

State of Delaware

**Senate Concurrent Resolution 13**  
**Review of Mandatory Trainings**  
**for Educators**



December 1, 2023



# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Townsend Building  
401 Federal Street Suite 2  
Dover, Delaware 19901-3639  
<http://education.delaware.gov>

Mark A. Holodick, Ed.D.  
Secretary of Education  
(302) 735-4000  
(302) 739-4654 - fax

**TO:** Members of the 152<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly

**FROM:** Mark A. Holodick, Ed.D,  
Secretary of Education

**DATE:** December 1, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 13 *Review of Mandatory Trainings for Educators*

SCR 13 w/ HA 1, sponsored by Senator Laura Sturgeon, Senator Eric Buckson, Senator Brian Pettyjohn, Representative Kimberly Williams, and additional Representatives and Senators, directed the Secretary of the Department of Education to undertake a comprehensive review of state and federally required trainings for teachers, specialists, and education support professionals and produce a report that details recommendations for minimizing the burden these trainings place on educators and increasing the relevance and effectiveness.

The Secretary of Education convened several meetings with stakeholders including Senator Laura Sturgeon, Representative Kimberly Williams, the Delaware State Education Association (DSEA), the Delaware Association of School Administrators and Delaware Chief School Officers Association as well as internal Department of Education staff.

## **Findings:**

The Secretary of Education requested initial feedback from the stakeholders prior to convening any meetings. The DSEA surveyed their members and provided comprehensive feedback to the group related to non-academic trainings. The Secretary of Education convened several meetings with the stakeholders where the group reviewed the feedback from DSEA members and discussed opportunities to re-structure the training schedule as well as update several of the trainings.

Below is a sample of feedback received from DSEA members gathered under general themes:

*Ensuring trainings provided Delaware statistics when possible.*

Comments from stakeholders:

- “The Gang training really needs to be updated and specific to Delaware gangs. This is

a huge issue in the youth population and the current training is very vague and a little out of date. How do we prevent gang recruitment? What symbols/acronyms/colors etc. signify Delaware specific gangs like OMB, 48 Gang, STK, etc.?”

*Ensuring trainings are relevant and timely.*

Comments from stakeholders:

- “The bullying and gang videos have never changed in my 12+ years.”
- “The bullying/gang ones are dry, dated, and not particularly helpful.”
- “The gang awareness training is severely out of date (as I recall most of the data cited is from 2012 or before).”
- “There should be differentiation between elementary and secondary trainings when applicable. As a K-5 teachers, training on teen dating practices or gang violence seems a bit out of my wheelhouse.”
- “The School Bullying Prevention Training and Criminal Youth Gang Detection Training, Cyber Security Training, Sexual Harassment Training and Child Abuse & Child Safety Awareness, Prevention, Detection, and Reporting Training should only require a short refresher course once they have been completed initially.”

*Ensuring the length of time of trainings is appropriate.*

Comments from stakeholders:

- “The bullying, suicide prevention and child abuse trainings have been the same for years. We should only have to take them once every 3-5 years. Or make a new version that is just a 30-minute overview.”
- “School bullying, gang awareness, child abuse, teen dating trainings are all very important, however watching the same videos year after year make them ineffective. A shorter reminder video for experienced staff would be actually viewed by more people.”
- “Suicide training takes entirely too long. It’s a very important subject, but if the course can be streamlined, that would be helpful. Also, if they could be offered and accessible during the summer - perhaps in July - that would be wonderful. I’m a school secretary and am inundated with all the tasks related to the beginning of the school year. Also, teachers and paraprofessionals are given time during the school day to get their trainings completed. Also, cafeteria staff and custodians are given time to get their trainings completed in a group setting. Secretaries are not given time to leave our desks to get all the required trainings completed.”

*Ensuring tracking of trainings was manageable by school personnel.*

Based on the feedback received directly from educators and discussions among the stakeholder group, the Secretary of Education submits the following recommendations for minimizing the burden of trainings and increasing the training relevance and effectiveness.

**Recommendations:**

- Update non-academic trainings to utilize current information from throughout Delaware (where possible) and ensure trainings are evidence-based and utilizing best practices.
- Stagger trainings across a statewide A/B/C year training schedule/calendar so that not all trainings need to be done by all educators every year.
- New staff should take all trainings at the start of their first year and then follow the A/B/C year schedule.
- Written “refresher” documents with training topic highlights should be provided to and acknowledged by all educators each year for any training that is not scheduled to be taken in that year.
- Reduce the requirement for non-academic trainings (teen dating violence, bullying, and gang violence) to have a 1-hour training requirement every three years and Suicide Prevention to have a 1-hour training requirement every year.
- Trainings should be reviewed at a minimum every 3 years and updated as needed; if significant updates are needed to a training due to a change in law or regulation, the training will be updated sooner than 3 years and required for all educators the next year.

**In Conclusion:**

The Secretary of Education will work with Department of Education staff to update current non-academic trainings for relevancy and effectiveness. The Department staff will also work on updating the tracking mechanism for all non-academic trainings. Lastly, the Department will implement a process to ensure trainings are reviewed based on the outlined recommendations.

The Department of Education will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure educator trainings are timely, relevant, and effective.

cc: Meredith Seitz, Chief of Staff, Department of Education