

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 The Department of Mental Health, in consultation with the Agencies of
11 Education and of Human Services and the Department of Public Service, shall
12 inventory all mental health crisis response programs that utilize State funds.
13 On or before January 15, 2023, the Department shall submit the inventory to
14 the House Committee on Health Care and to the Senate Committee on Health
15 and Welfare.

16 * * * Integrating Mental Health with School and Afterschool
17 Programming * * *

18 Sec. 2. GRANTS TO EXPAND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TO
19 YOUTH IN SCHOOL AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING

20 (a) In fiscal year 2023, \$4,000,000.00 is appropriated from the federal
21 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund) to

1 the Agency of Education, which shall work collaboratively with the
2 Department of Mental Health, to establish and administer a two-year program
3 that ensures continuous support to children and youth in school and afterschool
4 settings by providing grants to:

5 (1) expand existing school-based counseling services provided by
6 designated and specialized service agencies in underserved districts of the
7 State;

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

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

15 (c) The Agency shall issue grants to in-school counseling programs and
16 afterschool programs in geographically diverse regions on a first-come, first-
17 served basis until funds are depleted when the applicant meets all of the
18 eligibility criteria listed in subdivision (1) of this subsection and at least one
19 eligibility criterion listed in subdivision (2) of this subsection:

20 (1) Mandatory eligibility criteria.

1 (A) The applicant uses evidence-based strategies to address students’
2 social, emotional, mental health, and wellness needs.

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

5 (C) The applicant connects to and aligns with statewide initiatives,
6 including Building Flourishing Communities, Youth Thrive, and the Vermont
7 Youth Project.

8 (2) Additional eligibility criterion.

9 (A) The applicant works in close partnership with classroom teachers
10 and school guidance counselors to coordinate supports, communication, and
11 strategies.

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

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

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

1 (E) The applicant consults with local pediatricians to provide
2 referrals for support.

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

7 (d) On or before January 15, 2025, the Agency, in collaboration with the
8 Department, shall submit a report to the House Committees on Education and
9 on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on Education and on Health
10 and Welfare summarizing the afterschool programs to which grants were
11 awarded and recommending a model for the integration of mental health and
12 in-school and afterschool programming that provides consistency and
13 reliability to children and youth, is fiscally sustainable, and does not create
14 further workforce capacity challenges for afterschool organizations, the
15 Agency, or the Department.

16 Sec. 3. VERMONT INTERAGENCY AFTERSCHOOL YOUTH TASK
17 FORCE; REPORTING

18 The Vermont Interagency Afterschool Youth Task Force established
19 pursuant to Executive Order No. 08-21 shall submit to the House Committees
20 on Education and on Human Services and to the Senate Committees on
21 Education and on Health and Welfare copies of its bimonthly progress reports

1 on achieving expanded universal afterschool and summer programming. The
2 Task Force shall also provide advice and recommendations to the General
3 Assembly upon request.

4 * * * Effective Date * * *

5 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

6 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

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

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(Committee vote: _____)

Senator _____

FOR THE COMMITTEE