



SENATE BILL 476: Compt-Based Assess. & Mental Hlth/Teen Viol.

2019-2020 General Assembly

Committee:	House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	July 10, 2019
Introduced by:	Sens. Horner, Tillman, Ballard	Prepared by:	Drupti Chauhan
Analysis of:	Third Edition		Committee Counsel

OVERVIEW: Senate Bill 476 would:

- Direct the State Board of Education (SBE) to recommend how to transition to a competency-based assessment and teaching model for all elementary and secondary school students in the State.
- Require public school units (local boards of education, charter schools, regional schools, innovative schools, laboratory schools, and the renewal school system school) to: (i) adopt and implement a suicide risk referral protocol, (ii) adopt a mental health training program; and (iii) adopt a policy against teen dating and violence.

Part I: Competency-Based Assessments and Teaching Model

ANALYSIS: Section 1 would direct the SBE to determine and analyze how to transition to a competency-based assessment and teaching model for all elementary and secondary school students in the State. The SBE would be required to recommend transition steps that accomplish the following competency-based objectives:

- Students advance upon mastery.
- Competencies are broken down into explicit and measurable learning objectives.
- Meaningful assessments that accomplish the goals of the statewide testing program for measuring student achievement and student growth that also comply with federal fund conditions.
- Students receive differentiated support based on their learning needs.
- Learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include the application and creation of knowledge.

The SBE would have to examine (i) competency-based assessments in other states; (ii) the relationship between competency-based assessments and innovative teaching methods used in North Carolina schools; and (iii) any other considerations that the Board deems relevant to transitioning to a competency-based assessment and teaching model.

The SBE must report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by May 15, 2020, on its analysis and recommended transition steps.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The section would become effective when it becomes law.

BACKGROUND: Section 8.12 of S.L. 2015-241 stated that it was the intent of the General Assembly to transition to a system of competency-based learning assessments to measure student performance and

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growth whenever practicable. The SBE was encouraged to evaluate the feasibility of integrating competency-based assessments for use in local school administrative units and as a part of the statewide testing program for measuring student performance and student growth.

Part II: Suicide Risk Referral Protocol and Mental Health Training Program

ANALYSIS: Section 2 requires that public school units to adopt and implement a suicide risk referral protocol and mental health training program for school personnel who work directly with students in grades kindergarten through 12. "School personnel" would be teachers, instructional support personnel, principals, and assistant principals. In the discretion of the public school unit, "school personnel" could also include other school employees who work directly with students in grades kindergarten through 12.

The suicide risk referral protocol would be required to, at a minimum, do all of the following:

- Inform school personnel of suicide risk referral procedures, including the provision of training.
- Establish crisis teams.
- Inform school personnel on how to identify and intervene in appropriate situations.

The mental health training program would be required to, at a minimum, address the following topics:

- Youth mental health.
- Suicide prevention.
- Substance abuse.
- Sexual abuse prevention.
- Sex trafficking prevention.

Public school units would be required to periodically review and update the adopted suicide risk referral protocols and mental health training programs.

Nothing in the statutory requirement for the suicide risk referral protocol and mental health training program (G.S. 115C-375.11) would impose an additional duty on any public school unit required to adopt the suicide risk referral protocol and mental health training program, or its employees, to provide referrals, suicide prevention measures, or mental health services to students of the unit. Additionally, no public school unit, members, employees, designees, agents or volunteers would be liable in civil damages to any party for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission relating to the suicide risk referral protocol or mental health training program, unless the act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing. Further, nothing in the section should be construed to impose a specific duty of care or standard of care on a public school unit.

The State Board of Education is directed to adopt a school-based model suicide risk referral protocol and model mental health training program by December 1, 2020. Both models must meet the requirements developed by the Superintendent's Working Group on Health and Well-Being in its October 15, 2018 report required by Section 5 of S.L. 2018-32.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The section would become effective when it becomes law and would require that the suicide risk referral protocol and mental health training program be adopted and implemented by each public school unit by July 1, 2021. Public school units may use the model suicide risk referral protocol developed and model mental health training program developed by the State Board of Education, modify the State Board of Education models, or develop their own models.

BACKGROUND: The report of the [Superintendent's Working Group on Health and Well Being](#) created pursuant to Section 5 of S.L. 2018-32 is accessible through the link in this sentence.

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Part III: Teen Dating Violence Policy

ANALYSIS: Section 3 of the PCS would require each public school unit to adopt a policy against teen dating violence. The policy must do all of the following:

- Define dating violence and abuse.
- Prohibit dating violence and abuse by any student on school property, including during a school-sponsored activity or during school-sponsored transportation.
- Provide procedures for responding to such incidents of dating violence or abuse, including accommodations for students experiencing dating violence or abuse.
- Be implemented in a manner that is integrated with the discipline policies of the school.

Additionally, schools would be required to provide instruction on teen dating violence and abuse. If the school has a reproductive health and safety education program, instruction on dating violence and abuse must be incorporated into that program. Each public school unit is required to adopt and implement a policy by July 1, 2020, and to provide instruction on dating violence and abuse beginning with the 2020-2021 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The section would be effective when it becomes law and each public school unit is required to adopt and implement a policy by July 1, 2020, and to provide instruction on dating violence and abuse beginning with the 2020-2021 school year.

Part IV: Effective date

Except as otherwise provide in the bill, the act becomes effective when it becomes law.

**Samantha Yarborough, Committee Counsel, substantially contributed to this summary.*