

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS
FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

LS 7027
BILL NUMBER: SB 269

NOTE PREPARED: Jan 5, 2026
BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Youth Peer Support Program.

FIRST AUTHOR: Sen. Alting
FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: X **GENERAL**
DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill permits a school corporation to establish a youth peer support program. It requires a program to:

- (1) Be developed in consultation with one or more local mental health organizations serving the school's geographic area;
- (2) Utilize evidence based training models approved by the Department of Education;
- (3) Include written referral protocols to school based and community based mental health services;
- (4) Provide ongoing supervision by a school counselor, school social worker, licensed mental health professional, or qualified community partner; and
- (5) Include safeguards to protect student confidentiality and well-being.

The bill also provides that a program may not:

- (1) Provide clinical diagnosis or treatment;
- (2) Be established to replace school counselors or mental health professionals; or
- (3) Require participation by a student.

This bill requires a school corporation to provide certain students voluntary, online mental health screenings. The bill establishes parameters for certain partnerships between school corporations and local mental health organizations participating in the school corporation's program. It creates the Youth Peer Support Advisory Committee.

Effective Date: July 1, 2026.

Explanation of State Expenditures: The 14-member Commission on Youth Peer Advisory Support is established under the bill in FY 2027. This will increase state per diem and travel reimbursement expenditures. The Department of Education will also experience a workload increase to staff the commission and to publish an annual report detailing youth peer support programs established by school corporations. The bill's requirements are within the agency's routine administrative functions and should be able to be implemented with no additional appropriations, assuming near customary agency staffing and resource levels.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Mental Health Screener:* Provisions in the bill require school corporations to provide an annual mental health screening to students in 7th, 9th, and 11th grade. The impact to local expenditures is ultimately dependent on the screeners adopted by school corporations. To the extent school corporations utilize existing resources from the School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System's Screening and Assessment Library to find free or low-cost screening tools, expenditures can be minimized.

Youth Peer Support Program: Schools who elect to establish a youth peer support program will experience a workload and/or expenditure increase that should be able to be implemented with no additional appropriations, assuming near customary agency staffing and resource levels.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Department of Education.

Local Agencies Affected: School corporations.

Information Sources: School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System's Screening and Assessment Library; <https://theshapesystem.com/assessmentlibrary/>

Fiscal Analyst: Kelan Fong, 317-232-9592.