

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 913

PRINTER NO. 1727

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

April 22, 2024

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Langerholc

DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill 913 establishes the Virtual Mental Health in Schools Act to require parental consent to virtual mental health services provided by or in coordination with a school entity.

The legislation requires a school entity that provides or coordinates virtual mental health services to create a form containing: (1) a summary of the scope of virtual mental health services available; (2) an area for parents or guardians to provide consent; and (3) any other information the school deems necessary.

The legislation requires a school entity providing virtual mental health services to annually obtain a completed form with the consent of the parent or guardian of a student who is under 18 years of age prior to providing or coordinating virtual mental health services to the student. It also prohibits a school entity from providing or coordinating any virtual mental health services for a student whose parent or guardian has not provided consent.

The legislation defines "virtual mental health services" as online support, online peer support community or counseling provided by an individual who is not a licensed mental health professional in this Commonwealth. It also defines a "school entity" as a public school, including a charter school or cyber charter school, private school, nonpublic school, intermediate unit or area career and technical school operating within this Commonwealth.

The legislation is scheduled to take effect July 1, 2024, or immediately, whichever is first.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The enactment of Senate Bill 913 will have no fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds. The cost to school entities to comply with the provisions requiring parental consent for provision or coordination of virtual mental health services should be minimal as schools already seek parental consent for various purposes on a regular basis.