



2025-2026 General Assembly

SENATE BILL 257: 2026 Appropriations Act, Sec. 7.52: Expansion of Healthy Living Standard Course of Study

Analysis of: S.L. 2026-41, Sec. 7.52

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Section 7.52 of S.L. 2026-41 (Senate Bill 257) requires the State Board of Education to revise the Healthful Living Standard Course of Study by the 2028-2029 school year to add the following topics:

- Mental health awareness.
- Common mental health conditions, such as anxiety, depression, and trauma, and their warning signs.
- Help-seeking strategies for self and peers, including school and community resources.
- The neurological basis of addiction.
- The risks of alcohol, nicotine and vaping, cannabis, opioids, misuse of prescription drugs, and other illicit substances.
- The relationship between mental health and substance abuse.
- Treatment, recovery, and prevention of mental health disorders, including reducing the stigma surrounding mental health disorders.
- The effects of social media and other environmental influences on mental health and addictive behavior.
- Protective factors, coping skills, and sound decision making.

The Department of Public Instruction must report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15, 2028, on the adoption and implementation status of the revised standards, as well as any feedback from local school administrative units and recommended changes to the standards.

This section became effective July 1, 2026.

Kara McCraw
Director



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