

By Senator Berman

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to student mental health; amending s.
3 1006.041, F.S.; requiring minimum ratios of school
4 psychologists and of certified school counselors,
5 school social workers, or other licensed mental health
6 professionals to students in certain grades,
7 respectively, beginning with a specified school year;
8 making technical changes; providing an effective date.

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10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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12 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section
13 1006.041, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

14 1006.041 Mental health assistance program.—Each school
15 district must implement a school-based mental health assistance
16 program that includes training classroom teachers and other
17 school staff in detecting and responding to mental health issues
18 and connecting children, youth, and families who may experience
19 behavioral health issues with appropriate services.

20 (2) A plan required under subsection (1) must be focused on
21 a multitiered system of supports to deliver evidence-based
22 mental health care assessment, diagnosis, intervention,
23 treatment, and recovery services to students with one or more
24 mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and to
25 students at high risk of such diagnoses. The provision of these
26 services must be coordinated with a student's primary mental
27 health care provider and with other mental health providers
28 involved in the student's care. At a minimum, the plan must
29 include all of the following components:

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30 (a) Direct employment of school-based mental health
31 services providers to expand and enhance school-based student
32 services and to increase ~~reduce~~ the ratio of staff to students
33 ~~to staff~~ in order to better align with nationally recommended
34 ratio models. ~~The~~ Providers must ~~shall~~ include, but need ~~are~~ not
35 be limited to, certified school counselors, school
36 psychologists, school social workers, and other licensed mental
37 health professionals. However, by the beginning of the 2027
38 school year and each subsequent school year, the ratio of school
39 psychologists must be at least 1 per 700 full-time students in
40 grades 9 through 12 and the ratio of certified school
41 counselors, school social workers, or other licensed mental
42 health professionals must be 1 per 250 full-time students in
43 grades 9 through 12. The plan must also identify strategies to
44 increase the amount of time that school-based student services
45 personnel spend providing direct services to students, which may
46 include the review and revision of district staffing resource
47 allocations based on school or student mental health assistance
48 needs.

49 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.