

# OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-1

AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDHOOD MENTAL AND PHYSICAL  
HEALTH SERVICES IN SCHOOLS.

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## ***OFA Fiscal Note***

***State Impact:*** SEE BELOW

***Municipal Impact:*** SEE BELOW

## ***Explanation***

### **State Department of Education**

The bill results in significant costs to the State Department of Education (SDE) associated with developing a survey to distribute to each local and regional board of education concerning the employment of various behavioral health practitioners and school nurses, and the creation of a grant program for local and regional boards of education, associated with hiring and retention of these workers. SDE does not currently have the staff available to complete the requirements contained within the bill and does not have funding to provide grants. It is anticipated that the cost to the state would be significant, over \$1 million.

The bill additionally requires local and regional boards of education to implement mental health plans for student athletes, which are jointly developed with SDE. This could result in a state mandate and corresponding cost to local and regional boards of education associated with providing additional mental health services to student athletes. The scope of the cost would vary depending on the size of the district, the number of student athletes and the services contained within the mental health plans.

Primary Analyst: SB  
Contributing Analyst(s):  
Reviewer: JS

4/25/22

The bill authorizes a school nurse, or in the absence of a school nurse, a qualified school employee, to maintain opioid antagonists to administer emergency first aid to a student who is experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose. The bill requires a school nurse or principal to select multiple qualified school employees to administer an opioid antagonist, and at least one such employee must be on school grounds during regular school hours when the school nurse is not there. This could result in additional costs to local and regional school districts if a school must pay an employee to stay additional hours outside of their normally scheduled hours, to cover the requirements of the bill. The cost to a district would be dependent on the number of hours a school nurse is away during normal school hours and those hours are outside the normal schedule of the qualified employees. The bill allows local and regional school districts to maintain opioid antagonists, this could result in an additional cost associate with purchasing emergency kits, which are estimated to cost \$22 - \$60 per kit. If a district were to purchase 100 kits, the cost would range from \$2,220 to \$6,000.

Additionally, the bill establishes a minority teacher candidate scholarship program. This will result in an additional cost to the state as SDE does not have funding available. The scope of the cost would be dependent upon the number of scholarships awarded and the amount per award.

### **Office of Early Childhood**

The bill results in significant costs to the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) associated with: (1) expanding infant and toddler and PreK seats over time, starting with School Readiness programs in FY 23, and based on needs assessments, (2) increasing infant and toddler and Prek rates for those programs, (3) expanding the definition of School Readiness to include sectarian child care providers who would otherwise qualify, and (4) implementing the early childhood care and education salary enhancement grant program. OEC must establish program administration and eligibility requirements by 10/1/22 and distribute funding in FY 23, which is related to the early childhood education

compensation schedule.

For context, increasing rates for existing School Readiness and child day care seats would cost approximately \$64.8 million and the salary enhancement program is anticipated to impact up to approximately 21,000 employees. The bill's actual costs to the state and associated impacts to towns is dependent on the child care needs assessments and related distribution of seats at increased rates for applicable programs, and the implementation of the compensation schedule. OEC would require additional staffing costs of at least \$164,000 annually (with associated fringe of \$66,500) to administer the salary enhancement grant program.

### Appropriations

SDE	General Fund	60,000	To support a full-time SDE position to administer the grant program to provide grants to local and regional boards of education for the purpose of hiring and retaining additional school social workers and school psychologists.
SDE	General Fund	30,000	To support a full-time employee to administer the minority teacher candidate scholarship program.
DPH	General Fund	590,000	To provide grants to each of the 36 recommended sites for expanded mental health services contained in the final report of the School-Based Health Center Expansion Working Group, established pursuant to section 16 of public 1291 act 21-35.

DPH	General Fund	21,240,000	To expand services of existing school-based health centers to include mental health services in accordance with the provisions.
SDE	ARPA	13,000,000	To support the existing 15 districts participating in the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) and expand participation in the LEAP program to include five additional high-need districts.
SDE	ARPA	13,000,000	To support the existing 20 districts participating in the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP).

sHB 5037, the revised FY 23 budget bill, as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee, is under the spending cap by \$4.6 million in FY 23. The appropriations contained in the bill would result in the budget being over the spending cap by \$17.3 million in FY 23.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.