

Regular Session, 2001

SENATE BILL NO. 792

BY SENATOR IRONS AND REPRESENTATIVE PRATT

AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:282.3, relative to a program of youth suicide prevention; to establish a program of youth suicide prevention administered by the state Department of Education in cooperation with state and local agencies; to require the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt rules and regulations for the development of a state plan; to provide relative to services provided to students under a program; to authorize local programs; to provide for funding; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:282.3 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§282.3. Youth suicide prevention programs; intent; rules; services;  
funding

**R.S. 17:282.3 is all new law.**

A.(1) The legislature recognizes that adolescent suicide cuts across ethnic, economic, social and age boundaries and has a tremendous and traumatic impact on surviving family members.

(2) The legislature finds that suicide is a significant cause of death in the United States, and that the health and well-being of our youth is critically important to the public welfare of Louisiana. The legislature further finds that attempted suicide is usually a symptom

indicating that a person is experiencing stressful or traumatic events that push their normal coping strategies to the limit.

(3) It is the intent of the legislature to provide appropriate and timely help to Louisiana's youth and families, to improve access and availability of prevention services statewide, and to prevent youth suicide and suicidal behaviors.

B. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall prescribe such rules and regulations as are necessary and proper for a statewide youth suicide prevention plan in public elementary and secondary schools. Such rules and regulations shall be developed collaboratively with the Department of Health and Hospitals, Adolescent Health Initiative, and shall include the following:

(1) Procedures for the development of programs in the city, parish and other local public school systems.

(2) Standards and policies for programs to offer services which may include but shall not be limited to the following:

(a) Individual, family, and group counseling services related to youth suicide prevention.

(b) Referral, crisis intervention, and information for students, parents, and school personnel.

(c) Training for school personnel, and others responsible for counseling or supervising student activities.

C. Any city, parish, or other local public school system offering a youth suicide prevention program established pursuant to this Section shall do so in accordance with such rules and regulations adopted by the state board, and may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

(1) Classroom instruction integrated into the curricula designed to achieve any of the following objectives:

(a) Encourage sound decision-making and promote ethical development.

(b) Increase student awareness of the relationship between drug and alcohol use and youth suicide.

(c) Teach students to recognize signs of suicidal tendencies, and other facts about youth suicide.

(d) Inform students of the available community youth suicide prevention services.

(e) Further cooperative efforts of school personnel and community youth suicide prevention program personnel.

(2) School or community based alternative programs outside of the classroom.

D.(1) A statewide youth suicide prevention plan shall be implemented upon the appropriation of funds specifically for this purpose. A portion of such funds shall be budgeted for purposes of program implementation to the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and to the Department of Health and Hospitals, Adolescent Health Initiative.

(2) Any local youth suicide prevention program may be established and implemented in a city, parish, or other local public school system upon identifying and securing funds or services from other state and local agencies.

E. The state Department of Education and the Department of Health and Hospitals shall jointly submit an annual report to the Senate and House committees on education on the status and effectiveness of

the programs established pursuant to this Section.

Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on the day following such approval.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_