

School-Based Behavioral Health Services – Improving Availability and Funding (HB 82)

This bill seeks to increase the availability and funding for school-based behavioral health services.

Background:

One in six youth have a mental health condition, like anxiety or depression, but only half receive any mental health services[1]. Since children spend much of their time in educational settings, schools offer a unique opportunity for early identification, prevention, and interventions that serve students where they already are, especially for underserved communities.

In 2014, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services expanded the use of Medicaid to pay for school health services for all Medicaid-enrolled students. Eighteen states have taken the necessary steps, as of December 2021, to align their state Medicaid plan with federal policy to access these funds. Maryland has not yet done so. This bill will ensure Maryland joins these other states to fully access Medicaid funding for mental health services for Maryland students.

Solution:

This bill will require the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to apply for a State plan amendment to the CMS that would authorize expanded reimbursement to providers of behavioral health services when provided in a school setting.

For more information please contact:

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[1]

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2724377?guestAccessKey=f689aa19-31f1-481d-878a-6bf83844536a>

[2] https://dlslibrary.state.md.us/publications/JCR/2022/2022_103-104103-104.pdf