A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING EXPANDING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TRAINING FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE EDUCATORS.

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/.)

School Safety Committee. The bill requires the department of education (department) to offer a train the trainer program (program) designed to improve school culture, promote youth behavioral and mental health, and prepare attendees to teach a youth behavioral and mental health training course. The department must make the program available to employees of a school district, charter school, or board of cooperative
services (local education provider). A local education provider and its employees are not required to participate in the program. The department may enter into an agreement with an organization to provide the program. The department is required to annually evaluate the effectiveness of the program. The general assembly is required to annually appropriate up to $1 million for the program. The program is repealed June 30, 2024.

The program must include evidence-based instruction on, and prepare an attendee to teach a youth behavioral and mental health training course that includes, any of the following subjects:

- Using trauma-informed approaches to improve overall school climate and culture;
- Identifying behavioral and mental health challenges and substance use disorders;
- Restorative practices for addressing youth behavioral and mental health challenges;
- Improving youth social and emotional health;
- Bullying prevention and intervention strategies;
- Encouraging positive bystander behavior;
- Best practices for providing assistance in noncrisis situations;
- De-escalation of crisis situations; or
- Identifying and accessing available behavioral and mental health resources and substance use disorder support services and treatment.

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

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, add 22-2-146 as follows:

22-2-146. Department of education - youth behavioral and mental health train the trainer program - definitions - repeal. (1) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) "ATTENDEE" MEANS AN EMPLOYEE OF A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER WHO ATTENDS A TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM.

(b) "LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER" MEANS A SCHOOL DISTRICT, A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT PURSUANT TO PART 1 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF THIS TITLE 22, A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY

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THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE PURSUANT TO PART 5 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF THIS TITLE 22, OR A BOARD OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES CREATED AND OPERATING PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5 OF THIS TITLE 22 THAT OPERATES ONE OR MORE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

(c) "TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM" MEANS THE PROGRAM DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION THAT IS OFFERED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

(2) (a) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL OFFER A TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYEES OF A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER, INCLUDING EMPLOYEES WHO HOLD A SUBSTITUTE AUTHORIZATION. THE TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM MUST BE DESIGNED TO IMPROVE OVERALL SCHOOL CLIMATE, PROMOTE YOUTH BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH, AND PREPARE AN ATTENDEE TO TEACH A YOUTH BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING COURSE THAT CONTAINS ANY OF THE SUBJECTS, OR A COMBINATION OF THE SUBJECTS, DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION.

(b) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL NOT REQUIRE ANY LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER TO PARTICIPATE IN OR COMPLETE THE TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM.

(c) A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL NOT REQUIRE ANY EMPLOYEE TO PARTICIPATE IN OR COMPLETE THE TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM.

(3) THE TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM MUST PROVIDE EVIDENCE-BASED INSTRUCTION ON, AND PREPARE AN ATTENDEE TO TEACH A YOUTH BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING COURSE THAT INCLUDES, ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

(a) USING TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACHES TO IMPROVE OVERALL
SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE;

(b) IDENTIFYING SIGNS OF BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED BY STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER;

c) RESTORATIVE PRACTICES FOR ADDRESSING YOUTH BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES;

d) IMPROVING YOUTH SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND FOSTERING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE;

e) EVIDENCE-BASED BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES;

(f) ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BYSTANDER BEHAVIOR, INCLUDING RECOGNIZING POTENTIALLY HARMFUL SITUATIONS, SUCH AS BULLYING, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, OR THREATENING BEHAVIOR, AND TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION AS A BYSTANDER;

g) BEST PRACTICES TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS IN NONCRISIS SITUATIONS;

(h) SAFE DE-ESCALATION OF CRISIS SITUATIONS; OR

(i) IDENTIFYING AND ACCESSING AVAILABLE BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SUPPORT SERVICES AND TREATMENT APPROPRIATE FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER.

(4) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH AN ORGANIZATION TO PROVIDE THE TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM. THE DEPARTMENT MAY ONLY ENTER INTO SUCH AN AGREEMENT WITH AN ORGANIZATION THAT HAS EXPERIENCE PROVIDING EVIDENCE-BASED YOUTH BEHAVIORAL AND MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING PROGRAMS AND EDUCATING INSTRUCTORS USING A TRAIN THE TRAINER MODEL.
(5) (a) The department shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of the train the trainer program. The evaluation must solicit feedback from attendees and consider the effect of the program on school climate and youth behavioral and mental health.

(b) The department shall include a summary of the evaluation conducted pursuant to this subsection (5) and any recommendations concerning the train the trainer program in the department's annual presentation to the committees of reference pursuant to section 2-7-203.

(6) For each fiscal year, the general assembly shall appropriate up to one million dollars to the department for the administration of this section. The department shall pay any costs related to the administration of this section from the appropriation made pursuant to this subsection (6).

(7) This section is repealed, effective June 30, 2024.

SECTION 2. 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.