).

"Professional educator." As defined in section 1205.2(o).

"School entity." A school district, joint school district, charter school, regional charter school, cyber charter school, intermediate unit or area vocational-technical school.

"Secretary." The Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth.

Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

APPROVED--The 26th day of June, A.D. 2014.

TOM CORBETT