

HB 999

2006

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to suicide prevention; providing
3 legislative intent; providing for a pilot program to be
4 conducted by the Signs of Suicide Prevention Program for
5 secondary schools in specified counties; requiring the
6 submission of proposals to the Department of Education;
7 providing for student participation in the pilot program
8 and for the provision of certain information to parents;
9 requiring a report to the Legislature; providing an
10 appropriation; providing an effective date.

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12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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14 Section 1. Signs of Suicide Prevention Program for
15 secondary schools; pilot program; legislative intent.--

16 (1) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide support
17 and funding for a pilot program conducted by the Signs of
18 Suicide Prevention Program for secondary schools, hereinafter
19 referred to as "SOS." SOS is a nationally recognized, evidence-
20 based suicide prevention and depression screening program for
21 secondary schools. SOS teaches students how to identify symptoms
22 of depression and suicidal tendencies in themselves and friends
23 while educating students about the relationship between
24 depression and suicide and encouraging them to seek help. The
25 pilot program shall encourage collaboration with local mental
26 health facilities and individual professionals in order to
27 facilitate increased access to treatment.

28 (2) During the 2006-2007 fiscal year, an SOS pilot program
29 shall be conducted in Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole
30 counties. In order to receive funding under this act, an SOS
31 entity for a county authorized to participate in the pilot
32 program must submit to the Department of Education by September
33 1, 2006, a proposal for suicide prevention and depression
34 screening for secondary school students who attend school in
35 that county. The pilot program shall provide local school
36 personnel in each participating county with the materials
37 necessary for implementation. The entire student body or a
38 select portion of the student body of a participating school
39 shall be screened, depending on the school's resources. A
40 student is not required to present identification in order to be
41 screened. Prior to the screening, the parent of each student in
42 a participating school shall be provided with a copy of the
43 screening form and additional information to assist the parent
44 in the identification of depression and suicidal tendencies and
45 to help initiate family discussions. A parent may refuse to
46 allow his or her child to participate in the pilot program.

47 (3) By January 1, 2007, the SOS pilot program shall
48 provide to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the
49 House of Representatives a report that includes an itemized list
50 of program costs, an evaluation of participating schools, an
51 assessment of the quality of the program components, an
52 assessment of the safety of program implementation, an
53 assessment of the burden on school support staff after
54 implementation of the program, an assessment of the efficacy of
55 the program, and recommendations for further legislation, which

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56 may include an assessment of the feasibility of extending the
57 program to secondary schools throughout the state. The
58 information shall be reported for the pilot program in the
59 aggregate, for each participating county, and for each
60 participating school in each participating county.

61 Section 2. The sum of \$600,000 is appropriated from the
62 General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education for the
63 2006-2007 fiscal year to be distributed to the Michael Buonauro
64 Foundation to implement the Signs of Suicide Prevention Program
65 as a pilot program for secondary schools in Brevard, Orange,
66 Osceola, and Seminole counties in accordance with this act.

67 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.