

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 after-school, 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 connects to and aligns with statewide initiatives,  
15       including Building Flourishing Communities, Youth Thrive, and the Vermont  
16       Youth Project.

17            (2) Additional eligibility criterion.

18            (A) The applicant works in close partnership with classroom teachers  
19       and school guidance counselors to coordinate supports, communication, and  
20       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, § 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) \$4,000,000.00 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