

# OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-2

AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL EQUITY AND THE HEALTH,  
SAFETY AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

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## ***OFA Fiscal Note***

### ***State Impact:***

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Cost	128,000	19,100
Social Services, Dept.	GF - Cost	300,000	300,000
Office of Early Childhood	GF - Cost	1,650,000	1,650,000

Note: GF=General Fund

### ***Municipal Impact:***

Municipalities	Effect	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$
Local and Regional School Districts	STATE MANDATE <sup>1</sup> - Cost	See Below	See Below
Local and Regional School Districts	Potential Cost	Potential	Potential

### ***Explanation***

The bill, which makes changes to certain statutes concerning children, is anticipated to result in various fiscal impacts, identified by section number below. Other sections of the bill are not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact to the state or municipalities.

**Section 1**, which requires the Youth Suicide Advisory Board (housed within the Department of Children and Families, or DCF) and the Office of the Child Advocate to establish a youth suicide

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<sup>1</sup> State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

prevention program providing certification in QPR Institute Gatekeeper Training for district health department employees, results in a cost to DCF of approximately \$28,000 in FY 22 and \$9,100 in each fiscal year thereafter. The QPR Train-the-Trainers model would instruct a minimum of two employees at each district health department to serve as their local QPR trainers. Currently, there are 20 district health departments in Connecticut. In the initial year, approximately 40 employees will need to be trained at a cost to DCF of approximately \$700 per person. In subsequent years, to refresh training and replace trainers lost due to attrition, approximately 13 employees will need to receive training.

**Section 14** requires local and regional school districts to conduct one parent-teacher conference, in addition to the two per year required under current law, during a period when the district provides virtual learning for more than three consecutive weeks. One additional parent-teacher conference is required every six months after that if sessions continue to be provided virtually. This could result in a cost and state mandate to local and regional school districts, associated with providing substitute teacher coverage for teachers who are required to conduct additional parent conferences, if these conferences are held during school hours. It is estimated that the average substitute teacher rate is approximately \$105 per day. The actual cost to the district would be dependent on the number of days a substitute teacher must be hired to cover the additional parent conferences. Fifty additional substitute days results in a cost of approximately \$5,250.

**Sections 16 - 18** allow, beginning in FY 22, students in grades nine through twelve to attend class online or as part of a remote learning model. This could result in a potential cost to local and regional school districts if additional virtual or online materials and equipment must be purchased to accommodate students opting to participate in a remote learning model. However, the bill is permissive, and local and regional school districts are not mandated to participate.

**Section 22**, which require that DCF expand its Careline to accommodate reports of child abuse or neglect made by text message or mobile telephone application, is anticipated to result in a fiscal impact to DCF of approximately \$100,000 in FY 22 for the development of the mobile application and \$10,000 in FY 23 and the out years for technical support related to the application. The Careline currently accepts reports made by telephone.

**Section 24** results in a cost of approximately \$1.2 million annually to the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) associated with eliminating the fees paid by families under the Birth to Three program.

**Section 27** could result in increased staffing costs to OEC associated with conducting screening for children found ineligible for preschool special education services. The increased cost would depend on the number of children eligible for the screening.

**Section 28** is anticipated to result in a cost of approximately \$450,000 annually to OEC associated with extending support for certain children transitioning out of Birth to Three. This is also anticipated to result in an annual cost of approximately \$300,000 to the Department of Social Services for related Medicaid claims.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future.

*Sources: Connecticut Department of Public Health, Local Health Administration, Online, Available at <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Local-Health-Admin/LHA/Local-Health-Administration>  
QPR Institute, Online, Available at <https://www.qprinstitute.com/>*