

RE: SB-1 S.B. No. 1 (COMM) AN ACT EQUALIZING COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS TO MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC.

Dear: Senator Abrams and Representative Steinberg, Representative Anwar, Representative Kushner , Representative Gilchrest, and ranking members Senators, Hwang and Somers and Representative Petit,

Having a school based health center is beneficial as a school nurse because of the holistic care that can be provided to scholars. Nursing care that is outside of my scope as a registered nurse can often be performed by the APRN. Since school nurses are often alone, the school based health center allows for a second set of eyes, which is absolutely vital in certain situations. Because there are more eyes on a patient, fewer mistakes occur and better care is given. The school based health center provides social work and dentist visits to be integrated into scholars' health plans. This allows for issues to be resolved that may not be medical, but are absolutely integral to scholars' health. Collaborating with social work addresses the emotional needs of scholars, which can improve their overall well-being. Collaborating with dentists and hygienists takes care of dental issues and cleanings, which can prevent diseases from occurring in the long run. Absences are decreased as a result of this because scholars can get the care they need and return back to class as opposed to missing school entirely for appointments. The overall quality of care is very high because of the efforts of team members at the school based health center.

Sincerely,

*Tara Smith*

School Nurse at Connecticut River Academy and Integrated Health Services. Inc.