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GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

GOVERNOR HOCHUL ANNOUNCES \$108 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS PANDEMIC LEARNING LOSS AND SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH

Establishes the Recover from COVID School Program Grants

\$100 Million to Create or Expand Programs to Help Students Address Trauma from COVID-19 Pandemic

\$8.3 Million to Create and Support New School-Based Mental Health Clinics

Advances Governor's State of the State Priority to Expand Mental Health Support

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced \$108 million is available for school districts to support student well-being through expanding mental health supports. The new State matching fund, the \$100 million Recover from COVID School Program, will provide funding to create or expand programs to help students address trauma caused by the pandemic, prioritizing school districts with the highest need. Additionally, a portion of the \$100 million Recover from COVID School Program is available to address student learning loss exacerbated by the pandemic. Governor Hochul is also expanding school-based mental health clinics across the state through an \$8.3 million investment within her historic \$1 billion mental health plan. Today's announcement of funding advances one of Governor Hochul's State of the State priorities to expand mental health support for students and school staff.

"The effects of the pandemic on our students were devastating and irreversible – that's why we're making historic investments to address learning loss and expand mental health support in our schools," **Governor Hochul said.** "By pinpointing where students have fallen behind and getting them the mental health resources they need, this funding will help put New York students back on the path towards success."

Individual school districts or BOCES, a consortium of school districts or BOCES, or any combination of these entities may apply for the Mental Health Recover from COVID School Program (RECOVS) Grant and the Learning Loss RECOVS Grant. A total of \$100 million in funding is available to support these RECOVS grants.

The **Mental Health RECOVS Grant** objectives charge school districts and BOCES applicants to:

1. Expand student access to school-based mental health professionals, evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions, programming, services, supports and practices that promote mental health and wellness
2. Improve capacity for school staff and students to identify mental health concerns and increase help-seeking behaviors
3. Implement a variety of evidence-based and evidence-informed school-based mental health interventions and practices that are culturally, linguistically, and trauma responsive while promoting student diversity, equity, and inclusion
4. Ensure financial stability and continuation of student access to evidence-based and evidence-informed school-based mental health interventions, programs services, and supports beyond the second and final year of the RECOVS Mental Health Grant Program

The **Learning Loss RECOVS Grant** objectives charge school districts and BOCES applicants to:

1. Expand student access to academic recovery professionals, evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions, programming, services, supports and promising practices that counter learning loss
2. Improve capacity for school staff and students to identify learning loss, and increase student and staff resourcefulness and skills in seeking, receiving, and providing academic recovery supports
3. Implement a variety of evidence-based and evidence-informed school-based learning loss and academic recovery practices that are culturally, linguistically, and trauma responsive while promoting student diversity, equity, and inclusion
4. Ensure financial stability and continuation of evidence-based and evidence-informed school-based academic recovery opportunities for students continuing to experience learning loss beyond the second and final year of the RECOVS Learning Loss Grant Program

Funding will be awarded over two years (\$50 million annually). Application submissions are due by August 18, 2023, at 5pm. More information and application details can be found [here](#). Funding for RECOVS was included in New York State's enacted budget for State Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

Additionally, \$8.3 million is available for grants to create school-based mental health clinics. The New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) today issued a Request for Applications to provide up to \$25,000 in start-up costs for OMH-licensed providers to create new school-based mental health clinic satellites and to support recently established school-based mental health clinic satellites. An additional \$20,000 (\$45,000 total) will be available for clinics being established in high-needs districts where more than 50 percent of the students are economically disadvantaged. Application

submissions are due by October 5, 2023 at 1pm. More information and application details can be found [here](#).

Earlier this year, Governor Hochul directed OMH and the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to conduct a state-wide [Youth Mental Health Listening Tour](#) to receive direct input from middle and high school students on how their schools can better promote student wellness.

OMH and OCFS compiled information they gathered during the Listening Tour and presented a [report to the Governor](#) on their findings. School-based mental health clinics were frequently mentioned during the listening sessions by students, parents, caregivers and mental health advocates as a way to help young people struggling with mental health issues. The Governor released the report during the first-ever [New York State Summit on Youth Mental Health](#) which was attended by more than 1,000 mental health professionals, advocates and other stakeholders.

The Fiscal Year 2024 Budget provides a historic \$34.5 billion to New York's schools, the highest level of State aid in history, to help give every student the tools to succeed through a high-quality education. The 2024 Budget also provides \$30 million to expand mental health services for school-aged children throughout the state, including \$20 million for school-based mental health services and \$10 million to implement wraparound services training. The Budget also closes gaps in insurance coverage that have posed a barrier to New Yorkers needing mental health care and substance use disorder services. Among several critical changes outlined in the Budget, commercial insurance plans will be required to cover services provided in school-based mental health clinics.

New York State Office of Mental Health Commissioner Dr. Ann Sullivan said, "OMH has developed more than 1,000 mental health clinics in schools across the state to date, and this investment continues our commitment to New York State's young people. Providing services directly in schools increases access, promotes coordinated care, and helps reduce stigma, all of which lead to better health outcomes for young people. Governor Hochul has initiated a bold plan that will support and improve the mental health and wellness of all New Yorkers, especially for the children, youth and families who are facing greater challenges than ever before."

New York State Department of Education Commissioner Betty A. Rosa said, "In partnership with Governor Hochul, these grants will supplement the efforts already underway in our schools to address the pandemic-related trauma and meet the needs of students still struggling with academic, attendance, and mental health issues. Traumatic experiences can affect all aspects of learning. Every child deserves access to a quality education and these funds will enable our educators to deliver critical support to the students most impacted by the pandemic."

New York State Board of Regents Chancellor Lester W. Young, Jr. said, "We have come a long way since the pandemic's start; however, the long-term effects of COVID

continue, especially among our most vulnerable students. This funding will allow schools and districts to address student well-being and strengthen school connectedness strategies to combat the adversities caused by the pandemic. Working with the Governor and our state government partners, we can provide resources for the children, families, and school communities that need them most.”

State Senator Shelley Mayer said, “I am so pleased that with the support of Governor Hochul, my Senate colleagues and I were able to designate \$100 million in funding for schools to address student learning loss and mental health issues in last year’s state budget through the RECOVS program. With this funding announcement, we are now beginning to address these challenges head on and provide schools with the resources they desperately need. There is clear empirical evidence that the COVID pandemic imposed substantial learning loss and emotional challenges to New York’s students, as a result of interruptions in learning and social/emotional development. Now, with the opportunity to access these funds, we can turn the corner and address these serious challenges in the coming year. I applaud Governor Kathy Hochul, the New York State Education Department, and my legislative colleagues for making this funding available, so that New York students can recover from the pandemic with the resources they need and deserve.”

Assemblymember Michael R. Benedetto said, “All studies have shown the students of New York State have suffered major learning loss and emotional trauma due to the COVID pandemic. My compliments to Governor Hochul for recognizing these issues and committing the necessary funds to create or expand programs to offset the learning and mental health disruptions that occurred in our schools.”

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