LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 3862

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: JANUARY 15, 2026

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Requires DCF to expand services provided by NJ Statewide Student Support Services program to include eating disorder services.

Type of Impact: Potential annual State expenditure increase from the General Fund.

Agencies Affected: Department of Children and Families.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	Annual
Potential State Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that this bill may increase State costs by an indeterminate amount due to the provision of eating disorder awareness, prevention, and counseling services under the NJ Statewide Student Support Services program, to the extent that such services are not currently provided under the program. These services fall under the scope of the program's current mission to provide mental health services to New Jersey youth.

- The OLS assumes that any costs for a program hub to assess the need for eating disorder related services within the hub's vicinage, as required under the bill, would be incorporated into the hub's existing operating budget. This task largely aligns with each hub's current responsibility of responding to the needs of the hub's community.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill authorizes the Department of Children and Families to 1) expand the services provided by the NJ Statewide Student Support Services program to include eating disorder awareness, prevention, and counseling services; and 2) require a regional hub, contracted with the department to administer the NJ Statewide Student Support Services program, to assess, in consultation with the hub's Advisory Group, the needs of the hub's community for services relating to the treatment and prevention of eating disorders and to determine whether the students

in the community, grades K through 12, are receiving such services. Based on the results of the assessment, the regional hub is to develop and adopt policies and procedures, as outlined in the bill, to provide students in grades K-12 with eating disorder awareness, prevention, and counseling services, as appropriate, according to the tiered services administered by the hub.

The NJ Statewide Student Support Services program delivers prevention and mental health services to youth across the State. The program is administer by 15 regional hubs who are contracted with the department to receive service requests from, and provide linkages to community-based support services and programming to, students in grades K through 12 and their families.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

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The NJ Statewide Student Support Services program is operated under a tiered service system: tier 1 are universal prevention services; tier 2 are targeted group prevention services; and tier 3 are targeted individual mental health services. Only tier 1 services are available for public view. As of March 22, 2025, no tier 1 services are directly related to eating disorders; however, certain services focus on self-image, body-image, and nutrition education. In addition to tiered services, each hub is staffed with a limited number of prevention specialists and licensed clinicians who can be mobilized to deliver services locally, when and where they are needed, both in school and community settings. Each hub also has a director and support staff.

The services each hub provides are based upon the existing needs of the community, as determined through collaborating with a hub-specific Advisory Group comprised of students, parents, caregivers, school personnel, social service agencies, businesses, faith-based organizations, and other community and civic leaders. Under the contract with the Department of Children and Families, hubs are to solicit input from the Advisory Group on existing community resources in order to determine the focus, design, and delivery of hub programs, supports, and services.

For reference, in FY 2025, the NJ Statewide Student Support Services program was supported by a $43 million appropriation from the General Fund. The FY 2026 Appropriations Act maintained this level of funding for the current fiscal year, with $8.4 million from the General Fund and $34.6 million from the Cannabis Regulatory, Enforcement Assistance, and Marketplace Modernization Fund.

Section:	*Human Services*
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This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).