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HOUSE BILL NO. 224

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee on Education

on January 24, 2024)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Henson)

A BILL to amend and reenact § 22.1-298.6 of the Code of Virginia, relating to public schools; mental health awareness training and instruction; requirements.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 22.1-298.6 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-298.6. Mental health awareness training.

A. Each school board shall adopt and implement policies that require each teacher and other relevant personnel, as determined by the school board, employed on a full-time basis, to complete a mental health awareness training or similar program at least once. *Any such mental health awareness training or similar program shall address the needs of youth populations that are at a high risk of experiencing mental health challenges and disorders, including youth who (i) are bereaved by suicide; (ii) have mental or physical disabilities or chronic health conditions, including substance use disorders; (iii) are experiencing homelessness or housing instability; (iv) are in foster care or other situations that may result in instability in a youth's custodial or living situation; or (v) identify as LGBTQ+.*

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