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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Jacob Oliva

DATE: July 19, 2019

SUBJECT: **Mental and Emotional Health Education**

Contact Information:

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DPS: 2019-110

In Florida, quality mental and emotional health education has been identified as a high priority by Governor DeSantis, First Lady DeSantis and the Florida Legislature. For decades, Comprehensive Health Education has included mental and emotional health as part of required instruction through [s. 1003.42 \(2\)\(n\), F.S.](#), but did not include an instructional time requirement or the assurance mechanisms to support and verify that mental and emotional health instruction was being delivered.

Florida Youth Risk Behavior Survey data documents that in 2017, 28% of Florida high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row; 14% reported purposely hurting themselves without wanting to die; 14% reported having seriously considered attempting suicide; 11% reported having made a plan to commit suicide; and 8% reported a suicide attempt.

[Rule 6A-1.094121, F.A.C.](#), was approved by the State Board of Education on July 17, 2019. This rule establishes a minimum of five hours of required instruction related to mental and emotional health education for students in grades 6-12 and institutes procedures for school districts to document planning and delivery of instruction. Decisions about which course(s) will be used to deliver this instruction and curricula will be determined at the school district level. The rule will be in effect for the 2019-20 school year.

By December 1 of each year, each school district must submit an implementation plan to the commissioner at MentalHealthEducation@fldoe.org and post the plan on the school district website. The implementation plan must include:

- (a) The specific course(s) in which instruction will be delivered for each grade level;
- (b) The professional qualifications of the person delivering instruction; and
- (c) A description of the materials and resources utilized to deliver instruction.

Additionally, by July 1 of each year, each school district must submit an annual report to the commissioner to verify completion of the instruction.

Thank you for all you do for Florida's students to ensure they are safe, healthy and ready to learn.

JACOB OLIVA
CHANCELLOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS