

SESSION OF 2016

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL  
NO. 323**

As Amended by House Committee on Education

**Brief\***

Sub. for SB 323 would enact the Jason Flatt Act, which would require the board of education of each school district to provide suicide awareness and prevention programming to all school staff. The bill would require such programming to include at least two hours of training each calendar year based on programs approved by the Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE), which could be satisfied through independent self-review of suicide prevention training materials and a building crisis plan developed for each school building, including steps for recognizing suicide ideation, appropriate methods of interventions, and a crisis recovery plan. The bill also would require each school district to notify parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in such district that the training materials provided under such programming are available.

The bill would provide that no cause of action could be brought for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission resulting from the implementation of the provisions of the bill, or resulting from any training, or lack of training, required by the bill. Further, the bill would state nothing in this section shall be construed to impose any specific duty of care.

Finally, the KSBE would be required to adopt rules and regulations necessary to implement the bill by January 1, 2017.

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\*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

The bill would be in effect upon publication in the *Kansas Register*.

## **Background**

At the Senate Committee on Education hearing on the bill, Senator Smith; representatives of the Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas, Inc., Greater Kansas City Mental Health Coalition, Headquarters, Inc., Jason Foundation, Kansas Chapter for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Kansas National Education Association, and National Alliance on Mental Illness; several family members of students who committed suicide; and other private citizens offered testimony in support of the bill. Representatives of the Kansas State Department of Education, Office of the Attorney General, and United School Administrators of Kansas offered neutral testimony. There were no opponents.

The Senate Committee replaced language requiring all teachers and principals licensed or certified by the KSBE to receive at least two hours of suicide prevention training annually that uses best practice-based programs recommended by the KSBE with language requiring school districts to provide a minimum of one hour of programming to all school staff. The Senate Committee also adopted amendments requiring school districts to notify parents that materials are available and concerning liability. The Senate Committee recommended its amendments be incorporated into a substitute bill.

The House Committee on Education amended the bill by increasing the training requirement from one hour to two hours per calendar year. The Committee also removed language relating to willful and wanton misconduct from the section related to causes of action brought for any loss or damage brought because of requirements of the bill.

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget, the introduced bill would have no fiscal effect for the state. Any costs would be borne by local school districts.

There was no fiscal note provided related to bill amendments.