

Fact Sheet: SUNY Addresses Mental Health Needs to Support Student Success

Psychological support and safety are critical to every student's academic success. Unfortunately, anxiety, depression, grief, stress, and other mental health problems are impacting college students at all-time high rates. According to the latest annual Healthy Minds Survey, approximately 40% of college students suffer from moderate or major depression, and more than one-in-three college students deal with anxiety.

Thanks to the historic investment by Governor Hochul and the Legislature in SUNY's operating budget for 2023-24, SUNY is investing recurring funding of \$10 million per year to support State-operated campuses in addressing student mental health needs.

This investment will reach 28 campuses enrolling more than 200,000 students:

- At least 25 campuses will **hire, retain, or extend the contracts of over 90 mental health staff**, including psychologists, social workers, psychiatric nurse practitioners, and other clinical staff. Many campuses will be able to increase their capacity to meet student mental health needs by extending clinical hours or focusing on targeted student populations. For example:
 - SUNY Cobleskill will hire a 12-month counselor, allowing assistance to summer EOP program students and those on campus over the summer.
 - University at Albany will hire an LGBTQ+ Specialist to meet the needs of a student population who face increased risk for mental health concerns, trauma, and suicide.
 - SUNY Old Westbury, officially recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), will hire a dedicated bilingual counselor to reach out to the Hispanic student population.
- 14 campuses will **leverage telehealth to increase capacity and meet crisis and off-hours student needs**. Telehealth contracts will also allow for several campuses to **connect students to a more diverse clinical staff**, both in terms of specialties and demographics. For example:
 - Alfred State, whose rural location lends itself to fewer external community providers, will provide access to psychiatric nurse practitioners for acute student needs and expand services to include psychiatric hours for students through a telehealth provider.
 - SUNY Plattsburgh will work with a service provider offering 24/7 tele-counseling support to students.
 - SUNY Cobleskill will provide counselors with diverse backgrounds/experience who will also offer therapy outside of typical business hours.
- Other mental health investments will go toward peer support efforts, promotion of existing mental health resources, and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

In addition, SUNY system is building on other programs to address mental health needs including the continuation of the Statewide Tele-Psychiatry Network (STPN) at 56 campuses.