

## VT VSBA 2020-2021 Resolution submission

### WHEREAS:

Schools in Vermont underwent rapid change in March 2020 due to Covid-19. Research shows that children and adolescents are experiencing mental distress due to the disruptions of the closure of schools, activities, and maintaining social and physical distancing. The overall social-emotional impact on children is unclear, but it seems districts and schools need to prepare for the impact of increased trauma once at-school learning reopens in some capacity this fall. Implementing programs in place that allow for the integration of social-emotional learning and trauma-informed practices could help in mitigating behavioral issues. The extended summer slide that is occurring during Covid-19 is not only affecting learning development but exacerbating already present emotional challenges. If left unaddressed, the psychological impact on children and adolescents can have exacerbating effects.

### WHEREAS:

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, at least 20 percent of students between the ages of 12 and 18 report emotional or physical bullying at school. Research shows that bullying can have adverse long-term health outcomes for both victims and perpetrators, including depression, anxiety and physical, behavioral and emotional problems. One of the potential benefits of remote learning has been relief for those struggling from social aggression. Schools have an opportunity, to create meaningful change in their cultures by investing in mental health services, empathy development, diversity and inclusion programs, and emotional wellness activities. For these reasons and more, providing increased state funding for in-school mental health services and programs for all students is imperative.

### BE IT RESOLVED:

The VSBA urges the General Assembly to expand funding support to local schools to increase the availability of mental health counseling, emotional wellness, and psychological supports to students as VT schools return to class during the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath. These efforts will further support schools meeting Vermont's Agency of Education's Education Quality Standards, specifically Healthy and Safe Schools through the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model's domains 4 and 7.

**WHY THIS RESOLUTION IS IMPORTANT TO YOUR BOARD?** The Blue Mountain Union School District has a long-standing commitment to social-emotional growth through MTSS. We support PBIS throughout our Pre-K-12 classes, support mental health with space available in the school for Clara Martin services. However, the challenges presented by the pandemic and all of its accompanying stressors on students, faculty, Administrators, and families will demand more than schools can currently provide.

**IS THE TOPIC OF CONCERN CURRENTLY ADDRESSED IN ANY VSBA RESOLUTIONS?** No, this is not addressed in current resolutions.