



**AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION**
SERVICES, INC.

APA-Supported Federal Legislation & Programs

Examples of existing programs and proposed bills, all of which are supported by APA, that can be used in your advocacy.

Existing Programs

These U.S. Department of Education programs have all been authorized into law and are subject to annual discretionary appropriations. Your advocacy can focus on increasing funding for these programs.

Example of advocacy request: Fund the *[insert program name]* at *[insert funding amount]* in Fiscal Year 2024.

- **Mental Health Service Professionals Demonstration Grant Program** – Provides competitive grants to support and demonstrate innovative partnerships between institutions of higher education and local educational agencies (LEAs) to train school-based mental health service providers for employment in schools. The goal of this program is to increase the number and diversity of high-quality, trained providers available to address the shortages of mental health service professionals in schools within high-need LEAs.
 - **Current funding:** \$108 million
 - **APA FY 2024 request:** \$214 million
- **School Based Mental Health Services Grant Program** – Provides grants to State Educational Agencies and Local Educational Agencies to increase the number of qualified mental health service professionals providing school-based mental health services to students with a demonstrated need. The funding must be used to recruit and retain the number of qualified school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, or other mental health professionals, including those who provide services through telehealth.
 - **Current funding:** \$108 million
 - **APA FY 2024 request:** \$214 million
- **Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant Program, Title IV-A** – A flexible block grant that funds school districts to improve students' academic achievement, including by improving school conditions and climate through enhanced mental health services, social and emotional learning, and trauma-informed practices.
 - **Current funding:** \$1.38 billion
 - **APA FY 2024 request:** \$1.48 billion

Proposed legislation

These bills have been introduced, but not yet passed into law. Your advocacy can focus on building support and calling for passage.

Example of advocacy request: Endorse and/or pass the [*Insert bill name and number*].

- **Mental Health in Schools Excellence Program Act (H.R.3228/S.1574)** – Aims to recruit and retain more school-based mental health service providers, including school psychologists. It would establish a program under which the U.S. Department of Education would partner with eligible graduate institutions to cover up to the full cost of school-based mental health graduate programs for students at eligible institutions. The bill is bipartisan in both the House and Senate.
- **Mental Health Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act (H.R.4933/S.462)** – The legislation works to build a robust mental and behavioral health care workforce—including in school-based settings—by expanding a loan repayment program to mental health professionals who work for at least six years in a federally-designated mental health professional shortage area. The program would allow eligible students loans to be repaid for education in a mental health or a related field leading to a master's degree, doctoral degree, or post-doctoral study. The bill is bipartisan in the House and Senate.
- **Pell to Grad Act (H.R.961)** – Would expand the use of Pell Grants to cover graduate education for students who received a Pell Grant during their undergraduate education and have remaining semesters of Pell eligibility. Although not directly aimed at mental health degrees, many doctoral psychology students, as well as those studying other mental health fields that require a graduate degree at entry level, would benefit.