



Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE) – Fiscal Year 2024

This report describes grant activities related to funds allocated from Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023, line item [7061-9650](#), which are being coordinated with those related to line item [7061-0028](#) for Social Emotional Learning Grants. The combined grant program aims to build capacity of schools, districts charter schools, and educational collaboratives to do one or both of the following:

- Develop comprehensive integrated multi-tiered systems for student, family, and educator social-emotional and or/mental health supports; and
- Build sustainable infrastructure to facilitate integrated coordination between school and community-based and/or providers.

November 2024

This document was prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Russell D. Johnston, Acting Commissioner

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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

135 Santilli Highway, Everett, MA 02149

Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370

www.doe.mass.edu





November 12, 2024

Dear Members of the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means, and the Executive Office for Administration and Finance:

I am pleased to submit this report to the Executive Office of Administration and Finance and to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means, *Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE)*, pursuant to Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2023, line item [7061-9650](#), that reads in part:

“...provided further, that the department shall issue a report not later than December 29, 2023, the department shall issue a report outlining all student support efforts funded by this item; provided further, that the report shall be provided to the senate president, the speaker of the house, the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the joint committee on education ...”

This line item helps advance the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (Department) [EdVision](#), including our [strategic objective focused on supporting the whole student](#). This objective highlights the partnership that DESE has with districts, schools, and other entities “to cultivate systems to support the whole student and foster joyful, healthy, and supportive learning environments so that all students feel valued, connected, nourished, and ready to learn.” The funding provides critical resources to schools, districts, charter schools and educational collaboratives as they build “systems of integrated student supports” to “free children up to engage in the type of critical thinking and deeper learning to which our schools and education systems aspire,” as described in our [Our Way Forward](#) report¹ and our new [Educational Vision](#). These resources are particularly important as we continue to see student social and emotional, behavioral, and mental health and educator mental wellness concerns.

The efforts funded through this line item and supplemented and coordinated with funds to strengthen multi-tiered systems of support to respond to the social emotional and behavioral health needs through line item [7061-0028](#) and additional federal funding from the *Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Funds (ESSER)* will help further the ability of communities across the commonwealth to maximize coordination with service providers and establish more comprehensive continuums of care. These funds are helping to increase student access to behavioral and mental health services, including grant funded services, delivered in partnership with community-based providers. In addition, professional development coordinated by the Department and offered to school staff is supporting their ability to identify students’ behavioral and mental health needs as well as



educators' needs as part of comprehensive, integrated, tiered approaches to promoting wellness for all students and educators, and to address needs of students requiring additional supports.

This line item, along with supplemental ESSER funding, is making possible the continuation of [Fund Codes 613/311/332 Supporting Students' Social Emotional Learning, Behavioral & Mental Health, and Wellness through Multi-Tiered Systems of Support](#) (SEL and Mental Health) grants in fiscal year FY2024. Professional development (PD) is also supported by these line items to help school staff to identify students in need of services and connect those students to services as well as address the wellness needs of staff.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Rachelle Engler Bennett, Associate Commissioner, Student and Family Support, via RachelleEngler.Bennett@mass.gov. We look forward to continuing to facilitate and coordinate this work and thank the Governor and Legislature for your commitment to the students of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Russell D. Johnston
Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education respectfully submits this Report to the Legislature: *Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE)* pursuant to Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2024, line item 7061-9650:

“For the Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE) grant program to provide an integrated student wellness grant program to assist schools with addressing non-academic barriers to student success; provided, that grants shall be used to support school districts establishing an infrastructure to facilitate integrated coordination of school and community-based resources, including, but not limited to, social services, mental health and behavioral health resources; provided further, that not less than \$1,000,000 shall be awarded by the department to schools and school districts serving high percentages of low-income students; provided further, that said supports may include funding to assist public school districts in contracting with licensed community-based health care service providers, including mental and behavioral health providers; provided further, that said program shall be administered by the department of elementary and secondary education in coordination with the executive office of health and human services; provided further, that the department shall prioritize applications for such services that are submitted by school districts whose applications are consistent with infrastructure and coordination efforts linking schools to community-based resources in accordance with item 7061-9612 of section 2 of chapter 154 of the acts of 2018; provided further, that such support grants may be expended to assist school districts in connecting students with community-based services to maximize coordination with service providers and establish more comprehensive continuums of care; provided further, that such grants may also be expended to support increased professional development opportunities for public school employees to identify students in need of mental and behavioral health support; provided further, that not later than December 29, 2023, the department shall issue a report outlining all student support efforts funded by this item; provided further, that the report shall be provided to the senate president, the speaker of the house, the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committee on education; provided further, that for the purposes of this item, appropriated funds may be expended for programs or activities during the summer months; provided further, that any unexpended funds in this item shall not revert but shall be made available for the purpose of this item until August 30, 2024; and provided further, that any funds distributed from this item to a city, town or regional school district shall be deposited with the treasurer of such city, town or regional school district and held in a separate account and shall be expended by the school committee of such city, town or regional school district without further appropriation, notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary..... \$1,000,000”

This report outlines efforts to date to establish grants with public school districts charter schools, educational collaboratives, and contracts to provide professional development pursuant to this line item.

The Department continues to work collaboratively with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), including the Departments of Public Health and Mental Health (DPH and DMH), to leverage existing and planned initiatives and to promote complementary and supplemental activities.

In September 2023, the Department posted the fiscal year (FY2024) continuation grant Fund Codes 613/311/332 [Supporting Students' Social Emotional Learning, Behavioral & Mental Health, and Wellness through Multi-Tiered Systems of Support \(SEL & Mental Health Grant\)](#). Applicants who were awarded grants in fiscal year (FY2023) were eligible to apply to continue to support building their multi-tiered systems of support and collaborations with community-based organizations.

The Department awarded a total of approximately \$7.5 million (see Table 1 below for details) to 111 grantees to continue to implement activities district-wide or in one or more schools that increase student access to behavioral and mental health services.

Table 1

Line Item/Source	Fund Code	Total Amount
7061-9650	613	\$663,987
7061-0028	311	\$726,955
ESSER	332	\$6,072,713
Total Awarded		\$7,463,655

Coordinated Professional Development

Pursuant to this line item, the Department has coordinated and supported efforts related to integrated student supports and the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Reflection Tool. A portion of the SHARE line item is dedicated to the Systemic Student Support (S3) Academy, which is co-facilitated by the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy and the Center for Thriving Children at Boston College through a Department contract.

The S3 Academy deepens practitioners' understanding of the critical characteristics of a system that effectively and proactively identifies and addresses each student's strengths and needs. It also supports district and school practitioners to identify next steps in developing and implementing a system of integrated student support. By the end of three

years, participants implement an approach that can be embedded in the ongoing work of schools and districts to create safe and supportive environments that enable educational opportunity for all.

Participating schools and districts are implementing best practices for integrated student support by (1) assessing the strengths and needs of every student, across multiple developmental domains, resulting in an individualized plan with tailored services for each student; and (2) developing and embedding systems of integrated student support, through continuous improvement processes, that are scalable and sustainable.

Currently there are fifteen (15) district and school teams enrolled in the S3 Academy representing nine communities, with several communities having multiple school teams. Participating teams include:

- Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter
- Agawam Public Schools
- Ashland Elementary
- Early Childhood Center (Monson)
- Granite Valley Elementary (Monson)
- Hingham High School
- Collegiate Charter School (Lowell)
- Mendon Upton Public Schools
- Medway Public Schools
- Melrose Public Schools
- Nipmuc Regional High School
- Quincy, Middle School
- Scituate Middle School
- Winchester Elementary School
- Winthrop Public Schools

Representing urban, suburban, and rural school districts, participants also provide the Department and its partners the opportunity to learn from the S3 Academy about the different experiences, assets, and needs relative to building and executing integrated systems of student support for students across the Commonwealth.

Additional professional development offerings supported through the SHARE line item are provided by the Department in partnership with contractors, including [Walker Therapeutic and Educational Programs](#), [Rennie Center](#), the [Education Development Center](#), and other partners. Information when confirmed will be highlighted on the Department's [Mental and Behavioral Health and Wellness Supports page](#).

Professional development opportunities will include content to support educator social and emotional and wellness skills, multi-tiered systems of support, screening and building

systems of comprehensive mental health. Vendors will also offer office hours and coaching support to districts and or schools. This year the offerings will also include professional learning communities.

In FY2023, the Department sponsored nine (9) individuals to become certified Youth mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) instructors. In addition, the Department offered a total of thirty-six (36) YMHFA trainings for more than 400 (four hundred) school staff and other community partners who work with students.

As part of this PD, in FY2024, the Department continued to invest in [Youth Mental Health First Aid](#) trainings which is “designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis.” This year, through these coordinated efforts, the Department continue to offer school districts and youth-serving community-based organizations the opportunity to request up to two trainings for up to thirty (30) participants each, reaching an approximate 1,500 participants. More details on any of the information referenced in this report is available upon request.