



Rep. Lindsey LaPointe

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10200HB1320ham001

LRB102 03335 KTG 38448 a

1 AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 1320

2 AMENDMENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_. Amend House Bill 1320 by replacing  
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Wellness Checks in Schools Program Act.

6 Section 5. Findings. The General Assembly finds that:

7 (1) Depression is the most common mental health  
8 disorder among American teens and adults, with over  
9 2,800,000 young people between the ages of 12 and 17  
10 experiencing at least one major depressive episode each  
11 year, approximately 10-15% of teenagers exhibiting at  
12 least one symptom of depression at any time, and roughly  
13 5% of teenagers suffering from major depression at any  
14 time. Teenage depression is 2 to 3 times more common in  
15 females than in males.

16 (2) Various biological, psychological, and

1 environmental risk factors may contribute to teenage  
2 depression, which can lead to substance and alcohol abuse,  
3 social isolation, poor academic and workplace performance,  
4 unnecessary risk taking, early pregnancy, and suicide,  
5 which is the second leading cause of death among  
6 teenagers. Approximately 20% of teens with depression  
7 seriously consider suicide, and one in 12 attempt suicide.  
8 Untreated teenage depression can also result in adverse  
9 consequences throughout adulthood.

10 (3) Most teens who experience depression suffer from  
11 more than one episode. It is estimated that, although  
12 teenage depression is highly treatable through  
13 combinations of therapy, individual and group counseling,  
14 and certain medications, fewer than one-third of teenagers  
15 experiencing depression seek help or treatment.

16 (4) The proper detection and diagnosis of mental  
17 health conditions, including depression, is a key element  
18 in reducing the risk of teenage suicide and improving  
19 physical and mental health outcomes for young people. It  
20 is therefore fitting and appropriate to establish  
21 school-based mental health screenings to help identify the  
22 symptoms of mental health conditions and facilitate access  
23 to appropriate treatment.

24 Section 10. Wellness Checks in Schools Grant Program.

25 (a) Subject to appropriation, the Department of Healthcare

1 and Family Services shall administer a grant program to  
2 provide funding and resources for school districts and  
3 nonpublic schools to implement wellness checks to identify  
4 students in grades 7 through 12 who are at risk of mental  
5 health conditions, including depression or other mental health  
6 issues. A school district or nonpublic school that receives an  
7 award under the grant program shall make available to each  
8 student in grades 7 through 12 an annual wellness check.

9 (b) The wellness check shall include the use of a  
10 research-based screening tool validated to screen for mental  
11 health conditions in adolescents and shall be conducted by a  
12 mental health professional or through a partnership with an  
13 organization or health care provider. Nothing in this Act  
14 prohibits a school district or nonpublic school from using a  
15 self-administered screening tool as part of the wellness  
16 check. To assist school districts and nonpublic schools in  
17 selecting a research-based screening tool to use in their  
18 wellness check programs, the Department of Healthcare and  
19 Family Services may develop a list of preapproved  
20 research-based screening tools that are validated to screen  
21 adolescents for mental health concerns and are appropriate for  
22 use in a school setting. The list shall be posted on the  
23 websites of the Department of Healthcare and Family Services  
24 and the State Board of Education.

25 (c) Wellness checks shall be conducted in a manner that:

26 (1) permits real-time evaluation of the results and

1 same-day intervention by a mental health professional if  
2 necessary;

3 (2) accommodates bilingual education students,  
4 students with disabilities, and students with low reading  
5 proficiency;

6 (3) ensures the privacy of the student during the  
7 process and the confidentiality of the results consistent  
8 with State and federal laws applicable to the  
9 confidentiality of student records and mental health  
10 records; and

11 (4) requires written consent from a student's parent  
12 or guardian prior to any wellness check and a method for  
13 providing a parent or guardian with information if  
14 same-day intervention or other services are recommended.

15 (d) A school district or nonpublic school shall collect  
16 and report aggregated data that shall not contain any  
17 identifying or confidential information about any individual  
18 to the Department in a manner prescribed by the Department.

19 (e) A school district or nonpublic school seeking to  
20 receive funding under the grant program shall submit an  
21 application to the Department, in accordance with application  
22 procedures and requirements prescribed by the Department. An  
23 application shall include, at a minimum:

24 (1) a description of the tool to be used during  
25 wellness checks, an explanation of the individuals or the  
26 entity or entities that will administer the wellness

1 checks, and how the wellness checks will be conducted;

2 (2) an explanation of how the school district or  
3 nonpublic school intends to make its wellness check  
4 program available to each student in grades 7 through 12,  
5 the total number of students that will be offered wellness  
6 checks, and a description of how the school district or  
7 nonpublic school will notify students and parents or  
8 guardians about its wellness check program and how the  
9 school district or nonpublic school will obtain written  
10 consent from a student's parent or guardian prior to  
11 administering a wellness check;

12 (3) a dollar amount request and justification for  
13 funding sought by the school district or nonpublic school  
14 under the grant program; and

15 (4) a description of how the grant funding will be  
16 used to further the purposes of the school district's or  
17 nonpublic school's wellness check program, including  
18 covering costs for current personnel, hiring additional  
19 personnel, purchasing materials, or contracting with  
20 outside entities.

21 (f) Awards under the grant program shall be allocated to  
22 school districts and nonpublic schools that submit  
23 applications in a manner prescribed by the Department.

24 (g) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect a  
25 school district's or nonpublic school's ability to provide  
26 additional or supplemental services to students or impact any

1 other grant received by the school district or nonpublic  
2 school for providing social or mental health services. A  
3 school district or nonpublic school may seek to secure funds  
4 or other resources from the federal government or from private  
5 nonprofit or for-profit sources as may be available, to  
6 supplement funds received under the grant program.

7 (h) The Department shall submit a report to the General  
8 Assembly and the Office of the Governor that analyzes the  
9 grant program, including, but not limited to:

10 (1) the costs of the wellness check programs to each  
11 school district and nonpublic school awarded a grant;

12 (2) the aggregate number of students administered  
13 wellness checks;

14 (3) the aggregate number of students identified as  
15 being at risk of depression;

16 (4) the aggregate number of students who were provided  
17 same-day mental health services;

18 (5) the aggregate number of students who were  
19 identified as needing follow-up services; and

20 (6) the number of school districts and nonpublic  
21 schools that utilized current staff members, the number of  
22 school districts and nonpublic schools that hired other  
23 personnel, the number of school districts and nonpublic  
24 schools that contracted with another entity, and an  
25 average of the time school districts and nonpublic schools  
26 spent administering wellness checks per student.

1           (i) The Department may adopt rules to implement this Act.

2           Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
3           becoming law.".