



HOUSE BILL 578: The Jason Flatt Act of North Carolina.

2025-2026 General Assembly

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------|----------------------|
| Committee: | House Health. If favorable, re-refer to Education - K-12. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House | Date: | April 10, 2025 |
| Introduced by: | Reps. Pickett, Lambeth, Hawkins, Budd | Prepared by: | Stewart Sturkie |
| Analysis of: | First Edition | | Committee Co-Counsel |

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 578 would require public school units to adopt a mental health policy that includes a suicide prevention education requirement. Suicide prevention training would be required for all licensed educators and would be provided at no cost to employees. In addition to initial mental health training, school personnel would be required to annually complete one hour of suicide prevention to coincide with mental health trainings.*

CURRENT LAW: Suicide prevention training is currently not statutorily required to be a part of a public school's school-based mental health plan. The law currently requires public schools to have a suicide risk referral program that is consistent with model programs developed by the State Board of Education (the Board).

BILL ANALYSIS: The Board would be required to adopt a school-based mental health policy that includes a suicide prevention education requirement. The suicide prevention education would be given to all licensed educators, and the education would provide more detail about the educator's role in youth suicide awareness than the model mental health training provided by the Board. The Board and the Department of Public Instruction would be required to provide suicide prevention materials to K-12 schools at no cost.

Every K-12 public school unit would be required to adopt a suicide prevention education requirement as part of its plan for promoting student mental health and well-being. This education would be provided at no cost to employees. School personnel would be required to complete one hour of suicide prevention education every year, which would coincide with mental health trainings that occur after employees receive their initial mental health training. School personnel can meet the suicide prevention education requirement in a number of ways, including completion of approved programs.

Every five years, the Superintendent of Public Instruction would be required to review the Board's minimum requirements for suicide prevention education and recommend any necessary changes. Public school units would be required to provide an annual report on the content of the school-based mental health plan they have adopted, including the suicide prevention education requirement.

There would be no civil liability for the governing bodies, employees, and agents for harm caused by acts or omissions related to the implementation of, participation in, or provision of a suicide prevention education requirement. This immunity would not apply if the act or omission amounts to wanton conduct, gross negligence, or intentional wrongdoing.

Kara McCraw
Director



Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578

House Bill 578

Page 2

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would be effective when it becomes law and would apply beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.