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HOUSE BILL NO. 1707

Offered January 11, 2023

Prefiled January 9, 2023

A BILL to amend and reenact § 22.1-272.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to public school students; self-identification as gender other than biological sex; parental contact.

Patrons—Durant, Campbell, E.H., Orrock, Scott, P.A. and Williams

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-272.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-272.1. Students; imminent risk of suicide; self-identification as gender other than biological sex; parental contact.

A. Any person licensed as administrative or instructional personnel by the Board of Education and employed by a local school board who, in the scope of his employment, has reason to believe, as a result of direct communication from a student, that such student is at imminent risk of suicide; or that such student is self-identifying as a gender that is different than his biological sex shall, as soon as practicable, contact at least one of such student's parents to ask whether such parent is aware of the student's mental state and whether the parent wishes to obtain or has already obtained counseling for such student. Such contact shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the guidelines required by subsection C.

B. If ~~the~~ a student for whom an individual set forth in subsection A has reason to believe is at imminent risk of suicide has indicated that the reason for being at imminent risk of suicide relates to parental abuse or neglect, ~~this~~ contact shall not be made with the parent pursuant to subsection A. Instead, the person shall, as soon as practicable, notify the local department of social services of the county or city wherein the child resides or wherein the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or the state Department of Social Services' toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline, as required by § 63.2-1509. When giving this notice to the local or state department, the person shall stress the need to take immediate action to protect the child from harm.

C. The Board of ~~Education~~, in cooperation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Department of Health, shall develop guidelines for making the contact required by subsection A. These guidelines shall include, but need not be limited to, (i) criteria to assess the suicide risks of students, (ii) characteristics to identify potentially suicidal students, (iii) appropriate responses to students expressing suicidal intentions, (iv) available and appropriate community services for students expressing suicidal intentions, (v) suicide prevention strategies ~~which~~ that may be implemented by local schools for students expressing suicidal intentions, (vi) criteria to assess whether students have begun to self-identify as a gender that is different than their biological sex, (vii) criteria for notification of and discussions with parents of students expressing suicidal intentions or self-identifying as a gender that is different than their biological sex, ~~(vii)~~ (viii) criteria for as-soon-as-practicable contact with the parents, ~~(viii)~~ (ix) appropriate sensitivity to religious beliefs, and ~~(ix)~~ (x) legal requirements and criteria for notification of public service agencies, including, ~~but not limited to~~, the local or state social services and mental health agencies. These guidelines may include case studies and problem-solving exercises and may be designed as materials for in-service training programs for licensed administrative and instructional personnel.

INTRODUCED

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