

SENATE BILL NO. 252

BY SENATOR MIZELL

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:416.23, relative to behavioral health of students; to require the adoption of
3 a program by a local public school board; to provide for program requirements; to
4 provide for reporting on the program; and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 17:416.23 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

7 **§416.23. Behavioral or emotional challenges; referral for assessment and**
8 **treatment; reporting**

9 **A. Except as provided in R.S. 17:173, not later than thirty days prior to**
10 **the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, each city, parish, or other local**
11 **public school board shall adopt rules and regulations and implement a program**
12 **to:**

13 **(1) Assist school personnel in identifying signs and symptoms of a**
14 **student with behavioral or emotional challenges that may cause the student to**
15 **be at risk of their behavior escalating into aggression or disruption, disciplinary**
16 **actions including suspension or expulsion, or juvenile delinquency.**

17 **(2) Designate a specific employee at each school who shall be responsible**
18 **for identifying behavioral and mental health support services available in the**
19 **community, and when appropriate, facilitating a referral to those services for**
20 **assessment and treatment, including services provided through the Louisiana**
21 **Coordinated System of Care and its Medicaid provider network.**

22 **(3)(a) Require that after any second suspension of a student during the**
23 **same school year, the principal or his designee and the employee designated**
24 **pursuant to Paragraph (2) of this Subsection shall consult on whether the**
25 **student's behavior could be attributable to behavioral or emotional challenges.**

26 **(b) Require that if it is determined that the behavior is attributable to**
27 **behavioral or emotional challenges and rises to the level that supportive services**

1 could be beneficial, the principal or his designee and the employee designated
 2 pursuant to Paragraph (2) of this Subsection shall schedule a conference with
 3 the student's parent or legal guardian to discuss the student's behavior and
 4 counseling as well as the referral of the student and family to support services
 5 for assessment and treatment.

6 B. A city, parish, or other local public school board shall report to the
 7 state Department of Education and the House and Senate committees on
 8 education the number of students identified as possibly having behavioral or
 9 emotional challenges, the number of students for which a conference was
 10 scheduled, and the number of students referred for assessment and supportive
 11 services pursuant to this Section. The reports shall be submitted annually on
 12 July first and shall reflect data from the previous school year. The reports may
 13 be used to evaluate needs and capacity for behavioral health services
 14 throughout the state.

 PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

 SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

 GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____