

AB 1644 (Bonta) – Trauma and mental health services in schools

AB 1644 establishes the new School-Based Early Mental Health Intervention and Prevention Services Support Program (EMHI support program). The program would provide outreach, training, and technical assistance for schools and Local Education Agencies that provide mental health services, with priority to communities with high levels of childhood adversity.

***Why This Matters:** Schools are key to identifying mental health needs and preventing more costly interventions. Of children and youth who receive mental health services, 70% get them at school. The EMHI support program will help schools address trauma and mental health needs of students.*

AB 1863 (Wood) – Improving access to mental health services

AB 1863 (Wood) will increase Californians' access to mental health services in our most vulnerable communities by adding Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs) to the list of providers that Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) or Rural Health Centers may bill Medi-Cal for face-to-face visits.

***Why This Matters:** Most school-based health centers (SBHCs) rely on FQHC reimbursement to support the health services provided in the clinics. By adding MFTs as a billable provider, this policy will increase availability of mental health clinicians and help SBHCs address mental health needs of students.*

Funding for a state SBHC program office

California is one of the only states with a significant number of SBHCs and no state program office. Since the creation of the Public School Health Center Support Program in 2006 through AB 2560, state general funds have never been appropriated to the program. CSHA is requesting a one-time \$600,000 appropriation to fund two limited term positions within the Department of Health Care Services to staff this program. The positions would provide technical assistance for the development of SBHCs. **This budget item is an exciting opportunity for the state to augment local efforts and significantly advance the development of SBHCs.**



Maximize federal reimbursement for school-based health services

Through taking advantage of the federal reversal of the “free care rule,” there is an opportunity to increase school district revenue for health services. Schools can now obtain federal Medicaid funding for services provided to all students with Medi-Cal (not just those in special education) and they have an opportunity to create much more extensive systems for delivering health services. **CSHA is urging the Department of Health Care Services and the Department of Education to work together to help schools implement this rule change in a way that expands school health services.**