ASSEMBLY, No. 5186

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 1, 2026

Sponsored by:
Assemblywoman ROSAURA "ROSY" BAGOLIE
District 27 (Essex and Passaic)
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District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes County-Based School Security Pilot Program in DOE; appropriates $15 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT establishing the County-Based School Security Pilot Program, supplementing chapter 41 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, and making an appropriation.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. As used in this act:

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education.

"Pilot county" means Essex, Mercer, and Camden counties.

"Pilot program" means the "County-Based School Security Pilot Program," established pursuant to subsection b. of this section.

b. There is established in the Department of Education a three-year "County-Based School Security Pilot Program," which shall establish county-based mental health services for public school students and provide security infrastructure to public schools. The pilot program shall be established in the counties of Essex, Mercer, and Camden.

c. The commissioner shall work in collaboration with the Commissioner of Human Services, the Commissioner of Children and Families, and the Director of the State Office of Emergency Management in the Division of State Police in the Department of Law and Public Safety to implement the pilot program which shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) a county-based mental health program available to students residing in a pilot county and attending a public school that incorporates the following: individual and group clinical mental health services; referrals to community-based mental health care providers; evidence-based interventions; mental health screenings; and crisis intervention; and

(2) additional security supports for school districts within a pilot county including, but not limited to, expanded access to training for active shooter scenarios; bullet-resistant mobile ballistic shields; and other protective equipment as deemed necessary by the commissioner.

d. In selecting school districts to receive additional security supports pursuant to subsection c. of this section, the commissioner shall consider the security needs of the district as reflected in the data reported in the commissioner's annual report on violence, vandalism, and harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the school district, as required pursuant to section 3 of P.L.1982, c.163 (C.18A:17-48).

2. The commissioner shall submit a report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), not more than one year after the implementation of the pilot program, and annually thereafter for a total of three years. The report shall contain information on the implementation of the

pilot program, an evaluation of the mental health services available to students in a pilot county, and the recommendations of the commissioner on the advisability of continuing, expanding, or modifying the program.

3. There is appropriated $15 million from the General Fund to the Department of Education to implement the provisions of section 1 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

4. This act shall take effect in the first full school year following the date of enactment, but the Commissioner of Education may take anticipatory administrative action in advance thereof as shall be necessary for the implementation of this act.

STATEMENT

This bill establishes the County-Based School Security Pilot Program in the Department of Education.

The County-Based School Security Pilot Program would establish county-based mental health services for public school students and provide security infrastructure to certain public schools in Essex, Mercer, and Camden counties for three years.

This bill directs the Commissioner of Education to work in collaboration with the Commissioner of Human Services, the Commissioner of Children and Families, and the Director of the State Office of Emergency Management in the Department of Law and Public Safety to implement the pilot program. The pilot program established under the bill is required to include a county-based mental health program available to students residing in a pilot county and attending a public school. The mental health program would incorporate individual and group clinical mental health services; referrals to community-based mental health care providers; evidence-based interventions; mental health screenings; and crisis intervention. The pilot program would also provide additional security supports for school districts within a pilot county including expanded access to training for active shooter scenarios; bullet-resident mobile ballistic shields; and other protective equipment as deemed necessary by the commissioner.

The bill requires the commissioner to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature within one year after the implementation of the pilot program and annually thereafter for a total of three years. Additionally, this bill appropriates $15 million from the General Fund to the department.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2026-2027 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.