

STATE OF NEW YORK

4176

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 6, 2023

Introduced by Sen. WALCZYK -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Mental Health

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to developing materials relating to suicide prevention for school-aged children, and to amend the education law, in relation to including suicide prevention in health education curriculum

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

1 Section 1. Section 7.07 of the mental hygiene law is amended by adding
2 a new subdivision (i) to read as follows:

3 (i) The office shall, in consultation with the education department,
4 identify or develop materials for educators regarding suicide prevention
5 measures and signs of depression among school-aged children which may be
6 used by school districts and boards of cooperative educational services,
7 at their option, to educate students about such topics as such districts
8 and boards deem appropriate. Such educational materials shall include,
9 but not be limited to, information regarding symptoms of depression, how
10 depression manifests itself in different cultures, warning signs of
11 suicide, actions to take once a child is identified as a risk of
12 suicide, social media safety and the prevention of cyberbullying, and a
13 list of educational websites regarding suicide and children. Such mate-
14 rial shall be available on the education department's website. The
15 office shall provide a hyperlink on its website to the page of the
16 education department's website that displays such materials.

17 § 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 804-e to
18 read as follows:

19 § 804-e. Instruction regarding the prevention of suicide among school-
20 aged children. 1. The commissioner shall make available on the depart-
21 ment website materials identified or developed by the office of mental
22 health in consultation with the department pursuant to subdivision (h)
23 of section 7.07 of the mental hygiene law.

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

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1 2. Instruction regarding the prevention of suicide may be included in
2 the health education provided to all secondary school pupils and shall
3 be taught by teachers certified in health education. Related courses in
4 the secondary school curriculum may be taught in a manner supportive of
5 health education regarding the prevention of suicide among school-aged
6 children.

7 3. School authorities shall be authorized to provide the necessary
8 facilities, time and place for the instruction set forth in this section
9 and to provide learning aids and curriculum resource materials which
10 contribute to effective teaching methods and learning in health educa-
11 tion regarding the prevention of suicide among school-aged children
12 including instruction in social media safety and the prevention of
13 cyberbullying.

14 § 3. This act shall take effect on the first of July next succeeding
15 the date on which it shall have become a law.