



## Championed Bills in House Public Education

The Texas chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) believes that early intervention is critical to prevent and treat mental health disorders.

- One-fifth of youth ages 13-18 live with a mental health condition.
- The average delay nationally between when symptoms of a mental illness first appear and intervention is 8-10 years.
- 37 percent of students with a mental health condition age 14 and older drop out of school.

NAMI Texas champions the following bills in this committee to save lives and help young people with mental health disorders thrive.

### Suicide

- 1 in 8 high school students in Texas reported a suicide attempt in the past year, almost twice the national average.
- 89% of Texas educators surveyed reported having personally responded to a youth suicide.
- Only 44% of districts reported using a best practice suicide prevention program in 2017.

#### ➔ **HB 3235 (Ramos) - Relating to staff development requirements for public educators regarding suicide prevention training.**

- Requires teachers to receive evidence-based training on suicide prevention every other year.
- Currently only a requirement for new teachers.

#### ➔ **HB 3411 (Allison) - Relating to suicide prevention in public school curriculum and certain educational programs concerning suicide prevention and substance abuse prevention.**

- Requires school districts to develop a plan to address suicide at the prevention, intervention, and postvention (re-entry into school if student survives, grieving support for community if student dies by suicide).
- School districts are not currently required to have district plan for postvention.

#### ➔ **HB 4193 (Allison) - Relating to suicide prevention in public school curriculum and certain educational programs concerning suicide prevention and substance abuse prevention.**

- Requires school districts to develop a plan to address suicide at the prevention, intervention, and postvention (re-entry into school if student survives, grieving support for community if student dies by suicide).
- Requires teachers to receive evidence-based training on suicide prevention every other year.
- Requires mental health, substance abuse, healthy relationships, and suicide prevention to be included in the health curriculum.
- Requires School Health Advisory Councils to develop recommendations on suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, and strategies to increase parental awareness of risk factors for suicide.
- Companion bill to SB 1390 (Sen. Menendez)

### Parent Education on Mental Health

- For clinic-based services, between 40% and 55% of 15- to 17-year olds report that family was the major influence on their help-seeking behavior.
- Psychoeducation for parents, or education on mental health services, has been proven to increase parental and youth satisfaction with mental health treatment, increase attendance in treatment programming,

increase adherence to treatment plan, and reduce stigmatizing and negative beliefs around mental health disorders.

➔ **HB 3888 (Ramos) - Relating to a school district's plan for parental involvement concerning mental health and substance use issues and suicide prevention.**

- Requires School Health Advisory Councils to develop strategies to increase parental awareness of risk factors, warning signs, and resources that address and treat child mental health issues, substance abuse, and suicide.
- Allows school districts to develop plans to provide all families in the district with educational materials on risk factors, warning signs, resources on and off campus that address and treat child mental health issues, substance abuse, and suicide.
- Requires Title I schools to develop and implement a plan to educate and engage with students and parents on mental health, substance use, suicide, and trauma-related issues using any promising practices they choose.

**Prevention**

- Insufficient sleep can seriously exacerbate mental health issues.
- Individuals with mental health issues are more likely to have difficulty sleeping.
- Texas high school students are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide if they did not get eight hours or more of sleep on an average school night.

➔ **HB 1602 (Hernandez) - Relating to the time at which instruction may begin in public schools; making an appropriation.**

- Prohibits school districts from starting classroom instruction before 8am.
- Designates appropriation to offset transportation costs to districts.

**Trauma**

- 1 in 10 Texas high school students reported experiencing sexual violence and 7 percent experienced physical dating violence in the past year alone.
- In 2013-2014, out of 5 million Texas students, only 1,440 (0.03%) students were reported to have been bullied or harassment on the basis of sex.
- Children who experience trauma are 32.6 times more likely to have behavioral and learning issues than students who have not experienced trauma.

➔ **HB 3489 (Cole) - Relating to the establishment of a task force on sex-based harassment in public schools.**

- Creates a task force within Texas Education Agency to evaluate and develop recommendations on how school districts can improve their response to sex-based harassment (sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, and stalking) in grades K-12.
- Requires evaluation and recommendations on prevalence, current laws, barriers to implementation of policies, programs, and procedures on sex-based harassment, strategies for collecting data on prevalence and response, and best practices on providing guidance and support to schools and students.
- Requires evaluation and recommendation on best practices to include school district policies and procedures on accessibility of information on policy and reporting procedure to public, professional development training for school district employees, fair hearing procedures, trauma-informed mental health service access, and appropriate academic accommodations for survivors.

**For more information, please contact Alissa Sughrue at [policy.fellow@namitexas.org](mailto:policy.fellow@namitexas.org)**