



Supporting the Emotional Well Being of Students

The Monroe County School Boards Association believes that resources to support the emotional, social and physical needs of all children is necessary in order to meet the mission of public education. MCSBA calls on the state legislature to provide the critical funding needed to help all students achieve their potential.

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Concern</u>
<p>The demand for mental health services has increased as a result of better information on childhood trauma while staffing and resources have been cut or lost to budget cuts.</p>	<p>There is an increased response needed to meet the needs of the significant numbers of students scoring high on ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) assessments and risk surveys as a result of exposure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased levels of poverty, homelessness or home and food insecurity resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. • increased mental health needs, especially depression and anxiety from extended periods of isolation during COVID-19 pandemic. • increased substance abuse and fatal overdoses during the COVID-19 pandemic. • Increased exposure to violence in the home and/or the community and reduced reporting of child abuse during COVID-19 pandemic. <p>Trauma undermines a student’s ability to learn by impacting their ability to self-regulate, sustain attention, problem solve, control impulses and manage physical responses to danger.</p>
<p>Funding gaps and regulations limit collaborations and undermine social service efforts to help students and families in need</p>	<p>Current funding constraints have left areas that support the critical needs of students and their families overwhelmed and less effective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools have had to limit the number of counselors, school psychologists and social workers they hire due to funding cuts and pressures from the tax levy cap. An influx of federal stimulus money has temporarily relieved these constraints, but districts are unlikely to sustain additional support to students when the one-time funding is gone. • Funding for behavioral intervention models have been cut even as NYS has highlighted the importance of such programs. • Limits exist for social service agencies’ ability to create mental health partnerships with school districts. Agency budgets have been impacted by incremental increases in the state minimum wage and the need to use operating funds to recruit child psychologists, psychiatrists, as well as licensed mental health practitioners. • Gaps exist for children not eligible for Medicaid funding, but require services not covered by Child Health Plus or are beyond reach for poor working families. • Other financial barriers currently impede both school districts and agencies that provide coordinating services for early intervention to children and their families.
<p>Community Schools</p>	<p>Community Schools need a sufficient, long-term viable funding source. The Community Schools model needs to be available at the school building level for districts where demographics meet the criteria.</p>

MCSBA members support increased mental health funding and believe that schools should have the option to offer on-site mental health services.