

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Health and Welfare to which was referred Senate Bill
3 No. 197 entitled “An act relating to the Coordinated Mental Health Crisis
4 Response Working Group” respectfully reports that it has considered the same
5 and recommends that the bill be amended by striking out all after the enacting
6 clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

7 * * * Mental Health Crisis Response Inventory * * *

8 Sec. 1. INVENTORY OF MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS RESPONSE
9 PROGRAMS

10 On or before January 15, 2023, the Department of Mental Health, in
11 consultation with the Agencies of Education and of Human Services and the
12 Department of Public Safety, shall submit the Mobile Crisis Needs Assessment
13 report required by the Department’s federally-funded mobile crisis state
14 planning grant, including the stakeholder engagement summary and the mobile
15 crisis benefit implementation plan, to the House Committee on Health Care
16 and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.

17 * * * Integrating Mental Health for Educators and Students * * *

18 Sec. 2. PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
19 SUPPORTS FOR EDUCATORS

20 In fiscal year 2023, the Agency of Education, in consultation with the
21 Department of Mental Health, shall contract with one or more organizations to

1 provide statewide COVID-19 recovery supports for educators and school staff.
2 The supports shall be provided by mental health clinicians and focused on
3 COVID-19 recovery, including wellness and trauma-responsive school
4 practice supports on a statewide, regional, or supervisory union or supervisory
5 district-specific level as needed.

6 Sec. 3. GRANTS TO EXPAND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
7 SERVICES TO YOUTH

8 (a) In fiscal year 2023, the Agency of Education shall work collaboratively
9 with the Department of Mental Health to establish and administer a two-year
10 program utilizing a tiered-support approach to ensure continuous support to
11 children and youth in a variety of settings, including supervisory union and
12 district-wide, in-school, community technical education centers, and
13 afterschool, by providing grants to:

14 (1) expand existing school-based counseling services in underserved
15 districts of the State; or

16 (2) develop either school-based or community-based afterschool
17 programs, operating in a variety of settings outside the school day and over the
18 summer, including before and after school, in-service days, and school
19 vacation week, that support the mental health and wellness needs of students,
20 families, and staff.

1 (b) The Agency shall adopt policies, procedures, and guidelines necessary
2 for implementation of the program described in subsection (a) of this section.

3 (c) The Agency shall issue grants to in-school counseling programs and
4 afterschool programs in geographically diverse regions when the applicant
5 meets all of the eligibility criteria listed in subdivision (1) of this subsection
6 and at least one eligibility criterion listed in subdivision (2) of this subsection:

7 (1) Mandatory eligibility criteria.

8 (A) The applicant uses evidence-based strategies to address students’
9 social, emotional, mental health, and wellness needs. As used in this
10 subdivision, “evidence-based” means the same as in the Elementary and
11 Secondary Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C. § 8101.

12 (B) The applicant collects data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the
13 mental health and wellness supports and interventions utilized in the program.

14 (C) The applicant meets student needs by incorporating multitiered
15 systems of supports, trauma-informed and responsive approaches, and
16 approaches such as the Whole Child, Whole School, Whole Community model
17 or the Strengthening Families curriculum’s Youth Thrive program.

18 (2) Additional eligibility criterion.

19 (A) The applicant works in close partnership with classroom teachers
20 and school guidance counselors to coordinate supports, communication, and
21 strategies.

1 (B) The applicant uses specially trained staff to provide one-on-one
2 and small group supports and resilience sessions for children and youth,
3 including addressing specific needs, such as suicide prevention, social
4 isolation, anxiety, and substance use.

5 (C) The applicant provides participating families with assistance in
6 navigating behavioral health resources in their communities.

7 (D) The applicant provides opportunities for children and youth to
8 participate in activities that heal and prevent social isolation, such as outdoor
9 activities, art therapy, recreation, and time in nature.

10 (E) The applicant consults with local pediatricians to provide
11 referrals for support.

12 (F) The applicant provides staff training on Youth Mental Health
13 First Aid and other evidence-based techniques and approaches to crisis
14 prevention and intervention, such as trauma-responsive practices, adolescent
15 brain development, and how to build a culture of connection.

16 (d) On or before January 15, 2025, the Agency, in collaboration with the
17 Department, shall submit a report to the House Committees on Education and
18 on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Education and on Health
19 and Welfare summarizing the programs to which grants were awarded and
20 recommending a model for the integration of mental health and in-school and
21 afterschool programming that provides consistency and reliability to children

1 and youth, is fiscally sustainable, and does not create further workforce
2 capacity challenges for afterschool organizations, schools, community
3 technical education centers, the Agency, or the Department.

4 Sec. 4. ALLOCATION OF UNEXPENDED ESSER III FUNDS

5 In fiscal year 2023, ESSER III funds appropriated pursuant to 2021 Acts
6 and Resolves No. 74, Sec. E.501.3 shall be used as follows:

7 (1) \$500,000.00 for statewide COVID-19 recovery supports for
8 educators and school staff pursuant to Sec. 2 of this act; and

9 (2) \$2,500,000.00 for grants to expand mental health and well-being
10 services for children and youth pursuant to Sec. 3 of this act.

11 * * * Interagency Youth Afterschool Task Force * * *

12 Sec. 5. VERMONT INTERAGENCY AFTERSCHOOL YOUTH TASK
13 FORCE; REPORTING

14 The Vermont Interagency Afterschool Youth Task Force established
15 pursuant to Executive Order No. 08-21 shall submit to the House Committees
16 on Education and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on
17 Education and on Health and Welfare copies of its bimonthly progress reports
18 on achieving expanded universal afterschool and summer programming. The
19 Task Force shall also provide advice and recommendations to the General
20 Assembly upon request.

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* * * Effective Date * * *

Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act relating to the provision of mental health supports”

(Committee vote: _____)

Senator _____

FOR THE COMMITTEE