

<p>Subject: <i>Suicide Prevention Education in Schools</i></p>	<p>Legal Reference: • SB 282-FN: RSA 193-J</p>
---	---

*This Technical Advisory continues the New Hampshire Department of Education’s communication regarding new legislation, which was passed during the 2019 legislative session. This new law, which was SB 282 during the legislative session and became RSA 193-J when it was signed into law on August 2, 2019, will become effective next year on **July 1, 2020**. This technical advisory gives a brief overview of the new law, resources and information currently available and access to the text of the law in its entirety.*

During the 2019 legislative session, SB 282 was passed to address the critically important issue of suicide prevention of school-age children in New Hampshire. SB 282 was created out of a recognition that suicide is a complex issues that necessitates resources from schools, families, and the community to all be harnessed in an appropriate and timely fashion in order to prevent suicide. The sole purpose of this new law is to reduce the number of suicides that are occurring in New Hampshire’s school-age population. The bill seeks to accomplish this by ensuring that suicide prevention education and training be available to school personnel, students and their parents by utilizing age-appropriate and evidence-based materials in this subject area. This bill is applicable to all public schools and chartered public schools across the state and becomes effective in July of 2020, which provides districts and chartered schools with ample time to prepare for implementation.

In general terms, the new law is written in two parts. The first part of the bill requires that districts and chartered public schools develop a policy which guides the development and implementation of a coordinated plan to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide. The bill provides the basic parameters of what each policy must address, but allows districts and chartered public schools to add in additional areas as they deem appropriate. Each policy must include the following provisions:

- (a) The training of school faculty and staff, to include contracted personnel and designated school volunteers¹, in youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, post-intervention, and resources available within the school and community;
- (b) Educating students in the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies, recognizing risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others, and providing help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help;
- (c) Identifying within the school the person or persons who serve as the point of contact when a student is believed to be at an elevated risk for suicide;
- (d) Making referral, crisis intervention, and other related information, both within the school and the community, available for students, parents, faculty, staff, and school volunteers;
- (e) Promoting cooperative efforts between school districts, chartered public schools, and community suicide prevention program personnel.

The second part of the new law requires that each school district and chartered public school mandate that all school faculty and staff, to include contracted personnel, receive a minimum of 2 hours of training in suicide awareness and prevention every year. This requirement may be applicable to some school volunteers in accordance with individual school district policy. The training may include the following topics: youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, post-intervention, and resources available within the school and community. The training requirement may be accomplished within pre-

¹ School districts should have the term “designated school volunteer” defined in the criminal background check requirement policy as this term comes directly from RSA 189:13-a, which governs criminal background checks for employment in schools.

existing, in-service training programs or offered as part of ongoing professional development activities. Districts and chartered public schools must allow the use of self-training materials to fulfill this training requirement and each individual district and chartered public school may determine how to administer and ensure that the annual training requirements are met. This specific provision of the law becomes effective within nine months of the July, 2020, date mentioned above.

Resources and Information

The New Hampshire Department of Education's Bureau of Student Wellness, Office of Social and Emotional Wellness (OSEW), provides resources and technical assistance to school districts to work collaboratively with their community to respond to the needs of students through a multi-tiered system of support for behavioral health and wellness. Prevention works best when strategies are part of a comprehensive planning process. There are resources and tools to support comprehensive planning as well as a variety of free trainings offered throughout the state which specifically relate to suicide prevention including; youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, and post-intervention. Access to these resources and tools are provided below. These resources can aid districts in the development of the policy and training as required by the new law.

NH Department of Education – OSEW: Free school and/or district-wide trainings available -

- Youth Mental Health First Aid - <https://www.nhstudentwellness.org/ymhfa.html>
- Everyone is an Asset Builder – 40 Developmental Assets
<https://www.nhstudentwellness.org/assetbuilder.html>
- NH Student Wellness Toolkit for Comprehensive Planning
<https://www.nhstudentwellness.org/toolkit.html>
- OSEW full training offerings: <https://www.nhstudentwellness.org/pd.html>

NH Resources and Trainings:

- NAMI-NH – <https://www.naminh.org/education/training-opportunities/> --- NAMI-NH Online Suicide Prevention Training : <https://schoolsafetyresources.nh.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Connect-Online-School-Personnel.pdf>
- Connor's Climb - <https://www.connorsclimb.org>
- UNH Cooperative Extension - <https://extension.unh.edu/programs/youth-mental-health-wellness>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) NH Chapter - <https://afsp.org/chapter/afsp-new-hampshire/>
- NH 24/7 Resources - <https://www.211nh.org/>
- NH Suicide Prevention Plan - <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/bchs/spc/documents/2016-suicide-prevention-plan.pdf>
- NH Community Mental Health Centers - <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/bbh/centers.htm>
- NH Community Behavioral Health Association Emergency Services Resources - <https://nhcbha.org/emergency-key-services/>
- NH School Board Association – Policy Review - <https://www.nhsba.org/servicespolicy.asp>
- NH School District Governance Association – <https://sdganh.org>

National Resources to Support Suicide Prevention and Postvention in Schools:

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) - <https://afsp.org/>
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center - <http://www.sprc.org/>
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

- The Connect Program - <http://www.theconnectproject.org/>
- The National Alliance for Suicide Prevention - <https://theactionalliance.org/>
- SAMHSA's Toolkit for Suicide Prevention - <https://www.store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669>
- Center for Disease Control Prevention Package - <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/suicideTechnicalPackage.pdf>
- SAMHSA Suicide Prevention Toolkit for High Schools - <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma12-4669.pdf>
- Suicide Prevention Strategic Planning Course - <https://training.sprc.org/enrol/index.php?id=31>
- The National Council for Behavioral Health - <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/>

Model School Prevention Policy Online Resources:

- Model Suicide Prevention Policy (AFSP) <https://afsp.org/our-work/education/model-school-policy-suicide-prevention/>
- The Trevor Project – Model School Policy on Suicide Prevention - <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/education/model-school-policy/>

Examples of Evidence Informed Suicide Prevention Trainings:

- QPR Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention – <https://qprinstitute.com/>
- SOS Signs of Suicide – <http://www.sprc.org/resources-programs/sos-signs-suicide>
- Kognito At-Risk for High School Educators - <https://kognito.com/products/at-risk-for-high-school-educators>
- More Than Sad - <https://afsp.org/our-work/education/more-than-sad/>
- LEADS for Youth Suicide Prevention - <https://save.org/what-we-do/education/leads-for-youth-program/>
- The Connect Program: Prevention and Postvention: live and online training, protocols and technical assistance - www.theconnectprogram.org
- CALM: Counseling on Access to Lethal Means - <https://training.sprc.org/enrol/index.php?id=20>

Resources and Curriculum to Support Social & Emotional Learning, Resilience and Wellness:

- Collaborative for Academic, Social, & Emotional Learning - <https://casel.org/resources-support/>
- Too Good for Violence - <https://toogoodprograms.org/collections/too-good-for-violence>
- Choose Love - <https://www.jesselewischooselove.org/>

Text of bill:

The text of SB 282, in its entirety, can be accessed at the following link:

http://qencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/billText.aspx?sy=2019&id=1073&txtFormat=html

For convenience, the entire text of the bill is also provided below:

193-J:2 Suicide Prevention Education.

- I. Each school district and chartered public school shall develop a policy that guides the development and implementation of a coordinated plan to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide. The policy shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following provisions:

(a) Training school faculty and staff, including contracted personnel and designated school volunteers, in youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, post-intervention, and resources available within the school and community consistent with the provisions of paragraph II.

(b) Educating students in the importance of safe and healthy choices and coping strategies, recognizing risk factors and warning signs of mental disorders and suicide in oneself and others, and providing help-seeking strategies for oneself or others, including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.

(c) Identifying within the school the person or persons who serve as the point of contact when a student is believed to be at an elevated risk for suicide.

(d) Making referral, crisis intervention, and other related information, both within the school and the community, available for students, parents, faculty, staff, and school volunteers.

(e) Promoting cooperative efforts between school districts, chartered public schools, and community suicide prevention program personnel.

II. Each school district and chartered public school shall, within 9 months of the effective date of this chapter, require all school faculty and staff, including contracted personnel, to receive at least 2 hours of training in suicide awareness and prevention annually. Such training may include, but not be limited to, youth suicide risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, post-intervention, and resources available within the school and community. The training may be accomplished within the framework of existing in-service training programs or offered as part of ongoing professional development activities. School districts and chartered public schools shall allow the use of self-training materials in fulfilling the annual training requirements of this paragraph and each school district and chartered public school may determine how to both administer the annual training requirements and ensure that such training requirements are met. This paragraph may apply to all or some school volunteers in accordance with school district policy.

III. School suicide prevention policies required under paragraph I and the training required under paragraph II shall be evidence-informed.

IV. Nothing in this chapter shall require the inclusion of any specific curriculum, textbook, or other material designed to address the topic of suicide in any program or activity conducted by a school district or chartered public school.

193-J:3 Immunity. Nothing in this chapter shall create a private right of action against any school administrative unit, school district, public academy, chartered public school, the state, or any employee, contractor, subcontractor, or agent thereof. A school administrative unit employee, school employee, chartered public school employee, public academy employee, regular school volunteer, pupil, parent, legal guardian, or employee of a company under contract to a school, school district, school administrative unit, or chartered public school, shall be immune from civil liability for conduct arising from or related to the implementation of, or failure to adequately implement, this chapter.

For questions related to this Technical Advisory, please contact:

Michelle Myler, Administrator
Bureau of Student Wellness
Tel. 603-271-4018
Email: michelle.myler@doe.nh.gov

Kelly Untiet, Administrator
Office of Social & Emotional Wellness
Tel. 603-271-2295
Email: kelly.untiet@doe.nh.gov

Issued by: <i>Frank Edelblut, Commissioner</i>	Date Issued: October 17, 2019	Supersedes issue dated: September 25, 2019	Page 5 of 5
---	----------------------------------	---	-------------