

2024 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 59

BY SENATOR FIELDS

COUNSELING/GUIDANCE. Requires student athletes access to mental health counseling at educational institutions. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:3007 and 3714, relative to mental health of student athletes in high school

3 and college; to provide for mental health counseling; to provide for availability of

4 counselors; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 17:3007 and 3714 are hereby enacted to read as follows:

7 **§3007. Mental health counselors; student athletes; high schools; availability**

8 **A. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, each city,**

9 **parish, or other local public school board shall provide mental health counselors**

10 **for all student athletes in high schools in the state in accordance with guidelines**

11 **as established by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.**

12 **Such guidelines shall require that each school board employ or contract with a**

13 **mental health counselor.**

14 **B. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, any high**

15 **school mental health counselor provided by a school board in compliance with**

16 **this Section shall be certified or licensed under R.S. 37:1101 et seq.**

17 **C. The mental health counselors shall provide preventive and**

1 manageable counseling services to all high school student athletes in order to
2 address concerns about mental health at any given time with regard to the
3 athlete's psychological and emotional well being.

4 D. The mental health counselor shall be available to the student athletes
5 when requested by a parent, guardian, teacher, counselor, coach, or other
6 school employee.

7 E. Nothing in Subsection A of this Section shall prohibit any school
8 board from employing or contracting with additional high school mental health
9 counselors than required in Subsection A of this Section.

10 F. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
11 annually report to the legislature on the implementation and effectiveness of the
12 program as provided in this Section.

13 * * *

14 §3714. Intercollegiate athletes; mental health counseling; availability

15 A. Each postsecondary education institution shall provide mental health
16 counselors for all athletes enrolled at its institution and who participate in the
17 athletic program in accordance with guidelines established by the Board of
18 Regents.

19 B. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, any
20 mental health counselor employed or contracted by an institution pursuant to
21 the provisions of this Section shall be certified or licensed under R.S. 37:1101
22 et seq.

23 C. The mental health counselors shall provide preventive and
24 manageable counseling services to athletes in order to address concerns about
25 mental health at any given time with regard to the athlete's psychological and
26 emotional well being.

27 D. The mental health counselor shall be available to the athletes when
28 requested by the athlete, a coach, professor, or other administrator who notices
29 signs of distress by the athlete.

1 **E. The Board of Regents shall annually report to the legislature on the**
 2 **implementation and effectiveness of the program as provided in this Section.**

3 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
 4 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
 5 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
 6 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
 7 effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
 of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Carla S. Roberts.

	DIGEST	
SB 59 Original	2024 Regular Session	Fields

Proposed law requires that each city, parish, or other local public school board and each postsecondary education institution provide at least one mental health counselor for all high school and college student athletes in accordance with guidelines established by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Board of Regents.

Proposed law requires that each school board employ or contract with at least one mental health counselor for high school athletes. The school board, however, is not prohibited from hiring or contracting with more than one mental health counselor.

Proposed law requires that the mental health counselors be licensed pursuant to the Louisiana Mental Health Counselor Licensing Act.

Proposed law provides that the mental health counselors provide preventive and manageable counseling services to the student athletes in order to address concerns about mental health at any given time with regard to the athlete's psychological and emotional well being. The mental health counselor is to be made available to the student athletes when requested by a parent, guardian, teacher, counselor, coach, or other school employee.

Proposed law provides that BESE and the Board of Regents is to annually report to the legislature on the implementation and effectiveness of proposed law.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:3007 and 3714)