

August 26, 2015

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

SUBJECT: House Bill 2186 and Suicide Prevention Training for Educators in Public Schools

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide information regarding requirements under House Bill (HB) 2186, which was passed by the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, 2015. HB 2186 requires suicide prevention training for all new school district and open-enrollment charter school educators annually and for existing school district and open-enrollment charter school educators on a schedule adopted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) by rule. Training must be selected from the list of recommended best practice-based programs that is provided by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in coordination with the TEA. School districts and open-enrollment charter schools may also select programs through an independent review of suicide prevention training material that complies with the guidelines developed by the TEA and offered online.

A link to the DSHS recommended best practice-based programs list and the guidelines for independent review can be found on the TEA Coordinated School Health website at [http://tea.texas.gov/Texas\\_Schools/Safe\\_and\\_Healthy\\_Schools/Coordinated\\_School\\_Health/Coordinated\\_School\\_Health\\_Requirements\\_and\\_Approved\\_Programs/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/Safe_and_Healthy_Schools/Coordinated_School_Health/Coordinated_School_Health_Requirements_and_Approved_Programs/). School districts and open-enrollment charter schools are encouraged to involve a school health advisory council or a similar advisory group with the selection of a suicide prevention training program.

The DSHS recommended best practice-based list includes sections for mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention. The programs in the suicide prevention section are a subset of the programs that are included in the Best Practice Registry (BPR) of the Suicide Prevention Resource Center that can be found at <http://www.sprc.org/bpr>. A school district or open-enrollment charter school can choose from any of the programs in the BPR. Several of the programs, including *Kognito At-Risk*, *EndingSuicide.com*, and *Making Educators Partners in Youth Suicide Prevention* are free, online, and can be completed in one or two hours.

The TEA guidelines for independent review can be used by a school district or open-enrollment charter school to select a program that is not on the DSHS recommended best practice-based list. Programs selected as a result of an independent review using the guidelines must be offered online. While not required by HB 2186, school districts and open-enrollment charter schools that choose an online suicide prevention program through the independent review process are encouraged to maintain records related to the selection of the program.

While the schedule for training will not be adopted into rule until later this fall, school districts and open-enrollment charter schools may begin training new and existing educators as soon as a training program has been selected by the district or school. Suicide prevention training provided to existing educators by a school district or open-enrollment charter school prior to the 2015-2016 academic year may be used to meet the requirements of HB 2186 if the training

program is on the DSHS recommended best practice-based list or meets the TEA guidelines for independent review.

In accordance with Health and Safety Code §161.325, school districts shall maintain records that include the name of each educator who participated in the suicide prevention training. Open-enrollment charter schools are encouraged to maintain suicide prevention training records.

If you have questions regarding this training, please contact Victoria Ellis in the Division of Educator Preparation by email at [victoria.ellis@tea.texas.gov](mailto:victoria.ellis@tea.texas.gov) or by telephone at (512) 936-8400, Option 5.

Sincerely,

Ryan Franklin  
Associate Commissioner  
Educator Leadership and Quality