



VERMONT LEGISLATIVE Joint Fiscal Office

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Fiscal Note

Updated 5/19/2022

Nolan Langweil

S. 197 (Act 112) – An act relating to the provision of mental health supports

As passed by the General Assembly

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<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0197/S-0197%20As%20Passed%20by%20Both%20House%20and%20Senate%20Unofficial.pdf>

Other bill information

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2022/S.197>

Bill Summary

Act 74 of 2021 – Sec. E.501.3(A) – appropriated \$3,000,000 from the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III Fund) to the Agency of Education (AOE) for regional capacity grants to address students' social, emotional, and mental health needs.¹ In addition to other provisions related to mental health supports, the bill proposes more specific guidance on how to spend this appropriation including:

- \$500,000 for statewide COVID-19 recovery supports for educators and school staff, and
- \$2.5 million for grants to expand mental health and well-being services for children and youth.

Sec. 2 – Provisions of Mental Health and Well-Being Supports for Educators

Sec. 2 would require the Agency of Education (AOE), in consultation with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to contract with one or more organization(s) to provide statewide COVID-19 recovery supports for educators and school staff. Sec. 4 of the bill includes an appropriation of \$500,000 in ESSER III funds for this work.

Sec. 3 – Grants to Expand Mental Health and Well-Being Services to Youth

Sec. 3 would require AOE to work collaboratively with DMH to establish and administer a two-year program that ensures continuous support to children and youth in a variety of settings by providing grants to:

¹ Act 74 of 2021 (page 173) – An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government.

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/ACTS/ACT074/ACT074%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

- expand existing school-based counseling services in underserved districts of the State, or
- develop either school-based or community-based afterschool programs, operating in a variety of settings outside the school day and over the summer, that support the mental health and wellness needs of students, families, and staff.

Sec. 4 of the bill includes an appropriation of \$2.5 million in ESSER III funds for this work.

Sec. 4 – Allocation of ESSER III Funds

Sec. 4 provides further direction for ESSER III funds appropriated in Act 74 of 2021, Sec. E.501.3.

Following details as described in Sec. 2 and Sec. 3, ESSER III funds would be allocated as follows:

- \$500,000 for statewide COVID-19 recovery supports for educators and staff pursuant to Sec. 2 of the bill.
- \$2.5 million for grants to expand mental health and well-being services for child and youth pursuant to Sec. 3 of the bill.

Fiscal Summary

JFO estimates no additional fiscal impact in this bill as it only pertains to previously appropriated funds. It provides further guidance on how to spend funds already appropriated in Act 74 of 2021.