



HEALTHY MINDS  
POLICY INITIATIVE

## School Safety and Suicide Prevention Act

HB 4106, Rep. Mark Vancuren and Sen. Dewayne Pemberton

*The School Safety and Suicide Prevention Act ensures every school in Oklahoma has an evidence-based protocol for responding to students in suicidal and mental health crisis. Through a local and district-driven process supported by ODMHSAS and OKSDE, schools and mental health providers will work together to develop standard practices designed to keep students safe.*

### Stopping youth suicide through school/provider collaboration

- Requires each public school district in collaboration with a local mental health provider to **define “mental health crisis”** and how those crises are identified
- Requires districts and local mental health provider(s) to **develop a protocol** governing how school staff respond to crises and refer families to treatment
- **Ensures parents or guardians are *always* notified** of a student in crisis
- Protects student and family **privacy and anonymity**
- Ensures a local provider is available to support students’ needs via telehealth or in-person services, and requires ODMHSAS and OKSDE to help schools if needed

### Oklahoma’s students and schools need help

- **This is an unprecedented, urgent crisis.** Given the stress of the last two years, school assessments (OPNA) show 17% of Oklahoma students considered suicide in 2020 and 9.8% attempted. Hospital ERs have seen up to double the number of youth in suicidal crisis, sometimes leaving no beds for kids in physical health emergencies.
- **Students are struggling academically.** Students in crisis can’t learn, and OKSDE has reported plummeting test scores as a result of the stressors of recent months.
- **Teachers need the help.** Teachers increasingly report concerning classroom behavioral and safety incidents. Standard protocols will offer them realistic steps for dealing with crises so they can focus on teaching.
- **The foundation has been laid.** Recent legislation expanding mental health resources and suicide prevention training have positioned schools to deal with these crises, and 988 offers new connections to care. These protocols are a natural and needed next step.
- **Schools aren’t in this alone.** Current mental health resources available in all 77 counties can support our schools, and the bill requires ODMHSAS and OKSDE to offer templates and other assistance as needed. Many schools already have treatment professionals working in their walls.

## HB 4106 supporters

