

Student-Centered Newsletter

New York State Education Department
Office of Student Support Services
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September/October 2022

Greetings from Assistant Commissioner Kathleen R. DeCataldo, Esq.



Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Office of Student Support Services, I wholeheartedly welcome everyone to the 2022-2023 school year!

Across the State, thousands of students had access to quality summer learning and enrichment (SLE) programs. Schools and districts leveraged funding from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant, Extended School Day/School Violence Prevention grant, and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Reserves to create, sustain, or increase the capacity of their SLE programs. SLE programs engaged students in academic enrichment, social and emotional learning, and recreational opportunities critical to healthy youth development. The Student Technical Assistance and Support Team has developed the [Model Summer Learning and Enrichment Toolkit for Local Education Agencies](#) for schools to use in their preview of this year's programming and planning for next year.



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August was **National Immunization Awareness Month!** As we think about our students being ready for a safe and healthy school year and as part of our overall public health strategy, we know that routine vaccinations are necessary to protect children from deadly diseases and eliminate or significantly reduce the dangers of transmission. I strongly encourage all New Yorkers to learn more about [vaccines and immunizations](#).

New Yorker's access to crisis mental health support through the [Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) is now more accessible by simply dialing **988!** New Yorkers having suicidal ideation, experiencing emotional distress, or having a substance use-related crisis are encouraged to call 988. New York's planning team, which included staff members from the Office of Student Support Services, worked to ensure regional capacity at crisis centers and access to local resources for follow-up care. I wish everyone a healthy **Suicide Prevention Awareness Month** during the month of September!

October is **Domestic Violence Awareness Month!** In 2021, more than 80,000 New Yorkers were victims of domestic violence (sometimes referred to as intimate partner violence). Unfortunately, too many incidents of domestic violence are underreported or unreported. I recommend all school personnel to explore resources through the New York State [Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence](#), [the Office of Victim Services](#), and the [Office of Children and Family Services](#). Additionally, I wanted to underscore the importance of trauma-responsive practices in all [schools](#) and [communities](#).

Schools across New York State will spend October raising community awareness about bullying during **National Bullying Prevention Month**. Bullying has serious and life-threatening consequences when it is allowed to persist. We must create safe and supportive school environments for all students. Schools and districts will want to offer professional development on bullying prevention, [the Dignity for All Students Act \(the Dignity Act\)](#), and improving school climate strategies. Additionally, it is equally as essential to offer students social-emotional learning opportunities on recognizing and intervening when bullying occurs. To learn more about [bullying prevention](#) and the [Dignity Act](#) visit the New York State Center for School Safety.

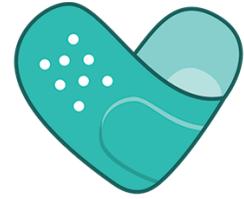
I wish you all a happy and healthy start to the 2022-2023 school year!

Sincerely,

Kathleen R. DeCataldo
Assistant Commissioner

IMMUNIZATION & VACCINATIONS

Fall is just around the corner, and that means a new school year begins! As we think about getting ready for school, we would like to remind schools and parents/guardians about the importance of ensuring students have all the vaccines required for school attendance.



National Immunization Awareness Month

Vaccines can prevent serious diseases that once killed or harmed many infants, children, and adults. Vaccines reduce the risk of getting a disease by working with your body's natural defenses to build protection. Without vaccines, students are at risk for serious illness or even death from diseases like polio, measles and whooping cough. Vaccination rates have plateaued in recent years and dropped since 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated disruptions over the past two years have strained health systems, with 25 million children worldwide missing out on vaccination in 2021, - the highest number since 2009.

To help ensure the health of our students, the New York State Department of Health requires that students are not permitted to attend school for more than 15 days (which may be extended to 30 days for new enrollees from out of state) if they do not have the vaccines required for their grade level, [2022-23 School Year New York State Immunization Requirements for School Entrance/Attendance \(ny.gov\)](#). Schools should inform parents/caregivers of students who do not have the required vaccines of the requirements and refer them to their local [County Health Departments \(ny.gov\)](#). The [County Health Department can](#) provide vaccines for little to no cost. For questions on how schools should implement the immunization requirements, contact our Office of Student Support Services at studentsupportservices@nysed.gov or 518-486-6090.

ACCESSING CRISIS MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



On July 16th, 2022, the **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) underwent a dramatic change to ensure accessibility to lifesaving support when in crisis. The new, easy three-digit number, **988**, connects people to a trained crisis counselor to support with:

- suicidal ideation
- mental health or substance use-related crisis
- any kind of emotional distress
- worry about someone in distress

The 10-digit number (800-273-TALK) is still operable. New York's crisis centers have access to translation services in more than 150 languages.

The New York State Education Department produced the [Guide for Suicide Prevention for School Personnel](#). This comprehensive guide provides school personnel with the resources to identify and act when a student is at risk for suicide. Our partner agency, the [New York State Office of Mental Health](#) has developed two newsletters to increase public awareness of access crisis mental health services.

[988 Updates and Education Newsletter, First Edition – “What is 988?”](#)
[988 Updates and Education Newsletter, Second Edition – 988 is Here!](#)

Guide for Suicide Prevention for School Personnel

Companion Guide to the New York State Office of Mental Health's A Guide for Suicide Prevention in New York Schools

2022



ENROLLMENT & ATTENDANCE

Students and families are excited about starting their educational journey in New York's schools. When families request to enroll their child in a school or district, per Commissioner's regulations [§100.2\(y\)\(3\)](#), the child shall be enrolled immediately and without delay, and begin attending on the next school day.

Establishing and maintaining a culture of positive school attendance is critical to student's academic achievement and social emotional competencies. [Cultivating a strong and positive family partnership](#) can help improve overall attendance. Districts and schools will want to spend time building social capital with students and families to prevent absences. Moreover, districts and schools can leverage social capital to identify root

causes and resolve barriers to school attendance. The New York State Council on Children and Families produced the [Every Student Present](#) initiative to increase access to information related to student attendance and chronic absenteeism for families, schools, and communities.

School districts and schools may find some of the following best practices helpful in developing a robust attendance system that improves school attendance:

1. Create district and school attendance committees responsible for developing, implementing, and assessing positive attendance plans.
2. Use district and school [self-assessment tools](#) to assess current practices and plan to implement practices by setting reasonable goals to reduce student absences.
3. Consider best practice [strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism](#) including the [3-tiered intervention model](#) to align with the district and/or school's multi-tiered system of supports.
4. Use [data tools](#) to drive strategic decision making to reduce chronic absenteeism.

EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



Welcome Round 8 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Subgrantees! In April, NYSED announced the award of approximately \$95M in 21st CCLC annual funding for five years to 66 New York City subgrantees and 69 Rest of State subgrantees. These subgrantees are gearing up to provide high quality out of school time academic, enrichment and youth development programming for students, and family engagement and literacy services for their families, across the state. Learn more about this federal grant program administered by NYSED by checking out the following resources.

Additional Resources:

NYSED website: <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/21stCCLC>

NYSED's 21st CCLC Resource Centers' website: <https://www.nys21cclc.org>

Network for Youth Success (statewide afterschool network resources): <https://networkforyouthsuccess.org>

You for Youth (US Ed Dept resources): <https://y4y.ed.gov>

Celebrate the 23rd annual *Lights On Afterschool* Oct. 20, 2022!



Launched in October 2000, *Lights On Afterschool* is the only nationwide event celebrating afterschool programs and their important role in the lives of children, families and communities. The effort has become a hallmark of the afterschool movement and generates media coverage across the country each year.

The Afterschool Alliance organizes *Lights On Afterschool* to draw attention to the many ways afterschool programs support students by offering them opportunities to learn new things—such as science, community service, robotics, Tae Kwon Do and poetry—and discover new skills. The events send a powerful message that millions more kids need quality afterschool programs. To learn more, visit the [Afterschool Alliance](#).

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

- Natalie Walrond, the Director of the National Center to Improve Social and Emotional Learning and School Safety at WestEd published [Rooting Social and Emotional Well-Being Efforts in Equity: A Reflection Guide](#). This reflective guide provides educators with high level principles for practical consideration, and self-reflection questions.
- NPR produced an article authored by Sequoia Carrillo, titled [Keep an Eye on Your Student's Mental Health Back-to-School Season](#), offering school personnel 5 suggestions from mental health experts.

SEPSIS AWARENESS MONTH

Sepsis is the body's overwhelming and life-threatening response to infection that can lead to tissue damage, organ failure, and death. Sepsis is preventable and treatable. It is vital that students and schools learn about sepsis, how it can be prevented, and its symptoms, so that immediate medical treatment can be sought. To accomplish this, the Department is encouraging the inclusion of sepsis education in a comprehensive K-12 health education program.

To learn more information about Sepsis and access educational resources, including sample curricula and developmentally appropriate resources, visit the [New York State Education Department](#). We are encouraging schools to educate students about sepsis as part of the health education curriculum and to weave it into other curricula throughout all grade levels. Together we can provide our students with skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15th to October 15th) recognizes and celebrates the achievement and contribution of Hispanic Americans across the nation. In New York State, it is estimated that we are home to 3.6 million Hispanic New Yorkers, with the majority, 2.4 million, residing in New York City. The Hispanic Heritage Month 2022 theme is "[Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation.](#)" Celebrations of Hispanic Heritage Month may include honoring ancestors, recounting historical, music, dance, food, wearing specific garments, to name a few. Schools are encouraged to access resources from [HispanicHeritageMonth.gov](#), the New York State Library, and local libraries and museums.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

New York State defines domestic violence, sometimes referred to as intimate partner violence, as a pattern of behavior used by an individual to establish and maintain power and control over their intimate partner. Domestic violence crosses all demographic groups, though there are unique experiences of specific populations. There are many types of abuse including, but not limited to, physical, sexual, verbal, emotional/psychological, financial, and stalking. Domestic violence can have profound effects on the victim, but also on children, other family members, and the community.

School personnel can benefit from additional training to recognize common signs of domestic violence and community resources available. Trainings are provided by the [New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence](#). Additionally, to be connected non-residential and residential domestic violence services, visit the [Office of Children and Services](#).



to
[Family](#)

New York State
Domestic Violence Hotline
800-942-6906

New York State
Domestic Violence Text
844-997-2121

New York City
Domestic Violence Hotline
800-621-HOPE

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

In 2011, the [United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 66/170 to declare October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child](#), to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world. International Day of the Girl Child is an international observance day declared by the United Nations; it is also called the Day of Girls and the International Day of the Girl. October 11, 2012, was the first Day of the Girl Child. The International Day of the Girl Child focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights.



Top 5 Favorite Books to Celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child

- The International Day of the Girl Child: Celebrating Girls Around the World
- I am Anne Frank
- Fly Girl, Fly!: Shaesta Waiz Soars Around the World
- 111 Trees: How One Village Celebrates the Birth of Every Girl
- She Was First! 45 Impressive Women Who Broke Barriers

NYSED established [The Girls of Color Interagency Advisory Workgroup](#) with expert membership in a range of areas to improve outcomes, provide opportunities, and address the unique needs of girls of color. Additionally, NYSED has produced two resources for school districts and schools to promote the authentic identity of girls of color.



BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

What is bullying?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

An Imbalance of Power

Kids who bully use their power – such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity – to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

Repetition

Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things.

- Teasing
- Name-calling
- Inappropriate sexual comments
- Taunting
- Threatening to cause harm

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships.

- Leaving someone out on purpose
- Telling other children not to be friends with someone
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Embarrassing someone in public

Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions.

- Hitting/kicking/pinching
- Spitting
- Tripping/pushing
- Taking or breaking someone's things
- Making mean or rude hand gestures

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.