

1 AN ACT relating to developing trauma-informed schools.

2 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

3 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 158 IS CREATED TO
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5 *(1) For purposes of this section:*

6 *(a) "Mental health professional" means:*

- 7 *1. A physician licensed under the laws of Kentucky to practice medicine*
8 *or osteopathy, or a medical officer of the government of the United*
9 *States engaged in conducting mental health services;*
- 10 *2. A psychiatrist licensed under the laws of Kentucky to practice*
11 *medicine or osteopathy;*
- 12 *3. A psychologist, a psychological practitioner, a certified psychologist,*
13 *or a psychological associate, licensed under KRS Chapter 319;*
- 14 *4. A psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner licensed under KRS*
15 *Chapter 314;*
- 16 *5. A licensed clinical social worker licensed under KRS 335.100, or a*
17 *certified social worker licensed under KRS 335.080 engaged in*
18 *providing mental health services; and*
- 19 *6. A professional counselor credentialed under KRS Chapter 335.500 to*
20 *335.599 engaged in providing mental health services; and*

21 *(b) "Trauma-informed approach" means incorporating principles of trauma*
22 *awareness and trauma-informed practices, as recommended by the federal*
23 *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in a school to*
24 *provide a safe, stable, and understanding learning environment for students*
25 *and staff.*

26 *(2) The General Assembly recognizes that schools must provide a place for students*
27 *to feel safe and supported to learn throughout the school day and that trauma*

1 can have a significant impact on the ability of a child to learn. The General
2 Assembly directs public schools to adopt a trauma-informed approach to
3 recognize, understand, and address the learning needs of children impacted by
4 trauma to create a school-wide environment where all children, including those
5 who have been traumatized, can be safe and successful.

6 (3) (a) Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, at least one (1) mental health
7 professional for every fifteen hundred (1,500) students shall be employed in
8 each public school to provide mental health services to students, including
9 identifying and assisting students whose learning, behavior, and
10 relationships have been impacted by trauma.

11 (b) Each mental health professional shall provide training, guidance, and
12 assistance to administrators, teachers, and staff on:

13 1. Recognizing symptoms of trauma in students;

14 2. Utilizing interventions and strategies to support the learning needs of
15 those students; and

16 3. Implementing a district's trauma-informed approach plan as
17 described in subsection (5) of this section.

18 (c) The mental health professionals hired under this section shall be employed
19 in addition to, and not in the place of, school guidance counselors or school
20 psychologists.

21 (4) By January 1, 2019, the Department of Education shall make available a toolkit
22 that includes guidance, strategies, behavioral interventions, practices, and
23 techniques to assist all local school districts in developing a trauma-informed
24 approach in their schools.

25 (5) By the 2020-2021 school year, each local board of education shall develop a
26 district plan for implementing a trauma-informed approach in its schools. The
27 plan shall include but is not limited to strategies for:

- 1 (a) Enhancing trauma awareness throughout the school community;
2 (b) Conducting an assessment of the school climate, including but not limited
3 to inclusiveness and respect for diversity;
4 (c) Developing trauma-informed discipline policies;
5 (d) Enhancing assessment and intervention skills; and
6 (e) Providing services and programs designed to reduce the negative impact of
7 trauma, support critical learning, and create a more positive and safe
8 school environment for every student.