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**SENATE BILL 5177**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Nobles and C. Wilson

AN ACT Relating to considering the experiences of historically marginalized and underrepresented groups when identifying professional development resources on certain topics; amending RCW 28A.300.479; and creating a new section.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that:

(1) While steps have been made to make education more inclusive, more work must be done to address the unmet social and emotional needs of marginalized students;

(2) Sixty-three percent of LGBTQ students face verbal harassment based on sexual orientation and 53 percent face verbal harassment based on gender expression as stated by the gay, lesbian, and straight education network;

(3) The Trevor project finds that 42 percent of LGBTQ youth attempted suicide in 2021 compared to the centers for disease control and prevention's statistic of 22 percent of youth overall who attempted suicide;

(4) According to the Trevor project, LGBTQ-affirming schools play a role in reducing suicidal ideation for LGBTQ students;

(5) In 2021, 16 percent of high school students who identified as Native American or Alaskan Native and 14.5 percent who identified as Black or African American attempted suicide. Overall, however, 10.2 percent of youth reported attempting suicide;

(6) In addition to their racial and/or ethnic identity, youth who identify with racial and ethnic minorities can have intersectional identities pertaining to socioeconomic status, documentation status, disabilities, and LGBTQ identities, making them more susceptible to multiple forms of discrimination;

(7) Results from a study from the University of Cambridge suggests that adults with autism spectrum disorder are more likely to self-medicate with recreational drugs to mask their unwanted symptoms, leading to emotional exhaustion;

(8) The national institutes of health published that adolescents diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism spectrum disorder were up to 10 times more likely to experience anxiety and depression compared to their neurotypical peers; and

(9) By expanding professional development topics to include various identities, schools will be better equipped to create inclusive environments that reduce discrimination and support the mental health of students.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.300.479 and 2019 c 386 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must create and publish on its website a list of resources available for professional development of school district staff on the following topics:

(a) Social-emotional learning((~~, trauma-informed~~));

(b) Trauma-informed practices((~~, recognition~~));

(c) Recognition and response to emotional or behavioral distress((~~, consideration~~));

(d) Consideration of adverse childhood experiences((~~, mental~~));

(e) Mental health literacy((~~, antibullying~~));

(f) Antibullying strategies((~~,~~)); and ((~~culturally~~))

(g) Culturally sustaining practices.

(2) The resources described in subsection (1) of this section must consider the experiences of historically marginalized and underrepresented groups including, but not limited to, students' experiences with:

(a) Sensory, mental, and physical disabilities;

(b) Neurodivergence;

(c) Gender identity and gender expression;

(d) Sexual orientation;

(e) Homelessness;

(f) Race and ethnicity;

(g) Religion;

(h) National origin; and

(i) Immigration status.

(3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must include in the list the professional development opportunities and resources identified by the social-emotional learning committee created under RCW 28A.300.477.

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