

S.B. No. 415 (RAISED) AN ACT ESTABLISHING ADDITIONAL SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS:

-The purpose for School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) is to increase access to healthcare and a continuum of other services [i.e. mental and behavioral health services] for students in various communities [specifically in this bill Groton & East Hartford]. In the communities where SBHCs have been implemented there has been information to support the effectiveness and efficiency of the centers in helping keep students in their learning communities in addition to improved academic outcomes since they are able to have their health needs met.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) advocates for the provision of coordinated, comprehensive, culturally competent, and effective mental health services in the school setting which include prevention and early intervention services as well as therapeutic interventions. These services should emphasize competence enhancement, prevention of mental illness, education, early intervention, and coordination of intensive interventions to adequately address student mental health needs. These are services that SBHCs have allowed more children access to in the schools as a complimentary service to school psychological services and collaboration between the SBHC, schools and families. NASP encourages school psychologists to actively participate in interagency teams that are established in their community, and work to develop new interagency collaborations with community agencies

The Connecticut Association of School Psychologists (CASP) supports the need of SBHCs to provide access to preventative and routine care for all students. CASP strongly recommends a Memorandum of Understanding [MoU] between the SBHCs and schools, specifically support staff/school-based mental health providers such as school psychologists, social workers and school counselors that clearly states the role of the school-based providers and how information is shared between the two entities. This will help collaboration and coordination of services for the students and families. The goal is to ensure that both entities are working together for the betterment of the students and to make sure that the groups are unified and not working in isolation. This will also help prevent the duplication of services so that the financial investment achieves maximum impact.