

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Action Item
July 17, 2019

SUBJECT: New Rule 6A-1.094121, Mental and Emotional Health Education

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

For Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Sections 1001.02(2)(n), 1003.42(2), F.S.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This new rule establishes minimum hours of required instruction related to mental and emotional health education for grades 6-12 students and establishes procedures for school districts to document the instruction.

Time is a critical factor. Approximately 1 in 5 youth in Florida, and worldwide, experience mental health disorders prior to turning age 25.

In Florida, quality mental and emotional health education has been identified as a high priority by Florida Governor DeSantis, First Lady DeSantis and the Legislature. Currently, health education requirements include mental and emotional health but do not include an instructional time requirement or assurance mechanisms to support and verify that mental and emotional health instruction is delivered.

Florida Youth Risk Behavior Survey data documents that in 2017, 28% of Florida high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row; 14% reported purposely hurting themselves without wanting to die; 14% reported having seriously considered attempting suicide; 11% reported having made a plan to commit suicide; and 8% reported a suicide attempt.

Mental health literacy components that are key to well-being include understanding how to optimize and maintain good mental health; decreasing stigmas related to mental health; enhancing help-seeking efficacy; and understanding mental disorders and treatments. Mental and emotional health education can positively impact areas including, but not limited to, teen suicide, bullying and cyberbullying, and opioid and alcohol addictions.

Supporting Documentation Included: Proposed Rule 6A-1.094121, F.A.C.

Facilitators/Presenters: Jacob Oliva, Chancellor of Public Schools

6A-1.094121 Mental and Emotional Health Education

(1) School districts must annually provide a minimum of five (5) hours of instruction to students in grades 6-12 related to youth mental health awareness and assistance, including suicide prevention and the impacts of substance abuse.

(2) Using the health education standards adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., Student Performance Standards, the instruction for youth mental and emotional health will advance each year through developmentally appropriate instruction and skill building and must address, at a minimum, the following topics:

- (a) Recognition of signs and symptoms of mental health disorders;
- (b) Prevention of mental health disorders;
- (c) Mental health awareness and assistance;
- (d) How to reduce the stigma around mental health disorders;
- (e) Awareness of resources, including local school and community resources;
- (f) The process for accessing treatment;
- (g) Strategies to develop healthy coping techniques;
- (h) Strategies to support a peer, friend, or family member with a mental health disorder;
- (i) Prevention of suicide; and
- (j) Prevention of the abuse of and addiction to alcohol, nicotine, and drugs.

(3) By December 1 of each year, each school district must submit an implementation plan to the commissioner at MentalHealthEducation@fldoe.org and post the plan on the school district website. The implementation plan must include:

- (a) The specific courses in which instruction will be delivered for each grade level;
- (b) The professional qualifications of the person delivering instruction; and
- (c) A description of the materials and resources utilized to deliver instruction.

(4) By July 1 of each year, each school district must submit an annual report to the commissioner at MentalHealthEducation@fldoe.org. The report must verify completion of the instruction and include:

- (a) The specific courses in which instruction will be delivered for each grade level;
- (b) The professional qualifications of the person delivering instruction; and
- (c) A description of the materials and resources utilized to deliver instruction.

(5) Failure to comply with the requirements of this rule may result in the imposition of sanctions described in

Section 1008.32, F.S.

Rulemaking Authority 1001.02(2)(n), 1003.42, F.S. Law Implemented 1003.42 FS. History-New