STATE OF NEW YORK

2388

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 22, 2019

Introduced by M. of A. WALLACE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to providing dating violence education and dating violence policies in school districts, boards of cooperative educational services and county vocational education and extension boards

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Kari Ann Gorman act."

§ 2. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature finds, determines and declares that when a student is a victim of dating violence, his or her academic life suffers and his or her safety at school is jeopardized. The legislature finds that a policy to create an environment free of dating violence shall be a part of each school district. It is the intent of the legislature to enact legislation that would require each school district to establish a policy for responding to incidents of dating violence and to provide dating violence education to students, parents, staff, faculty and administrators, in order to prevent dating violence and to address incidents involving dating violence.

§ 3. The education law is amended by adding a new section 817 to read as follows:

§ 817. Dating violence education. 1. Each school district shall incorporate dating violence education that is age-appropriate into the annual health curriculum framework for students in grades seven through twelve.

(a) Dating violence education shall include, but not be limited to, defining dating violence, recognizing dating violence warning signs and characteristics of healthy relationships. Additionally, students shall be provided with the school district's dating violence policy as provided in section twenty-eight hundred three of this chapter.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(b) For the purposes of this section:

(i) "Dating violence" means a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner.

(ii) "Dating partner" means any person involved in an intimate association with another primarily characterized by the expectation of affectionate involvement whether casual, serious or long-term.

(iii) "At school" means in a classroom, on or immediately adjacent to such school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop, or at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is on school grounds.

(c) To assist school districts in developing a dating violence education program, the department shall review and approve the grade level topics relating to dating violence and healthy relationships.

2. Upon written request to the school principal, a parent or legal guardian of a pupil less than eighteen years of age, within a reasonable period of time after the request is made, shall be permitted to examine the dating violence education program instruction materials at the school in which his or her child is enrolled.

§ 4. The education law is amended by adding a new section 2803 to read as follows:

§ 2803. Dating violence policy. 1. As used in this section:

(a) "Dating violence" means a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner.

(b) "Dating partner" means any person, regardless of gender, involved in an intimate relationship with another primarily characterized by the expectation of affectionate involvement whether casual, serious or long-term.

(c) "At school" means in a classroom, on or immediately adjacent to school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop, or at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is on school grounds.

2. The department, in conjunction with the office for the prevention of domestic violence, shall develop a model dating violence policy to assist school districts, boards of cooperative educational services and county vocational education and extension boards in developing policies for dating violence reporting and response. The model policy shall be issued on or before April first, two thousand twenty-two.

3. Each school district, board of cooperative educational services and county vocational education and extension board shall establish a specific policy to address incidents of dating violence involving students at school by December first, two thousand twenty-two. Each school district, board of cooperative educational services and county vocational education and extension board shall verify compliance with the department on an annual basis through the school district report cards or board of cooperative educational services report card required by this chapter.

(a) Such policy shall include, but not be limited to, a statement that dating violence will not be tolerated, dating violence reporting procedures, guidelines to responding to at-school incidents of dating violence and discipline procedures specific to such incidents.

(b) To ensure notice of the school district's, board of cooperative educational services' and county vocational education and extension board's dating violence policy, the policy shall be published in any school district, board of cooperative educational services and county

vocational education and extension board policy and handbook that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for students at school.

4. Each school district, board of cooperative educational services and county vocational education and extension board shall provide dating violence training to all administrators, teachers, nurses and mental health staff at the middle and high school levels. Upon the recommendation of the administrator, other staff may be included or may attend the training on a volunteer basis. The dating violence training shall include, but not be limited to, basic principles of dating violence, warning signs of dating violence and the school district's dating violence policy, to ensure that they are able to appropriately respond to incidents of dating violence at school. Thereafter, this training shall be provided yearly to all newly hired staff deemed appropriate to receive the training by the school's administration.

5. Each school district, board of cooperative educational services and county vocational education and extension board shall inform the students' parents or legal guardians of the dating violence policy. If requested, the school district, board of cooperative educational services or county vocational education and extension board shall provide the parents or legal guardians with the school district's dating violence policy and relevant information. It is strongly recommended that the school district, board of cooperative educational services or county vocational education and extension board provide parent awareness training.

6. This section does not prevent a victim from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal. This section does not create or alter any tort liability.

§ 5. This act shall take effect immediately.