

VOICES FOR VIRGINIA'S CHILDREN 2022 MENTAL HEALTH LEGISLATIVE OUTCOMES

Budget Amendments We Supported

[Item 311](#)

[#3h](#)

[Item 331](#)

[#5s](#)

School-based mental health integration pilot | Delegate Price; Senator McClellan

Status: \$2.5 million in FY23 for the school-based mental health pilot in the final budget.



Summary: This amendment provides \$10 million each year from the Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to local school divisions to contract for community-based mental health services for students from public or private community-based providers.

[Item 136](#)

[#6h](#)

[Item 136](#)

[#14s](#)

Recovery high school pilot | Delegate Coyner; Senator Morrissey

Status: \$864,000 the first year + \$500,000 the second year for the pilot that will begin during Fall 2022 enrollment.



Summary: In 2020, the General Assembly approved a bill to begin a recovery high school pilot in Chesterfield County, but put the funding on hold. This amendment provides the funding to jumpstart the pilot as a year-round high school for students residing in Region 1 in the early stages of substance use recovery. This bill provides \$864,000 the first year and \$890,000 the second year to begin the program.

[Item 33](#)

[#1h](#)

[Item 33](#)

[#2s](#)

Study of school-based mental health services | Delegate Brewer; Senator McClellan

Status: The Behavioral Health Commission to study resources and recommendations to improve school-based mental health and to produce a report to the General Assembly by Fall 2023.



Summary: By creating a task force of the Behavioral Health Commission to assess current approaches developed at the local level and recommend how the state can support and sustain approaches by maximizing federal funding and integrated with existing public and private community-based services. The task force should make recommendations for how the state can develop and support more integrated student mental health supports.

Similar approaches proposed by Senator Dunnivant to study school-based mental health services and proposals to study school-based health services from Senator Favola, Delegate Robinson and Delegate Bennett-Parker could be incorporated with this approach.

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Budget Amendments We Supported

[Item 304 #39h](#) **Remove barriers to licensure for the mental health workforce | Delegate Davis; Senators Barker and Deeds**

[Item 144 #4s](#) **Status:** Funding for the workforce initiative called Boost200, now accepting applications for participation. The final budget also includes funding for 10 new psychiatry residency slots.

[Item 304 #53s](#)



Summary: Governor Northam's proposed budget provides \$3 million in one-time funds for a contract with the Virginia Health Care Foundation to pay for the costs of supervisory hours needed for licensure for individuals seeking advanced degrees in social work or counseling. Senator Barker adds an additional \$1 million for this effort. Additional amendments from Senator Deeds and Delegate Davis adds 10 new psychiatry residency slots to allow more providers to enter that specialty.

Budget proposal

Support funding for VMAP

Status: An additional \$882,000 each year, but the program plans to move forward with expansion plans.



Summary: The Virginia Mental Health Access Program (VMAP) has developed a strong, efficient, and effective model of behavioral health and health integration. Proposed increases will expand training efforts beyond primary care into emergency departments and provide additional expertise to support young children and their families. The proposed budget includes an additional \$2.3 million each year to expand the reach of the program.

Budget proposal

Enhance funding for existing services

Status: Increased funding for STEP-VA as well as Medicaid reimbursement rate increases for home- and community-based services, peer and family recovery specialists, and psychiatric residential treatment facilities.



Summary: Continuing to support the expansion of STEP-VA and improve Medicaid reimbursement rates for behavioral health services to provide accessible services. Both the public and private mental health providers can serve more children and youth with improved Medicaid reimbursement rates for clinical mental health services

DISRUPTING THE 'SCHOOL TO PRISON' PIPELINE

Bills We Monitored

[HB 89](#)

Disorderly conduct in public places | Delegate Walker

Status: Passed House (52-48), left in Senate Rules

Summary: This is one of a series of bills that would reverse progress on disrupting the school to prison pipeline by reintroducing “disorderly conduct” as an activity that can be referred to law enforcement when taking place on school grounds for a high school age student.

Voices' position: Voices opposes policy changes that result in criminalizing student behavior and lead to referrals to law enforcement. Often those circumstances could be better addressed by providing mental health supports to students.

[HB 4](#)

School principals and incident reporting | Delegate Wyatt; Senator Norment

[SB 36](#)

Status: Passed and signed by the Governor (Effective 8/1/2023)

Summary: Requires each public elementary or secondary school to process each web-based or paper-based application for participation in the School Breakfast Program or the National School Lunch Program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture within five working days after the date of receipt of the application.

