



State of Wisconsin  
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-1979/P2  
FFK&KMS:emw/skw/cdc

DOA:.....Kretschmann, BB0150 and 0153 - Aid for Comprehensive School Mental Health Services and school mental health staff

**FOR 2025-2027 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION**

**AN ACT ...; relating to:** the budget.

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*Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

**EDUCATION**

**PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

***School mental health and pupil wellness; categorical aid***

The bill changes the types of expenditures that are eligible for reimbursement under the state categorical aid program related to pupil mental health.

Under current law, DPI must make payments to school districts, independent charter schools, and private schools participating in parental choice programs (local education agency) that increased the amount they spent to employ, hire, or retain social workers. Under current law, DPI first pays each eligible local education agency 50 percent of the amount by which the eligible local education agency increased its expenditures for social workers in the preceding school year over the amount it expended in the school year immediately preceding the preceding school year. If, after making those payments, there is money remaining in the appropriation account for that aid program, DPI makes additional payments to eligible local education agencies. The amount of those additional payments is determined based on the amount remaining in the appropriation account and the amount spent by eligible local education agencies to employ, hire, and retain social workers during the previous school year.

The bill expands eligibility for the payments under the aid program to include spending on school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and school nurses (pupil services professionals). The bill also eliminates the two tier reimbursement structure of the aid program and eliminates the requirement that a local education agency is eligible for the aid only if the local education agency increased its spending. Under the bill, any local education agency that made expenditures to employ, hire, or retain pupil services professionals during the previous school year is eligible for reimbursement under the aid program.

***Aid for comprehensive school mental health services***

Under current law, DPI awards grants to school districts and independent charter schools for the purpose of collaborating with community mental health

**BILL**

agencies to provide mental health services to pupils. This bill replaces the current grant program with new categorical aid for comprehensive school mental health services to school districts and independent charter schools.

Under the bill, beginning in the 2025–26 school year, DPI must annually reimburse a school board or the operator of an independent charter school for costs incurred for mental health services during in-school or out-of-school time, up to the greater of \$100,000 or \$100 per pupil who was enrolled in the school district or independent charter school in the previous school year. If the amount appropriated for this purpose is insufficient, DPI must prorate the reimbursements.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

**SECTION 1.** 20.255 (2) (da) of the statutes is amended to read:

20.255 (2) (da) *Aid for school mental health programs; pupil services professionals.* The amounts in the schedule for aid to ~~school districts and independent charter schools~~ employ, hire, and retain pupil services professionals under s. 115.364.

\*\*\*\*NOTE: This SECTION involves a change in an appropriation that must be reflected in the revised schedule in s. 20.005, stats.

**SECTION 2.** 20.255 (2) (dt) (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

20.255 (2) (dt) (title) ~~School-based~~ Aid for comprehensive school mental health services ~~grants~~.

\*\*\*\*NOTE: This SECTION involves a change in an appropriation that must be reflected in the revised schedule in s. 20.005, stats.

**SECTION 3.** 115.364 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

**115.364 (title) Aid for school mental health programs, pupil services professionals.**

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**SECTION 4.** 115.364 (1) (intro.) of the statutes is renumbered 115.364 (1) and amended to read:

115.364 (1) In this section, “pupil services professional” means a school counselor, school social worker, school psychologist, or school nurse.

**SECTION 5.** 115.364 (1) (a), (am) and (b) of the statutes are repealed.

**SECTION 6.** 115.364 (2) (a) (intro.) and 1. of the statutes are consolidated, renumbered 115.364 (2) (a) and amended to read:

115.364 (2) (a) Beginning in the ~~2018-19~~ 2025-26 school year and annually thereafter, the state superintendent shall ~~do all of the following:~~ 1. Subject, subject to par. (b), from the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (da), pay to an eligible reimburse a school district board, the operator of a charter school established under s. 118.40 (2r) or (2x), or the governing body of a private school participating in a program under s. 118.60 or 119.23 for an amount equal to 50 percent of the amount by which the school district increased its expenditures made by the school board, operator, or governing body in the preceding school year to employ, hire, or retain social workers over the amount it expended in the school year immediately preceding the preceding school year to employ, hire, or retain social workers pupil services professionals.

**SECTION 7.** 115.364 (2) (a) 2. and 3. of the statutes are repealed.

**SECTION 8.** 115.364 (2) (b) 1. of the statutes is renumbered 115.364 (2) (b) and amended to read:

115.364 (2) (b) If the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (da) in any fiscal year is insufficient to pay the full amount of aid under par. (a), the state superintendent

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shall prorate state aid payments among the school ~~districts, private schools, and independent charter schools~~ boards, operators of charter schools established under s. 118.40 (2r) and (2x), and governing bodies of private schools participating in programs under ss. 118.60 and 119.23 that are eligible for the aid.

**SECTION 9.** 115.364 (2) (b) 2. of the statutes is repealed.

**SECTION 10.** 115.367 of the statutes is repealed and recreated to read:

**115.367 Aid for comprehensive school mental health services. (1)** Beginning in the 2025-26 school year and annually thereafter, the state superintendent shall, from the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (dt) and subject to sub. (3), reimburse a school board or the operator of a charter school established under s. 118.40 (2r) or (2x) for expenditures relating to mental health services provided during in-school or out-of-school time. Mental health services eligible for reimbursement under this subsection include at least all of the following:

(a) Mental health evidence-based improvement strategies.

(b) Mental health literacy and stigma reduction programs for pupils and adults.

(c) Collaborating or contracting with community mental health providers, consultants, organizations, cooperative educational service agencies, and other experts to provide consultation, training, mentoring, and coaching.

(d) Parent training and informational events.

(e) Assistance programs for pupils and families.

(f) Mental health navigators.

(g) Mental health system planning.

(h) Translator and interpreter services.

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(i) School-employed mental health professionals who are accessible to all pupils and for whom a reimbursement is not made under s. 115.364 (2) (a).

(j) Setting up spaces and purchasing equipment suitable for mental health telehealth service delivery.

(k) Projects designed to assist minors experiencing problems resulting from the use of alcohol or other drugs or to prevent alcohol or other drug use by minors.

(L) Telehealth services, as defined in s. 440.01 (1) (hm).

**(2)** The following costs are ineligible for reimbursement under sub. (1):

(a) Payments for direct treatment services or insurance deductibles.

(b) Training that is not related to pupil mental health.

(c) Staff salaries for positions that are not related to pupil mental health.

(d) Indirect costs of regular school operations.

**(3)** (a) In each school year, the amount the state superintendent reimburses a school board or operator of an independent charter school under sub. (1) may not exceed the greater of the following:

1. \$100,000.

2. \$100 multiplied by the number of pupils enrolled in the school district or charter school in the previous school year.

(b) If the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (dt) in any fiscal year is insufficient to pay the full amount of aid under sub. (1), the state superintendent shall prorate state aid payments among the school boards and the operators of charter schools established under s. 118.40 (2r) and (2x) that are eligible for the aid.

**(END)**