

Testimony before the
Senate Education Committee

on

SB 333

by

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February 8, 2018

Madam Chair: Baumgardner

I stand in support of Senate Bill 333.

I wanted to email and give my support to the proposed changes to the Jason Flatt Act. As a school teacher, my greatest fear is losing a student to suicide. I also know that trying to determine if a student is at risk for self harm or suicide. I feel that this training is necessary for teachers; however, my concern with the original act was that it was a one-size-fits-all model. There is nothing more important in our classrooms and schools than our students' well-being.

Not every school needs the same type of training. A school 20 miles down the road from my district recently lost a student to suicide. This district will undoubtedly need a different type of training that incorporates loss and grief. My district, on the other hand, would really benefit from identification techniques and warning signs. Because this bill allows for this type of variation, it will benefit students in a way that the current bill does not. If we are asked to watch the same video over and over again, it will lose its importance and impact.

The other aspect of these changes that I like is that these trainings and action plans are to be posted on the district website. Teachers are rule-followers. We like to have this type of information to refer to in times of need. This is an easy way to get the district plan to teachers - in a way that is easy to access, at any time of day.

As a teacher, I am in support of these changes. We need to keep our students as safe as possible, and districts need to be able to choose trainings that are pertinent to their own needs.

Respectfully,

Samantha Neill

