

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-298.6 of the Code of Virginia, relating to public schools; mental*
3 *health awareness training and instruction; requirements.*

4 [H 224]

5 Approved

6 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**7 **1. That § 22.1-298.6 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**8 **§ 22.1-298.6. Mental health awareness training.**

9 A. Each school board shall adopt and implement policies that require each teacher and other relevant
10 personnel, as determined by the school board, employed on a full-time basis, to complete a mental
11 health awareness training or similar program at least once. *Any such mental health awareness training*
12 *or similar program shall address the needs of youth populations that are at a high risk of experiencing*
13 *mental health challenges and disorders in accordance with evidence-based best practices developed by*
14 *the American Psychological Association, including youth who (i) are bereaved by suicide; (ii) have*
15 *mental or physical disabilities or chronic health conditions, including substance use disorders; (iii) are*
16 *experiencing homelessness or housing instability; (iv) are in foster care or other situations that may*
17 *result in instability in a youth's custodial or living situation; or (v) identify as LGBTQ+. The provisions*
18 *of this section or any policy adopted in accordance with the provisions of this section shall not be*
19 *construed to permit biased or discriminatory treatment of any youth population deemed to be at a high*
20 *risk of experiencing mental health challenges and disorders.*

21 B. Each school board shall provide required personnel the training required by subsection A and may
22 contract with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, a community services
23 board, a behavioral health authority, a nonprofit organization, or other certified trainer as defined in
24 § 37.2-312.2 to provide such training. Such training may be provided via an online module.

ENROLLED

HB224ER