A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATOR LICENSURE.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill creates a requirement that of the 90 hours of professional development training currently required for educator licensure renewal during the term of the educator's license, at least 10 of those hours must include some form of behavioral health training that is culturally responsive and trauma- and evidence-informed.

The bill requires teacher preparation programs to include in
program graduation requirements that each teacher candidate in an initial educator licensure program complete at least 10 hours of behavioral health training that is culturally responsive and trauma- and evidence-informed.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-60.5-110, amend

(3)(b) and (3)(c)(XI) as follows:

22-60.5-110. Renewal of licenses - rules. (3) (b) (I) A professional licensee shall complete such ongoing professional development within the period of time for which such the professional license is valid. Such a licensee who has less than three years left in the licensee's renewal period as of June 30, 2020, has until the end of the next applicable renewal period to complete the requirements of this subsection (3)(b). A licensee may submit professional development activities completed within five years prior to June 30, 2020, to satisfy the requirements of this subsection (3)(b). Professional development may include, but need not be limited to, in-service education programs, including programs concerning juvenile mental health issues and the awareness and prevention of youth suicide and shall include at least ten hours of behavioral health training that is culturally responsive and trauma- and evidence-informed. Behavioral health training may include but is not limited to suicide prevention strategies and may include programs such as:

(A) Mental health first aid specific for youth and teens;

(B) Staff development training modules concerning how to prevent teen suicide;
(C) INTERCONNECTED SYSTEMS FRAMEWORK FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS AND MENTAL HEALTH;

(D) TRAINING APPROVED OR PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WHERE THE TEACHER IS EMPLOYED;

(E) TRAINING CONCERNING STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIORAL CONCERNS OR DISABILITIES;

(F) TRAINING MODULES CONCERNING CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS;

(G) TRAINING RESOURCES CONCERNING TEACHER AND STUDENT ADAPTATION RESPONSES; AND

(H) ANY OTHER PROGRAM OR TRAINING THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUBSECTION (3).

(II) ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MAY INCLUDE training in preventing, identifying, and responding to child sexual abuse and assault; college or university credit from an accepted institution of higher education or a community, technical, or local district college; educational travel that meets the requirements specified in subsection (3)(d) of this section; involvement in school reform; service as a mentor teacher for teacher candidates participating in clinical practice, as defined in section 23-78-103; internships; and ongoing professional development training and experiences.

(III) The state board of education, by rule, may establish minimum criteria for professional development; except that such criteria shall MUST not:

(A) Specify any particular type of professional development activity as a requirement or partial requirement for license renewal, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (3)(b)(I) OF THIS SECTION;

(B) Require completion of more than six credit hours or more
than ninety total clock hours of activities during the term of any professional license;

(HH) (C) Prescribe a schedule for completion of professional development activity during the term of any professional license; or

(IV) (D) Require prior approval or supervision of professional development activities.

(IV) NOTHING IN THIS SUBSECTION (3)(b) PROHIBITS A LICENSEE FROM APPLYING A SINGLE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE OR ACTIVITY TO ONE OR MORE CONTENT OR HOURLY REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION OR BY RULE OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

(c) In selecting professional development activities for the renewal of a professional license pursuant to this section, each licensee shall choose those activities that will aid the licensee in meeting the standards for a professional educator including but not limited to the following goals:

(XI) Awareness of warning signs of dangerous behavior in youth and situations that present a threat to the health and safety of students and Knowledge of the community resources available to enhance the health and safety of students and the school community, YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH, SAFE DE-ESCALATION OF CRISIS SITUATIONS, RECOGNITION OF SIGNS OF POOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE, AND SUPPORT OF STUDENTS USING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE AND TRAUMA- AND EVIDENCE-INFORMED PRACTICES, AS WELL AS WHEN TO REFER A STUDENT FOR OUTSIDE HELP.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-121, add (2)(d.5) as follows:
23-1-121. Commission directive - approval of educator preparation programs - review. (2) The commission shall adopt policies establishing the requirements for educator preparation programs offered by institutions of higher education. The department shall work in cooperation with the state board of education in developing the requirements for educator preparation programs. At a minimum, the requirements must ensure that each educator preparation program complies with section 23-1-125, is designed on a performance-based model, and includes:

(d.5) A REQUIREMENT THAT EACH TEACHER CANDIDATE IN AN INITIAL LICENSURE PROGRAM COMPLETE AT LEAST ONE SEMESTER OR QUARTER-LENGTH COURSE IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TRAINING AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-60.5-110 (3)(b)(I) AND (3)(c)(XI);

SECTION 3. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.