

House Bill 1056

By: Representatives Dempsey of the 13th, Dickson of the 6th, Cooper of the 43rd, Gardner of the 57th, Coleman of the 97th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to student health in elementary and secondary education, so as to enact
3 the "Jason Flatt Act-Georgia"; to provide for legislative findings; to require annual suicide
4 prevention education training for school system personnel; to provide that no cause of action
5 is created; to provide that no duty of care is created; to provide for related matters; to repeal
6 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 This Act shall be known and may be referred to as the "Jason Flatt Act-Georgia."

10 **SECTION 2.**

11 The General Assembly finds that:

- 12 (1) Suicide cuts across ethnic, economic, social, and age boundaries and has a tremendous
13 and traumatic impact on surviving family members, friends, and the community at large;
14 (2) After unintentional injury, suicide has become the leading cause of death among young
15 people between the ages of ten and 24. At a time when unintentional injuries have been
16 on the decline, suicides have increased; and
17 (3) Suicide is a complex issue that requires school, family, and community resources be
18 harnessed for appropriate and timely help to be available in order to prevent suicide.

19 **SECTION 3.**

20 Part 3 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
21 relating to student health in elementary and secondary education, is amended by adding a
22 new Code section to read as follows:

23 "20-2-779.1.

24 (a)(1) The Department of Education shall adopt rules to require that all public school
25 personnel receive annual training in suicide awareness and prevention. This training shall
26 be provided within the framework of existing in-service training programs offered by the
27 Department of Education or as part of required professional development offered by a
28 local school system.

29 (2) The Department of Education shall, in consultation with the Department of Public
30 Health, the Suicide Prevention Program established pursuant to Code Section 37-1-27,
31 and suicide prevention experts, develop a list of approved training materials to fulfill the
32 requirements of this subsection which may include training materials currently being used
33 by a local school system if such training materials meet any criteria established by the
34 department.

35 (3) Approved materials shall include training on how to identify appropriate mental
36 health services, both within the school and also within the larger community, and when
37 and how to refer youth and their families to those services.

38 (4) Approved materials may include programs that can be completed through self-review
39 of suitable suicide prevention materials.

40 (b) No person shall have a cause of action for any loss or damage caused by any act or
41 omission resulting from the implementation of the provisions of this Code section or
42 resulting from any training, or lack thereof, required by this Code section.

43 (c) The training, or lack thereof, required by the provisions of this Code section shall not
44 be construed to impose any specific duty of care."

45 **SECTION 4.**

46 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.