

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION - 2018
COMMITTEE STATEMENT
LB998

Hearing Date: Monday February 12, 2018
Committee On: Education
Introducer: Walz
One Liner: Create the Collaborative School Behavioral and Mental Health Program

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:
Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

Vote Results:

Aye:	6	Senators Ebke, Groene, Kolowski, Morfeld, Pansing Brooks, Walz
Nay:	2	Senators Erdman, Linehan
Absent:		
Present Not Voting:		

Verbal Testimony:

Proponents:

Senator Lynne Walz
Jenni Benson
David Ludwig
Dan Schnoes
Anne Constantino
Amanda Duffy Randall
John Spatz
Debra Anderson Pappas
T. Michael Williams
Mary Bahney

Julia Hebenstreit
Mike Waters
Daniel Bombeck
Ken Heinz
Laura Barrett
Ann Hunter-Pirtle
Jon Habben
Tom Venzor

Representing:

Introducer
Nebraska State Education Association
ESU Coordinating Council
ESU 3
Nebraska Child Health & Education Alliance
self
Nebraska Association of School Boards
Project Harmony Advocacy Center
Baptist Pastors & Ministers Conference
School Social Work Association of NE / National
Association of Social Workers--Nebraska
Kim Foundation
STANCE
ESU 2
Weeping Water Public Schools
ESU 13
Stand for Schools
Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association
Nebraska Catholic Conference

Opponents:

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

LB 998 would create a collaborative behavioral health and mental health program with initiatives between the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council, the educational service units, and the school districts located in the ESU district. The collaboration is designed to assist students and families in need of mental or behavioral health services, find programs and providers by placing a social worker in every educational service unit (ESU) across the state.

Section by Section

Section 1. Amends 79-1201 to add sections 2 to 7 of this act to the Educational Service Units Act found in sections 79-1201 to 79-1249.

Section 2. Legislative Intent

Section 3. Creates the Collaborative Behavioral & Mental Health Program and Initiatives, between Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council (ESUCC), the educational service unit and the school districts within the educational service unit. The program would provide a social worker to every educational service unit to train teachers & school personnel and to work with parents, schools and providers in the delivery and receipt of effective, family-centered services. The Collaborative Program would not begin until the Collaborative School Behavioral and Mental Health Fund has \$3.6 million.

Section 3 also provides that three years after the implementation of the collaborative program, the ESU must determine the cost of the program and whether or not the program will continue in its service area. If a program is to be continued, the cost for the program will be split between: the school districts within the educational service unit, the educational service unit, the General Fund, and private donations.

Service 4. Provides that the ESUCC is to administer the Collaborative Program and hire a social worker and a program coordinator. The administration of the programs by the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council shall contain:

- The establishment of the initiatives that implement the collaborative program and includes the requirements of section 6 of this act;
- Annually seek program plans from the Educational service units to ensure the plans submitted meets initiative requirements;
- Provide evidence-based best practices for interventions for students and to coordinate the delivery of evidence-based training to social workers and school personnel at least on an annual basis;
- Conduct an annual evaluation that collects data that identifies the number of students referred, assessed, or served and the improved health and academic outcomes for students;
- Create and maintain a statewide map available behavioral and mental health services...

Section 5. Provides that social workers hired as required under section 3 of this act may do the following (please note that the following list is not exhaustive):

- Provide evidence-based screening tools to students to identify the need for services;
- Administer evidence-based assessment tools that they are qualified to provide, to students in order to match the student with the appropriate health care providers;
- Facilitate needed care between students, families and providers;
- Maintain case files and reports to identify problems and progress made;
- Provide behavioral and mental health training to & support to school employees and students...

Section 6. Provides that an Educational Service Unit "may" choose to implement an initiative to provide a Collaborative Behavioral and Mental Health Program, which must include the following components within their program:

- Create sources and establish agreements for specific referrals such as community providers, community nonprofits, public and private schools and the Nebraska Family Helpline of the Department of Health & Human Services;
- Provide training for referral sources to recognize & refer students who could gain from the program;
- Develop strategies to identify ways to use available health insurance or the medical assistance program;
- Requires at least one social worker to meet with families, assess needs, identify barriers to services and connect those in need to resources within the community;
- Create plans for mapping services, for struggling students that are within the communities of the school districts, that

are within the educational service unit;

- Create plans for collecting and disseminating information documenting outcomes and provide required reports to the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council.

Section 7. Establishes the Collaborative School Behavioral and Mental Health Fund, which is administered by the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council. This section also requires the State Treasurer to credit the following to the fund:

- Revenue transferred to the fund by the Legislature,
- Money donated or provided from public or private entities, or
- Revenue made available by any department or agency of the United States.

Section 7 also attempts to limit the ability of the Legislature to transfer or designate for other uses, funds provided for purposes of this act.

Explanation of amendments:

AM2044 makes the following changes to LB 998:

1. On page 3, line 6, strike "born equally between" and insert "paid by any combination of" which change provides fiscal flexibility under the plan;
2. On page 3, line 7, strike "the General Fund" to clarify that the program is to be included in the budgets of the entities participating in the program in future years;
3. On page 3, line 17, strike beginning with "and" through "unit" in line 18. This change removes the requirement that the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council (ESUCC) hire a social worker from section 4 of this bill as it is now placed in section 5;
4. On page 4, line 5, strike beginning with "a" through "Council" in line 6 and insert "the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council (ESUCC) or an educational service unit (ESU) may employ a social worker. Such social worker." This change would provide the permissive ability to hire a social worker in Section 5 of the act and clarifies that either an ESUCC or an ESU may hire a social worker.

Mike Groene, Chairperson