



IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(ON BEHALF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE HALPERT ADMINISTRATION)

SPONSOR: Rep. Kyouko Chan

COSPONSORS: Rep. Koay, Rep. Graves

SEPTEMBER 20, 2020

A BILL

To build and improve upon mental health programs in our nation's schools.

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SECTION 2. SHORT TITLE.

This Bill shall be cited as “School Therapy Additional Focused Funding Act of ” or the “STAFF Act”

SECTION 3. PURPOSE.

This Bill, dated September 20th, 2020, will enact the following in the Department of Education and our nation's schools;

A. PURPOSE. To create new and foster existing mental health programs in our nation's schools.

B. REASONING. Children, especially teenagers, have need of mental health counseling. They are one of our most overlooked and at risk groups for suicidality, depression, anxiety, and other serious problems. School should serve as a safe place for them, where they can get help and talk to a licensed counselor who can help them. Not all schools have the funds to have a proper mental health program for students or even to have one at all. It is of the utmost importance that we prioritize the health, happiness, and productivity of our students and this Bill shall do so.

SECTION 4. PROCEDURE AND APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS

A. PROCEDURE. This bill shall only apply to junior high schools and high schools. Schools will submit requests for funding along with pertinent information (school size, existence of a program currently, underfunding in said program, high rates of youth mental disorders or delinquency) to the State Department of Education. The requests will then be approved or denied, if approved they will be sent to the (federal) Department of Education who will appropriate the funds to the state who will then give them to the school for the express purpose of building or improving a mental health program. The State Department of Education can request that schools be recategorized (i.e, a school with 950 may be reclassified if they have traditionally had more students or have close enough to qualify, in the State DoE's opinion, a different category). Schools within 100 students of the 1,000 mark, 300 students of the 2,500 mark, and 500 students of the 4,000 mark should be automatically put into consideration for recategorization. The Department of Education (federal) is directed to only deny the request of the states should that request be...

1. clearly misrepresenting the mental health data or student population for said school; or
2. one for an amount of money that is judged to be *clearly and obviously* beyond the scope of the needed improvements.

B. APPROPRIATIONS. Schools will follow the chart below to apply for the appropriate amount of funding based on their size and the presence of a mental health program. Schools may apply once every year for the funding and are required to direct the funding towards a mental health system.

Existing, but suboptimal, mental health program, less than 1,000 total students	May request up to 80,000 dollars
No existing mental health program, less than 1,000 total students	May request up to 125,000 dollars
Existing, but suboptimal, mental health program, between 1,000 and 2,500 total students	May request up to 110,000 dollars

No existing mental health program, between 1,000 and 2,500 total students	May request up to 160,000 dollars
Existing, but suboptimal, mental health program, between 2,500 and 4,000 students	May request up to 140,000 dollars
No existing mental health program, between 2,500 and 4,000 students	May request up to 200,000 dollars
Existing, but suboptimal, mental health program, above 4,000 students	May request up to 160,000
No existing mental health program, above 4,000 students	May request up to 250,000

SECTION 5. FUNDING AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

- a. **FUNDING:** The Department of Education is appropriated \$750,000,000 for the fiscal year of 2020 to carry out the provisions of this bill. They may also direct discretionary funding towards it should they wish.
 - b. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** The provisions of this bill will come into effect one fiscal month after its enactment as to allow time for communication and preparation between state and federal Departments of Education and schools.
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