

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 136

Approved March 27, 2024

WHEREAS, The City of Providence recognizes the indispensable role of school social workers in supporting the academic, social, and emotional well-being of students and families; and

WHEREAS, School social workers possess specialized skills in addressing various challenges hindering students' academic success, including but not limited to disability, poverty, discrimination, abuse, neglect, mental illness, homelessness, bullying, and familial stressors; and

WHEREAS, The demand for school social workers is higher than ever, particularly with the increasing prevalence of mental and behavioral health disorders among students, necessitating early identification and intervention strategies; and

WHEREAS, As school districts statewide grapple with the looming specter of budgetary reductions, the Providence Public Schools District (PPSD) finds itself similarly vulnerable with 18 school social worker positions within our district being slated for elimination in the upcoming fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative to consider the profound impact such cuts will have on the well-being and academic success of our children across the city if this measure is allowed to proceed; and

WHEREAS, School-based mental health programs are crucial for identifying and addressing mental health issues promptly, thereby improving educational outcomes and fostering a conducive learning environment; and

WHEREAS, School social workers, as licensed mental health professionals in educational settings, provide invaluable services such as assessment, interventions, counseling, family engagement, and community referrals; and

WHEREAS, Research underscores the positive impact of school mental health programs on educational outcomes, including reduced absences, lower dropout rates, fewer disciplinary incidents, and enhanced academic achievement; and

WHEREAS, School social workers serve as integral members of the education team, facilitating collaboration among schools, families, and communities to promote student success; and

WHEREAS, The observance of 'School Social Worker Week' during the week commencing March 3, 2024, serves as a fitting opportunity to honor and express gratitude to the dedicated school social workers across the City of Providence and the entire state, who tirelessly serve the needs of students and families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City of Providence hereby acknowledges the invaluable contributions of school social workers and expresses heartfelt appreciation for their unwavering dedication to enhancing the lives of students and families throughout our community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to NASW Rhode Island Chapter, Providence Public Schools District, Rhode Island Department of Education, and the Office of the Honorable Mayor Brett Smiley.

IN CITY COUNCIL
MAR 21 2024
READ AND PASSED


RACHEL M. MILLER, PRESIDENT

CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.


Mayor

Date: 3/27/24