

**2013 SENATE EDUCATION**

**SB 2306**

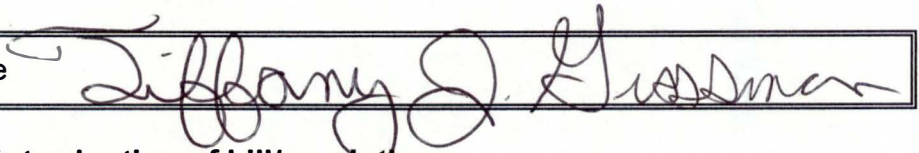
# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee  
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

SB 2306  
2-4-13  
18201

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to youth suicide prevention

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Flakoll** opened the hearing on SB 2306

**Senator Heckaman District 23:** I am here to introduce SB 2306. (Written Testimony #1 attached)

**Chairman Flakoll:** What is your vision on the frequency of this? Once each year?

**Senator Heckaman:** I think that is up to discretion of the administrators.

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** Could this be done through DPI or REA's rather than a law?

**Senator Heckaman:** That is a possibility. The Jason Foundation has been a vehicle in several other states and they come in after there is a law on the books so that is the reason for this.

**Chairman Flakoll:** They could choose someone other than The Jason Foundation though right?

**Senator Heckaman:** I believe they could. The foundation will continue to see this information is available online. The training session is rather short.

**Senator Marcellais District 9:** I signed on to this bill because of the suicides in my community. I want to present some statistics (Written Testimony #2 attached)

**Chairman Flakoll:** Do you know how many successful suicides happened this last year in the state of North Dakota?

**Senator Marcellais:** I have no idea.

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** I wish to testify in support of SB 2306. (Written testimony #3 and #4 from Jason's Father Clark Flatt attached)

**Senator Heckaman:** Are there program materials specifically for students?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** They can access them on the website. The resources span every component of a teen's life.

**Senator Heckaman:** So a group like SADD can take this program on and educate students?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** Yes.

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** If a school would like to access these facilities can they do that now?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** They can but it is limited access. Unlimited access is available once the state passed it.

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** Why do they need the state's approval?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** It is only recently they required there be an act in the state because the results show it needs to be widespread to be effective.

**Senator Luick:** How much time does it take to complete the program?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** I believe two hours per module, with 4 modules so I think approximately 8 hours.

**Chairman Flakoll:** So the materials are free but if we provide you with free materials that have to be taken during the course of the day, there is still the salary and benefits so that is \$4 million.

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** I wouldn't put staff on my floor unless they were trained to do their job. This is critical.

**Senator Heckaman:** Do you think the states and the schools would get this to their staff if it was not a state law?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** We will get the DVDs out and we will not stop. My concern is if we pass out the DVDs they get put on a shelf and aren't opened.

**Chairman Flakoll:** When they complete the four modules do they get a certificate?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** Yes at the end of each module they get a certificate of completion.

**Chairman Flakoll:** How are other states handling the liability associated with such legislation?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** The intent of the act is that the teachers just have an awareness and serve as a bridge. It is focused on the training not the proficiency. The intent is this happens locally in their communities before they have to come to a hospital.

**Chairman Flakoll:** In other states is it "shall" or "may"

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** "Shall"

**Senator Luick:** Is this a requirement for each year or each other year for the staff to be doing this training?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** The intent was each person to have a one-time training. My recommendation is they would have a refresher training.

**Chairman Flakoll:** The fiscal note says there is an annual assessment along with the tracking mechanism. Can you fail the assessment?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** You retake a module until you pass.

**Chairman Flakoll:** What is the tracking mechanism?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** They have that through the website and those reports can be produced from the Jason Foundation.

**Chairman Flakoll:** So are we tracking the teacher administrator or school data?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** They have info so they can report back to the school district.

**Senator Heckaman:** Do you have the number of teens or individuals that entered your facility?

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO of Prairie St. John's Hospital, Fargo, ND:** My average daily census for teens that fit into this category is 17 any day. Today is actually 27. I have swing capacity and we are full on child and adolescent. I have a 91 bed facility.

**Mark LoMurray:** I am here to testify in support of SB 2306. I have been working with teens and young adults for about 40 years and I have been in the field of suicide prevention about 30 years. I used to be director of the Police Youth Bureau in Bismarck. I was director of the ND Adolescence Suicide Prevention Project. I partnered with Mental Health America and the North Dakota Department of Health back in early 2000s and our project won a national

award for best public health practice from the American Public Health Association. I left the youth bureau feeling like we needed to handle suicide issues before they happen so I helped develop a suicide program Source's Strength. This bill emphasizes the need for suicide prevention. Generally 10-30% of 9-12 graders are suicidal on any given year. Only about 25% go to adults. Our goal is to reduce injuries. If we are really serious we need to mandate some evaluation and surveys to students to test if they are suicidal. We need to look at programs like the good behavior game that have been proven to have impact into 12<sup>th</sup> grade. We need to look at peer programs that partner with adults. By doing combinations we can reduce the fatality rates. I do think it will take much more than one piece of a program.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Part of our challenge is doing something that works. Are the other states showing success?

**Mark LoMurray:** If we are looking at injury numbers there isn't a system to track that. We know we have seen a reduction when certain prevention programs are put together.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Is the self-inflicted injury data the pre-cursor as opposed to actual suicides?

**Mark LoMurray:** Self-inflicted injuries and tracking the data set would be incredibly helpful. Suicide fatalities are difficult unless we have the large groups to draw from. Whatever efforts we do move forward with are important

**Chairman Flakoll:** For every suicide is there a corresponding self-inflicting injury or a proportional trend?

**Mark LoMurray:** 30 to 40 injuries for every fatality.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Does anyone wish to testify in opposition to SB 2306?

**Chairman Flakoll:** How was the fiscal note done?

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** The fiscal note was done using the Cognito Program which is a program that is supported right now by the North Dakota Department of Health and is in place in several middle schools and high schools across the state because it is already an existing program and we were most familiar with that as a researched based program. We got additional data and financial information from the Department of Health and that is the fiscal note.

**Chairman Flakoll:** So we could zero out the fiscal note?

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** That is correct.

**Senator Heckaman:** Is the Cognito Program more training for staff or students?

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** The only information I have about Cognito is that it is for Middle School and High School Educators and Associated Staff. It is

a two hour annual type web-based training. I don't know if there is a student component in that or not.

**Chairman Flakoll:** How long does that take to complete? How much of the professional development time required by law would it take up?

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** The current professional development requirements are two days a year and most districts offer additional professional development. The Cognito Program is two hours of annual time.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Are you doing any tracking data in terms of self-inflicted injuries?

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** The Department of Health may collect some of that information.

**Chairman Flakoll:** What about the liability?

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** That is why we didn't take a side. In addition to the cost of not just the program but the staff time will cost money as well. We believe in the intent and concept and believe the bill sponsors have a vision of safe and healthy schools. We support the intent and concept. There are a few bits and pieces that could be tweaked so we could put a fact sheet out identifying the programs available.

**Chairman Flakoll:** What bills or amendments are out there? There are a number of bills looking at required professional development.

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** This committee heard the bill on CPR. The training of that which would be implemented for students but part of the conversation was getting the staff trained tool

**Chairman Flakoll:** What reach does the Cognito program have?

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** I believe the fiscal note of \$123,600 would allow every middle school and high school across North Dakota to have access to that program.

**Chairman Flakoll:** What is the current penetration?

**Valery Fischer, Director of School Health for the DPI:** That I do not know.

**Chairman Flakoll:** We will close hearing on SB 2306

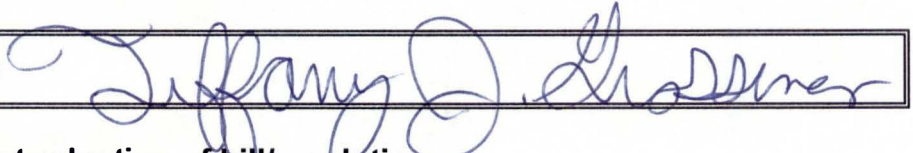
# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee  
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

SB 2306  
2-6-13  
18396

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to youth suicide prevention.

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Flakoll:** I will open the hearing on SB 2306

**Senator Heckaman:** I am working with Attorney General Stenehjem on this bill and I haven't talked to him recently. I don't think there will be any amendments that add anything. I think it will actually decrease the appropriation so I don't know what happens with that when there is a bill and the appropriation is not needed anymore.

**Chairman Flakoll:** We will have to talk to Senator Holmberg on that. Until we adopt the amendment, we need to treat it like it has to be out Monday.

**Senator Heckaman:** We heard from Prairie St. John's that in order to access the free literature we have to pass the Jason Flatt Act and we don't have a bill stating we are passing the Jason Flatt Act. This bill doesn't say that. Attorney General Stenehjem knows the family and how it should be worded if we want to go that direction to use those materials. I would also like to have that "or" or "and" any other materials that are currently available to schools. I don't think we want to say this is the only way you can work with the Suicide Prevention Program. There will be an amendment coming but I don't know what it is going to look like right now. I would like more info for that Cognito Program.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Closed the hearing on SB 2306

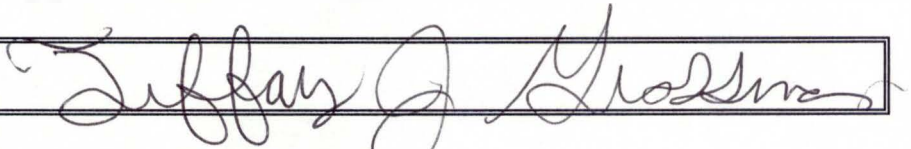
# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee  
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

SB 2306  
2-11-13  
18677

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 15.1-19 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to youth suicide prevention.

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Flakoll** opened the hearing on SB 2306

**Senator Heckaman:** I have been working with the Attorney General and we want to keep the language similar to the other 11 states. In subsection one change "include" to "require" and insert "annual" before the words "professional development". In subsection one remove "middle and high school" and replace it with "all teachers and administrators" and add two hours "of" before the word training. They recommend two hours of training. The fiscal note attached will disappear if the bill is passed.

**Chairman Flakoll:** Who is that from?

**Senator Heckaman:** Donna Finley, Director of Education and Legislative liaison from the Jason Foundation.

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** This does not require every school to use that format if they don't want to. Is that correct?

**Senator Heckaman:** That is my understanding.

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** Is this an additional requirement to provide some suicide prevention of some kind

**Senator Heckaman:** That is true.

**Chairman Flakoll:** The question was should we have an amendment to change the total number of school days to add one effective July 1, 2015 to accommodate this and other opportunities.



**Senator Heckaman:** My concern is that we are mandating so many things that we need to pay for that on behalf of the state of North Dakota. My concern about putting 2015 is that if we get it as soon as possible rather than later, it will eliminate minor concerns. Maybe they will have minor things taken care of. If they are interested in doing this, waiting for two more years might not be helpful.

**Chairman Flakoll:** I was saying that if we keep adding these things, should we have an additional day starting in 2015 so there is only that two year period where they don't have the extra day yet.

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** Do we have to require or can we put may in there? Suicide prevention is great but we heard testimony that some other programs are being used. This is turning into a mandate that we have to have suicide prevention. Is there a way to have the program available but still the flexibility?

**Senator Heckaman:** I suggest we add that subsection identifying this bill as the Jason Flatt Act. Maybe if we pass this bill out, we can work the details out as it goes over to the house. I want to make sure schools can use that if they wish

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** That is my point. I am not against this. I am against mandating another program for schools. They should determine what is a priority and what is important to them. If we can give them the resources without mandating it, we should do it.

**Chairman Flakoll:** We are also thinking of mandating a preparatory day for teachers before the school year starts.

**Senator Heckaman:** I would like to add subsection three and leave everything as it is.

**Chairman Flakoll:** We will take this up this afternoon.

**Senator Heckaman:** Do we have to make a statement that is has no appropriation in it for the record?

**Chairman Flakoll:** I will let senator Holmberg know that we are getting rid of the fiscal note. We will need an email from the Department of Public Instruction indicating the passage of amendments would expunge the fiscal note.

**Chairman Flakoll:** closed the hearing on SB 2306

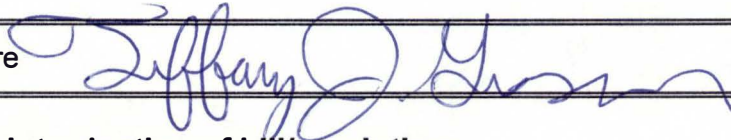
# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Education Committee  
Missouri River Room, State Capitol

SB 2306  
2-11-13  
18714

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to youth suicide prevention

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Flakoll** opened the hearing on SB 2306

**Senator Heckaman:** I have the amendment (#1 attached) We can't site a specific act and Council believes putting in generic language will still allow us to access those funds. I'm not sure about that but there are other programs available and we can use those.

**Senator Heckaman: Move amendment 13.0811.01001**

**Senator Marcellais:** Second

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** It says shall, so does this mandate that every school shall do this?

**Senator Heckaman:** Yes. I can continue to see if we can add a generic statement. I know we can access a limited part of the services but we can't access the full online part. I think we want complete access.

**A roll call vote was taken to adopt the amendment: 6 yeas, 0 neas, 0 absent**

**Senator Heckaman: Do pass as amended on SB 2306**

**Senator Marcellais:** Second

**Vice Chairman Schaible:** With the required mandate I will vote against it. I am not against the suicide prevention but if we promoting another requirement for our schools I'll have to vote against that.

**Senator Luick:** I feel the same way. We have too many mandates going on. We should not be forcing them to do that.

**A roll call was taken for a Do Pass as amended to SB 2306: 3 yeas, 3 neas, 0 absent**

**Vice Chairman Schaible: I move a Do Not Pass as amended for SB 2306**

**Senator Poolman: Second**

**A roll call vote was taken for a Do Not Pass as amended to SB 2306: 3 yeas, 3 neas, 0 absent**

**Vice Chairman Schaible: I move to pass on the floor without committee recommendation**

**Senator Luick: Second**

**Chairman Flakoll: I am not really excited about this bill as amended but I have been voting to keep the concept alive.**

**Senator Luick: Can we take the shall and move it to a may?**

**Senator Poolman: I would vote for this bill if it were a may and not a shall.**

**Vice Chairman Schaible: I withdraw my without committee recommendation**

**Senator Luick: I withdraw my second**

**Senator Luick: Move amendment to make the "shall" a "may"**

**Senator Poolman: Second**

**A roll call vote was taken to adopt the amendment: 6 yeas, 0 neas, 0 absent**

**Vice Chairman Schaible: I move a Do Pass on 2306 as further amended**

**Senator Luick: Second**

**A roll call vote was taken for a Do Pass as amended to SB 2306: 6 yeas, 0 neas, 0 absent**

**Senator Heckaman: will carry**

**FISCAL NOTE**  
**Requested by Legislative Council**  
**01/24/2013**

Bill/Resolution No.: SB 2306

- 1 A. **State fiscal effect:** *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2011-2013 Biennium		2013-2015 Biennium		2015-2017 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues						
Expenditures			\$123,600		\$123,600	
Appropriations			\$123,600		\$123,600	

- 1 B. **County, city, school district and township fiscal effect:** *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

	2011-2013 Biennium	2013-2015 Biennium	2015-2017 Biennium
Counties			
Cities			
School Districts			
Townships			

- 2 A. **Bill and fiscal impact summary:** *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

The bill creates an Act relating to youth suicide; requiring guidelines for training and self-study materials.

- B. **Fiscal impact sections:** *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

Section 1, #2 requires guidelines be developed for training and self-study materials be made available to districts at no charge.

3. **State fiscal effect detail:** *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

- A. **Revenues:** *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

- B. **Expenditures:** *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

An on-line self-study for high school level is estimated to cost \$59,400 for the biennium and for middle school \$64,200 for the biennium. Each on-line self-study course includes an annual post survey assessment along with a tracking mechanism. Total cost of \$123,600.

- C. **Appropriations:** *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

Funding for this requirement was not included in the Department of Health's appropriation – SB 2004.



**Name:** Valerie Fischer

**Agency:** Public Instruction

**Telephone:** 328-4138

**Date Prepared:** 01/29/2013



February 11, 2013

*JB*  
2-11-13

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2306

Page 1, replace lines 7 through 11 with:

- "1. Annually, each school district may provide to middle school and high school teachers and administrators at least two hours of professional development relating to youth suicide risk indicators, appropriate staff responses, and referral sources.
  
2. The superintendent of public instruction shall collaborate with the state department of health to obtain and disseminate information and training materials to school districts and nonpublic schools, free of charge."

Renumber accordingly

2306

Date: 2-11-13  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13,0811.01002

Action Taken amendment

Motion Made By Heckaman Seconded By Marcellais

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Tim Flakoll	✓		Senator Joan Heckaman	✓	
Vice Chairman Donald Schaible	✓		Senator Richard Marcellais	✓	
Senator Larry Luick	✓				
Senator Nicole Poolman	✓				

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

2306

Date: 2-11-13  
Roll Call Vote #: 2

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13.0811.01002

Action Taken do pass as amended

Motion Made By Heckaman Seconded By Marcellais

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Tim Flakoll			Senator Joan Heckaman		
Vice Chairman Donald Schaible			Senator Richard Marcellais		
Senator Larry Luick					
Senator Nicole Poolman					

Total (Yes) 3 No 3

Absent 0

Floor Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:



2306

Date: 2-11-13  
Roll Call Vote #: 3

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13,0811.01002

Action Taken do not pass as amended

Motion Made By Senaine Seconded By Poolman

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Tim Flakoll	✓	✓	Senator Joan Heckaman		✓
Vice Chairman Donald Schaible	✓		Senator Richard Marcellais		✓
Senator Larry Luick	✓				
Senator Nicole Poolman	✓				

Total (Yes) 3 No 3

Absent 0

Floor Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

2306

Date: 2-11-13  
Roll Call Vote #: 4

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number

Action Taken

adopt a amendment

Motion Made By

Luick Seconded By Poolman

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Tim Flakoll	✓		Senator Joan Heckaman	✓	
Vice Chairman Donald Schaible	✓		Senator Richard Marcellais	✓	
Senator Larry Luick	✓				
Senator Nicole Poolman	✓				

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Change shall to may

2306

Date: 2-11-13  
Roll Call Vote #: 15

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO.

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13,0811,01002

Action Taken do pass as amended

Motion Made By Scharnie Seconded By Luick

Senators	Yes	No	Senator	Yes	No
Chairman Tim Flakoll	✓		Senator Joan Heckaman	✓	
Vice Chairman Donald Schaible	✓		Senator Richard Marcellais	✓	
Senator Larry Luick	✓				
Senator Nicole Poolman	✓				

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

Floor Assignment Heckaman

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2306: Education Committee (Sen. Flakoll, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2306 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, replace lines 7 through 11 with:

- "1. Annually, each school district may provide to middle school and high school teachers and administrators at least two hours of professional development relating to youth suicide risk indicators, appropriate staff responses, and referral sources.
2. The superintendent of public instruction shall collaborate with the state department of health to obtain and disseminate information and training materials to school districts and nonpublic schools, free of charge."

Renumber accordingly

**2013 HOUSE EDUCATION**

**SB 2306**

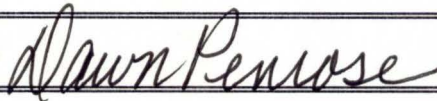
# 2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2306  
March 6, 2013  
19512

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Minutes:

**Ch. Nathe:** We will open the hearing on SB 2306.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** Sponsor (see attached #1).

**Ch. Nathe:** I see on the bill that it says "annual training". Is this something you see the teachers doing once a year, every other year? How often do you see the staff having to take this training?

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** Mr. Flatt has some recommendations. It may be possible to work this in with professional development that the teachers are already required to do to relicense every five years. Working with the Attorney General, there may be some possibilities that we can work with this as professional development time and actually use this as some credit hours. The recommendation in the beginning was annually. The amendment that I had drawn up spoke to every 5 years to take the training. I think we're open to work with Mr. Flatt on that issue. Every five years, teachers need to recertify or relicense and maybe we use this training as part of that.

**Rep. Hunsakor:** You're talking about the life of a young person, and we talk about the words "may" and "shall". I would see if "may" would stay in the bill, we would have many, many teachers who would not get up to speed on signs of suicide. That seems kind of ridiculous to me. Two hours isn't very long and it could make a difference in the life of a child. I think it should be "shall" instead of "may".

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** That's how the bill started out and in order to keep it alive and to get it over here, I accepted that change. "May" is what we can already do right now. As you will see, if we change this to "shall", and go to the Jason Flatt materials at no cost that are on-line, we will be one of 15 states that they have funding for right now. I think they are up to 11-12 states already that have adopted this piece of legislation and they have funding and staff to handle up to 15 states. If we reject this legislation, we probably won't have an opportunity for that free on-line training.

**Rep. Heller:** So when you said in order to keep it alive, where did it hit the snag, in committee or on the floor?

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** It was in committee. The Senate Education Committee felt that we already require too much training right now, and I think to save the life of a young person, 2 hours wouldn't be too much.

**Rep. Meier:** Do you know how the Foundation gets it funding, the sources.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** I think in the testimony from Mr. Flatt, they have fundraisers, it is a non-profit, so they accept donations and they also get funds from other financial contributions from other entities in his testimony.

**Rep. Schatz:** If this were passed in the form that you wanted it, would you suspect that we would have a dramatic decrease in suicides in the state. What do you think would be the outcome?

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** Since it's been enacted in Tennessee in 2007, all of the other age groups have kept about the same percentage of suicides across the board, except for the high school students and they continue a downward trend, which actually was a 28% decrease over the past two years, since they've implemented the training. I think they feel as it goes along and the teachers get more comfortable with it, and the students get more comfortable with the wording and the terminologies that staff might use with them if they are at risk, I think you will see a bigger decrease for our state. Mr. Flatt also has some dramatic statistics from ND. One of the statistics is that North Dakota youth responded to the question "have you attempted suicide in the past 12 months" and in ND, 1 out of 9 young people said yes compared to 1 out of 12, so we're a little bit higher. If you consider that, it would mean that according to our population, about 4,866 students will attempt suicide in the next year, or about 13 per day in ND alone. It's a high need. It's not that we don't have materials out there. Another presenter uses it in a treatment facility and coordinating that, they feel that it has an opportunity for us to be proactive, upfront in our schools, to get to these situations and get help sooner.

**Ch. Nathe:** Do you have any data or examples of this program being implemented in other states that have actually helped save lives, to get to the child before he actually goes through with committing suicide.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** I don't; I have the statistics from Tennessee that Mr. Flatt mentioned.

**Rep. Wall:** I don't see anything in here and maybe it is and I don't see it; it addresses in-services for teachers. Is there anything in the bill that will get the materials to the students, making them aware of reasons to live? Many students don't give the normal indicators like giving things away and so on. If the teachers just get training and they approach students who appear to probably have depression, I don't think that is enough. We bring in response teams after a youth suicide, but we never do anything proactively in giving students the reasons why we choose life and why breaking up with a girl at age 16 is probably not a reason to commit suicide. Is there anything in the bill that is going to get materials to the students who we don't know, or do not have the symptoms of potential suicide.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** I don't know specifically what the training materials look like. Online, there are separate sections for students, for teachers and for parents. I would imagine, somewhere along that line, that we could direct the students, or the staff could direct students to that position. That is something Mr. Flatt could answer for you.

**Rep. Schatz:** Is there an upward trend in suicide in North Dakota; from the '60s, '70s, '80s, is there any data on that.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** I don't know what the trend is. Mr. Flatt just references the Center for Disease Control 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey that was completed in ND schools and that's what he references here. As far as past history, I don't know. I think its maybe up and down. The school where I teach hasn't had one for a few years, but that doesn't mean anything. We could have three tomorrow.

**Rep. Heilman:** I imagine there are other national suicide prevention programs. What drew you to this one; what is the longevity of this Foundation and will it continue into the future, funding-wise, is it a program that we will implement and then the Foundation crumbles and we have to find funding.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** It started in 1997, so we're looking at about 16 years right now. It's supported by a lot of collegiate coaches, fundraisers for the organization; Coach Bohl is a member of the foundation and supports this. The attorneys general across the states support this organization. You're correct. There are a number of other good programs out there. Just because this piece of legislation would be written that we can access these foundation online materials, doesn't mean a school has to use them. They can provide their two hours of training with something else. In fact, the Dept. of Health and DPI already work on a couple of programs in some of our schools; but not all schools use a program.

**Rep. Hunsakor:** I believe that in many of our ND schools, especially if there has been a suicide in a community, that particular community and surrounding communities will have experts come in, in that field and talk to selected students, say grades 9-12. I think that is done quite a bit in our state.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** That was our situation; we had grief counselors in and, like Rep. Wall said, it was after the fact. It wasn't before the fact. One of the students did have some red flags and we tried to provide some interventions and that student was good enough to buffalo the interveners. We need the information ahead of time, instead of after the fact.

**Ch. Nathe:** Bismarck has what is called the Bismarck Crisis Team, of which I am a part. Like you say, after death has occurred, they will have counselors at the funeral home watching the kids, if they lost a parent or fellow classmate. But they also raise red flags if they hear things in the hallways and will try to address them prior to a kid attempting suicide, but they don't always stop it or catch them, but there are some proactive programs out there too.



**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** There have been some attempts to be proactive. There is a great pastor in Minot that does a great program. However, if you don't have someone that continually keeps that up, it goes by the wayside. This online information is really exciting because you can access it at a moment's notice. It's not like having to dig through some files in my classroom to try and figure out what I'm looking for and all of a sudden we are three hours down and we should have been there three hours before.

**Rep. Rohr:** Would this century code then also cover the tribal and non-public schools.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** That's my assumption and hope that it would. I don't see why we would leave anyone out. If we don't have the word, public and non-public in there, it says for middle and high school teachers. It doesn't specifically say just public.

**Ch. Nathe:** Line 12.

**Rep. Heller:** I'm looking at the history of what this bill has gone through and it started out with a fiscal note of \$123,000 and explain how that dropped off of it and the other question is, if a school district decides not to go with this free program, do they pick up those costs themselves, or would the state have to pay for the program they decide to use.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** The fiscal note came from the DPI, assuming that they would have to develop the materials themselves. So that was the cost on the fiscal note for the schools across the state. Because the material from the Jason Foundation is free, that's how the fiscal note got dropped. Schools can access some of the programs that the Dept. of Health uses already. I don't know if there is a cost for that program or not. I don't know how that is run right now. But there are programs available that are already being used in some schools through the Health Dept. and I don't know who picks up the cost. As far as requiring us to pick up the cost of anything else, I don't think it would, because it can access any materials. If they choose not to use this, I would assume it would be at their own cost, because these materials are free and available for them.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you.

**Wayne Stenehjem, Attorney General:** I appreciate the opportunity to be here today, to do so especially on a topic as significant and as important as this one is. I became involved because I serve, along with most of my colleagues, Attorneys general across the country as state ambassadors for the Jason Flatt Foundation. That is designed to attempt assist in reducing the prevalence of youth suicide. It is a problem as Sen. Joan Heckaman said. She took most of my statistics. But it does bear repeating. According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey here in North Dakota, one out of four of our state's youth report that "they have felt sad or hopeless for two weeks or more within the last year", which is, of course, a sign of possible

depression; one out of seven of our young people, 14.7% seriously considered suicide in the previous 12 months; almost one out of eight of our young people, 12.1% actually made a plan to attempt suicide within the previous 12 months, and almost one out of eight of ND's young people, 10.8% reported that they actually attempted suicide one or more times within the last 12 months. That translates to almost 5,000 of ND's young people who have actually attempted suicide; those are very frightening and concerning statistics. This is an average of 13 suicide attempts by young people, somewhere in ND, each and every day. That is why it seems to me that it is important enough for you to make the policy decision that one of the things that teachers need to have as a part of their professional development is training in the area where to recognize possible suicide ideation, and also then to give a resource for these teachers who want to know what to do about it when we see a situation arising. I am here to commend to you the passage of this legislation. The legislation as it passed the Senate, simply includes the word "may", and really doesn't do a lot in my estimation because that's really current law. They "may" do this right now; you need to decide if 5,000 suicide attempts by young people in ND are serious enough for you to actually require that this kind of training take place among our teachers in ND. I think it is and I also have communicated with Clark Flatt. I have heard him make presentations on this topic several times and I know it will be well worth your while to hear from him. He has a very compelling story and the program that he has, which is one of several that exist across the country, but the program he has commenced is something that is appearing to make a difference. It certainly has in Tennessee, and he will be here to answer some of your specific questions. I want to commend this legislation to you. I hope you will agree that 5,000 suicide attempts in the state of ND is really a serious public health issue and it needs to be addressed. The best way that I can think of is to pass legislation like this; that says part of the training teachers should get is how to recognize and what to do about suicide issues within the schools and I think that most teachers probably would welcome the opportunity to have education and training in that area. I am happy to work with this committee and the sponsors to come up with amendments that may be necessary; I think it is important enough that you should seriously consider passing this bill with amendments.

Ch. Nathe: Rep. Hunskor will be carrying the bill.

Wayne Stenehjem, AG: That's good because I understood him to say that he wants to make it mandatory and also that it is a good indication that you are going to pass the bill.

Rep. Hunskor: Do you know if Mr. Flatt appeared before the Senate Education Committee.

Wayne Stenehjem, AG: No, he didn't; but he is planning on coming next Wednesday, 3/13. He had hoped to be here today; he travels around the country giving presentations all the time, he just couldn't be here today.

Rep. Rust: When I look at the word "may", my first inclination when I read this bill was that it doesn't do anything. It isn't even a feel good bill. I am wondering if we

were to change that back to "shall", what is your thinking about the word "annually". Maybe there is a trade-off there. You could probably get "shall" more easily accepted if we didn't do it as often. I'm not sure if annually is necessarily needed. After a while, if you go through this, and you've done this for seven years in a row, you have people kind of wondering about whether or not that's necessary. Any thoughts about the words "shall" and "annually".

Wayne Stenehjem, AG: I think it should be "shall", and I think "annually" is probably more frequent than it needs to be and one of the amendments that has been circulated would say that you have to have two hours of this training every five years to recertify and that might be sufficient. We just think it's important that teachers know and have the training, get the background. They probably wouldn't need it every year. Early on they would need it, and then at regular intervals that you could as a policy matter decide is appropriate.

Rep. D. Johnson: Is this part of the curriculum now for a teacher learning the profession before coming out into the job market, as part of the training to work with students.

Wayne Stenehjem, AG: I'm not the person to answer that.

Rep. Hunskor: We do have teachers coming into a system, so if you did it every two years, we could have a new teacher in the system who would go through the whole year without that training and that teacher could very well be responsible or the one who would be in a key position to recognize suicide symptoms, so the annual requirement would cover.

Wayne Stenehjem, AG: It would.

Rep. Hunskor: Or something else written in there to cover that situation.

Wayne Stenehjem, AG: There might be other ways to cover that and say that every five years, or that you have to have it within the first year or two of your initial teaching experience. There are lots of options that might be workable. I think what's important is that we get this into the code, one way or another and require that at some point you get this kind of training.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you. We will now listen to the DVD from Clark Flatt (attached).

Clark Flatt: Due to previous engagements and arrangements to be a keynote speaker many states away from you, I could not make this meeting. I want to share an important date in my life. On July 16, 1997, I lost my youngest son Jason, to a terrible silent epidemic called "youth suicide". It was only after the fact that I found out that suicide was so impactful to our nation's youth; being the third leading cause of death of young people, then from ages 15-24. Today the third leading cause of death for ages 10-24. Soon after losing Jason, myself and my family and a small group of friends decided to start the Jason Foundation to provide the information and resources to the students, teachers, youth workers, educators to

adults, parents and communities to help them be able to recognize the warning signs and be able to react. Four out of five young people who will attempt suicide will give clear, clinical warning signs. We just have to know what to look for and then know how to respond. Not making counselors out of our students, teachers or parents, but making them people that can identify and respond and know what resources are there in their community to help them with a situation where a young person might be considering suicide. I want to talk to you today about a very important resource that you're considering for ND, called the Jason Flatt Act. The Jason Flatt Act goes with the teacher's in-service training requirements and requires teachers to have two hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training, built within your own state system, or to help them to learn how to recognize the signs of suicidal ideation. It's not meant to add to the hours, although in some cases it might have to be that type of amendment to the law. But it's very important that it's being passed so that you can train your teachers. The national strategy for suicide prevention stresses the importance of training our educators to be able to recognize the early warning signs and know how to respond to those warning signs. I want to share four statistics from the 2011 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey that was done in North Dakota. There are four questions that concern suicide in young people (see attached #2).

Sen. Joan Heckaman: There are some things I want to cover from Mr. Flatt's written information (see attached #2). He has statistics at the bottom of page 1 and top of page 2 that came from the Survey done in ND. He also has some information discussing the trends and his statistics on the 4,866 students, the 13 per day that will attempt suicide in the next year. I invite you to spend some time reading his document here on Effectiveness and Replication. He gives us some other ideas as well on what we can use. I am going to work with the Attorney General on amendments to put the correct language in the bill.

Rep. Rust: In your discussions with the Attorney General, and as you look at an amendment, one of the things that popped up to my mind, if we require teachers to be trained, and now you have a student who does the unthinkable and commits suicide, is the teacher or the school going to be held liable for that; should there be something within the law or the amendments to kind of address that.

Sen. Joan Heckaman: That came to my mind, but I think there is enough written into law for staff already, but we'll look at that.

Rep. Rohr: I think of the Good Samaritan Law. I don't see this any different as being a first responder for CPR. You're not a doctor when you do that, just like you're not a counselor when you do this. It's all about early recognition, intervention and referral is what I'm getting from the bill.

Sen. Joan Heckaman: That was my first thought. I had thought the same thing as Rep. Rust, about are we getting ourselves into a liability issue but I don't think we are. I think maybe if we don't train, we might be in a worse liability issue. We might be better off with the training than not having it.

**Rep. D. Johnson:** Do you know if the younger teachers are they getting this type of training. I think it's a great idea, but do they get this type of training when they're preparing to be a teacher at college.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** I'm not sure that they are right now. There are a lot of things, as you teach out there, that you wish you would have learned in college. I don't know if we could bring this forward to our teachers' training centers across the state. I think that would be great. But I don't know how they would access the materials that we would use here. I think there would be some continuity if they could. But any kind of materials are better than none.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Further testimony in support of SB 2306.

**Greg LaFrancois, CEO Prairie St. John's, Fargo:** Support (see attached #3).

**Rep. Rohr:** Is this evidence-based.

**Greg LaFrancois:** No, it is not. Mr. Flatt can explain why this is a very effective training program.

**Rep. Rohr:** Thank you.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Further testimony in support.

**Merle Botone, Education Administrator for the Office of Indian Affairs, ND Indian Affairs Commission:** Support. In the past two years, being in my position here with the state, I have felt the effects of youth suicide both professionally and personally. Just within the last week, I have received a call from a counselor at one of the local middle schools asking for assistance to deal with suicide ideations that they had at their school. I know that providing this professional training will be beneficial and it is a training that is thought out and needed in the school system. We do support this bill.

**Ch. Nathe:** Thank you. Further testimony in support.

**D.J. Arnold:** Support. I have personal experience in these areas. I have the privilege actually of serving on the ND Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and they are very proactive in moving forward with programs like the Jason Flatt Act that helps educate. Fifteen years ago, my brother, Jeff, was 17 months younger than me, was a professional pharmacist, in Dallas, TX died by suicide. He was suffering from depression and things like that. Honestly, as a family 15 years ago, a tight family, he had tickets to come home for Christmas that year. Instead he left each of us a note along with a gift talking about his situation. Three and a half years later, my father, who couldn't deal with his suicide, took his own life, leaving my mother and us to deal with the ramifications. First, coming from a small town, Steele, ND, it's a tremendous impact on those communities and any opportunity that you have for, what amounts literally to free help to get awareness into those communities and just getting people to talk about the issue of suicide.

**There is such a stigma that goes along with it that people are afraid to talk, even ask questions. For somebody who has survived suicide loss twice, it's even hard for me to ask my kids if they are thinking of suicide. We do need that intervention at a much earlier level, so that a teacher, who sees those kids on a daily basis, is not becoming a counselor. How many of us went to our teachers when we were younger, that teacher we respected, our coach; we go to those people and we're asking for an opportunity to extend to them another tool in the toolbox that allows them to make the next step forward instead of feeling regret because they didn't have that tool in the toolbox if something should happen to that student. I serve on the board for the Out of the Darkness Walk, which is a fundraiser for American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. I've also set a group called the Lost. Lost is a group for young adults and teens that are survivors of suicide loss. I would love the fact that I didn't have any people coming to my support group, but the inevitability of it is that there is.**

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support of SB 2306. Testimony in opposition. We will recess this hearing until Wednesday, March 13, 2013 at 9:00 am so that Mr. Flatt can testify in person.**

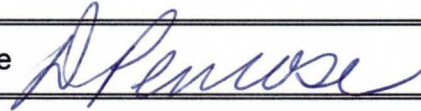
# 2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

House Education Committee  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

SB 2306  
March 13, 2013  
19821, 19859, 19872

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Minutes:

**Ch. Nathe:** We will open the recessed hearing on SB 2306.

**Sen. Joan Heckaman:** Sponsor, support (see attached amendment #1). The question last time at the end of the hearing was "is this evidence based". I think you heard from testimony that I handed out that it is outcome-based. There are positive outcomes that come from using these materials. It's not saying that we don't get positive outcomes from the other materials that can be used. The way the bill is written, other materials can be used that are used in schools right now. I think when teachers start to use these, they will find them readily available, easy to access, the training is quick, you know where the materials are when you are done and I would ask for your support passage of this bill.

**Wayne Stenehjem, Attorney General:** I want to re-express my interest in passage of this bill and suggest the amendments that Sen. Heckaman was working on. With respect to the topic of putting names of private organizations in the bill, that is something that happens from time to time. You do not make a habit of naming bills after somebody for very good reasons. References to organizations are found in places all throughout the statutes and even in the constitution. In fact the North Dakota Education Association is listed as a recognized organization for the purpose of making recommendations for members of the board of higher education. That's not unprecedented. I wanted to come here to mention that I serve as an ambassador, along with most of the other attorneys general in the country for the Jason Flatt Institute and to help introduce Mr. Flatt. I appreciate the consideration from the committee for the extra time to allow him an opportunity to appear by telephone. He tried to get here in person, and it just didn't work out with his schedule with the airlines. I hope you look favorably upon the amendments and pass the bill.

**Rep. Hunskor:** Can you tell me what you do as an ambassador for the Jason Flatt Foundation. What does that involve?

**Mr. Stenehjem:** It involved doing what I am going right now; to promote the work that they are doing to try to get useful and helpful legislation enacted and to help raise awareness of the seriousness of the problem of youth suicide across the country including here in ND.

**Ch. Nathe: Thank you.**

**Clark Flatt, Jason Flatt Foundation (telephonically): Support. I want to commend you for looking at SB 2306, the Jason Flatt Act. It started here in TN in 2007 and is the first state to pass it. Of course, the Jason Foundation is named after my 16 year old son. I lost Jason to suicide July 16, 1997. We're one of the longest running youth suicide prevention programs in the nation today and we are very fortunate to have a lot of partners. We have an office at Prairie St. Johns in Fargo, ND. The Jason Flatt Act simply will save lives. It has shown that by passing this Act, there will be a young person alive 12 months from now that would not have been alive if you had not trained the teachers. The national strategy for suicide prevention points out that teachers are one of our main core of providing the education, information, and awareness on identifying early warning signs. The outfitting of teachers, we feel, is one of the best actions that a state can take to confront this problem. It is not the answer to everything; it is just a great first step in confronting the problem of youth suicide, here in ND. Youth suicide for ages 15-24 at least to the 2010, it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death and the CDC report of 2011 shows that you are running about a 40% higher rate on young people who were asked have they attempted suicide in the past. There is a great need there and that's one of the things we were looking at when we were mapping out where to offer the Jason Flatt Act. We now have 11 states that have passed it. We are not trying to take on the whole United States. We charted by two things: 1) we thought the greatest need and also we had people that we felt would help us introduce it and help us be able to at least get it in front of the right people, because we do it without a fiscal note, it was passed without a fiscal note in all but one state; California will not pass any kind of mandated legislation without a fiscal note. It was a very small fiscal note and we saw none of the money, but they put something on it for the Dept. of Education. In the other 10 states, it was passed without a fiscal note and operating very well in all of the states. You will have people, like your own suicide prevention coalition that would go out and I'm sure would help, the Mental Health Associations, the Crisis centers, schools themselves, many of the counselors find that they assimilate the information they need to be able to present this and of course, as a fail-safe system, the Jason Foundation offers the on-line library that will satisfy the requirements. The AFSP also has some on-line programs that are very good. This is not, nor should it be, the only program. We like to have it put in the bill that the Dept. of Education, just like in all 11 cases would review any materials that would be acceptable for self-taught and approve those. That's worked very well in all 11 states.**

**Ch. Nathe: We heard your CD the other day during the first hearing on 3/6/13. It was very informational and empowering.**

**Rep. Meier: How many years did it take you to get your Foundation up and running.**

**Clark Flatt: Well I lost Jason in July, 1997. We did not start the foundation until October of that year. We have been operating over 15 years now. We incorporated in the state of TN in October, 1997. We really started going regional the next spring. By 2001, we would be considered a national program.**



**Rep. Meier:** With the fundraising that you have done for your foundation, and I commend your work on the foundation. I think it seems to be very good work. What is the cost for the materials for each state? I know that it was testified that we would be one of 15 states to receive the funding. What is the cost for the materials?

**Clark Flatt:** Since we offer the on-line library, we've had to go to the same basis that Google has gone to, by being an I-cloud type of situation, because of the broadband width. We have four different modules that are in that library. It is a tremendous amount of broadband capacity in doing that, and it's not an inexpensive amount. Each module costs us around \$75,000-100,000 to do. Then we put those on the on-line library and we maintain that. Just maintaining the library on a monthly basis is easily a \$1500-2000 job for us, and that's counting the broadband. Broadband is very expensive. What we wanted to do is to pass it and we first said in 10 states, and we would take care of all the cost, especially the costs of the on-line library. That's our biggest issue. We made some arrangements with the people that handle the broadband. They also like our cause and what we're trying to do. We were able to work out some discounts where we can now up that number to 15 states. For the first 15 states that we talk with that pass the Jason Flatt Act, we will guarantee the program will remain free. If you go on the website, you will see it now, when you go to the on-line library it will tell you to drop down to the state. If you have passed the Jason Flatt Act, find your state on the drop-down menu. When you find the state and click on it, you are automatically sent to a special part of our website where the broadband is the broadest we can get. We want to make sure that anybody that clicks on that site will be connected and able to get to the materials. We've had labs where there have been 115 teachers click on that link at the same time. That's a pretty big strain on the computer right there. We want to make sure that all of those 125 teachers get to take that course and get to do it in a timely manner without the computer locking up or going down, or not being accessible. If you are not one of those 15 original states, in the future, you will be able to still be able to use the program but you will be on general broadband which means that there could be times that you would not have any problems at all, but if usage is high, you might not be able to get on that system if you're not one of the 15 states. Some school systems like to do it in person which I think is the best. We have the same programs that are on-line; we have on a DVD facilitator. Where you have a middle school or high school counselor who could take that and within a short period of time, are able to present that module to their school. The teaching is done by the DVD, but the facilitator has put the groups together, break them into small groups, talk about it, bring them back together. I personally like the DVD part, because you get the interpersonal reaction. We would make those free to any school in ND that would request it too. There is no cost unless someone chooses to buy a program on their own. There wouldn't be any need to, AFSP will offer their program free, they don't charge. They are a national organization, very good. We will not charge for any of our programs there in the state. The on-line library just protects that person in the very rural areas that did not have access to a mental health association or didn't have access to some of the resources that the more urban areas have. This assures the teacher, even in a remote rural area, they could access and satisfy the

requirements of the law by just being in self-study in the on-line library that's been approved by your Dept. of Education.

**Rep. Meier:** Do you customize your materials to each state. We're more of a rural state.

**Clark Flatt:** In the actual teacher in-service trainings they are more general because that is the only way we can do this economically. This is not going to make your teachers into counselors. There are some programs out there that I feel like attempt to do that. I don't think that is a good deal. I've worked in youth suicide prevention for 15 years now; I have a master's degree that is in education and counseling. I wouldn't attempt to do counseling one on one with a suicidal teen. When you're looking at the cost of \$75,000-100,000 per module that gets fairly expensive. We want to give them the information tools and resources where they can do early identification and know how to refer within their school system to get help. I think that is very important to know that we're not trying to make them counselors. There will be materials through our office there at Prairie St. Johns that is customized for your state. Some of the same information that you have, like the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey, I think there is a tremendous amount of great information on it, when you are looking at suicide awareness and prevention to give you an outlook about how your state is doing compared to the national stats. We will also send out a lot more information, and our office there will customize it, but the DVDs and on-line are general.

**Ch. Nathe:** In regard to the in-service and the professional development training. In the states where you have this program, how often are they doing that for the teachers and administrators. Once a year, once every 3 years, 5 years. How does that work.

**Clark Flatt:** We try to work within the current system. Here in TN, a recertification for teachers is on an annual basis, so every year they have to do 2 hours. We do have some states that do it bi-annually, and one state it is once every 5 years, because their recertification was set on a 5 year rotation. The best thing that I would love to say is to do it every year, but if your system is not set up to recertify every year, then I could see where it could add an undue cost to your state, because you are not set up to do it annually. I would say that whatever the system is there in ND, as far as the recertification. I could see you passing this bill to consider coinciding the training with teacher recertification. So if recertification for a teacher is every 1, 2, or 5 years, then they would be required during that same to complete one 2 hour session.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** Has this created any liability to either a school or school district in any of those states, or is there a possibility of that happening.

**Clark Flatt:** That has been addressed. We have had two or three states that have actually put in language that states that this in no way increases the liability of the individual teacher, school district or state. They put that in there. I don't know how forceful that is. They've done it just to make themselves feel better. You're really in

more of an area of liability now without the training, than you are with it, in my opinion and the same is true of some of the legal people we work with. If you look at the ND Child Abuse and Neglect law there, you also have within that the emotional abuse, which makes the teachers already to be the first responders to recognize and report emotional abuse, whether they know the abuser or even through self-abuse. What you don't have is the training that the teachers could recognize that. That was the main thing when California passed this. California's Teacher's Association, we were in conversation with them, they had almost identical wording to the ND Child Abuse and Neglect law. When we showed them that their teachers were already first responders, already required by law to report these things, they just had not trained them. That was the reason that they really got behind the Jason Flatt Act in California. I think that is wise. I don't think we are making anyone liable. If you were trying to make those teachers into counselors, then I think you would be increasing the liability or try to say that a teacher should handle a suicidal ideation point without bringing in the professional people of that school. I think that would be very dangerous. This doesn't do that. This helps a teacher recognize and be able to refer within their system. If you look at the one that was distributed today, the survey we do every two years. One of the biggest points of that survey, teachers are so scared about a student walking up to them between classes and asking if they can talk to them, that they are thinking about killing themselves. We had a pretty high percentage after they go through one of our modules of saying now, they don't have that same fear. We haven't had any attorney general or anyone that we have worked with, say that it is increasing liability. They've seen it actually the other way. Nothing can say that someone won't sue you, but this goes the other way, you've done something to try and help identify. The lawsuits we see occurring now have been primarily where their schools have not done any proactive work in trying to do identification and referral. We have not had one single case tied to the Jason Flatt Act or any activity of a state due to that since 2007, since the start.

Rep. Rohr: We've been told that this is not evidence-based but outcome-based. How frequently does someone look at the information and make sure that it's updated and who is responsible for that.

Clark Flatt: This is something we fight regularly. Evidence-based is not proprietary, it doesn't belong to just that person or company. We say, without exceptions, our program of clinical evidence based. They are reviewed, made sure that the most sound clinical approach to addressing how to convey information on awareness and prevention, items around youth suicide, we also give it to one of the leading universities that make sure that it fits within an educational model that's been proven to be able to take information and successfully convey that information. The survey is done every two years, where you would say the outcome-based, shows that we say the program will raise awareness and prevention information and it has been shown to do that. We would say it is a clinical evidence-based system. It has been used by more people in the United States than any other program. In the last couple of years, we have had over 300,000 people go through the course and be certified. All 11 states have had their Dept. of Education, Dept. of Health, and sometimes Dept. of Mental Health look at the programs and all 11, without any hesitation, have passed it. We've had three states actually ask to put it on their Dept. of Education, to host it

on the Dept. of Education's website, and then the individual study done by Washington State also looked at the program and approved it. When you are thinking about in-service, I think it is important to remember this. A large majority of the in-service programs that are done annually, all across the nation, are done by counselors or they have gone into the community and found people who they think are knowledgeable or leaders in areas, and they bring those people in to provide information about a particular subject as a continuing education for a teacher. I would keep that in mind. As long as you put a line in there, I would expect them to do it. Your Dept. of Education and anybody who wants to in the state, our programs will stand to any scrutiny, but I think it is important that you realize that the Jason Flatt Act doesn't mandate that you have to use the Jason Foundation programs. If we want to make it available, we think our programs are as good as, if not better, than anyone else out there, but there are several other very good programs. Let your Dept. of Education look at it and have their experts look at it and approve the ones they want to. We would be happy to provide it to ND. We have seen it work here in TN. Youth suicide rates in the past two years have gone down 28.3%. We really believe, along with not only the Jason Foundation, but our people that run the state suicide prevention program as well as Dept. of Education really feels like arming our teachers since 2007 with this information is now starting to show some very positive results.

Rep. Hunsakor: TN has had this program since 2007. Do you have any numbers that you can say, due to teacher intervention that potential suicides have been turned in the right direction.

Clark Flatt: No, but what we can share with you is the stat I just shared. The state of TN is about like every other state as far as not having the money to actually lay out a clinical study on that. All the way from the Commissioner of Mental Health here in TN, along with the head of the Suicide prevention Coalition, that is better than me saying this, but we've seen in the last two years where youth suicide rates have gone down 28.3%, suicide rates in every other age group in TN have increased, continued to increase. When they look back and ask what is the biggest differences between this age group who should be 10-19 or 15-24, as it is in ND, it is one of the fastest growing age groups as far as numbers of suicides. What makes TN different, why are we having a 28.3% decrease over the last two years, and over a five year period, it's been decreasing every year. The one variable they saw was that we trained 74,000 teachers in the state of TN every year and youth suicide awareness and prevention. That is primarily the biggest difference between any of the other age groups of the population. The national strategy says if you will educate your teachers, provide them the information, tools and resources to identify and refer, you will save lives. As far as being cognitive and putting those things together, has there been a study, no sir. But people that have looked at it and we'll be happy to have the commissioners here tell you that, so you're not just hearing it from me. They really lay it at our teachers' feet that the reason we have been able to bring down youth suicide rates has been that our teachers have had, on an annual basis; this training and now they are identifying. The truth is we will never know how many have been identified. That still, regrettably mental health issues, especially suicidal ideation, is still in those myth stages where people, not very many people come up

and say that they had been suicidal and my teacher identified that and I got help and now I'm not. You don't have a lot of people reporting or standing behind lecterns and saying that. We can take the numbers that have been there and whether they've been reduced or not. We have empirical data on it, but not a clinical study.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you for taking time out today. I want to commend you on your work on this. Thank you for taking the lead on this and wish you good luck and keep spreading this program around.

Dawn Hoffner, member of the ND Suicide Coalition, board of directors of the ND Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, also the Jason Foundation representative in ND: In 2010, the Attorney General and Clark brought the Jason Foundation to ND and opened an affiliate office in Fargo and I am the representative there on that. You may have heard this information before, but I just wanted to let you know since 2010, we have 81 schools in ND that currently have signed a curriculum agreement and been trained on the Jason Foundation Suicide Prevention materials and are utilizing those. There are 81 schools already using them; 110 schools have asked for the materials and have been briefed on it and started that process; 664 school personnel that include teachers, but also school counselors, administrators and coaches have been trained on the Jason Foundation in ND.

Ch. Nathe: Thank you. Further testimony in support. Testimony in opposition. We will close the hearing.

Ch. Nathe: We will take a look at SB 2306, the Jason Flatt program.

Rep. Rohr: I move to amend SB 2306 with Sen. Heckaman's proposed amendments, 13.0811.02002.

Rep. Mock: Second the motion.

Ch. Nathe: Clerk will call the roll on the amendment 13.0811.02002.  
9 YES 3 NO 1 ABSENT Motion carried. We now have the amended bill before us. Discussion was held on perhaps removing "annually" on line 7, and regarding the word "shall" on line 10.

Rep. Heller: I move to amend further, on line 7, strike "annually".

Rep. Schatz: Second the motion.

Ch. Nathe: We will take voice vote. Motion carried. We now have the bill before us as amended.

Rep. Rohr: I move a Do Pass as amended.

Rep. Heilman: Second the motion.

**12 YES 0 NO 1 ABSENT DO PASS AS AMENDED CARRIER: Rep. Hunskor**

**This action was reconsidered below. No standing committee report was prepared.**

**#19872**

**Rep. Hunskor: I visited with an individual in the back and I just want you to listen to what I tell you and think about that. I don't know if we can change our actions if we so desire. I was concerned about the foundation coming to ND and asking for donations for this foundation because we have our kids involved. I don't think that was discussed and the answer is they do not. They get all their money from national partnerships. They never come back to our corporations, our folks to get money. Here was the part I was concerned about. Why is CPR training required annually or on a regular basis and if you answer that, it is to save lives, you have a moment's notice and if you're not up-to-date that person is gone. As written, if we take the word "annually" out committee, as I read the bill, a teacher could be trained once and five years later or ten years later, have no more training. That's pretty serious; it's like CPR to me. Kids have irregular behaviors; maybe one runs to the bathroom too often, all kinds of things going on that may be indications of suicide. So if a teacher doesn't have training for let's say 5-10 years, wouldn't you think that they would get watered down in their sensitivity to recognize, where regular training, you are there, you're aware, you're more sensitive because you've just heard about it in a training session. It's only two hour training. As I think about that, that's pretty serious stuff. We're talking about a family, the life of a child, and for 2 hours because the main reason I heard that annual is being taken out, because we are throwing so many things at the teachers. I agree 100%, but if you were a child or were the family of that child that committed suicide and it could have been prevented by a teacher who was sensitive and has that training regularly, is that more important, is that more of a priority.**

**Ch. Nathe: We will take this up later.**

**#19859**

**Ch. Nathe: We will take another look at SB 2306.**

**Rep. Hunskor: Teachers need to be sensitive to students who may be showing some signs of potential suicide issues and in order to be sensitive, you need to be reminded on occasion, no different that Rep. D. Johnson driving his combine, if he doesn't do it every year, after ten years he is a little rusty when he gets out there. The lady that I visited with mentioned that there is a statistic that indicated that 80% of suicides have made an inclination or said maybe I'll kill myself tonight, or I don't like life any more. They've shared those issues with people and then later committed suicide and those folks didn't take it seriously. That was one of her concerns that we be ultrasensitive and you do that by having this information brought back to you. I did visit a little bit with a couple of other legislators prior through the lunch hour and we talked about this could be every two years, every five years, the number is not probably so important, but somewhere in that interim, and nothing over five, so**

these teachers are reminded. The other thought was new teachers that come into the system. If you do it every five years, you will have some teachers in the system for four years that are not trained in this suicide program. In deciding what that number should be, I think I would favor every two years for that reason, so that most of the teachers are up on the latest information. We're dealing with young people who have a whole life to live and their families; it's a very serious issue. I just can't see why two hours is such a burden.

Ch. Nathe: We did pass this bill out as amended. We have not brought it back yet, we are just discussing it.

Rep. J. Kelsh: To even discuss this further, do we need reconsideration of the bill.

Ch. Nathe: If we want to make any changes.

Rep. J. Kelsh: I move that we reconsider our action by which we passed amended SB 2306.

Rep. Hunskor: Second the motion.

Ch. Nathe: Voice vote, motion carried.

Rep. J. Kelsh: I move that we put in the words where we struck "annually", insert "once every three years", each school district shall provide....

Rep. Meier: Second the motion.

Rep. D. Johnson: I think it should be "once every 2 years". Three years is kind of a long time.

Rep. J. Kelsh: I was just trying to be in the middle of Rep. Hunskor's suggestion of 1 to 5, they are going to have had this information before and Rep. Hunskor's concern was to keep that teacher aware of what may be happening in their school. They need to have it more than once in their lifetime, or once in their teaching career. I'm not stuck on this number.

Rep. D. Johnson: As important as this is, is there any type of training of this type in teacher's colleges for the young teachers that are coming out into the workforce. Are they exposed to any of this before they do get out of school? I would be more comfortable if the teachers knew this information out of college, then 3 years would be okay.

Rep. Hunskor: Whether we go with 2 or 3, the good part of it is, you are going to have 80-90% of the staff who have had training and the new teachers can draw off the other teachers with the training.

Rep. Rust: I say leave it as is. The school district shall provide....., then it is up to the schools to monitor what the personal situations are.

**Rep. Heller:** I agree that 2 years is right.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** I withdraw my motion of 3 years and make it 2 years.

**Rep. Meier:** I withdraw my second and re-amend to 2 years, second that motion.

**Ch. Nathe:** We will take a voice vote. Motion carried.

**Rep. B. Koppelman:** I move that we amend Sen. Heckaman's amendment, on page 1, line 12, change "the Jason Flatt foundation" to "the Jason foundation".

**Rep. Heilman:** Second the motion.

**Ch. Nathe:** We will take a voice vote. Motion carried. We now have the bill before us as amended.

**Rep. J. Kelsh:** I move a Do Pass as Amended.

**Rep. Heilman:** Second the motion.

**10 YES 1 NO 2 ABSENT      DO PASS AS AMENDED      CARRIER: Rep. Hunskor**



**FISCAL NOTE**  
**Requested by Legislative Council**  
**03/15/2013**

Revised  
 Amendment to: SB 2306

- 1 A. **State fiscal effect:** *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2011-2013 Biennium		2013-2015 Biennium		2015-2017 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

- 1 B. **County, city, school district and township fiscal effect:** *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

	2011-2013 Biennium	2013-2015 Biennium	2015-2017 Biennium
Counties	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cities	\$0	\$0	\$0
School Districts	\$0	\$0	\$0
Townships	\$0	\$0	\$0

- 2 A. **Bill and fiscal impact summary:** *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

SB 2306 creates an Act relating to youth suicide that permits, but does not require, school districts to provide two hours of professional development relating to youth suicide.

- B. **Fiscal impact sections:** *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

SB 2306 requires the Department of Public Instruction to collaborate with the Department of Health to obtain and disseminate information and training materials to school districts and to nonpublic schools. This bill should have no fiscal impact as training materials and information is readily available at no additional cost.

3. **State fiscal effect detail:** *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

- A. **Revenues:** *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

Revenues are zero.

- B. **Expenditures:** *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

There is no necessary expenditure since training materials and other information is readily available at no additional cost.

- C. **Appropriations:** *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

There is no appropriation required.

**Name:** Valerie Fischer  
**Agency:** Public Instruction  
**Telephone:** 328-4138  
**Date Prepared:** 03/19/2013

**FISCAL NOTE**  
**Requested by Legislative Council**  
**02/12/2013**

Amendment to: SB 2306

- 1 A. **State fiscal effect:** *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2011-2013 Biennium		2013-2015 Biennium		2015-2017 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

- 1 B. **County, city, school district and township fiscal effect:** *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

	2011-2013 Biennium	2013-2015 Biennium	2015-2017 Biennium
Counties	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cities	\$0	\$0	\$0
School Districts	\$0	\$0	\$0
Townships	\$0	\$0	\$0

- 2 A. **Bill and fiscal impact summary:** *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

HB 2306 creates an Act relating to youth suicide that permits, but does not require, school districts to provide two hours of professional development relating to youth suicide.

- B. **Fiscal impact sections:** *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

HB 2306 requires the Department of Public Instruction to collaborate with the Department of Health to obtain and disseminate information and training materials to school districts and to nonpublic schools. This bill should have no fiscal impact as training materials and information is readily available at no additional cost.

3. **State fiscal effect detail:** *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

- A. **Revenues:** *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

Revenues are zero.

- B. **Expenditures:** *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

There is no necessary expenditure since training materials and other information is readily available at no additional cost.

- C. **Appropriations:** *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

There is no appropriation required.

**Name:** Valerie Fischer  
**Agency:** Public Instruction  
**Telephone:** 328-4138  
**Date Prepared:** 02/13/2013

**FISCAL NOTE**  
**Requested by Legislative Council**  
**01/24/2013**

Bill/Resolution No.: SB 2306

- 1 A. **State fiscal effect:** *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2011-2013 Biennium		2013-2015 Biennium		2015-2017 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues						
Expenditures			\$123,600		\$123,600	
Appropriations			\$123,600		\$123,600	

- 1 B. **County, city, school district and township fiscal effect:** *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

	2011-2013 Biennium	2013-2015 Biennium	2015-2017 Biennium
Counties			
Cities			
School Districts			
Townships			

- 2 A. **Bill and fiscal impact summary:** *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

The bill creates an Act relating to youth suicide; requiring guidelines for training and self-study materials.

- B. **Fiscal impact sections:** *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

Section 1, #2 requires guidelines be developed for training and self-study materials be made available to districts at no charge.

3. **State fiscal effect detail:** *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

- A. **Revenues:** *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

- B. **Expenditures:** *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

An on-line self-study for high school level is estimated to cost \$59,400 for the biennium and for middle school \$64,200 for the biennium. Each on-line self-study course includes an annual post survey assessment along with a tracking mechanism. Total cost of \$123,600.

- C. **Appropriations:** *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

Funding for this requirement was not included in the Department of Health's appropriation – SB 2004.

**Name:** Valerie Fischer  
**Agency:** Public Instruction  
**Telephone:** 328-4138  
**Date Prepared:** 01/29/2013

March 13, 2013

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2306

Page 1, line 7, replace "Annually" with "Once every two years"

Page 1, line 7, replace "may" with "shall"

Page 1, line 11, remove "information and training materials"

Page 1, line 12, after "charge" insert ", information and training materials, including those available through the Jason foundation"

Renumber accordingly

Date: 3/13/13

Roll Call Vote #: 1

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2306

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13. 0811. 02002

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Rohr Seconded By Rep. Mock

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe	✓		Rep. Bob Hunskor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz		✓	Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman	✓		Rep. Corey Mock	✓	
Rep. Brenda Heller	✓				
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓				
Rep. Ben Koppelman		✓			
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr	✓				
Rep. David Rust		✓			
Rep. John Wall	✓				

TOTAL (YES) 9 (NO) 3 (ABSENT) 1

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

*Motion passed.*



Date: 3/13/13

Roll Call Vote #: —

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2306

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number remove "annually" line 7

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Heller Seconded By Rep. Schatz

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunskor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) \_\_\_\_\_ (NO) \_\_\_\_\_ (ABSENT) \_\_\_\_\_

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

*Voice vote - Carried*

Date: 3/13/13

Roll Call Vote #: 2

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2306

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Kahr Seconded By Rep. Heilman

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe	✓		Rep. Bob Hunsakor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz	✓		Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman	✓		Rep. Corey Mock	✓	
Rep. Brenda Heller	✓				
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓				
Rep. Ben Koppelman	✓				
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr	✓				
Rep. David Rust	✓				
Rep. John Wall	✓				

TOTAL (YES) 12 (NO) 0 (ABSENT) 1

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT Rep. Hunsakor

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

*This vote was reconsidered.*

Date: 3/13/13

Roll Call Vote #: —

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2306

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number move to reconsider action

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations

Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Kelsh Seconded By Rep. HUNSKOR

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunskor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) \_\_\_\_\_ (NO) \_\_\_\_\_ (ABSENT) \_\_\_\_\_

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

*Voice vote - carried*

Date: 3/13/13

Roll Call Vote #: —

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2306

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee *Page 1, line 7*

Legislative Council Amendment Number Amendment - insert "once every 2 years"

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Kelsh Seconded By Rep. Meier

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe			Rep. Bob Hunskor		
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh		
Rep. Joe Heilman			Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller					
Rep. Dennis Johnson					
Rep. Ben Koppelman					
Rep. Lisa Meier					
Rep. Karen Rohr					
Rep. David Rust					
Rep. John Wall					

TOTAL (YES) \_\_\_\_\_ (NO) \_\_\_\_\_ (ABSENT) \_\_\_\_\_

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

*Voice Vote - Carried*

Date: 3/13/13

Roll Call Vote #: 3

2013 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2306

House EDUCATION Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 13.0811.02003 03000

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations

Do Not Pass  Adopt Amendment

Motion Made By Rep. Kelsh Seconded By Rep. Heitman

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Mike Nathe	✓		Rep. Bob Hunskor	✓	
Rep. Mike Schatz			Rep. Jerry Kelsh	✓	
Rep. Joe Heilman	✓		Rep. Corey Mock		
Rep. Brenda Heller	✓				
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓				
Rep. Ben Koppelman	✓				
Rep. Lisa Meier	✓				
Rep. Karen Rohr	✓				
Rep. David Rust		✓			
Rep. John Wall	✓				

TOTAL (YES) 10 (NO) 1 (ABSENT) 2

FLOOR ASSIGNMENT Rep. Hunskor

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2306, as engrossed: Education Committee (Rep. Nathe, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (10 YEAS, 1 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2306 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 7, replace "Annually" with "Once every two years"

Page 1, line 7, replace "may" with "shall"

Page 1, line 11, remove "information and training materials"

Page 1, line 12, after "charge" insert ", information and training materials, including those available through the Jason foundation"

Renumber accordingly

**2013 TESTIMONY**

**SB 2306**

SB 2306

#2

Chairman Flakoll and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am Senator Joan Heckaman from New Rockford and I represent District 23.

I am here today to introduce SB 2306 to you. This bill would create a new section to the North Dakota Century Code relating to suicide prevention. While this bill seems mighty small, its benefits would be mighty large.

Recent and past events across the state identifying suicide and thoughts of suicide in our young adults, shakes all of us to the core.

As an educator, I have been in a school where students have taken their lives. The staff, students, parents, and community were in a state of shock. How could something like this happen when there are so many people who care?

Today you will hear information about training opportunities for school staff to help prevent suicides among our young population. While the program is having success, it is also provided at no cost to the schools. The passage of SB 2306 allows North Dakota to access training protocol from the Jason Foundation at no cost.

Further information about the training opportunities will be presented by others who are testifying today.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this bill.



SB 2306

#2

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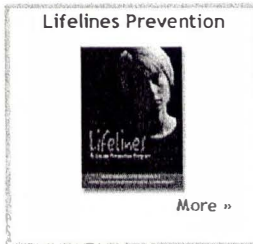
Prevention

- Prevention home
- Bullying prevention
- Substance abuse prevention
- Suicide prevention

Learn More

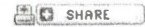
- A chapter from Lifelines
- Fact sheets
- Resources for parents

Resources



Prevention

Preventing teen suicide



Hazelden provides evidence-based, comprehensive resources for schools that address the topic of teen suicide prevention

Teenagers experience intense feelings of self-doubt, peer-pressure, stress, pressure to succeed, and other fears. For some, additional stresses such as divorce, moving, or combined families can intensify their feelings of self-doubt.

The statistics about youth suicide are disturbing:

- Suicide is the third leading cause of death for 15-to-24 year olds
- It is the second leading cause of death in college students
- There are 50-200 suicide attempts for every completion
- Almost 7% of high school students report making a suicide attempt
- Over 14% of high school students report suicidal thoughts
- Suicide is often linked with drug and alcohol use

According to the Hazelden publication LifeLines, clinical studies have shown:

- The vast majority of youth who died by suicide had significant psychiatric problems, including depression, conduct disorders, and substance abuse problems
- Between one-quarter to one-third had a prior attempt.
- A family history of suicide greatly increased the risk
- Stressful life events such as interpersonal losses, legal or disciplinary crises, or changes for which the teen felt unprepared to cope

The LifeLines program organizes the warning signs of suicide by use of the acronym FACTS, which stands for feelings, actions, changes, threats, and situations.

Feelings

- Hopelessness--feeling like things are bad and won't get any better
- Fear of losing control, going crazy, harming oneself or others
- Helplessness--a belief that there's nothing that can make life better
- Worthlessness--feeling useless and of no value
- Self-hate, guilt, or shame
- Extreme sadness or loneliness
- Anxiety or worry

Actions

- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Talking or writing about death or destruction
- Aggression
- Recklessness

Changes

- Personality--behaving like a different person, becoming withdrawn, feeling tired all the time, not caring about anything, or becoming more talkative or outgoing
- Behavior--inability to concentrate
- Sleeping pattern--sleeping all the time or not being able to sleep



- Eating habits--loss of appetite and/or overeating
- Losing interest in friends, hobbies, personal appearance
- Sudden improvement after a period of being down or withdrawn

Threats

- Statements like "How long does it take to bleed to death?"
- Threats like "I won't be around much longer" or "You'd be better off without me"
- Making plans, such as studying about ways to die or obtaining the means to self-inflict injury or death
- Suicide attempts

Situations

- Getting into trouble at school, at home, or with the law
- Recent losses
- Changes in life that feel overwhelming
- Being exposed to suicide or the death of a peer under any circumstances

Hazelden is dedicated to helping young people live healthy lives. We provide evidence-based resources that address the important issues that teen face everyday, including teen suicide, alcohol and drug use, bullying, and dating violence. To see a complete listing of all the materials Hazelden offers addressing the topic of suicide, please visit our online bookstore.

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#3

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2306  
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
4 JANUARY 2013**

By: Greg LaFrancois, CEO Prairie St. John's  
701-476-7485

Chairman Flakoll and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

I am Greg LaFrancois. I am the chief executive officer of Prairie St. John's Hospital in Fargo ND. We are a 91 bed acute psychiatric hospital serving children, adolescents, and adults. We provide services to suicidal persons all over the state and are involved in doing workshops to help people and organizations prevent suicide. I would like to talk to you today about saving the lives of North Dakota teens. If passed, Bill 2306 will ensure teachers are skilled at identifying signs of concern and elevated risk for suicide in our students.

Nowhere are the stresses of teen life more evident than the school. Competition for grades, athletic performance, and acceptance weighs heavy on our teens. A trained teacher is in the perfect position to identify, very early, the signs of struggle. This early warning allows us to address the stressors with reasonable supports that fit the busy life of a teen. Left unaddressed they quietly destroy hope for the future and the will to continue.

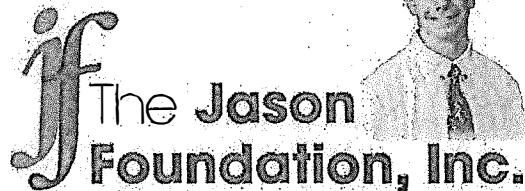
This bill, which in many states is referred to as The Jason Flatt Act, should be implemented without cost to the State of North Dakota. If "The Jason Flatt Act" is passed, The Jason Foundation will provide North Dakota access, without charge, to their web-based "Library of Training Modules". You are able to access the modules by going to [www.jasonfoundation.com](http://www.jasonfoundation.com). Once the act is passed, our teachers will be issued

a statewide username and password. These modules will satisfy the training requirements as set forth in the Bill. A teacher only needs access to a high-speed internet connection and, at the conclusion of the module, take a brief test. Each participant will have an opportunity to print a certificate of completion to provide to their school as proof of training. It is important, however, to stress The Jason Flatt Act does not single out any specific training program as the "required or suggested" program to be utilized.

The Jason Foundation, Inc. (JFI) is a national non-profit leader in the awareness and prevention of youth suicide. Founded in 1997, JFI has 99 Regional Affiliate Offices located in 34 states that serve all fifty states. The Jason Foundation trains more educators in youth suicide awareness and prevention than any non-profit in the nation (over 167,000 in 2012).

Out of the eleven states which have already passed The Jason Flatt Act, ten of those states have passed it without a fiscal note attached. In each state it has functioned as outlined above without a cost to the school, educator, school district or state. (The only state to pass The Jason Flatt Act, with a fiscal note, was California which requires all Bills with mandates to have a fiscal note attached.) Not only have these states implemented The Jason Flatt Act, without a fiscal note, it has functioned several years as such. The following states have passed the Jason Flatt Act without a fiscal note: Tennessee (2007), Louisiana (2008), Mississippi (2009), Illinois (2010), Arkansas (2011), West Virginia (2012), Utah (2012), Alaska (2012), South Carolina (2012), Ohio (2012).

In Tennessee alone, the incidence of teen suicide has been reduced by 28% since the adoption of the Jason Flatt Act. We in North Dakota are absolutely capable of doing what these 10 states have done. I believe this Bill will save lives and prevent hospitalizations. I thank you for your consideration and ask you to vote yes on SB 2306.



#4

## The Jason Flatt Act – North Dakota Senate Bill No. 2306

Youth suicide is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death for our youth ages 10-24 nationally. In North Dakota, suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for young people ages 15-24<sup>1</sup>. In 2010, rates increased for North Dakota youth ages 10-24.

According to the Center for Disease Control - 2011 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey:

- ❖ *“Have you experienced the feeling of hopelessness and sadness for a constant period of two weeks or greater during the past twelve months (possible beginning of clinical depression – depression is a leading cause for suicide and suicide attempts)?”*  
23.8% answered YES or Almost 1 out of every 4 young people.  
This equates to 10,723 youth in the North Dakota that have these feelings.
  
- ❖ *“Have you seriously considered suicide in the past twelve months?”*  
14.7% answered YES or Over 1 out of every 7 young people.  
This equates to 6,623 youth in North Dakota that will consider suicide in the next 12 months.
  
- ❖ *“Have you made a plan to commit suicide in the past twelve months?”*  
12.1% answered YES or Almost 1 out of every 8 young people.  
This equates to 5,452 youth in North Dakota that will make a plan.
  
- ❖ *“Have you attempted suicide in the past twelve months?”*  
10.8% answered YES or Almost 1 out of every 9 young people. This equates to 4,866 youth in North Dakota that will make an attempt in the next 12 months. This is an average of 13 per day.

If nothing different is done to affect these CDC statistics, these are the numbers and the impact you can expect over the next twelve months for North Dakota’s youth.

But...you have before you a tool that will help make that difference to affect these statistics, Senate Bill 2306 “The Jason Flatt Act – North Dakota” which will provide educators with the information, tools and resources to help identify and assist at-risk youth for suicide. Education is the “**KEY**” to building a successful prevention effort.

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Disease Control - 2010

The Jason Flatt Act – North Dakota / Senate Bill 2306, if passed within the guidelines of The Jason Flatt Act, can be passed without a fiscal note and will not add any cost to the state, the Department of Education, any school district or educator.

First passed in Tennessee in 2007, The Jason Flatt Act has been passed in a total of eleven (11) states (TN / LA / CA / MS / IL / AR / WV / UT / AK / SC / OH).

In Tennessee, where the effect of training 70,000+ educators every year has been longest in effect, the Tennessee Department of Health reported in the past two years of reporting while suicide rates have increase in most age groups youth suicide rates have decreased over 28%. We believe that it is evident that training our educators, as noted in the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, can and does impact youth suicide rates.

On July 16, 1997, I lost my youngest son Jason – age 16 to this terrible “Silent Epidemic” of youth suicide. I want to ask your help in preventing another young person seeing suicide as an answer to a problem or situation. I want to ask your help to make sure another parent does not lose a son or daughter to this “Silent Epidemic” of youth suicide.

I will be glad to provide additional information from The Jason Foundation corporate office or through our affiliate office in North Dakota – The Jason Foundation @ Prairie St. John’s located in Fargo, ND. We are also proud to have Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem of North Dakota working with The Jason Foundation as one of our “Attorney General Ambassadors” and can also provide you reference to The Jason Foundation.

Respectfully submitted:

Clark Flatt, President  
The Jason Foundation

Clark Flatt  
The Jason Foundation, Inc.  
[clarkflatt@jasonfoundation.com](mailto:clarkflatt@jasonfoundation.com)  
615-264-2323  
[www.jasonfoundation.com](http://www.jasonfoundation.com)

February 11, 2013

#2

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2306

Page 1, replace lines 7 through 11 with:

- "1. Annually, each school district shall provide to middle school and high school teachers and administrators at least two hours of professional development relating to youth suicide risk indicators, appropriate staff responses, and referral sources.
2. The superintendent of public instruction shall collaborate with the state department of health to obtain and disseminate information and training materials to school districts and nonpublic schools, free of charge."

Renumber accordingly



## SB 2306

Chairman Nathe and Members of the House Education Committee:

I am Senator Joan Heckaman from New Rockford and I represent District 23.

I am here today to introduce SB 2306 to you. This bill would create a new section to the North Dakota Century Code relating to youth suicide prevention. While this bill seems mighty small, its benefits would be mighty large.

Suicide is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death for ages 10-24, the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for college-age youth, and in ages 10-14 has seen an alarming 128% increase since 1980. Facts from the Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System reported more teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease COMBINED. Suicide does not typically have a sudden onset. There are a number of stressors that can contribute to a youth's anxiety and unhappiness.

Recent and past events across the state identifying suicide and thoughts of suicide in our young adults, shakes all of us to the core. In my home town and school we experienced the suicide of two young high school students within 2 years of each other. And the following year our superintendent of schools committed suicide while on contract and serving our school. That superintendent was the administrator when those 2 young men passed. All 3 of those events still echo in the minds and lives of their families, friends, school staff, and community members. How could something like this happen when there are so many people who care?

Several questions arose following those events as well as events in a nearby school. What could we do as teachers, school staff, and administrators? Do we know the signs of suicidal thoughts? Well, a one day training was held in the nearby community. But now both of these communities have new staff and administrators. Have these people been trained? How can we provide a continuous source of training materials to school staff? We can do it through the Flatt Foundation on-line training modules.

Today you will hear information about training opportunities for school staff to help prevent suicides among our young population. This training opportunity comes at the cost of the Flatt family's loss of their son, Jason. Jason's story is on the web site and indicates he was an average 16 year old. He loved sports and was active in his youth group and had a lot of friends. July 16, 1997 Jason became the statistic of the "Silent Epidemic" of youth suicide.

The Jason Flatt Foundation provides materials at no cost to educators. All that is required is that we as a state endorse the use of these materials in our schools and require that 2 hours of annual training be taken by our teachers, staff, and administrators. The qualifier to receive these materials is that we acknowledge the need for these materials and the importance in risk management and detection in our youth. We, as a state, have to have legislation that schools require these 2 hours of training. Now the schools will not have to use these materials exclusively. The schools can use other materials already adopted by some schools. The important part of the legislation to the Flatt Foundation and to our schools is that we require this training.

The passage of SB 2306 allows North Dakota to access training protocol from the Jason Foundation at no cost. This brings forward an issue in the way that North Dakota laws can be drafted. Other states allow the insertion of the wording "Jason Flatt Foundation" or materials from the

"Jason Flatt Foundation". In North Dakota we cannot make that reference so I have an amendment to hand out for your consideration. That amendment also returns the word "shall" on line 7.

The bill as it is before you today is an engrossed version with the only change from the original bill being the change of the word "may" on line 7 where the word "shall" was in the original version. Some of the members of our Senate Education Committee felt that we should not mandate any more training for our staff. The interesting thing about this training is that it can be done on-line at any time the staff members can complete the training. It takes about 2 hours and at the end of the training, a certificate of completion is available. But more importantly, staff can access the training site at any time and look at the warning signs and actions that can take place prior to getting professional help for the student. Early intervention is important in suicide prevention.

Youth suicide can be prevented. That is what the Jason Foundation is all about. This foundation is supported by collegiate football coaches as well as other inspirational and motivational celebrities. Coach Craig Bohl from NDSU is a foundation supporter of the Jason Foundation.

Now is our opportunity to get our school staff involved and recognize what we can do to help our young adults. Mr. Clark Flatt states he will never get to hug his son again but perhaps working alongside us in our state, he can help save our children and grandchildren.

I ask for your thoughtful consideration and do what is right for the young people across our state. Pass SB 2306.



## The Jason Flatt Act

The idea for The Jason Flatt Act came from a young legislator in New Jersey in 2004. His question, "Have you ever thought about working with teachers' in-service requirements to have educators trained?" was the beginning hint that this type legislation could possibly work. The Jason Flatt Act is the result of this conversation. This legislative action requires educators to complete two hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training through the professional staff development/in-service training requirements for each respective state. The Jason Flatt Act also provides that the required training may be completed through self-review of appropriate materials.

It is very important to note that The Jason Flatt Act can be passed without a fiscal note. (See additional attached information, No Fiscal Note.) It's also important to note that this Act does not require, nor should it require, the use of any particular youth suicide awareness and prevention training program for their training. The Jason Foundation offers its online Professional Development Series at no cost to the State as a fail-safe option so that the legislation can be passed without a fiscal note. As proven in previous states that have passed The Jason Flatt Act, there are many non-profits, mental health agencies, organizations and others that will join in to offer suicide awareness and prevention programs at no cost as a result of this legislation. The State's Department of Education is responsible for reviewing and approving the appropriate suicide awareness materials which may be used for the training. Additionally, The Jason Flatt Act should not add hours to the professional development/in-service training that is required for licensure renewal but work within the already established requirements when possible.

The Jason Foundation (JFI) launched the first "The Jason Flatt Act" legislative action to require in-service training on youth suicide awareness

and prevention in our home state of Tennessee during the 2007 legislative session. This legislation required that every educator in Tennessee receive two hours of training each year in suicide awareness and prevention in order to be certified to teach in Tennessee. The Jason Flatt Act passed through the Tennessee House and Senate (and their respective committees) without a single "nay" vote. This legislation also passed without a fiscal note. When Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen signed this bill into law on April 24, 2007, The Jason Flatt Act became one of the most comprehensive laws dealing with youth suicide awareness and prevention training in the nation. The Tennessee legislation is the model now used to introduce The Jason Flatt Act in other states.

Since 2007, ten additional states have passed The Jason Flatt Act in their state. These states are Louisiana, California, Mississippi, Illinois, Arkansas, West Virginia, Utah, Alaska, South Carolina, and Ohio. Ten of the eleven states which have passed The Jason Flatt Act have done so without a fiscal note. The only exception is California which requires a fiscal note on all mandated legislation.

Most In-Service trainings provided by schools either utilizes a school counselor who assimilates and presents materials on desired subject areas or programs are provided by sources considered to be a "leader" or "knowledgeable" in an area of instruction. The Jason Foundation Professional Development Series of suicide awareness and prevention training modules are Clinical Evidenced-based Programs that also meet successful educational model standards. The Jason Foundation Professional Development Series has been presented by school counselors, JFI staff and used for independent self-study for over eight years. At least every two years, a random sampling survey is completed to determine whether the JFI staff development programs are meeting or continuing to meet the expectations of the training. The results from these surveys not only indicate that the programs are beneficial and are meeting the clinical and educational standards set forth as goals for In-Service training, but greatly exceeds those expectations in many areas. The most recent survey is attached. Many professionals agree that the "ruler of success" for an In-Service training is measured by the "learning of proven and sound information, tools, and resources." It is one of the only true measurable outcomes of whether a program for In-Service training for educators in youth suicide awareness and prevention is successful.

All eleven states which have passed The Jason Flatt Act have required that their respective Departments of Education review and approve all materials to be used in their statewide In-Service trainings on suicide awareness and prevention. All eleven states have reviewed and approved the use of The Jason Foundation materials to meet the in-service training requirements as set out in each individual state's Jason Flatt Act.

In addition to the above eleven states, JFI's in-service training programs are being widely used nationally. In several states, including Texas, Florida, Kentucky, Nevada, Washington, where The Jason Flatt Act has not be rolled out, they have placed The Jason Foundation programs on their websites as approved programs. Some of these are with the exception of Tennessee:

**Nevada**, <http://dhhs.nv.gov/suicide-onlineresources.htm>, The Jason Foundation is "A nationally recognized leader in teen suicide awareness and prevention. Makes available a wide range of information, educational materials and programs, at no charge, to parents, teachers, youth workers..."

**Florida**, Center for Child Welfare,  
<http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/horizontaltab/onlinetraining.shtml>,  
"The Jason Foundation In-Service Training, Video Training Modules (4) Certificate available"

**Delaware**, Delaware Mental Health Association, Delaware Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training Brochure,  
<http://kids.delaware.gov/pdfs/suicidePreventionGatekeeperTraining.pdf>,  
"...the materials are easy to use and are intended to provide educational information...JFI's intention is to empower youth, educators and parents to help recognize when young people are in pain and know to get professional help involved as soon as possible."

**Kansas**, Headquarters Counseling Center, National Suicide Prevention Resources,  
[http://www.headquarterscounselingcenter.org/services/suicide\\_prevention/resources/national.php](http://www.headquarterscounselingcenter.org/services/suicide_prevention/resources/national.php), "...a wide range of informative, educational materials and programs available to parents, teachers, youth workers and others who are concerned about the alarming statistics that link our next generations and suicide."

**Tennessee**, Department of Education,  
<http://www.state.tn.us/education/tpd/JasonFoundation/index.shtml>, "The State Department of Education, in collaboration with [The Jason Foundation](#) and the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Disabilities, is pleased to offer a " no cost" web based staff development program. Educators will benefit from this training because it is the right thing to do, it can help address possible liability issues, it will help you become proactive instead of re active, and because suicide is preventable."

**Florida**, Department of Education, Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction, 2012 Summer Academy for Teachers of Health Education Content,  
<http://www.fldoe.org/BII/CSHP/> , Session "Suicide Prevention in the K-12 Classroom: Using Jason Foundation Curriculum in Florida"

**Washington**, Department of Education,  
<http://www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter/YouthSuicide/SuicidePrevention.aspx>, "educates young people, parents, teachers, and others who work with young people about youth suicide. The foundation offers programs, seminars, and support materials on suicide awareness and prevention."

Several states have posted direct connection to The Jason Foundation's On-Line Professional Development Series and Arkansas' Department of Education offers the entire program within their state website.

Recently, we signed a contract with the second largest school district in the nation, Chicago Public Schools, which will offer through their network The Jason Foundation's On-Line Professional Development Series to all of their educators.

We are very proud that The Jason Foundation's Professional Development Series trained more educators in 2011 and 2012 than any other non-profit in the nation (over 317,000) and continues to be a leader in the area of self-study for youth suicide awareness and prevention resources.

If you have any questions or need additional information or materials, please do not hesitate to contact:

The Jason Foundation

[info@jasonfoundation.com](mailto:info@jasonfoundation.com) or call 1-888-881-2323



## The Jason Flatt Act

*A legislative Act to require suicide awareness and prevention training for educators within the In-Service / Certification Requirements of a State.*

### No Fiscal Note Implementation Report

The Jason Flatt Act should be implemented without a fiscal note. A state will find that once passed, various organizations within their state that already have programs in suicide awareness and prevention are excited about being able to provide those programs at no-charge to schools / educators. Such organizations include Crisis Intervention Services, NAMI, Mental Health America, mental health cooperatives, mental health facilities, state mental health agencies, and school counselors. Many non-profits, such as The Jason Foundation, provide suicide awareness and prevention training programs at no-charge. These organizations can either directly provide the training services or provide resources for school personnel to provide such training.

One question always arises concerning passage of a Bill requiring training without a fiscal note attached and relying on the above scenario for training support. "What about that rural / remote school that does not have access to such organizations?" How can they satisfy a state requirement on training without having to pay for such training? If "The Jason Flatt Act" is passed as the template for the legislation, The Jason Foundation will provide that state access, **without charge**, to their web-based "Library of Training Modules" which will satisfy the training requirements as set forth in the Bill. A teacher / educator only needs access to a high-speed internet connection to access the training and at the conclusion of the module take a brief Summary Test. Each participant will have an opportunity to print a certificate of completion at the end test to provide to their school or school district as proof of training. It is important, however, to stress The Jason Flatt Act does not single out any specific training program as the "required or suggested" program to be utilized. The offer by The Jason Foundation to supply its On-Line Library of Training Modules to a state which passes The Jason Flatt Act is done as assurance that the Bill's required training can be



supplied without a fiscal cost to the state, school or school district. We have found that not only rural / remote schools appreciate the ability to do the training on-line at their convenience, but many schools choose to annually utilize the On-Line Training or DVD Facilitator Packet for training.

This explanation on passage of The Jason Flatt Act without a fiscal note is more than "theory" or that we believe it will work this way. Out of the eleven states which have already passed The Jason Flatt Act, ten of those states have passed it without a fiscal note attached. In each state it has functioned as outlined above without any problems of the schools / educators having access to such training and without a cost to the school, educator, school district or state. (The only state to pass The Jason Flatt Act with a fiscal note was California which requires all Bills with mandates to have a fiscal note attached.) Not only have these states implemented The Jason Flatt Act without a fiscal note; it has functioned several years in some of the states as such, proving sustainability, too. Those states are:

- ❖ **Tennessee** – The Jason Flatt Act passed without a fiscal note in 2007. Since passage, over 74,000 educators each year have received training in youth suicide awareness and prevention without a fiscal note.
- ❖ **Louisiana – passed in 2008**
- ❖ **Mississippi – passed in 2009**
- ❖ **Illinois – passed in 2010**
- ❖ **Arkansas – passed in 2011**
- ❖ **West Virginia – passed in 2012**
- ❖ **Utah – passed in 2012**
- ❖ **Alaska – passed in 2012**
- ❖ **South Carolina – passed in 2012**
- ❖ **Ohio – passed in 2012**

**All states above have passed and are maintaining The Jason Flatt Act without a fiscal note.**

### **The Jason Foundation, Inc.**

The Jason Foundation, Inc. (JFI) is a national non-profit leader in the awareness and prevention of youth suicide. Founded in 1997, JFI has 99 Regional Affiliate Offices located in 34 states that serve all fifty states. The Jason Foundation trains more educators in youth suicide awareness and prevention than any non-profit in the nation (over 167,000 in 2012).

The Jason Foundation's Board of Directors is a national representation with 18 members. One of the Board members is a current state Attorney General and four former Attorneys General serve on the Board as well as the CAO of Walmart and the President of Ohio State University.

**For more Information on the "No Fiscal Note" or JFI:**

The Jason Foundation

Attn: Clark Flatt, President

18 Volunteer Drive

Hendersonville, TN 37075

Phone: (615) 264-2323

Email: [clarkflatt@jasonfoundation.com](mailto:clarkflatt@jasonfoundation.com)

Web: [www.jasonfoundation.com](http://www.jasonfoundation.com)

*"Keeping More Than Dreams Alive...One Young person  
at a Time"*



A National Leader in the Awareness and Prevention of Youth Suicide

# **In-Service Training Modules Survey Results**

**March 1, 2011**

**Training Programs for Teachers and Youth Workers in the  
awareness and prevention of youth suicide.**



# ***The prevention of suicide has not been adequately addressed due to basically a lack of Awareness of suicide as a major health problem.***

**World Health Organization – 2009 Report on Suicide**

## **Overview of Survey**

***“Key gate keepers, those people who regularly come into contact with individuals or families in distress, must be trained to recognize behavioral patterns and other factors that place individuals at risk for suicide and be equipped with the effective strategies to intervene before the behaviors and early signs of risk evolve further.”***

**\*National Strategy for Suicide Prevention – US Surgeon General Office**

**Education** is the foundation for prevention. **IF** we are not aware of a problem...we fail to be looking for it. **IF** we are not aware of how the problem manifests itself - “warning signs / signs of concern” ...we are unable to recognize it forming. **IF** we are not aware of how to respond or the resources available to help...we are unable to confront or help prevent the tragedy.

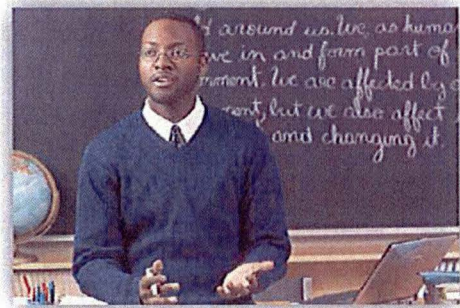
The Jason Foundation is a national leader in youth suicide awareness and prevention. In the past 2 years, we have trained more educators than any youth suicide awareness and prevention non-profit organization– over 250,000 educators...that is an average of one teacher trained every 4.5 minutes, 24/7, for over two years straight. This is just not a Jason Foundation statistic, rather a celebration that today over a quarter million more educators are better equipped to recognize and respond to a possible at-risk youth for suicide. Bottom line, lives will be saved because a teacher took time to learn how to recognize and respond. The return on investment of a teacher’s time, as the popular commercial states, “PRICELESS”.

The Jason Foundation’s basic prevention principal is that if we can in a professional and sound clinical manner educate young people, educators / youth workers and parents/communities with the information, tools and resources available for youth suicide awareness and prevention, we can reduce the number of suicide attempts and suicides. Our “ruler for success” in suicide prevention is demonstrating that our programs utilizing sound clinical approaches in awareness and prevention are indeed successfully educating these groups. In fact we agree with many of the leading government and non-government

agencies, this measuring of “learning of proven and sound information, tools and resources” is the only true measurable outcome for success in whether a program for youth suicide prevention is successful. This basic principal – education is the foundation of prevention - is embraced throughout the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (NSSP)* which most states have utilized as a framework of their state suicide prevention plans. The NSSP stresses as one of its goals (NSSP Goal #6 page 78) the need to educate teachers and those who work with our youth as a major component in building a successful suicide prevention campaign. Every state suicide plan that we have seen also states this as a major goal in their work to prevent the tragedy of suicide.

This Evaluation Survey centers on measuring the effectiveness of our On-Line Library of In-Service Training Modules utilizing the above “ruler for success” of measuring learning. These modules are utilized for the In-Service Training / Certification for educators in schools. However, anyone who works with youth would benefit from these modules. The information within these modules represents sound clinical approaches that address both protective and preventive factors involved in successfully addressing the national health problem of youth suicide. We wanted a survey to answer our question, did our programs effectively convey the information on youth suicide awareness and prevention...the “ruler for success”, did this information make a positive impact on the individual conception of the issue of youth suicide, and with this new awareness do they feel more confident in addressing the youth suicide.

To apply our “ruler for success”, whether our programs were effective in conveying the information that if applied would assist in the reduction of both suicide attempts and suicides, The Jason Foundation launched a survey in February 2011. This survey was conducted via *Survey Monkey – E Survey* by email. The random sample that was constructed involved educators from multiple states who had, in the past twelve months, participated in The Jason Foundation’s On-Line Library for In-Service Training. The randomly selected survey included responses from over 200 educators over multiple states from both urban and rural areas.



# The Results and Comments

## **Responses as to Successful Conveyance of Information:**

- 1) "I have significantly increased my knowledge of youth suicide".

**Response:** 85.3% agree / strongly agreed

(\* ) As stated in the World Health Organization's statement, the "Lack of Awareness" is a major obstacle for preventing suicide. Raising the basic awareness and knowledge of suicide 85.3% represents a major increase in participants... the first step in prevention.

- 2) "I now can better recognize the warning signs and elevated risk factors for suicide ideation".

**Response:** 88.7% agree / strongly agree

(\* ) Awareness creates a foundation for building successful prevention effort, but then we must build upon that foundation with information that will assist in indentifying at-risk individuals. 88.7% of those who participated in The Jason Foundation's In-Service Training Module On-Line Library reported now being better equipped to recognize those students.

- 3) "I am more confident in my ability to recognize and approach students who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts".

**Response:** 83.8% agree / strongly agree

(\* ) It is one thing to learn about a national health issue and how to recognize "warning signs" of possible trouble...it is entirely a different attitude that will put that knowledge to work-action. After participating in The Jason Foundation's In-Service Training, 83.8% agreed / strongly agreed that they were more confident in not only recognizing a student that may be struggling with thoughts of suicide, but would now feel more confident in approaching that student with those concerns and be ready to assist in getting help, if needed. This is a major success!

- 4) "If a student approaches me, I feel more confident in my abilities to assist in getting appropriate help".

**Response:** 87% agree / strongly agree

(\* We have found in our 13 years of working with educators that there was a "common fear" of teachers not knowing what to do if a student should come to them and express that he/she is considering suicide. Because of this fear, many educators avoided such possible encounters that many times left students without the help they were searching. After participating in The Jason Foundation's In-Service Training, 87% of educators reported now feeling more confident in their abilities to assist that student if approached.

*See Appendix A*

#### **Responses as to Presentation Model and Benefit:**

- 1) "Was the information presented in a clear and concise manner?"

**Response:** 95.6% agree / strongly agree

(\* The Jason Foundation systematically has its programs reviewed by both academic and clinical practitioners within the mental health community to assure that we are utilizing the most current and effective clinical information. We also utilize education specialist to assure that the information is conveyed in the best manner that will allow the highest learning curve. 95.6% of our participants agreed / strongly agreed that we had met that goal. We are striving to reach that other 4.4%!

- 2) "Was the information beneficial to your role as a teacher, counselor, youth worker, etc.?"

**Response:** 94.1% agree / strongly agree

(\* Teachers have so training requirements. An important question that must be asked before any further requirements should be placed upon them, "Do the educators themselves see benefit in additional training / information?" After participating in The Jason Foundation's In-Service Training, 94.1% agreed / strongly agreed that the information presented was beneficial to their role.

3) "Was the training module easy to access?"

**Response:** 91.6% agree / strongly agree

(\*) A basic fundamental yet very important question due to the time constraints on our educators today, "Was the information / training easy to access?". We have worked very hard at The Jason Foundation and have strived to stay on the cutting edge of technology that will allow The Jason Foundation to deliver its programs - whether over the internet, DVD Facilitator's Packets, or staff presented - with professionalism and conciseness.

*See Appendix B*

#### **Responses as to Overall Impression:**

1) "Would you use The Jason Foundation staff development training modules again?"

**Response:** 85.1% likely / very likely

2) "Would you recommend these training modules to another teacher, coach, youth worker, etc.?"

**Response:** 86.4% likely / very likely

3) "Overall, how do you rate the quality of the training modules we provide?"

**Response:** 97% good / very good / excellent

*See Appendix C*

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The training of our educators - providing them the information, tools and resources provides one of the highest impacts a school, school district or state can employ in addressing youth suicide.

We believe the results of our survey demonstrate not only the success of The Jason Foundation's In-Service Training in building awareness and knowledge, but just as important if not even more important, the attitude that they now



feel more confident in addressing the issue whether that means approaching a student or should a student approach them needing help.

Although we are very proud of The Jason Foundation's programs and survey results of effectiveness, we must stress that there are many other good programs that exist provided by other organizations. Our request is that you provide training for your educators and use whoever's program you feel best fits your specific need and/or situation. It is, in reality, a situation of life or death for a young person who today still has an opportunity for help if someone can identify and assist.

### **Some Comments Posted on Survey:**

- ❖ **"I was really drawn to the videos. They were very engaging and related to real problems that students face at school. It would be nice if The Jason Foundation could extend their resources to all public and private schools in this nation."**
- ❖ **"There should be options available for high risk students that possibly are bipolar, schizophrenic in diagnosis/nature."**
- ❖ **"Because it was online it could be completed at convenient times for all teachers."**
- ❖ **"Clarity, real case examples, very professional"**
- ❖ **"The training gives me stats and other information such as how prone students really are to committing suicide ...to keep me aware as a teacher of how important of a topic this really is"**
- ❖ **"I liked the integration of video with materials. I thought it made it a powerful impact."**
- ❖ **"Positive approach ...illustrated examples"**
- ❖ **"The site was easy to maneuver through, the information was clear and the quiz at the end drove home the major points of training."**



## What do the numbers / comments tell us and what did we learn at The Jason Foundation?

First, seeing the effectiveness of The Jason Foundation's programs on building awareness was a key demonstrator of the need as well as the effectiveness of our program to provide that awareness. We have found that most people do not realize the impact of youth suicide in our nation or in their communities. Youth suicide is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death for our youth ages 10-24, the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for our college-age youth and the 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for ages 10-14. That is why we have labeled it the "Silent Epidemic".

Secondly, we wanted to see if equipping our educators with information, tools and resources would increase their confidence in taking a pro-active role in identifying possible at-risk youth. We were excited that 83.8% or over 8 out of every 10 teachers who participated in a Jason Foundation In-Service Training now felt more confident! Hand-in-hand with this comes the question "what if a student comes to me about suicide, whether for them or a friend?", a terrifying question for many educators. After training, almost 9 out of every 10 (87%) educators no longer felt that degree of fear which regrettably in the past may have lost an opportunity to help save a life.

In the "Some Comments Posted on the Survey" section (an area was provided within the survey for text responses) you will see positive comments. Of course, there were some others which were mostly of ways we can make it better. But, in fairness, let us share a few:

- **"maybe shorter time or less information for those who watch it (a training module) each year"**  
(\* Each unit is designed to satisfy the two hours CEU credit that is required by many states to qualify for an In-Service Training.
- **"...my skills and knowledge are already good and each year doesn't really add anything to my understanding. It just gives me another hoop to jump."**  
(\* We, at The Jason Foundation, wish this was the case with every educator because then we would not be losing so many young lives to suicide or have a need for our programs. Unfortunately, we have not found this level of skills and knowledge as a general rule within our teacher population, and we certainly do not view learning skills and resources that can help prevent a suicide attempt or suicide as "hoop to jump".
- **"it should not be mandatory"**  
(\* As stated at the beginning, several states have implemented The Jason Flatt Act as well as other legislation that "mandates" training in awareness and prevention of youth suicide be included within the requirements for In-Service Training or Certification. Where The Jason Flatt Act has been passed, it did not increase the total number of hours that a teacher had to satisfy for In-Service and/or certification, but

rather just changed the ratio of how many hours were “electives” and how many hours were “required subject matters”. We, at JFI, strongly support mandatory compliance to assure that all students will have the benefit of knowing their teacher(s) have been trained to help if needed. For instance, how would parents react after losing a son or daughter to suicide and he/she find out that their child’s teacher was not trained or, and if that teacher had been trained he/she could have possibly identified the warning signs (which 80% exhibit) and made an intervention before the tragedy. More importantly, how would they react when finding the teacher in the next room had “elected” the training and if their child had been in **that** teacher’s class, they may still be alive because of the heightened chance of intervention (i.e.: teacher’s survey results on feeling more confident to reach out to a youth or assist a youth who comes to them).

These comments help The Jason Foundation in making sure our focus is correct and that we are doing the best job we can in providing this important information. Some of the comments not listed above talked about “internet connectivity,” and because of some of those comments The Jason Foundation has increased our IT efforts to assure, as best we can, the easy and quality accessibility of our programs.

### **Summary:**

In summation, we at The Jason Foundation are excited about the success the survey demonstrated in our mission to successfully convey information, tools and resources to our educators / youth workers.

We stress the importance in training our educators - individuals who many times have as much, if not more, time spent with our youth as the parents. As the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention states (our nation’s blueprint for suicide prevention), “Educators have not only a key role but are positioned well to see at-risk behavior and act”. In The Jason Foundation Corporate’s home state, Tennessee, The Jason Flatt Act was passed in 2007 requiring all educators to complete two hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training (not specifying any specific program or organization) each year in order to be certified to teach in Tennessee. It was recently reported by the Tennessee Department of Health that although suicide had increased alarmingly in Tennessee over the life-span, youth suicide rates continued their decrease over each of the past five years. In fact, youth suicide rates **declined** more than 31% over the past five years in Tennessee while many areas of our nation have seen significant increases over that same time period. Although this amazing statistic cannot be laid at the feet of any one program, most professionals with whom we have shared this statistic with agreed that training each of Tennessee’s 64,000+ teachers each year played a major role in identifying more youth who are struggling with suicidal ideation and assisting them as early as possible to avoid the tragedy of a suicide attempt or suicide.

We are encouraging all schools, school districts and states to include youth suicide awareness and prevention in the required subject matters within their In-Service and/or Certification programs. If you do, there will be young people alive who could have become a tragic statistic of youth suicide.

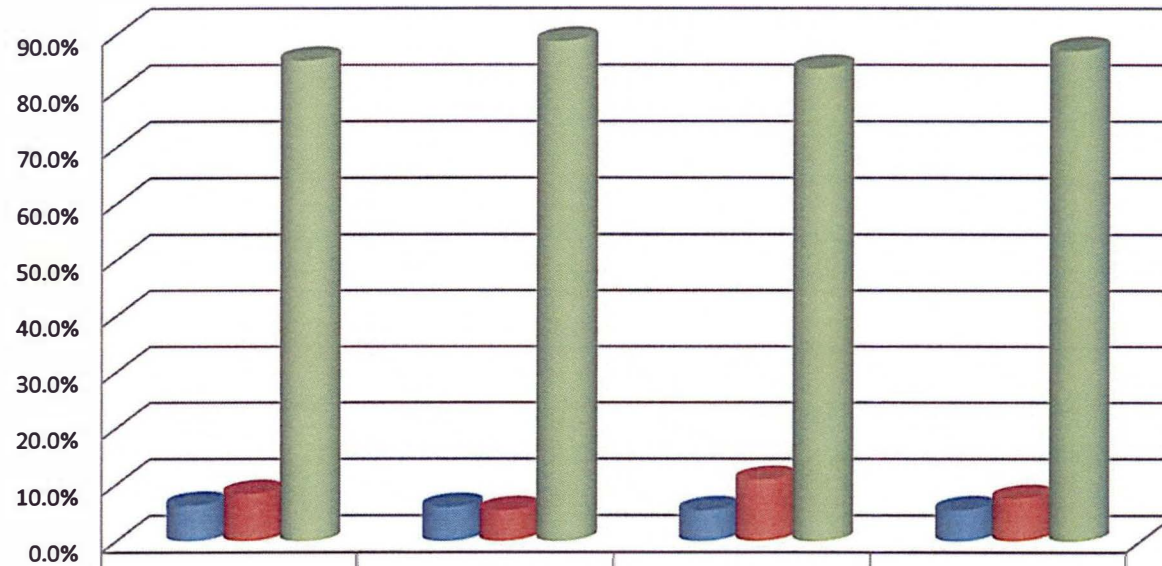
**Contact Information:**

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Phone: (615) 264-2323  
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Email: [contact@jasonfoundation.com](mailto:contact@jasonfoundation.com)  
Website: [www.jasonfoundation.com](http://www.jasonfoundation.com)



Appendix A

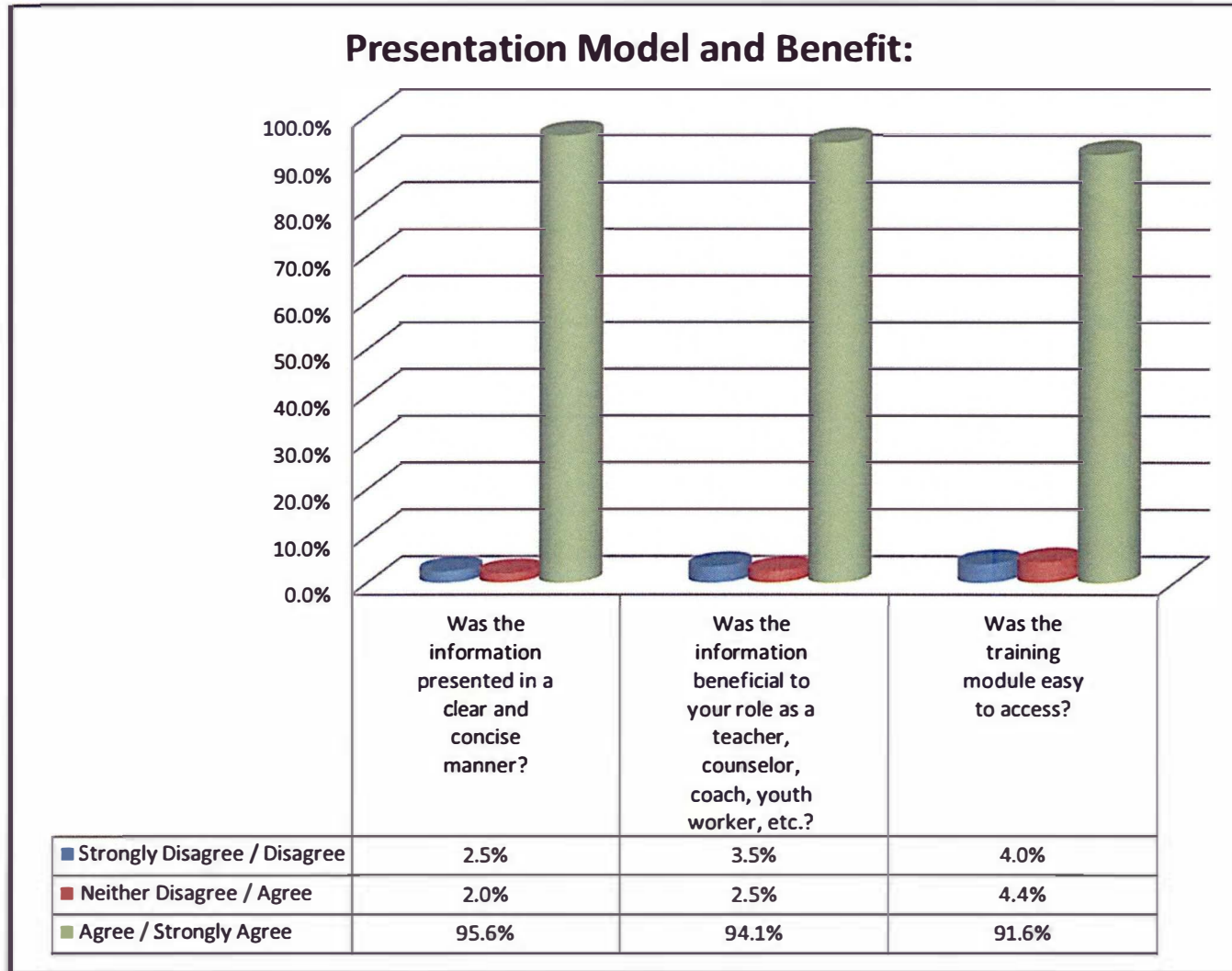
**Successful conveyance of information:**



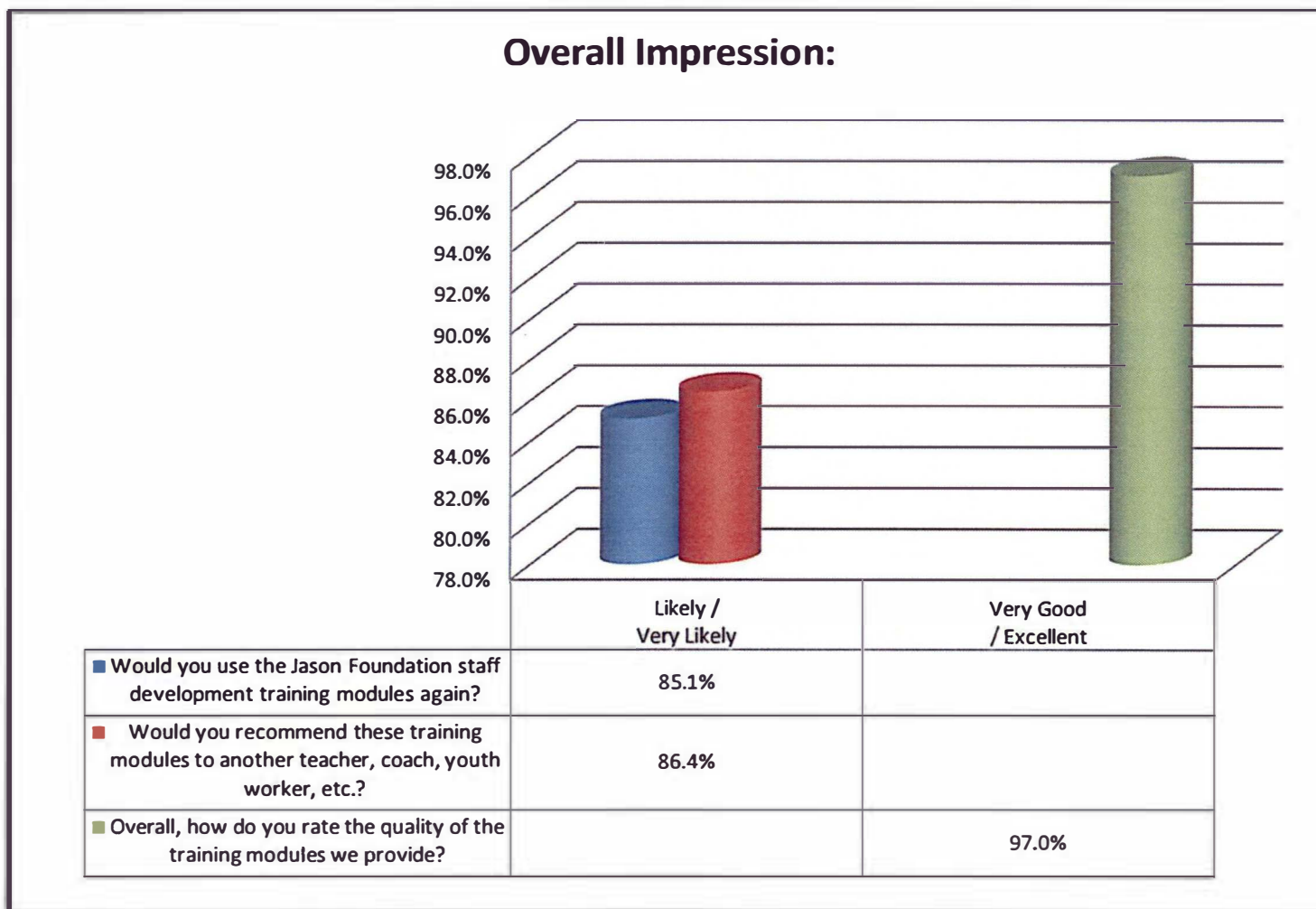
I have significantly increased my knowledge of youth suicide.	6.3%	8.3%	85.3%
I now can better recognize the warning signs and elevated risk factors for suicide ideation.	6.0%	5.4%	88.7%
I am more confident in my ability to recognize and approach students who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts.	5.4%	10.8%	83.8%
If a student approaches me, I feel more confident in my abilities to assist in getting appropriate help.	5.5%	7.5%	87.0%

■ Strongly Disagree / Disagree	6.3%	6.0%	5.4%	5.5%
■ Neither Disagree / Agree	8.3%	5.4%	10.8%	7.5%
■ Agree / Strongly Agree	85.3%	88.7%	83.8%	87.0%

Appendix B



Appendix C



**The Jason Flatt Act – North Dakota**  
**Senate Bill 2306**  
**State of North Dakota**  
**House of Representatives- Committee on Education**  
**March 2013**

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The Jason Flatt Act, a legislative action in providing In-Service Training for educators in the national health problem of youth suicide, was first passed in Tennessee in 2007. At its passing, it became the nation's most aggressive effort in providing educators with the information, tools and resources to help identify and assist at-risk youth for suicide ideation. Each year in Tennessee, over 74,000 educators accumulate over 148,000 training hours in youth suicide awareness and prevention. It should also be noted that although in Tennessee over the past two reporting years suicide rates have increase across the population as in most areas of the nation, youth suicide among ages 10-19 (basically middle and high school students) has continued its downward rate (actual decrease of 28+% over the past two years). Across the board from leaders in education and mental health, the training of our educators is lauded as one of the most important factors believed to have made such an impact in rates.

Since its passage in Tennessee in 2007, The Jason Flatt Act has been passed in ten additional states making a total of eleven states (TN / LA / CA / MS / IL / AR / WV / UT / AK / SC / OH). In every state but CA it has been passed without a fiscal note and made a requirement for certification of a teacher license in that state (this was due to CA law that requires every bill have a fiscal note).

If a state passes The Jason Flatt Act as outlined in our proposal, The Jason Foundation will provide the "fail-safe" resource to help assure that no fiscal note is require and no educator, school or school district would have to pay for the training. This system has worked in all ten states without flaw or problems since 2007.

In North Dakota, according to the Center for Disease Control 2011 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey, when North Dakota youth were asked;

- ❖ ***"Have you experienced the feeling of hopelessness and sadness for a constant period of two weeks or greater during the past twelve months (possible beginning of clinical depression)?"***  
**23.8% answered YES or Almost 1 out of every 4 young people. Compared to Nationally – 28.5%**
- ❖ ***"Have you seriously considered suicide in the past twelve months?"***  
**14.7% answered YES or Over 1 out of every 7 young people. Compared to Nationally – 15.8%**





- ❖ ***“Have you made a plan to commit suicide in the past twelve months?”***  
12.1% answered YES or Almost 1 out of every 8 young people. Compared to Nationally – 12.8%
- ❖ ***“Have you attempted suicide in the past twelve months?”***  
10.8% answered YES or Almost 1 out of every 9 young people. Compared to Nationally – 7.8%

North Dakota is comparable to the national rate in the first three questions which confirms severity of impact on youth and families in North Dakota. However on question #4, “Have you attempted suicide in the past twelve months?” North Dakota youth responded a rate 30% higher than the nation’s. That means, if nothing different is done to affect that 2011 rate, North Dakota can project that 4,866 student will “attempt” suicide in the next twelve months. That is a statistical average of 13 per day for the year! The Jason Flatt Act can be part of the response impacting and reducing that rate by providing students with educators who can help in early identification of warning signs as well as better equipped to assist a student who comes to them for help.

The Jason Foundation requests two items for effectiveness be included in all legislation as well as one request to help The Jason Foundation replicate this important legislation.

#### **For Effectiveness:**

- 1) The legislation should make training in youth suicide awareness and prevention a requirement for all educators as part of the license process and or certification. This is important to assure that every student, who maybe at-risk sometime in their life, will have the benefit of a teacher who has been trained to help identify and assist such at-risk youth. Four out of five young people who attempt suicide have given clear “warning signs” before the attempt – that 80% of the time. If your child was one of those exhibiting “warning signs” before a tragic attempt of suicide, would you want their teacher to be one who has been trained?  
This requirement assures that every educator will have had such training to help give that student the best chance for help. It is also a requirement that is part of The Jason Foundation’s assurance of providing its On-Line Library In-Service Training at no-cost to the state or the educators. In November 2012, The Jason Foundation invested another \$36,000 to help assure states that have passed The Jason Flatt Act will have the best access and availability of programs to satisfy the required training. Currently, we are projecting that we will host the first 15 states that pass The Jason Flatt Act with this new update and cannot assure states who sign on after that 15<sup>th</sup> passage.
- 2) Such training can be “self-taught” with utilization of On-Line Training Modules that have been approved by the Department of Education.

#### **For Replication:**

- 1) The Bill does not have to have as an “Official Title” or “Reference Locator” the wording “The Jason Flatt Act – (State passing bill), but we do ask that somewhere within the wording describing the legislation it is stated ...this legislation can also be known as The Jason Flatt Act – North Dakota. This helps us as we approach other states with replication of this legislation and helps tie all of the efforts together. We have had this type of reference done in other states where “names” are not allowed for official titles of bills.



We applaud the draft of the Senate Bill 2306 – The Jason Flatt Act – North Dakota and hope that the above changes can be incorporated within that draft. ***Another way this might be accomplished legislatively*** is to add to the requirements of Professional Development Certification for North Dakota educators (as we understand it). Currently, educators are required to have 4 semester hours every five years. An amendment could include that during that same five year period, a two-hour training in youth suicide awareness be required. This would change it from the current draft of “annually” training to coincide with the Professional Development system and could be easier to track.

“The Jason Flatt Act – North Dakota” we feel should be passed first and foremost because it is the “right thing” to do in helping save young lives in North Dakota. After losing my youngest son Jason, age 16 to this tragedy of suicide, I can tell you first hand it puts a hole in your heart that never mends and affects not only the parents, brother, sisters...but friends and the entire community. Secondly, it helps in addressing legal issues that we have seen arising more and more often about teacher’s training or lack-there-of considering youth suicide. Since it has been declared a “national health problem” by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services / The U.S. Surgeon General, some now are seeing it as part of the “duty” of an educator...not to be a counselor, but to be able to recognize and refer at-risk youth.



Lastly, as you consider the passing forward The Jason Flatt Act – North Dakota, I ask you to look at the Child Abuse and Neglect Law enacted in North Dakota. North Dakota is one of the many states that include within this legislation “Emotional Abuse” as one of the required reported items by “First Responders” in the state (which teachers are listed as such). The “warning signs” of suicidal ideation can be argued as such signs of “Emotional Abuse” whether it is caused by a third party such as a bullying situation or self-abuse / mental illness. Just like the “Physical Abuse” requirement, the First Responder does not have to or need to know the source of the abuse...only the signs of abuse happening. Many states are legally requiring their educators as First Responders to be able to report such “Emotional Abuse” but have not provided the educators with training to help do such...The Jason Flatt Act helps to provide such training.

Thank you for your interest in The Jason Flatt Act and your passion in wanting to help protect the youth and families in North Dakota from this “Silent Epidemic” of youth suicide. I will be glad to provide any further information you may need in your consideration. I hope that North Dakota will be one of our 15 states to lead the nation in confronting youth suicide.

Clark Flatt  
President, The Jason Foundation, Inc.  
[clarkflatt@jasonfoundation.com](mailto:clarkflatt@jasonfoundation.com) / Office 615-264-2323



**TESTIMONY ON SB 2306  
HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
6 March 2013**

By: Greg LaFrancois, CEO Prairie St. John's  
701-476-7485

Chairman Nathe and Members of the House Education Committee:

I am Greg LaFrancois. I am the chief executive officer of Prairie St. John's Hospital in Fargo ND. We are a 91 bed acute psychiatric hospital serving children, adolescents, and adults. We provide services to suicidal persons all over the state and are involved in doing workshops to help people and organizations prevent suicide. I would like to talk to you today about saving the lives of North Dakota teens. If passed, Bill 2306 will ensure teachers are skilled at identifying signs of concern and elevated risk for suicide in our students.

Nowhere are the stresses of teen life more evident than the school. Competition for grades, athletic performance, and acceptance weighs heavy on our teens. A trained teacher is in the perfect position to identify, very early, the signs of struggle. This early warning allows us to address the stressors with reasonable supports that fit the busy life of a teen. Left unaddressed they quietly destroy hope for the future and the will to continue.

This bill, which in many states is referred to as The Jason Flatt Act, should be implemented without cost to the State of North Dakota. If "The Jason Flatt Act" is passed, The Jason Foundation will provide North Dakota access, without charge, to their web-based "Library of Training Modules".

The Jason Foundation, Inc. (JFI) is a national non-profit leader in the awareness and prevention of youth suicide. Founded in 1997, JFI has 99 Regional Affiliate Offices located in 34 states that serve all fifty states. The Jason Foundation trains more educators in youth suicide awareness and prevention than any non-profit in the nation (over 167,000 in 2012).

Out of the eleven states which have already passed The Jason Flatt Act, ten of those states have passed it without a fiscal note attached. In each state it has functioned as outlined above without a cost to the school, educator, school district or state. Not only have these states implemented The Jason Flatt Act, without a fiscal note, it has functioned several years as such. The following states have passed the Jason Flatt Act without a fiscal note: Tennessee (2007), Louisiana (2008), Mississippi (2009), Illinois (2010), Arkansas (2011), West Virginia (2012), Utah (2012), Alaska (2012), South Carolina (2012), Ohio (2012).

In Tennessee alone, the incidence of teen suicide has been reduced by 28% since the adoption of the Jason Flatt Act. We in North Dakota are absolutely capable of doing what these 10 states have done. I believe this Bill will save lives and prevent hospitalizations. I thank you for your consideration and ask you to vote yes on SB 2306.

13.0811.02002  
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council staff for  
Senator Heckaman

March 11, 2013

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2306

Page 1, line 7, replace "may" with "shall"

Page 1, line 11, remove "information and training materials"

Page 1, line 12, after "charge" insert ", information and training materials, including those available through the Jason Flatt foundation"

Re-number accordingly