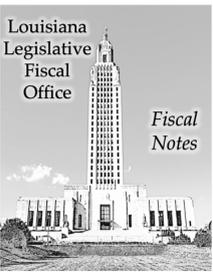


**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE**  
**Fiscal Note**



Fiscal Note On: **SB 41** SLS 25RS 80  
 Bill Text Version: **ENGROSSED**  
 Opp. Chamb. Action:  
 Proposed Amd.:  
 Sub. Bill For.:

<b>Date:</b> April 30, 2025 3:43 PM	<b>Author:</b> BARROW
<b>Dept./Agy.:</b> Department of Children and Family Services	
<b>Subject:</b> Provides relative to child welfare	<b>Analyst:</b> Tamiko Stroud

CHILDREN EG INCREASE GF EX See Note Page 1 of 2  
 Provides relative to child welfare. (8/1/25)

Proposed legislation requires all nonpublic pre-kindergarten programs to be licensed as early learning centers and apply by January 1, 2026. The proposed legislation prohibits a person whose name is recorded on the state central registry (SCR) on or after August 1, 2018 from participating in the governance of certain child-related services and being hired by certain school boards, nonpublic schools, and school systems. Proposed legislation requires certain school boards to dismiss certain school employees whose name is recorded on the SCR on or after August 1, 2025. Proposed legislation requires compliance with child safety and welfare minimum standards no later than October 1, 2025. Proposed legislation requires the Dept. of Education (LDOE) to publish all child-related business violations on their website. Proposed legislation changes certain definitions. Proposed legislation provides additional certain circumstances in which DCFS or local/state law enforcement must be contacted by mandatory reporters and requires certain action by DCFS and local/state law enforcement upon the receipt of a mandatory reporter's report of abuse. Proposed legislation requires DCFS to assess the family of the victim child and the alleged perpetrator child of any sexual abuse cases. Proposed legislation does not require school employees to pay certain fees. Proposed legislation will become effective upon the governor's signature or legislative approval.

EXPENDITURES	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Federal Funds	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	
Local Funds	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	

**Annual Total**

REVENUES	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Agy. Self-Gen.	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	<b>INCREASE</b>	
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Local Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>

**Annual Total**

**EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION**

Proposed legislation will result in a significant increase in annual expenditures as a result of additional staffing and resources required in two (2) separate agencies, including \$877,792 SGF for LA Dept. of Education (LDOE) and \$6.2 M (\$4.3 M SGF and \$1.9 Federal) in the Department of Children and Family Services. The original sources of funding are Title IV-B, Title IV-E, and SSBG.

**LA Department of Education (LDOE)**

The LDOE reports the proposed legislation will require an expenditure increase of \$877,792 SGF in FY 26 to fund eight (8) authorized positions to monitor and inspect the 254 nonpublic pre-kindergarten programs currently unlicensed as early learning centers.

The department reports the need for six (6) Licensing Specialists I/II to conduct inspections and monitor an additional 254 nonpublic programs; one (1) Licensing Supervisor to train specialists, review inspection reports for accuracy, and conduct onsite quality monitoring; and one (1) Licensing Consultant to review initial, renewal, and changing licensing applications and conduct consultations regarding compliance with LA Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations. The department reports the estimated number of employees was based on a caseload of approximately fifty (50) sites per Licensing Specialist, five (5) Licensing Specialists per Licensing Supervisor, and two hundred and fifty (250) sites per Licensing Consultant. The department reports an additional Licensing Specialist is required to accommodate the distance between early learning sites as the geographic spread can require additional staff members. See the expenditure table on page 2 that reflects LDOE's projected expenditures.

LDOE Expenditures	Costs
<b>Positions (include salaries and related benefits)</b>	
Licensing Specialists I/II (6)	\$88,882
Licensing Supervisor (1)	\$108,878
Licensing Consultant (1)	\$108,878
<b>Other</b>	
Operating Expenses	<u>\$126,744</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$877,792</b>

The proposed legislation also requires all pre-kindergarten programs to comply with child safety and welfare minimum standards. LDOE reports local education agencies (LEAs) will incur costs for possible restroom accommodations needed in public and nonpublic schools because certain LEAs do not have bathrooms specifically for pre-kindergarten. The department reports the expenditure amount will depend on existing facilities available at each school and is indeterminable. **SEE PAGE 2**

**REVENUE EXPLANATION**

**LA Dept. of Education (LDOE)**

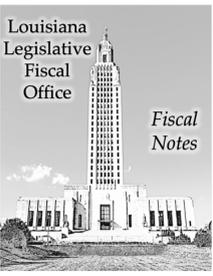
LDOE reports an anticipated revenue increase of \$6,350 SGR from collecting licensing fees received from nonpublic pre-kindergarten programs due to the proposed law requiring these programs to be licensed as early learning centers. There department identified 254 nonpublic pre-kindergarten programs without a license that will incur a cost of \$25 per program upon enactment.

Senate Dual Referral Rules  
 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H}  
 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H}

House  
 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}  
 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}

**Patrice Thomas**  
 Deputy Fiscal Officer

**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE**  
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**CONTINUED EXPLANATION from page one:**

**Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)**

DCFS reports the proposed legislation will require an expenditure increase of \$6.2 M (\$4.3 M SGF and \$1.9 Federal) and 44 additional T.O. in FY 26 to: 1) perform additional state central registry clearances for school employees, 2) refer misappropriated reports to local or state law enforcement within twenty-four hours, 3) assess the family of the victim child and the alleged perpetrator child of any sexual abuse cases, including cases referred from law enforcement that occur at home and in a school setting, 4) collect and investigate reports of abuse or neglect if the perpetrator is believed to be a person living in the same residence as the child, as the proposed law expands the definition of "caretaker" to include all adult household members, and 5) upgrade technology systems to include new verbiage and requirements of proposed law. The Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO) cannot corroborate the total increase in expenditures and staff reported by the department. The LFO does not believe the requirements of proposed law will create a workload sufficient to require the reported level of additional funding and employees based on aspects of proposed law not changing existing law. Each report for additional funding and employees has been itemized below:

(1) DCFS reports the need for \$434,331 to fund three (3) T.O. positions and one (1) WAE to perform state central registry clearances on school employees who are hired on or after August 1, 2025, which is required by proposed legislation. The department estimates that there are 100,000 teachers and school employees (public and private) in the state that will require SCR clearances to be conducted by DCFS. The three (3) FTE positions and one (1) WAE position reported consist of: two (2) Program Specialists (2 FTE), one (1) Program Specialist (WAE), and one (1) Attorney 3 (1 FTE). The department reports the three specialists, including the WAE, would be responsible for conducting child abuse background clearances during peak hiring times for school employees (May through August). The specialists are expected to complete an average of 8,750 clearances annually (150-200 per week out of 50 weeks). The department expects the specialists to complete 20,000 SCR clearances annually, after applying a 20% turnover rate. The department reports these additional SCR clearances will result in an indeterminable increase in administrative appeals for substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect for school employees, which are handled by the department's due process attorneys. The LFO cannot corroborate the department's report of increased funding and T.O. and believes the department may be able to utilize existing staff and resources to support these functions.

(2) DCFS reports the need for \$420,848 to fund four (4) T.O. positions to refer misappropriated mandatory reports to local or state law enforcement within twenty-four hours. The four positions reported include: three (3) Child Welfare (CW) Specialist 2's and one (1) Child Welfare Supervisor to provide 24/7 coverage for the child abuse hotline calls and complete written mandated reporter reports for accepted intakes. Upon enactment of proposed legislation, the department estimates an increase of 524 intakes per month (6,288 intakes per year), which is equivalent to 2.62 FTE Program Specialist 2's. The standard employee-to-caseload ratio for a CW Specialist is 200 reports per month (2,400 reports per year) per caseworker, which would allow the 3 CW Specialists to collectively take and report on 600 intakes per month (7,200 reports per year) while being managed by the CW Supervisor. The LFO cannot corroborate the department's report based on existing law requiring the department to promptly communicate abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate law enforcement agency pursuant to Children's Code Article 616(H).

(3) DCFS reports the need for \$2.5 M to fund twenty-three (23) T.O. positions to assess the family of the victim child and the alleged perpetrator child of any sexual abuse cases, including child sexual abuse cases referred from law enforcement that could occur at home or in a school setting. Proposed legislation also requires DCFS to collect mandatory reporter reports and investigate cases of alleged sexual abuse involving child perpetrators living in the same residence as child victim or cases identified as indeterminable by the mandatory reporter, but the reporter suspects that the abuse occurred at the child's residence. DCFS reports the department does not currently conduct investigations or assessments of alleged abuse or neglect that occurs in school settings or child-on-child abuse that does not involve parent culpability.

The twenty-three (23) positions reported by the department consist of: fifteen (15) CW Specialist 3's, three (3) Social Service Analyst 1's, one (1) CW Consultant 1, three (3) CW Supervisors, and one (1) Child Welfare Manager 1 to address a new scope of work of assessing families of child victims and alleged child perpetrators of child sexual abuse by utilizing the new specialized staff members, who would be trained specifically in sexual abuse dynamics and family engagement, to create an assessment model that will allow escalation to an investigation if parental culpability is suspected, retain responsibility of cases, and take any necessary court action. DCFS conducted a review of 100 cases out of 672 cases referred to law enforcement in March of 2025 and found that 16 out of the 100 reports reviewed were related to child-on-child sexual abuse. Based on this data from the sample size case review, the department anticipates an increase of 107 cases (.16 x 672 referred cases = 107) per month involving child-on-child sexual abuse. The LFO believes DCFS may undergo an increase in workload due to the new requirements set within the proposed legislation; however, DCFS has reported employee-to-caseload ratios that do not justify the reported level of additional funding and employees.

(4) DCFS reports the need for \$1.4 M to fund thirteen (13) T.O. positions to collect and investigate reports of abuse or neglect if the perpetrator is believed to be a person living in the same residence as the child, or any residence of the child if the child has more than one residence, as proposed legislation expands the definition of "caretaker" to include all adult household members. The reported positions consist of: eight (8) CW Specialist 2's, two (2) Social Service Analyst 3's, two (2) CW Supervisors, and one (1) CW Manager 1 to collect and investigate reports of abuse or neglect from mentioned persons above. DCFS conducted a review of 100 cases out of 672 cases referred to law enforcement in March of 2025 and found that 12 out of the 100 reports reviewed were related to other household members or by an indeterminable individual. Based on this data from the sample size case review, the department anticipates an increase of 80 cases (.12 x 672 referred cases = 80) per month involving a person living in the same residence as the child or indeterminable. The LFO cannot corroborate the department's report of increased funding and T.O. and believes DCFS may undergo an increase in workload due to the new requirements set within the proposed legislation; however, DCFS has reported employee-to-caseload ratios that do not justify the reported level of additional funding and employees.

(5) Lastly, DCFS reports the need for \$1.5 M to update Child Welfare's technological systems, such as Child Abuse and Neglect Clearance System (CANS), Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS), and A Comprehensive Enterprise Social Services (ACCESS) to recognize school employees receiving state central registry clearances, change verbiage from valid/invalid to substantiated/unsubstantiated, expand system selection for caretakers, create assessment to investigation workflow, and track the number of abuse/neglect intakes referred to law enforcement. The LFO cannot corroborate as proposed law does not require the technological enhancement of platforms to perform these functions.

Senate  
 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H}  
 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H}

House  
 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}  
 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}

**Patrice Thomas**  
 Deputy Fiscal Officer