



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: January 17, 2024

To: Local Educational Agency Leads, Administrators of Nonpublic Schools, Administrators of Approved Private Schools

Route To: Principals, Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Supervisors, Directors of School Counseling, Directors of Student Services, Student Safety Specialists, School Nurses, Teachers

From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Register by: January 23, 2024

Information Sessions on Participating in 2024-2025 DREAMS Program

Through the American Rescue Plan Act, the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (NJDCF) in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), invites local educational agencies (LEAs), district and school leadership to learn about an exciting opportunity for school districts to participate in the 2024-2025 DREAMS Program (Developing Resiliency with Engaging Approaches to Maximize Success). The DREAMS Program focuses on providing trauma-informed and healing centered supports that assist staff and students in building positive relationships and emotional self-regulation. This program aims to promote healthy and healing school environments and to provide educators with supports to aid in both job satisfaction and in building classrooms conducive to student learning.

Participating DREAMS districts will:

- Receive training in The Nurtured Heart Approach® (NHA). NHA is a method for creating a supportive and positive school culture that prioritizes the building of healthy relationships, recognizes every student's greatness, and promotes the development of self-regulation strategies for both staff and students.
- Participate in trainings on trauma related topics such as *Adverse Childhood Experiences*, *Trauma Informed Practice for Educators*, *Understanding the Impact of Toxic Stress and Developmental Trauma on the Brain*, and others.
- Have access to online evidence based and best practice related resources and training materials.
- Identify two staff members to become NHA certified trainers.
- Be connected to the NHA Community through a NHA mentor who will aid in the implementation planning of NHA within the school/district.

All LEAs are eligible to participate in this program. As a partnership between the NJDCF and NJDOE, this program and all associated trainings and professional development will be at **no cost** to LEAs but will require a commitment of time and designated staff to support the program. However, there are a limited number of spaces available.

Key steps/actions

To learn more about the required commitment and in order to be considered for admission into the DREAMS Program, an LEA administrator should participate in an information session on either [January 23, 2024](#) from 1:00-2:00 p.m. or [January 31, 2024](#) from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Please [register](#) for one of the two sessions as soon as possible to confirm interest in participating in the program.

Contact information

For any additional questions, please contact Children's System of Care via Tia.Sanders@dcf.nj.gov or the Office of Student Support Services via SafeSupportiveSchools@doe.nj.gov.

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