

HOUSE BILL NO. 374

INTRODUCED BY E. MCCLAFFERTY, B. BENNETT, Z. BROWN, V. COURT, W. CURDY, K. DUDIK,  
 M. DUNWELL, J. ECK, J. ELLIS, M. FUNK, D. HAYMAN, C. HUNTER, T. JACOBSON, J. KARJALA,  
 K. KELKER, G. KIPP, E. LIESER, R. LYNCH, M. MACDONALD, K. MCCARTHY, N. MCCONNELL,  
 P. NOONAN, A. OLSEN, C. PEASE-LOPEZ, R. PEPPERS, Z. PERRY, G. PIERSON, C. POPE, J. PRICE,  
 A. REDFIELD, V. RICCI, D. SALOMON, C. SCHREINER, B. SMITH, T. STEENBERG, K. SWANSON,  
 S. WEBBER, N. WILSON, T. WOODS

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION TO DEVELOP  
SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION TRAINING MATERIALS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES;  
 REQUIRING RECOMMENDING AT LEAST 2 HOURS OF TRAINING EVERY 5 YEARS FOR RENEWAL OF  
 A TEACHER OR SPECIALIST CERTIFICATE; AMENDING SECTION 20-4-108, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN  
 EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, Montana's Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training Act is based on The Jason Flatt Act  
 model legislation that has been adopted in over a dozen states, where this legislation has been implemented to  
 positively impact hundreds of thousands of teachers and millions of students around the country.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Short title. [Sections 1 and 2] may be cited as the "Suicide Awareness and  
 Prevention Training Act".

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Mandatory youth YOUTH suicide awareness and prevention training.

(1) The office of public instruction shall provide guidance and technical assistance to Montana schools on youth  
 suicide awareness and prevention TRAINING MATERIALS. All training MATERIALS offered must be approved by the  
 superintendent OFFICE of public instruction in accordance with subsection (2):

~~(2) The superintendent of public instruction shall approve youth suicide awareness and prevention~~  
~~training under this section if the training is at least 2 hours each year, meets, MEET the standards for professional~~  
 development in the state, and ~~is~~ BE periodically reviewed by a qualified person or committee for consistency with



1 generally accepted principles of youth suicide awareness and prevention training.

2 ~~(3)(2)~~ The LEGISLATURE RECOMMENDS THAT youth suicide awareness and prevention training ~~must~~ be  
3 made available annually to each employee of a school district and to staff of the office of public instruction who  
4 work directly with any students enrolled in Montana public schools. The training must be provided at no cost to  
5 the employee. The training may be offered through any method of training identified in subsection ~~(4)~~ (3).

6 ~~(4)(3)~~ ~~Employees required to take training under this section shall~~ THE LEGISLATURE RECOMMENDS THAT  
7 EMPLOYEES UNDER SUBSECTION (2) take at least 2 hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every  
8 5 years. Appropriate methods for delivery of the training include:

9 (a) in-person attendance at a live training PROVIDED BY A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ENTITY APPROVED  
10 BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION;

11 (b) videoconference;

12 (c) an individual program of study of designated materials;

13 (d) self-review modules available online; and

14 (e) any other method chosen by the local school board that is consistent with professional development  
15 standards.

16

17 ~~Section 3.~~ Section 20-4-108, MCA, is amended to read:

18 ~~"20-4-108. Term of teacher and specialist certificates -- renewal. (1) A teacher or specialist certificate~~  
19 ~~issued by the superintendent of public instruction must bear the dates of issue and validity and is valid for a term~~  
20 ~~of 5 school fiscal years, except that a class 5 provisional certificate is valid for the number of years, up to a~~  
21 ~~maximum of 5 years, provided by the policies of the board of public education. The period of validity for any~~  
22 ~~certificate begins on July 1 immediately preceding the date of issue, except that a teacher or specialist who~~  
23 ~~applies for certification after January 1 may, upon request, have the period of validity of the certificate begin on~~  
24 ~~July 1 following the date of application.~~

25 ~~(2) Teacher and specialist certificates must be renewed for similar periods of time on the basis of the~~  
26 ~~board of public education policies for teacher and specialist certification renewal.~~

27 ~~(3) A teacher or specialist who applies for certification renewal shall show that the teacher or specialist~~  
28 ~~has completed at least 2 hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training in the previous 5 years before~~  
29 ~~the certification may be renewed."~~

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1            NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Codification instruction.** [Sections 1 and 2] are intended to be codified  
2 as an integral part of Title 20, chapter 7, and the provisions of Title 20, chapter 7, apply to [sections 1 and 2].

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4            NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2015.

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