



Legislation Text

File #: Int 0986-2024, **Version:** A

Int. No. 986-A

By Council Members Joseph, Restler, Cabán, Banks, Narcisse, Sanchez, Ung, Brannan, Stevens, Ossé, Nurse, Hudson, Menin, Hanif, Louis, Brooks-Powers, Rivera, Abreu, Bottcher, Schulman, Zhuang, Fariás, Gutiérrez, Hanks, Won, Dinowitz and Ariola

A Local Law in relation to a pilot program to involve mental health professional candidates in student wellness clubs in public middle and high schools

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Pilot program to involve mental health professional candidates in student wellness clubs. a.

Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Middle and high school. The term “middle and high school” means any school of the city school district that contains any combination of grades from grade 6 through grade 12.

Professional candidate. The term “professional candidate” means an individual enrolled in an accredited training program leading to licensure as a mental health professional.

Student. The term “student” means any pupil under the age of 21 as of September 1 of the relevant academic year who does not have a high school diploma and who is enrolled in grade 6 or higher.

Student wellness club. The term “student wellness club” means an extracurricular student-led group that holds meetings for students to focus on student wellbeing and the factors influencing student wellbeing, including mental health.

b. Development and establishment of program. 1. An agency or agencies designated by the mayor shall develop a pilot program to involve mental health professional candidates in student wellness clubs and mental health education in middle and high schools at the invitation of the principals of the schools that wish to

participate. Through such program, the agency or agencies designated by the mayor pursuant to this subdivision shall, at a minimum:

(a) Make best efforts to recruit mental health professional candidates for voluntary participation in such program;

(b) Make best efforts to develop partnerships with universities to recruit professional candidates for voluntary participation in such program; and

(c) Facilitate the leading of discussions and workshops by mental health professional candidates for middle and high school students on mental health topics, including but not limited to, mental health coping skills, recognizing signs of mental distress, and strategies for maintaining mental well-being.

2. The agency or agencies designated by the mayor pursuant to this subdivision shall make best efforts to coordinate with the chancellor of the city school district to establish such program within student wellness clubs in middle and high schools.

c. Implementation. The pilot program developed and established under subdivision b of this section shall commence no later than 1 year after the effective date of this local law. The duration of such program shall be 2 years.

d. Reporting. 1. No later than 3 years after the effective date of this local law, the agency or agencies designated by the mayor pursuant to subdivision b of this section, in coordination with the chancellor of the city school district, shall submit to the mayor and the speaker of the council, and post on the agency or agencies' website, a report on the pilot program developed and established under subdivision b of this section. This report shall include, but need not be limited to, the following information:

(a) An overview of the activities facilitated by mental health professional candidates through such program;

(b) The total number of mental health professional candidates who participated in such program;

(c) The total number of middle and high school students who participated in such program, disaggregated by the district borough number and name of each middle or high school attended by such students at the time of participation in such program;

(d) An evaluation of such program's effectiveness in improving mental health support within middle and high schools;

(e) A description of any challenges encountered during the implementation of such program; and

(f) Recommendations for the future of such program, including any proposals for continuation, expansion, or modification based on such program's outcomes.

2. No information that is required to be reported pursuant to this subdivision shall be reported in a manner that would violate any applicable provision of federal, state, or local law relating to the privacy of student information or that would interfere with law enforcement investigations or otherwise conflict with the interests of law enforcement. If a category contains between 1 and 5 students, or contains an amount that would allow another category that contains between 1 and 5 students to be deduced, the number shall be replaced with a symbol. A category that contains zero shall be reported as zero, unless such reporting would violate any applicable provision of federal, state, or local law relating to the privacy of student information.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

JL

LS #14112

1/15/2025 9:59 PM