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BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 4375 (as reported without amendment)

Sponsor: Representative Chris Ward

House Committee: Education

Senate Committee: Education

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to encourage school districts and public school academies (PSAs) to provide instruction to students and personnel on suicide and depression, and require the Department of Education to develop or select model programs and materials on suicide prevention and awareness.

Specifically, the bill would encourage a school board or the board of directors of a PSA to provide age-appropriate instruction for pupils and professional development for school personnel concerning the warning signs and risk factors for suicide and depression, and the protective factors that help prevent suicide.

The instruction and professional development would have to be designed to prevent both fatal and nonfatal suicide behaviors among youth, to increase pupil awareness of the warning signs and risk factors for suicide and depression, and to improve access to appropriate prevention services for vulnerable youth groups.

If a school district or PSA provided such instruction, it would have to give notice of the instruction to the parents of all pupils of each school in which the instruction was provided. Failure to comply with this requirement would not create a cause of action or constitute a breach of any legal duty in a civil action.

The Department of Education would have to develop or select model programs and materials on suicide prevention and awareness that were appropriate for the purposes specified above, such as the Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education, and make those programs and materials available to school districts and PSAs.

Proposed MCL 380.1171

Legislative Analyst: Curtis Walker

FISCAL IMPACT

To the extent the Department of Education does not already have applicable materials available, the Department likely would incur costs associated with developing or selecting model programs and materials on suicide prevention and awareness, and making those programs and materials available to school districts and public school academies.

To the extent school districts and public school academies newly chose to provide age-appropriate instruction about warning signs and risk factors for suicide and depression, the districts and academies could see increased costs associated with such instruction.

Date Completed: 6-28-06

Fiscal Analyst: Kathryn Summers-Coty