WEST virginia legislature

2021 regular session

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 2362

By Delegates Zukoff, Hornbuckle, Thompson, Cooper, Toney, Higginbotham, Ellington, Hansen and Lovejoy

[Originating in the Committee on Education; February 25, 2021]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section, designated §18-2-43, relating to implementation of trauma-informed practices in schools; providing for an effective date; providing for training and verification of training by county boards; requiring the department of education to maintain a list of training resources and to report noncomplying counties to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability; providing definition and parameters of trauma-informed practices; and providing for rulemaking.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

Article 2. State Board of Education.

§18-2-43. Implementation of trauma-informed practices.

(a) No later than January 1, 2022, each county board of education shall verify to the state board that all schools within the county board of education’s jurisdiction have received training on trauma-informed practices.  The department of education shall maintain a list of resources available to county boards to meet this requirement and shall report to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability, prior to the 2022 Legislative Session, those counties that have not met this requirement.

(b) “Trauma-informed practices” means:

(1) Evidence-based professional development that promotes a shared understanding among teachers, teachers’ assistants, school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel and other staff that:

(A) Traumatic experiences are common among students;

(B) Trauma can impact student learning, behavior and relationships in school;

(C) Traumatic experiences do not inherently undermine the capabilities of students to reach high expectations in academics and life;

(D) School-wide learning environments where all students and adults feel safe, welcomed, and supported can enable students to succeed despite traumatic experiences; and

(E) Services, support, and programs provided to meet individual student needs should be trauma-informed, where appropriate, and increase student connection to the school-wide learning environment;

(2) Activities that engage teachers, teachers’ assistants, school leaders, paraprofessionals, specialized instructional support personnel, and other staff in a process of school-based planning to:

(A) Help all students feel safe and connected to the school community;

(B) Support all students to form positive relationships with adults and peers, understand and manage emotions, achieve success academically and in extra-curricular areas, and experience physical and psychological health and well-being;

(C) Promote teamwork and effective communication among all staff and shared responsibility for every student;

(D) Integrate evidence-based practices that build social-emotional skills into rigorous academic instruction; and

(E) Recognize and prevent adult implicit bias.

(c) The state board is authorized to promulgate legislative rules and, if necessary, emergency rules, in accordance with §29A-3b-1 *et seq*. of this code, for the implementation of this section.