

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
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**JANUARY 15, 2019**

**SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS' HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

Mental and emotional well-being are critical to children's success in school and life. Research has shown that students who receive social-emotional and mental health support perform better academically. School climate, classroom behavior, on-task learning, and students' sense of connectedness and well-being all improve as well. As a result, mentally healthy children are more successful in school and life. Mental health is not simply the absence of mental illness but also encompasses emotional, social, and behavioral health and the ability to cope with life's challenges. Left unmet, mental health problems are linked to costly negative outcomes such as academic and behavioral problems, dropping out, and delinquency.

Schools offer an ideal context and environment in which to provide mental health services to children and youth. Virtually every community has a school and most children spend at least six hours a day on campus. School-employed professionals such as psychologists, counselors, social workers, and nurses have built trust with students, parents, and other staff, contributing to accessibility of services. In fact, research has shown that students are more likely to seek counseling when services are available in schools. In some areas, schools provide the only mental health services in the community.

Increasingly, school systems are joining forces with community health, mental health,

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**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS AND HILDA L. SOLIS  
JANUARY 15, 2019  
PAGE 2**

and social services agencies to promote student well-being and to prevent and treat mental health disorders. Through these collaborations, schools and local agencies are working together to address the growing health, behavioral, and mental health needs of students.

This type of collaboration between the County of Los Angeles (County) and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) would provide an opportunity to address students' and others' mental health wellness, as well as implement prevention and early intervention strategies before more intensive interventions become necessary. Such a collaboration would enhance the array of services within LAUSD that will support an improved learning environment and promote the mental wellness of this significant population within the County.

**WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. Instruct the Director of the Department of Mental Health (DMH), or his designee, to, as soon as possible, identify potential funding sources that could provide up to \$10 million in funding to the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) for enhancing mental health and well-being and addressing the prevention of mental health needs of the students, staff, and others within LAUSD;
2. Instruct the Director of the Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Director of the Department of Public Health (DPH), or their designees, to identify potential funding sources, as soon as possible, to provide funding to LAUSD for the hiring of school nurses and other health professionals; and
3. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer and the Directors of DMH, DHS, and DPH to enter into such agreements with LAUSD, subject to approval by County Counsel and other essential stakeholders, including, without limitation, administration and allocation of available funding, as may be necessary to memorialize and execute the mental health and well-being activities pursuant to this motion.