

## Forefront in the Schools:

A model for implementing a meaningful, comprehensive and sustainable approach to mental health promotion and suicide prevention

### The Issue and the Opportunity

*Suicide is now the second leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24 in Washington and the U.S.* In Washington, we lose two youth to suicide each week on average. Additionally, rates of youth depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts are high and rising.

House Bill 1336 was enacted in 2013 and requires schools to update their safety plans to reflect best practices in suicide prevention. From our work over the last 3 years, we have learned that most schools have robust procedures to deal with fires, disasters and active shooters, but procedures for responding to mental health crises are typically limited or non-existent. Similarly, schools rarely have curriculum or trainings for teachers, students and parents around suicide prevention and mental health awareness.

To address these gaps, Forefront in the Schools (FIS) supports a cohort of high schools to undertake a comprehensive approach to mental health promotion and suicide prevention. Through engagement by multi-disciplinary teams, each school is able to transform its culture and practices to support its entire community.

### Forefront in the Schools Model

There are many components to the FIS model that support schools to transform their culture. They include:

#### Components that span all 3 years

- Multi-disciplinary teams of 6-8 members from each school - comprised of parents, students, teachers, administrators and school counselors.
- Cohort model that includes shared learning and support to do this life-saving work.
- Forefront's LEARN™ curriculum:
  - 90-minute training by parents for parents.
  - 90-minute training by teachers for teachers.
- 1-day fall academy for all teams each year.
- Half-day end-of-year meeting for all teams each year.
- Training for school based behavioral health staff that exceeds legislative training mandates.

#### Components for year 1

- Extensive revisions to, or creation of, suicide prevention, intervention, assessment, re-entry, and recovery procedures.
- Enhanced linkages with mental health referral network.

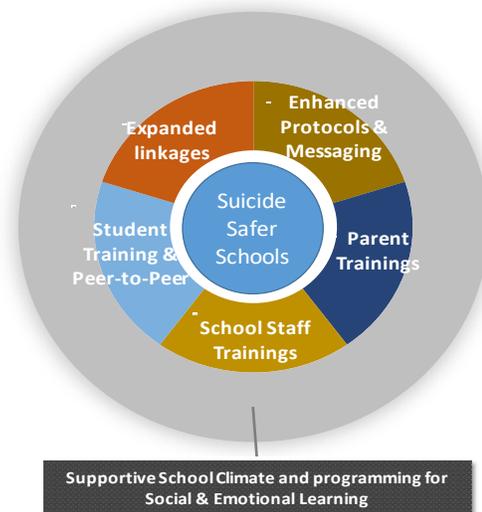
#### Components for year 2 that continue to year 3

- Forefront's LEARN™ curriculum:
  - Teacher led student training.
  - Student led peer-to-peer training.
- Student-led behavioral health promotion week and public messaging activities.

#### Components for Year 3

- Resources and trainings for schools on various mental health education and social/emotional curricula.
- Individual support to schools in planning mental health education and social/emotional curricula.

### Forefront in the Schools: Comprehensive Approach to Suicide Prevention



### Cost and Support Per School

The cost per year for a school is \$12,500\*. For that investment, you will receive:

- A Forefront liaison who meets monthly with your school to support all areas of work.
- Support to enhance mental health crisis procedures to meet best practice standards.
- Trainings, materials and video conferencing.
- Constant access to the LEARN™ curriculum.
- Consultation on mental health education and social/ emotional learning curricula.
- Aftercare support, if needed, for a suicide.

*\*Partial to full scholarships available through private funding*