

New York State

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Leading the Way

According to a recent survey of NYS school superintendents by the NYS Council of School Superintendents, 56% of superintendents would make “improving mental health, counseling, social work or related services” a priority for new funding. Improving mental health services was overwhelmingly the most widely cited priority for superintendents.

For the 2018-19 school year, schools must offer instruction on mental health and add mental health to the current health education curriculum. NYS PTA proudly served on the Mental Health Advisory Council who worked on guidance for implementation of new mental health curriculum.

Support School-Based Mental Health Services for Students

We strongly support the inclusion of \$1.5 million to support school-based mental health programs, and grants for middle schools for mental health and school climate services.

We would ask that this amount be increased, to at least \$5 million in this coming school year.

Further, increases in Foundation Aid could support critical personnel like guidance counselors, health professionals such as school nurses, and licensed clinical social workers – who work not only to address mental health concerns, but also identify behavioral issues, and can be a positive support system for the academic system, family and community.

We are also encouraged by the proposal for a new program in middle and high schools, which will be determined by SED in consultation with the DOH, OCFS, medical experts, teachers, students and families to update the State’s health standards to include up-to-date, medically accurate, comprehensive information on healthy relationships for grades 6 through 12.

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