

26102869D

1 **HOUSE BILL NO. 495**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 12, 2026

4 A BILL to amend and reenact § 22.1-298.6 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by
5 adding a section numbered 22.1-279.11, relating to school boards; mental health awareness training;
6 anonymous reporting system; assessment of risk of violence and prevention of student harm to self or
7 others.

8 Patron—Guzman

9 Committee Referral Pending

10 Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

11 1. That § 22.1-298.6 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is
12 amended by adding a section numbered 22.1-279.11 as follows:13 § 22.1-279.11. *School boards; anonymous reporting system; assessment of risk of violence and
14 prevention of student harm to self or others.*15 Each school board is encouraged to contract with a private nonprofit organization to procure and make
16 available an anonymous reporting system for the assessment of risk of violence and the prevention of student
17 harm to self or others that includes the following features and components:18 1. A secure, certified Service Organization Control 2 (SOC 2) compliant platform for students to submit
19 messages and tips relating to violence or harm to self or others by telephone, website, and a multiplatform
20 compatible mobile application;21 2. Student access, 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and 365 days per year, to a national crisis
22 center that is staffed by a team of highly skilled and trained crisis counselors who have experience in
23 psychology, social work, counseling, and education; who are fluent in multiple languages; who are trained in
24 violence risk assessment, suicide prevention, crisis management, and mental health support; and whose sole
25 duty is to respond to messages and tips from students relating to violence or harm to self or others;

26 3. Ongoing program support, including onboarding, professional development, and promotion; and

27 4. Curricula and training for student and adult users available in in-person, live virtual webinar, and
28 prerecorded virtual webinar format.29 § 22.1-298.6. **Mental health awareness training.**30 A. Each school board shall adopt and implement policies that require (i) each teacher and other relevant
31 personnel, as determined by the school board, employed on a full-time basis, and (ii) each school bus driver
32 to complete a mental health awareness training or similar program at least once. No school board shall
33 require an employee to complete such training outside of the employee's regular working hours unless the
34 employee is compensated for the time spent completing the training at an hourly rate of not less than one and
35 one-half times the employee's average hourly rate of pay.36 B. Each school board shall provide required personnel the training required by subsection A and may
37 contract with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, a community services board,
38 a behavioral health authority, a nonprofit organization, or other certified trainer as defined in § 37.2-312.2 to
39 provide such training. Such training may be provided via an online module.

INTRODUCED

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