

MEMORANDUM

To: School Superintendents and Principals

From: Robin LeClaire, Director Office of School Improvement

Date: October 19, 2018

Re: Suicide Awareness and Prevention (IC 20-26-5-34.4; IC 20-28-3-6) and SEA 230 (2018)

Background:

In 2017, the Indiana General Assembly passed legislation requiring all school corporations to adopt a policy intended to increase child suicide awareness and prevention. The statute sets forth specific items that must be addressed in this policy. Additionally, beginning after June 30, 2018, each school corporation, charter school, and accredited nonpublic school shall require all teachers (as defined in IC 20-18-2-22) and other appropriate school employees in schools with grades 5-12 to attend or participate in at least two hours of research-based in-service youth suicide awareness and prevention training every three school years. The statute sets forth specific training requirements. These requirements were revised by SEA 230 during the 2018 legislative session and noted below.

Guidance:

Suicide Prevention Policy:

Per IC 20-26-5-34.4, the required school corporation policy must address the following:

- 1) Counseling services for the child and the child's family related to suicide prevention.
- 2) Availability of referral information for crisis intervention to children, parents, and school corporation staff.
- 3) Increasing awareness of the relationship between suicide and drug and alcohol use.
- 4) Training on warning signs and tendencies that may evidence that a child is considering suicide.
- 5) Availability of information concerning suicide prevention services in the community.
- 6) Cooperation among the school corporation and suicide prevention services in the community.
- 7) Development of a plan to assist survivors of attempted suicide and to assist children and school corporation staff in coping with an attempted suicide or death of a student or school employee.
- 8) Schools should adopt a policy by the beginning of the 2017-18 school year.

Research-based Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training:

Per IC 20-28-3-6, the training:

- beginning after June 30, 2018, is required for all teachers, including a Superintendent licensed under IC 20-28-5; principal; teacher; librarian; school counselor; school psychologist; school nurse; school social worker; and also may include any other appropriate school employees; who are employed at schools that provide instruction in any combination of grades 5-12;
- must be during the teacher's or school employee's contracted day or at a time chosen by the teacher or employee;
- may include an in-person presentation; electronic or technology-based medium, including self-review modules available on an online system; an individual program of study of designated materials; or any other method approved by the governing body that is consistent with current professional development standards;
- shall count toward the requirements for professional development required by the governing body; and
- must be demonstrated to be an effective or promising program and recommended by the Indiana Suicide Prevention Network Advisory Council.

The Indiana Department of Education will update the list of Suicide Prevention Trainings to reflect the new requirements outlined in SEA 230 as they are approved by the Indiana Suicide Prevention Network Advisory Council. All training should be provided to teachers by trainers certified in the material/program they are training, and according to requirements set forth by the developer of each training program. A school or school corporation may leverage any grant funds or free/reduced cost for research based youth suicide awareness and prevention training provided by any state agency or qualified statewide or local organization to cover the costs of the training.

Resources to address the requirements can be accessed [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Jeff Wittman at jwittman@doe.in.gov.