

November 13, 2025

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States Senate

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States Senate

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives

Re: Urgent Need to Fully Fund School-Based Mental Health Workforce Development Grants in FY 2026

Dear Senators Moore Capito and Baldwin and Representatives Aderholt and DeLauro,

We are deeply grateful for your leadership of the House and Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Committees. Your steadfast commitment to addressing the nation's youth mental health crisis has brought much-needed attention to these challenges and built bipartisan consensus around ensuring that every young person has access to care and hope for the future.

As FY 2026 appropriations negotiations advance, we respectfully urge you to **support the Senate proposal** to direct what remains of \$190 million in School Safety National Activities funding—after Project SERV and continuation awards—to be split between the **Mental Health Services Professional Demonstration Grant (MHSP)** and the **School-Based Mental Health Services Grant (SBMH)** programs. These programs were authorized following the tragic Uvalde school shooting as a cornerstone of the nation's strategy to strengthen the school-based mental health workforce and keep our students safe, healthy, and ready to learn.

The evidence shows that the MHSP and SBMH programs work. Between May and December 2023 alone, data from a single cohort of grantees - though not representative of all grants during that period - show that the funding [supported over 775,000 students, hired 1,296 new providers, trained 1,767 professionals, and placed 1,191 graduate students](#) in practicums and

internships. In classrooms across America, these investments are helping children manage anxiety, reconnect to school, and stay on track to graduate.

Despite this success, the need remains significant. Nationally, schools have reached only **47%** of recommended staffing levels for school psychologists, **66%** for counselors, and **42%** for social workers. Without sustained investment, schools risk losing critical professionals and progress at a time when students' needs are rising, not falling.

This is not a partisan issue. Americans across the political spectrum recognize the urgency:

- **90%** of adults say expanding access to mental health care should be a priority for elected officials.
- **80%** of parents support schools providing access to mental health professionals.

Supporting the Senate proposal to allocate what remains of \$190 million in School Safety National Activities funding—after Project SERV and continuation awards—to the MHSP and SBMH programs in FY26 **will expand access in rural and under-resourced communities and build a sustainable workforce pipeline of fully prepared trained professionals ready to serve in schools nationwide.** This is a fiscally responsible investment in prevention, community safety, and the long-term health of our children and workforce.

Thank you for your continued leadership and for working together to ensure that every student in America has the support they need to thrive.

Sincerely,

Inseparable

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)

Sandy Hook Promise

Active Minds

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Occupational Therapy Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association

Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO)

CEC-Division for Research

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

Clinical Social Work Association

Committee for Children

Council for Exceptional Children Division of Research

Council of Administrators of Special Education
Crisis Text Line
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action
Epilepsy Foundation of America
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health & Social Justice
Healthy Schools Campaign
Hope Squad
International OCD Foundation
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
Mental Health America
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Board for Certified Counselors
National League for Nursing
National Register of Health Service Psychologists
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Postpartum Support International
REDC Consortium
School-Based Health Alliance
Students Engaged in Advancing Texas (SEAT)
The American Counseling Association
The Children's Partnership
The Jed Foundation
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The Trevor Project
Western Youth Services