

February 2026

Re: Opposition to HB 1754

Dear Chairman Noble and Members of the Education Policy and Administration Committee:

My name is Brittany St. Jean, and I am a licensed clinical and school psychologist who has lived in New Hampshire for much of my life. As Executive Director of Psychology and Training at White Birch Educational Services, work directly with students throughout our state. As the Past President of the New Hampshire Psychological Association, I work with Psychologists across the state who work in community mental health centers, hospitals, juvenile justice, and child welfare systems. These roles provide me with firsthand insight into the Multi-Tiered System of Support for Behavioral Health and Wellness (MTSS-B0, which is grounded in evidence showing that children do well when they receive timely help in familiar settings. Without it, they endure lengthy waits, deteriorating symptoms, crisis-level interventions, and academic setbacks that worsen their challenges.

MTSS-B connects schools with mental health services to help students access care in familiar settings. Please accept this letter as written testimony in *opposition to HB 1754*, which would eliminate a multi-tiered system of collaboration and support between health care providers and schools for children's mental health.

Created through years of collaboration among state agencies, providers, school districts, and child advocates, this system of care framework was passed unanimously in 2016 with support from health departments, educators, and medical professionals. Governor Sununu reinforced its importance in 2020 by directing statewide implementation. However, a current proposal aims to remove it entirely.

For nearly ten years, this system has identified at-risk youth and connected them with appropriate resources. Timely intervention strengthens children's resilience and coping skills while keeping them engaged in school, fundamentally changing their development paths. Without coordinated care, kids decline while waiting for help, often ending up in emergency rooms or juvenile justice centers.

Eliminating MTSS-B would destroy the infrastructure and prevent costly crises. Trading immediate savings for expensive long-term consequences makes no fiscal sense, considering the cost of hospitalizations, justice system involvement, child welfare cases, specialized school placements, and immeasurable family suffering. As youth mental health challenges continue to grow statewide, dismantling functional infrastructure is reckless. We cannot return to fragmented services where families struggle alone through bureaucratic maze, and children only receive attention after reaching breaking points.

Legislators should reject this repeal and instead strengthen a proven, evidence-based system that has served communities effectively since 2016.

Respectfully,



Brittany St. Jean, Psy.D.