

April 11, 2023

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Senate Subcommittee on LHHS-Ed
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Subcommittee on LHHS-Ed
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Baldwin and Ranking Member Capito:

On behalf of the 16 undersigned organizations, we urge you to continue to prioritize investments in programs that promote the learning, health, safety, and well-being for the young people in our country as you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill.

Amidst the youth mental health crisis that continues in our country, it is particularly critical that we act now. To ameliorate this crisis, we must ensure that young people have access to prevention programs and services that proactively support their mental wellness. Evidence- and research-based prevention includes supporting children and youth in building important skills that promote their wellbeing such as coping with stress, navigating their emotions, building healthy relationships, and developing problem-solving skills that decades of research have shown help to reduce [aggression, hyperactivity, anxiety, depression, bullying, school violence, suicidal ideation](#), and [substance misuse](#) as well as to promote [well-being, academic engagement and performance](#), and [future readiness](#). Attending to and strengthening access to such school-based services, meets students where they are with critical support that enables their learning and promotes their health and well-being.

As such, we ask that you include the following report language that bolsters access to prevention programs and services for Medicaid-eligible students in school settings:

Department of Health and Human Services

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Program Management:

School-Based Primary Prevention.—The Committee recognizes that our country continues to face a youth mental health crisis and that in order to avert and ameliorate the crisis we must ensure that all children and youth have equitable access to primary prevention programs and services that mitigate symptoms of anxiety, depression, substance misuse, and are a part of comprehensive suicide prevention. The Committee commends CMS for its work to strengthen school-based services in Medicaid and looks forward to additional guidance consistent with the provisions of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. The Committee encourages CMS to continue to ensure that Medicaid beneficiaries can access research- and evidence-based supports, services, programs, and practices that proactively promote mental health and well-being and mitigate crises from developing, and that these services are reimbursable by Medicaid in a school-based setting.

We are grateful for your longstanding support for enhancing the learning, safety, and well-being of the students across our country. Thank you for your consideration of our request and we look forward to continuing to work together on this essential endeavor of supporting our young people. For any questions or to discuss further, please contact Katherine Seibel (kseibel@cfchildren.org).

Sincerely,

American Federation of Teachers

American Psychological Association

Collaboratory on School and Child Health, University of Connecticut

Committee for Children

Council of Administrators of Special Education

The Family Focused Treatment Association

First Focus Campaign for Children

Futures Without Violence

Healthy Schools Campaign

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

National Association of Social Workers

National Education Association

National League for Nursing

National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives

School's Out Washington