



Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, and members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Jesse White-Fresé; I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of School Based Health Centers. I am testifying on SB 1137, *an Act Concerning School Based Health Centers*. I will refer specifically to Section 1, which is new. Other members of the Connecticut Association of School Based Health Centers will comment on additional sections of this bill in their testimony.

The purpose of Section 1 is to create a standard definition of a School Based Health Center in Connecticut statute. Section 1 of Bill 1137 refers to the federal definition established as part of the Social Security Act of 2009 (42 USC 1397jj(c)(9)). Our goal is to align with the federal definition but to add in Connecticut-specific information. I have attached the federal definition to this testimony with the Association's suggested additions that will address contract guidelines as set forth by the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

The purpose of formalizing the definition is to create consistency in the SBHC model that supports the provision of both physical and behavioral health services. We believe this will maximize the opportunities to address and improve student health, and serves as the gold standard for comprehensive services provided through School Based Health Centers.

Section 2 refers to the establishment of a school based health center advisory committee, which currently exists in statute (PA 11-242, §44). The purpose of the SBHC Advisory Committee is to assist the Commissioner of Public Health in developing recommendations for statutory and regulatory changes to improve health care through access to school based health centers. The committee is composed of the following members: the Commissioners of Public Health, Social Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Education or the commissioners' designees; and three school based health center providers appointed by the Connecticut Association of School Based Health Centers. Administrative support for the activities of the committee is provided by the Connecticut Association of School Based Health Centers (CASBHC). The Committee meets monthly and addresses issues related to sustainability of SBHCs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this information.

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Please refer to the underlined sections of the School Based Health Center definition attached below.

**DEFINITION OF A SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTER:
(UNDERLINED SECTIONS ARE CONNECTICUT-SPECIFIC)**

(A) IN GENERAL – The term ‘school based health center’ means a health clinic that

- (i) is located in or near a school facility of a school district or board or of an Indian tribe or tribal organization;
- (ii) is organized through school, community, and health provider relationships;
- (iii) is administered by a sponsoring facility/agency;
- (iv) provides comprehensive medical and behavioral health services to children and adolescents in accordance with State and local law including laws relating to licensure and certification.

(A) SPONSORING FACILITY – For purposes of subparagraph (A)(iii), the term “sponsoring facility” includes any of the following:

- (i) a hospital
- (ii) a public health department
- (iii) a community health center
- (iv) a nonprofit health or human services agency
- (v) a school or school system
- (vi) a program administered by the Indian Health Service or Bureau of Indian Affairs or operated by an Indian tribe or a tribal organization.