



Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.
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Memorandum in Support

School Mental Health Resource and Training Center

The Mental Health Association in New York State (MHANYS), supports legislation that would renew financial support for the continuation and expansion of this valuable resource that is helping New York's schools to educate students about mental health.

New York led the nation in 2016 by being the first state to pass legislation requiring schools to teach students about mental health. This historic mandate couldn't have come soon enough as rates of anxiety and depression among youth are sobering and, by all accounts, appear to be growing. As many as half of all youth 13 to 18 years of age have experienced a mental health challenge with either mild or moderate impact and most of that is anxiety and/or depression. Untreated, these symptoms can worsen to the point of having significant impact on youth.

To help schools successfully implement the new law, the 2018 Executive Budget included funding for the creation and maintenance of a School Mental Health Resource and Training Center. The purpose of the Center is to provide all New York State public and private schools with professional development, mental health instructional resources, technical assistance and connections with community partners to comply with the new mental health education law at no cost to schools.

Significant assistance has already been provided to schools between July, 2018 and December, 2018 including nearly 10,000 unique visits to the School Mental Health Resource and Training Center website, the downloading of over 600 mental health lesson plans, and engagement of over 3,500 educators at various conferences and scheduled trainings.

The School Mental Health Resource and Training Center is a valuable, cost-effective and efficient means of supporting all of New York schools' in their ability to provide quality mental health instruction to students, train education personnel about mental health and assist in connecting schools with vital mental health services in their communities. Schools are already reaping the benefits of the Resource Center and there is great potential to build upon the foundation already established. It is critically important to capitalize on the momentum of the Center and to continue financially supporting its maintenance and growth.

Therefore, MHANYS strongly supports legislation that would fund the continuation and expanded role of the School Mental Health Resource and Training Center.

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