



STATE OF DELAWARE  
**STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**  
Margaret M. O'Neill Bldg., Third Floor, Suite 1  
410 Federal Street  
Dover, Delaware 19901  
302-739-3621

The Honorable John Carney,  
Governor

John McNeal, Director  
SCPD

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 5, 2022

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate  
and House of Representatives

FROM: Ms. Terri Hancharick, Chairperson *TH*  
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: H.B. 301 (Mental Health Educational Programs)

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed H.B. 301 which would require the Department of Education (DOE) to establish and implement statewide mental health educational programs for each grade [K-12] in each school district and charter school. SCPD endorses the proposed legislation, but encourages engagement with the disability community in the development of the instructional programming and subsequent regulations because, as written, the act may have potential benefit although it is vague as to what actual school programming may look like. In addition, the educational programs developed should be researched and evidence-based.

SCPD has the following observations.

The act provides only minimal requirements for the mental health education programs. The instruction must:

- ...includ[e] instruction in mental health and the relationship between physical and mental health to enhance student understanding, attitudes, and behaviors that promote health, well-being, and human dignity.
- Be taught by appropriately trained certified educators.
- Be comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, and sequential in nature.

The act also requires that the school district or charter school provide in-service training on the new instructional program.

While the act has limited requirements for the new instructional program, it does require DOE to “consult with mental health experts, including individuals with the Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families, Mental Health Association of Delaware, Delaware Guidance Services, National Alliance of Mental Illness Delaware, and National Council for Behavioral Health.” The act also empowers DOE to “adopt regulations to implement and enforce this section.” Future regulations may provide more specific guidance on the mental health curriculum.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions or comments regarding our position, observations, or recommendations on the proposed legislation.

cc: Ms. Laura Waterland, Esq.  
Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens  
Developmental Disabilities Council

HB 301 [Mental Health Educational Programs (4-5- 22)]