



# STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 9, 2022

To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads, Administrators of Nonpublic Schools, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

From: Angelica Allen-McMillan, Ed.D.  
Acting Commissioner of Education

## **New Jersey Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Resource Guide Release**

Recognizing the widespread and increasing mental health needs of our school communities, Governor Murphy called upon the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) to lead a statewide youth mental health working group to develop resources, including best practices for school and mental health provider connections to support student needs. The result of those efforts is this extensive [Comprehensive School-Based Mental Health Resource Guide](#), which will provide schools with a roadmap to assist staff in developing, implementing, and evaluating mental health supports and services in our schools.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that mental health and wellness are fundamental needs that transcend the boundaries of our school districts, townships, communities, schedules, and family structures. As we continue to move forward, it is vital to approach school mental health with a systemic set of evidence-based preventative practices, procedures, and interventions. This Guide advances that goal by outlining the application of the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports model to address the social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs of all students. By using a three-tiered approach, New Jersey educators can ensure equitable access to core prevention practices and appropriate interventions and supports. The Guide consists of 11 chapters starting with the basics of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) and ending with suggestions on how to fund this comprehensive model.

This Guide is a continuation of NJDOE's efforts to support physically and mentally safe learning environments. The Office of Student Support Services recently revised, reorganized, and updated a set of resources related to mental health that can be found on the NJDOE's [Student Wellness webpage](#). In the months to come, online modules will be produced to support the implementation of this Guide in addition to the technical assistance and monthly webinars provided by our collaborative partners, the [Northeast and Caribbean Mental Health Technology Transfer Center \(MHTTC\)](#). Additionally, the NJDOE will continue to gather updated resources, feedback, and data around implementation to inform revisions and subsequent editions of this document.

### **Contact Information**

For questions, please contact the Office of Student Support Services at [SafeSupportiveSchools@doe.nj.gov](mailto:SafeSupportiveSchools@doe.nj.gov).

c: Members, State Board of Education  
NJDOE Staff  
Statewide Mental Health Working Group  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
Garden State Coalition of Schools  
NJ LEE Group