

2024 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 346

BY SENATOR BARROW

SCHOOLS. Provides for wellness programs in schools to address mental health and substance abuse disorders. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT
2 To enact R.S. 17:173.1 and 3996(B)(82), relative to wellness programs in schools; to
3 provide for student mental health and well-being; to provide for programs on
4 substance disorders; to require the State Board of Elementary and Secondary
5 Education to adopt related rules; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for
6 related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:173.1 and 3996(B)(82) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 **§173.1. Establishment of programs for wellness; mental health and substance**
10 **abuse disorders**

11 **A. The legislature hereby finds and declares that good mental and**
12 **physical health are essential to a child's success in school and in life, and that**
13 **delivery of basic wellness care and support services in a school-based setting is**
14 **a highly practical and fiscally prudent means of achieving positive outcomes in**
15 **the overall well-being of children, their families, and communities of this state.**

16 **B. Each city, parish, or other local public school board shall establish**
17 **and maintain in every school such grade-appropriate programs of wellness**

1 related to mental health and substance abuse disorders, education, information,
2 and counseling.

3 C. The state superintendent of education, with the approval of the State
4 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, shall develop, furnish to local
5 school boards, and coordinate the implementation of the programs required by
6 this Section. The programs shall include, at a minimum, services that will
7 increase students' mental health literacy and promote emotional and behavioral
8 learning.

9 D. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
10 promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this Section in accordance with
11 Administrative Procedure Act.

12 * * *

13 §3996. Charter schools; exemptions; requirements

14 * * *

15 B. Notwithstanding any state law, rule, or regulation to the contrary and
16 except as may be otherwise specifically provided for in an approved charter, a
17 charter school established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this
18 Chapter and its approved charter and the school's officers and employees shall be
19 exempt from all statutory mandates or other statutory requirements that are
20 applicable to public schools and to public school officers and employees except for
21 the following laws otherwise applicable to public schools with the same grades:

22 * * *

23 **(82) Wellness programs in schools, R.S. 17:173.1.**

24 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
25 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
26 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
27 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
28 effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Michael Bell.

DIGEST

SB 346 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Barrow

Proposed law provides for each city, parish, and other local public school boards to establish and maintain in every school such grade-appropriate programs of wellness related to mental health and substance abuse disorders, education, information, and counseling.

Proposed law provides for the state superintendent of education, with the approval of BESE, to develop, furnish to local school boards, and coordinate the implementation of the programs as required by proposed law. The programs must include, at a minimum, services that will increase students' mental health literacy and promote emotional and behavioral learning.

Proposed law provides for BESE to promulgate rules to implement the provisions of proposed law in accordance with Administrative Procedure Act.

Proposed law applies proposed law to all public schools, including charter schools.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:173.1 and 3996(B)(82))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by SenateCommittee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Education to the original bill

1. Includes other local public school boards to establish and maintain wellness programs.