



LFC Requester: Liu

**PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION**

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Check all that apply:

Original Amendment
Correction Substitute

Date Prepared: January 28 2026

Bill No: HB159

Committee Referrals: HEC/HAFC

Agency Name and Code: PED - 924

Sponsor: Lujan

PED Lead Analyst: Ashley Garcia

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Short Title: K-12 STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH PLATFORM

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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY27	FY28		
\$1000.0	None	N/A	General

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY27	FY28	FY29		
None	None	None	N/A	N/A

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY27	FY28	FY29	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	None	None	None	None	N/A	N/A

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: None as of 1/28/2026.

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: House Bill 159 (HB159) would appropriate \$1 million to the Public Education Department (PED), for expenditure in FY27 and FY28, to provide a no-cost, comprehensive, and evidence-based mental health support platform for kindergarten-12th grade students and their families.

The bill does not provide an effective date. Laws go into effect 90 days after the adjournment of the legislature enacting them, unless a later date is specified. If enacted, this bill would become effective May 20, 2026.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The bill appropriates \$1 million from the General Fund to PED, for expenditure in FY27 and FY28 to:

- (1) establish a pilot program that enables kindergarten through twelfth grade students and their families to access a no-cost, comprehensive and evidence-based mental health support platform that offers mental health education, self-management resources and care navigation supports;
- (2) contract for services to implement the pilot program; and
- (3) develop and submit a report that analyzes the impact of the pilot program to the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC).

Any unexpended balance remaining at the end of FY28 shall revert to the General Fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In 2022, a National Institute of Health (NIH) [study](#) estimated “12–30 percent of school-age children suffer from mental illness of sufficient intensity to adversely affect their education.” This indicates a need for mental health supports in grades K-12, as proposed by HB159, and may support students in ameliorating symptoms of mental illness and achieving greater academic success. If enacted, it is unclear how many schools, students, and communities may be impacted by the proposed pilot program.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

HB159 may support student mental health needs and potentially improve academic outcomes. Digital platform delivery of mental health services may have potential benefits. For example, families may be less likely to encounter barriers such as transportation issues and taking time off from school or work. Conversely, [concerns and considerations](#) for digital platform service delivery may include inconsistent impact of services, time constraints, privacy concerns, treatment relevancy, and overall satisfaction with the platform design and user-experience.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

HB159 would require administrative oversight by new or existing PED staff or contractors to

oversee design and implementation of the pilot program, as well as develop the report to the LESC required by the bill.

HB159 may increase access to no-cost mental health supports for students in grades K-12 and their families. As HB159 is silent on the type of platform that must be utilized, the design and implementation of the platform would need to be determined by the PED. This would likely require extensive research related to successful models and platforms for mental health support delivery in schools.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

None.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

None.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

None.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

None.

AMENDMENTS

None.