



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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March 27, 2017

TO: Members  
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: January 2017 Special Session Assembly Bill 11: Mental Health Training Program

January 2017 Special Session Assembly Bill 11 was introduced on February 21, 2017, and referred to the Assembly Committee on Education. Assembly Amendment 1 was offered on February 27, 2017. The Assembly Committee on Education adopted AA 1 on a vote of 15 to 0 and recommended the bill for passage as amended on a vote of 16 to 0 on March 9, 2017. The bill was then referred to the Joint Committee on Finance. The bill would require the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to provide training on evidence-based strategies related to addressing mental health issues in schools to school district and independent charter school personnel.

A Senate companion bill, Special Session Senate Bill 11, was introduced on February 21 and referred to the Senate Committee on Education. Senate Amendment 1 was offered on March 1, 2017.

### **BACKGROUND**

Screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) is a process that can be used to identify problematic use of alcohol or drugs or other mental health issues. Typically, participants first participate in a short standardized screening assessment to identify potential drug or alcohol abuse, behavioral or emotional problems, or risk for future crime or violence. If the screener identifies a need for further assessment, participants receive a brief intervention that provides education and uses motivational interviewing techniques to encourage the participant to modify his or her behavior. Participants who continue to experience problem behaviors and do not respond to the brief intervention can then be referred to further treatment, including school-based services or community-based mental health or substance abuse services.

The Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Center, or WISH Center, currently offers training for school districts in the implementation of SBIRT programs. The WISH Center is a collaborative project between the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the CESA Statewide Network, and offers training to school district personnel across the state and online in youth mental health, suicide prevention, school safety, and other topics, in addition to SBIRT. SBIRT trainings are conducted by five certified trainers operating under the WISH Center, who use multi-day sessions

to train school staff to perform SBIRT screenings and brief interventions. In 2016-17, the WISH Center received \$83,700 in state funding through an alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) state grant.

## **CURRENT LAW**

Under current law, state funding for AODA programs is provided through a block grant program administered by DPI. The program receives \$1,284,700 PR annually through program revenue from the penalty assessment surcharge fund. Under the program, grants are provided to school districts, cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs), or consortia of school districts and/or CESAs. The grants fund projects with an emphasis on AODA prevention and intervention, including K-12 curriculum development, family involvement, drug abuse resistance education, and pupil designed AODA prevention or intervention projects.

Additionally, \$609,500 PR is appropriated annually for administration of AODA programs. DPI is required under current law to develop and conduct training programs for public, private, and tribal school staff in AODA prevention, intervention, and instruction programs, and provide consultation and technical assistance for the development of AODA programs. DPI also must provide access to informational resources for AODA education, including screening and evaluating resources, establishing a central depository and loan program for resources, and disseminating information about available resources. In addition, the appropriation funds fellowship grants for school personnel to pursue advanced training or education in comprehensive school health or AODA education.

## **SUMMARY OF BILL**

The bill would provide \$100,000 GPR in 2017-18 and in 2018-19 in a new appropriation for a mental health training support program.

Under the bill, the State Superintendent would be required to establish a mental health training support program for school district staff and the instructional staff of independent charter schools. The program would provide training on the screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment program (SBIRT), which is an evidence-based strategy related to addressing mental health issues in schools.

The bill would take effect on July 1, 2017, or on the second day after publication of the 2017 biennial budget act, whichever is later.

## **ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT 1**

Assembly Amendment 1 would increase funding under the bill to \$200,000 GPR annually.

## **FISCAL EFFECT**

As described above, the bill as amended would provide \$200,000 GPR in 2017-18 and in 2018-19.

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