

July 8, 2026

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A DISTRICTWIDE EDUCATOR MENTAL HEALTH PLAN

WHEREAS, healthy, supported educators are critical to developing and maintaining safe, equitable, and consistently flourishing learning environments that align with Whole School Safety goals and enable students to learn and thrive academically, socially, and emotionally; and

WHEREAS, the mental health and well-being of educators directly impacts instruction, informs conditions for student success, impacts the implementation of high-quality curriculum, the creation and maintenance of positive classroom climates, increases positive student behavior and overall school performance; and

WHEREAS, Illinois Public Act 104-0032 reflects the State's commitment to strengthening school mental health practices by directing the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Team and the Office of the Governor, to provide model procedures, guidance, and training for universal mental health screening implementation for students beginning during the 2027-2028 school year, including tools, privacy considerations, opt-out procedures, communication strategies, and training for school personnel;

WHEREAS, educators across various roles—including teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, special education classroom assistants/paraprofessionals, and support staff—face increasing internal and external stressors that contribute to workplace dissatisfaction, burnout, absenteeism, and attrition; and

WHEREAS, The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model is a student-centered framework that emphasizes the role of the community in supporting the student wellbeing and success. The same model, which CPS has adopted as a strategic initiative, suggests that students benefit academically, behaviorally, and emotionally when educators are supported, emotionally regulated, and professionally equipped to manage stress and trauma; and

WHEREAS, Chicago Public Schools recognizes through its Whole School Safety Policy that true school safety is multi-dimensional—requiring not only physical safety but also emotional, behavioral, and relational safety—and that the psychological well-being of educators is fundamentally intertwined with creating safe, supportive, and trauma-informed school environments for everyone; and

WHEREAS, Chicago Public Schools recognizes that creating a truly supportive ecosystem requires shifting from a trauma-informed lens to a holistic, Healing-Centered Framework, one that actively fosters collective well-being, addresses systemic stressors, and views wellness not just as an individual responsibility, but as an ongoing, culturally responsive community practice for both students and staff; and

WHEREAS, schools have a responsibility not only to address student mental health needs, but also to proactively support the mental health of educators as a foundational condition for student Success, overall school safety, and as a foundational condition for the protection and retention of educators by fostering a workplace culture rooted in healing-centered principles; and

WHEREAS, through partnership with the Offices of Social and Emotional Learning, Teaching and Learning, School Counseling and Postsecondary Advising and Students with Disabilities, it shall be required that Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) frameworks emphasize proactive, prevention-oriented supports that promote well-being and address barriers to learning for both students and educators; and

WHEREAS, a coordinated emphasis on educator mental health aligns with MTSS Tier 1 (universal supports) and Tiers 2 and 3 (targeted and individualized supports), strengthens SEL competencies for adults, in service of students, and enhances early identification and intervention efforts when integrated with student-focused screening and referral systems;

WHEREAS, the Chicago Public Schools Talent Office will maintain the CPS Be Well employee wellness program, a district-wide initiative to support the holistic health of our CPS employees.

WHEREAS, through data-driven, evidence-based practices, the Office of Student Health and Wellness (OSHW) is committed to prioritizing the mental health and well-being of staff, students, and families, promoting welcoming learning environments that are healthy, safe, and supported. The OSHW Mental Health Team oversees the implementation, guidance, and training for the district's Comprehensive Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Policy as well as the Comprehensive Student Substance Use Prevention & Intervention Policy.

WHEREAS, through the Be Well Employee Wellness Program and collaborations with the Office of Social and Emotional Learning, CPS provides mental health supports for educators that must be planned, intentional, role-specific, sustained, and embedded within the professional learning structures of the school system rather than treated as optional or supplemental;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board hereby directs Chicago Public Schools to:

1. Develop a Districtwide Educator Mental Health Framework: Develop an inclusive, thoughtful, and expeditious process to design and implement a districtwide framework to support educator mental health and well-being across all CPS schools. This framework shall recognize educator mental health as a core component of safe, supportive, and high-quality learning environments; align with the CPS Be Well Employee Wellness Program, CPS Comprehensive Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Policy, the CPS Whole School Safety Policy, Public Act 104-0032, and existing district initiatives related to student mental health, MTSS, trauma-engaged practices, school climate, and social and emotional learning; and reflect the distinct needs, responsibilities, and working conditions of educators across roles; and explicitly anchor these efforts in the CPS Healing-Centered Framework to ensure supports are restorative, culturally sustaining, and protective against secondary traumatic stress. This framework will be developed in collaboration with CPS educators and negotiated with the union representatives of the affected employees.

2. Establish Sustainable Structures for Educator Mental Health Support: In alignment with this framework and contingent on negotiations with labor partners representing the affected Educators, the CPS Be Well Employee Wellness Program shall identify and implement sustainable system-level structures to support educator mental health such as the creation of mental health guides, professional learning opportunities that support educator well-being, and benefits education across the district. This may include integration of educator mental health considerations into district strategies, school safety plans, and school improvement structures that shape teacher working environments, professional learning opportunities that support educator well-being, role-specific training and guidance, clear communication pathways that ensure educators are aware of and able to access mental health resources, and embedding healing-centered leadership and whole-school safety practices into ongoing administrator and staff professional development.

3. Promote Accountability Through Transparency and Reporting: CPS shall ensure

educator mental health and wellbeing are meaningfully incorporated into district efforts. The Superintendent/CEO or designee shall issue an initial report to the Board by November 1, 2026 and determine a cadence for providing subsequent regular public updates to the Board on progress toward development and implementation of the districtwide educator mental health framework and supports, and utilize existing data sources to monitor and report trends related to educator working conditions, retention, absenteeism, school safety metrics, and school climate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School Board affirms that educator mental health is not an individual responsibility alone, but an important component of the district's supportive and deeply held values; and that sustainable improvements in student outcomes are strengthened by attention to the well-being, stability, and professional sustainability of the educators who serve them.