

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB495

Patron: Guzman

Bill Title: School boards; mental health awareness training; anonymous student reporting system.

Bill Summary: Requires each school board to adopt and implement policies that require each school bus driver to complete, at least once, the mental health awareness training or similar program currently required to be completed by teachers and other designated employees. The bill prohibits any school board from requiring an employee to complete such training outside of the employee's regular working hours unless the employee is compensated for the time spent completing the training at an hourly rate of not less than one and one-half times the employee's average hourly rate of pay. The bill also encourages each school board to contract with a private nonprofit organization to procure and make available an anonymous reporting system for the assessment of risk of violence and the prevention of student harm to self or others that includes the following features and components: (i) a secure platform for students to submit messages and tips relating to violence or harm to self or others by telephone, website, and a multiplatform compatible mobile application; (ii) student access, 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and 365 days per year, to a national crisis center that is staffed by a team of highly skilled and trained crisis counselors whose sole duty is to respond to messages and tips from students relating to violence or harm to self or others; (iii) ongoing program support; and (iv) training for student and adult users.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No

Items Impacted: None

Explanation: There is no anticipated state fiscal impact resulting from the provision of this bill. Any impact to local school divisions is indeterminate.

Fiscal Analysis: There is no anticipated state fiscal impact to the Department of Education. Any impact to local school divisions to provide training to bus drivers or to contract with an organization to provide an anonymous reporting system is indeterminate.

Other: None