



## Community Education Council 24

Public School 71 Forest

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**Resolution No. 196**

**Sponsored by: Gina Liberta**

**Co-Sponsor by: Manisha Jain**

### **CEC District 24 Resolution Calling for Expanded School-Based Mental Health Supports, Family Partnership, and Restorative Practices**

WHEREAS, Community School District 24 serves a diverse and vibrant community of students and families whose academic success and overall well-being are closely connected to access to timely, effective social-emotional and mental health supports; and

WHEREAS, District 24 schools serve significant numbers of students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and students navigating trauma, stress, and complex life circumstances, underscoring the importance of strong, school-based mental health services that are accessible, culturally responsive, and integrated into the school community; and

WHEREAS, educators and families across District 24 have identified a growing need for additional school psychologists, social workers, guidance counselors, and mental health professionals to support students proactively and strengthen school climate; and

WHEREAS, evidence-based practices demonstrate that early intervention, restorative approaches, and strong family-school partnerships improve student outcomes and reduce reliance on exclusionary disciplinary practices;

WHEREAS, students whose needs go unrecognized due to masking, stigma, or outdated frameworks may experience increased anxiety, school avoidance, or emotional distress before appropriate supports are provided;

WHEREAS, many neurodivergent students—particularly students with autism, anxiety disorders, ADHD, and other developmental differences—may engage in masking

behaviors that conceal their support needs, which can lead to delayed identification, increased stress, and academic or emotional burnout when appropriate supports are not recognized or provided;

WHEREAS, evolving research and clinical understanding of neurodivergence and child mental health—including conditions and support profiles such as Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder, Pica, Pathological Demand Avoidance, and Selective Mutism—require updated awareness and training among school staff in order to appropriately recognize, support, and refer students who may present with complex or misunderstood support needs; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Community Education Council 24 (CEC24) respectfully calls upon the District 24 Superintendent and the New York City Department of Education to continue strengthening and expanding school-based mental health supports across District 24, with thoughtful attention to enrollment, student needs, and school communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that District 24 collaborate with school leadership teams to support trauma-informed and culturally responsive practices, including professional learning opportunities that help staff identify and respond to students' social-emotional and behavioral needs in supportive ways; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that District 24 and the DOE strengthen family engagement and caregiver partnership by providing clear and accessible information about mental health supports, ensuring interpretation and translation services, offering flexible scheduling and virtual participation options, and hosting workshops to support caregivers in understanding social-emotional development, mental health services, and special education-related supports; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that families be recognized as essential partners in supporting student mental health, with opportunities for feedback and collaboration built into school and district planning efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that District 24 continue to promote restorative and

supportive approaches to student behavior that emphasize relationship-building, emotional regulation, and skill development, with the goal of reducing reliance on punitive disciplinary measures when appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department provide ongoing professional development for all school staff on youth mental health awareness, trauma-informed practices, suicide prevention, and modern understandings of neurodivergence and support needs—including emerging profiles and conditions such as ARFID, PDA profiles, selective mutism, and other complex student presentations—as well as training on recognizing masking behaviors, student burnout, and other signs that a student may be struggling despite appearing academically or behaviorally compliant; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Community Education Council 24 (CEC24) respectfully requests a future presentation or discussion with the District 24 Superintendent on current mental health staffing, resources and initiatives, and looks forward to continued dialogue and collaboration among district leadership, school communities, and families.

### Vote: (CEC 24) – Roll Call (Check One Per Member)

**Matthew Crescio:**     Support     Does Not Support     Absent     Abstain

**Gina Liberta:**                     Support     Does Not Support     Absent     Abstain

**Anna Karwoska:**     Support     Does Not Support     Absent     Abstain

**Felicia McHugh:**     Support     Does Not Support     Absent     Abstain

**Kate Barvels:**                     Support     Does Not Support     Absent     Abstain

**Aliya Bonar:**                     Support     Does Not Support     Absent     Abstain

**Brian Augustine:**     Support     Does Not Support     Absent     Abstain

**Manisha Jain:**                     Support     Does Not Support     Absent     Abstain

