

# State officials announce \$4.9 million in mental health grants to intermediate school districts

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## Grants will provide more access to mental health care for kids most in need

November 20, 2018

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Today state officials visited North Education Center, New Hope, to announce \$4.9 million in mental health grants to intermediate school districts. This funding helps specialized school districts provide mental health services to children, including those who have experienced trauma.

Intermediate school districts provide highly specialized educational programs to students and families, such as special education, area learning centers, career tech programs and online learning. Intermediate school districts give additional support to students whose needs are not being met in a more traditional school setting. Minnesota has four intermediate districts that serve more than 20,000 students annually from member school districts. The two-year grants went to all four districts and one service cooperative, with three to mental health providers who will work with intermediate school districts and two to intermediate school districts who qualify as mental health providers.

“With many kids coping with trauma, these grants will be a big help to Minnesota families,” said Minnesota Human Services Commissioner Emily Piper. “Too many kids fall through the cracks, and we want to make sure they get the care they need. We know the need is great, but we also know we have opportunities to really make a difference in their lives.”

The goal of the School Innovation Grant initiative is to improve clinical outcomes for students, helping them return to their home school districts, reversing the disproportionate impact on students of color, and providing support and training for school staff and parents. Teachers partner with mental health staff to provide early childhood special education and mental health programs, and families have access to monthly parent/child/family psychoeducational trainings.

“Many of our students need more support in order to be successful in the classroom,” said Minnesota Education Commissioner Brenda Cassellius. “Partnerships between schools and mental health providers is one great way to connect with more students. We need to support the whole child at school in order for them to reach their full potential, and I am excited to see new partnerships help us reach that goal.”

Supported initiatives include psychotherapy and psychiatric services, substance use disorder recovery services, case management, day treatment, and consultation and coordination. Key strategies include creating a trauma-informed learning environment, integrating mental health care,

providing culturally responsive services and serving multi-generational mental health and family stability needs.

“During my four years as Chair of the House Education Finance Committee, I have championed funding and policy initiatives that ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed in the classroom. Since 2015, we have more than doubled state funding for school-linked mental health grants, helping address an escalating need in intermediate school districts and districts statewide,” said Rep. Jenifer Loon, who authored the bill creating the School Innovation Grant Initiative. “I am incredibly pleased that we were able to make mental health services for students a priority, as we work to improve outcomes for children and put Minnesota kids on a path to success.”

School Innovation grantees are:

- Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, in partnership with Intermediate School District 287, Plymouth, \$1,973,612
- Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District, White Bear Lake, in partnership with Canvas Health and Family Innovations, \$1,497,916
- **Greater Minnesota Family Services, in partnership with Southwest West Central Service Coop, Marshall, \$421,992**
- Intermediate School District 917, Rosemount, \$580,604
- Scott County Mental Health Center, in partnership with SouthWest Metro Intermediate District 288, Shakopee, \$425,876.