

STATE OF NEW YORK

5019

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 10, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. GONZALEZ-ROJAS -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to the employment of mental health professionals by school districts

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 901 of the education law, as amended by chapter 477
2 of the laws of 2004, subdivision 1 as amended by section 57 of part A1
3 of chapter 58 of the laws of 2006, is amended to read as follows:

4 § 901. School health and mental health services to be provided. 1. a.
5 School health services, as defined in subdivision two of this section,
6 shall be provided by each school district for all students attending the
7 public schools in this state, except in the city school district of the
8 city of New York, as provided in this article. School health services
9 shall include the services of a registered professional nurse, if one is
10 employed, and shall also include such services as may be rendered as
11 provided in this article in examining students for the existence of
12 disease or disability and in testing the eyes and ears of such students.

13 b. School mental health services, as defined in subdivision two of
14 this section, shall be provided by each school district for all students
15 attending the public schools in this state, as provided in this article.
16 School mental health services shall include the services of a school
17 psychologist and school social worker, each of which shall be employed
18 by the district.

19 2. a. School health services for the purposes of this article shall
20 mean the several procedures, including, but not limited to, medical
21 examinations, dental inspection and/or screening, scoliosis screening,
22 vision screening and audiometer tests, designed to determine the health
23 status of the child; to inform parents or other persons in parental
24 relation to the child, pupils and teachers of the individual child's
25 health condition subject to federal and state confidentiality laws; to

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 guide parents, children and teachers in procedures for preventing and
2 correcting defects and diseases; to instruct the school personnel in
3 procedures to take in case of accident or illness; to survey and make
4 necessary recommendations concerning the health and safety aspects of
5 school facilities and the provision of health information.

6 b. (i) School mental health services provided by a certified school
7 psychologist for purposes of this article shall mean the several proce-
8 dures, including, but not limited to, evaluations, screenings and
9 assessments, designed to determine the mental health and well-being
10 status of the child; to inform parents or other persons in parental
11 relation to the child, pupils and teachers of the individual child's
12 mental health condition subject to federal and state confidentiality
13 laws; to address identified mental health needs of the child; to
14 instruct the school personnel in interventions, techniques, and behav-
15 ioral approaches to respond to the mental health needs of the child; to
16 provide such interventions, approaches and services as necessary to
17 address the mental health needs of the child; and to make necessary
18 recommendations concerning the mental health aspects of the school envi-
19 ronment and the provision of mental health information.

20 (ii) School mental health services provided by licensed or certified
21 school social workers for the purposes of this article shall mean the
22 several procedures and services including, but not limited to, assess-
23 ments, evaluations and psychosocial intervention plans that are designed
24 to prevent and intervene to address mental, social, emotional, behav-
25 ioral, developmental, and addictive disorders, conditions, and disabili-
26 ties of the psychosocial aspect of illness and injuries experienced by
27 the child. Services provided by a licensed clinical social worker, or
28 under supervision, in accordance with the commissioner's regulations
29 governing the practice of social work services, those services shall
30 include: diagnosis of mental, emotional, behavioral and developmental
31 disorders and disabilities, and the psychosocial aspects of illness,
32 injury, disability and impairment undertaken within a psychosocial
33 framework; administration and interpretation of tests and measures of
34 psychosocial functioning; development and implementation of appropriate
35 assessment based treatment plans; and the provision of crisis and leth-
36 ality assessments, and short term and long term psychotherapy and
37 psychotherapeutic treatment to students, families and groups, undertaken
38 for the purpose of preventing, assessing, treating, ameliorating and
39 resolving psychosocial dysfunction with the goal of maintaining and
40 enhancing the mental, emotional, behavioral, and social functioning and
41 well-being of the child in the context of the family, school, and commu-
42 nity; to work as a liaison between parent, child, school, and community
43 and function within applicable confidentiality laws; to instruct school
44 personnel regarding interventions, techniques, and behavioral
45 approaches; to respond to the mental health needs of the child; and to
46 make necessary recommendations concerning the mental health aspects of
47 the school environment and the provision of mental health information.

48 3. The mental health professionals required herein shall be in addi-
49 tion to such personnel as necessary to implement the provisions of the
50 federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended.

51 § 2. Section 902 of the education law, as amended by chapter 477 of
52 the laws of 2004, paragraph a of subdivision 2 as amended by chapter 376
53 of the laws of 2015, paragraph b of subdivision 2 as amended by chapter
54 501 of the laws of 2005, is amended to read as follows:

55 § 902. Employment of health and mental health professionals. 1. a. As
56 used in this article "health professionals" means persons duly licensed

1 or otherwise authorized to practice a health profession pursuant to
2 applicable law, including, but not limited to, physicians, registered
3 professional nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians assistants, optome-
4 trists, dentists, dental hygienists, dietitians and nutritionists, and
5 audiologists.

6 b. As used in this article, "mental health professionals" shall mean
7 certified school psychologists and certified or licensed school social
8 workers duly authorized to provide mental health services pursuant to
9 applicable law.

10 2. a. The board of education, and the trustee or board of trustees of
11 each school district, shall employ, at a compensation to be agreed upon
12 by the parties, a qualified physician, or a nurse practitioner to the
13 extent authorized by the nurse practice act and consistent with subdivi-
14 sion three of section six thousand nine hundred two of this chapter, to
15 perform the duties of the director of school health services, including
16 any duties conferred on the school physician or school medical inspector
17 under any provision of law, to perform and coordinate the provision of
18 health services in the public schools and to provide health appraisals
19 of students attending the public schools in the city or district. The
20 physicians or nurse practitioners so employed shall be duly licensed
21 pursuant to applicable law.

22 b. Any such board or trustees may employ one or more school nurses,
23 who shall be registered professional nurses, as well as other health
24 professionals, as may be required. Such registered professional nurses
25 and other health professionals shall aid the director of school health
26 services of the district and shall perform such duties, including health
27 instruction for the benefit of the public schools as may be prescribed
28 by such board or trustees, in compliance with each such health profes-
29 sional's practice act.

30 c. Any such board or trustees shall employ one or more school psychol-
31 ogist and school social worker, as may be required. Such professional
32 shall perform such duties as may be prescribed by such board or trus-
33 tees, in compliance with such professional's authorization.

34 3. Health and mental health professionals may be employed by the trus-
35 tees or boards of education of two or more school districts, and the
36 compensation of such health and mental health professionals, and the
37 expenses incurred in providing school health and mental health services
38 for students as provided in this article, shall be borne jointly by such
39 districts, and be apportioned among them in any manner agreed to by such
40 districts in a sharing agreement entered pursuant to section one hundred
41 nineteen-o of the general municipal law. The trustees or boards of
42 education of two or more school districts in a supervisory district may
43 enter into an agreement, or agreements as may be required, with a board
44 of cooperative educational services for the provision of the services of
45 one or more mental health professional or registered professional nurs-
46 es, and other health professionals to perform health and mental health
47 services, including health and mental health instruction in such
48 districts.

49 4. The mental health professionals required herein shall be in addi-
50 tion to such personnel as necessary to implement the provisions of the
51 federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended.

52 § 3. This act shall take effect on the first of September next
53 succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law. Effective imme-
54 diately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation
55 necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date is
56 authorized to be made on or before such effective date.