

RCW 28A.410.226 Washington professional educator standards board—Training program on youth suicide screening—Certificates for school nurses, social workers, psychologists, and counselors—Adoption of standards.

(1) As provided under subsections (2) and (3) of this section, individuals certified by the professional educator standards board as a school nurse, school social worker, school psychologist, or school counselor must complete a training program on youth suicide screening and referral as a condition of certification. The training program must be at least three hours in length. The professional educator standards board must adopt standards for the minimum content of the training in consultation with the office of the superintendent of public instruction and the department of health. In developing the standards, the board must consider training programs listed on the best practices registry of the American foundation for suicide prevention and the suicide prevention resource center.

(2) This section applies to the following certificates if the certificate is first issued or is renewed on or after July 1, 2015:

- (a) Continuing certificates for school nurses;
- (b) Continuing certificates for school social workers;
- (c) Continuing and professional certificates for school psychologists; and
- (d) Continuing and professional certificates for school counselors.

(3) A school counselor who holds or submits a school counseling certificate from the national board for professional teaching standards or a school psychologist who holds or submits a school psychologist certificate from the national association of school psychologists in lieu of a professional certificate must complete the training program under subsection (1) of this section by July 1, 2015, or within the five-year period before the certificate is first submitted to the professional educator standards board, whichever is later, and at least once every five years thereafter in order to be considered certified by the professional educator standards board.

(4) The professional educator standards board shall consider the training program under subsection (1) of this section as approved continuing education under *RCW 28A.415.020 and shall count the training program toward meeting continuing education requirements for certification as a school nurse, school social worker, school psychologist, or school counselor. [2013 c 197 § 2.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 28A.415.020 was repealed by 2018 c 266 § 411.

Findings—Intent—2013 c 197: "(1) The legislature finds that:

(a) According to the state department of health, suicide is the second leading cause of death for Washington youth between the ages of ten and twenty-four. Suicide rates among Washington youth remain higher than that national average;

(b) An increasing body of research shows an association between adverse childhood experiences such as trauma, violence, or abuse, and school performance. Children and teens spend a significant amount of time in school. Teachers and other school staff who interact with students daily are in a prime position to recognize the signs of emotional or behavioral distress and make appropriate referrals. School personnel need effective training to help build the skills and confidence to assist youth in seeking help;

(c) Educators are not necessarily trained to address significant social, emotional, or behavioral issues exhibited by youth. Rather, best practices guidelines suggest that school districts should form partnerships with qualified health, mental health, and social services agencies to provide support; and

(d) Current safe school plans prepared by school districts tend to focus more on natural disasters and external threats and less on how to recognize and respond to potential crises among the students inside the school.

(2) Therefore, the legislature intends to increase the capacity for school districts to recognize and respond to youth in need through additional training, more comprehensive planning, and emphasis on partnerships between schools and communities." [2013 c 197 § 1.]

Finding—Intent—2013 c 197: See note following RCW 43.20A.765.

Civil liability—2013 c 197: See RCW 28A.310.501.