

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 486

BY REPRESENTATIVES FISHER, ADAMS, BAYHAM, BILLINGS, BOYD, BRASS, BRYANT, CHASSION, FREEMAN, FREIBERG, GREEN, HUGHES, JACKSON, TRAVIS JOHNSON, JORDAN, KNOX, LAFLEUR, MANDIE LANDRY, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MARCELLE, MENA, MILLER, MOORE, NEWELL, PHELPS, SPELL, STAGNI, TAYLOR, WALTERS, WILLARD, AND YOUNG

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

HEALTH: Requires public schools to offer a mental health assessment to certain students

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:173.1, relative to mental health services for students; to require public
3 schools to offer a mental health assessment to certain students at the beginning of
4 each school year; to provide for reporting; and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 17:173.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

7 §173.1. Mental health assessments

8 A. Each public school shall make available to each student in grades three
9 through twelve a mental health assessment by a licensed behavioral health provider,
10 so long as it is annually authorized by his parent or legal guardian. Such screening
11 shall be offered within the year, and, if feasible, during the first semester rather than
12 the second semester of the school year. Each public school principal or his designee
13 may use discretion in determining a convenient time for scheduling such assessments
14 and an appropriate time and place to conduct such assessments.

15 B. For the purposes of this Section, "licensed behavioral health provider"
16 means a provider who is on a list that the Louisiana Department of Health shall
17 provide to the public school and fits into one of the following categories:

1 (1) A licensed behavioral health provider approved by the Louisiana
2 Department of Health to provide behavioral health services and who is properly
3 credentialed by an accrediting body.

4 (2) An individual provider who is licensed and authorized to conduct mental
5 health assessments. Managed care organizations shall provide a list of such
6 providers to the Louisiana Department of Health.

7 C. The assessments provided for in this Section shall be provided to the
8 appropriate students at each public school at no cost to each city, parish, or other
9 local public school board.

10 D. Each public school shall annually report at the end of each school year the
11 number of screenings administered to students, by grade level, under its jurisdiction
12 to the Louisiana Department of Health.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 486 Reengrossed

2025 Regular Session

Fisher

Abstract: Requires public schools to offer a mental health assessment to certain students at the beginning of each school year.

Proposed law requires public schools to make available to each student the opportunity to undergo a mental health assessment by a licensed behavioral health provider within the year. Requires the consent of his parent or legal guardian annually. Applies to students in grades three through 12.

Proposed law requires the La. Dept. of Health (LDH) to provide to each public school a list of licensed behavioral health providers. Provides that, for the purposes of proposed law, such provider means one of the following:

- (1) A provider approved by LDH to provide behavioral health services and who is properly credentialed by an accrediting body.
- (2) An individual provider who is licensed and authorized to conduct mental health assessments.

Requires managed care organizations (MCOs) to provide the content of number (2) above to LDH.

Proposed law authorizes each public school principal to use his discretion in establishing a time and location to conduct the assessments.

(Adds R.S. 17:173.1)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill:

1. Change lowest grade of student to which assessment is made available from fourth to third.
2. Require the assessments be done at no cost to local, parish, and other public school boards.
3. Authorize each public school principal to use his discretion in establishing a time and location to conduct the assessments.
4. Require LDH to provide to each public school a list of licensed behavioral health providers.
5. Define "licensed behavioral health provider".

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Require MCOs to provide a list of individual providers who are licensed and authorized to conduct mental health assessments to LDH.
2. Specify parental consent is required annually for an assessment to be administered.
3. Change timing of availability of assessment from within the first 90 days of each school year to within the year, with preference for the first semester.
4. Require each public school to annually report the number of screenings administered, by grade level, to LDH.