

WEST WARWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**ADMINISTRATION
BUILDING**

Miriam A. Duffy School

10 Harris Avenue

West Warwick, RI 02893

April 24, 2026

The Honorable Chairman Marvin Abney
Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support for H8180 – Children’s Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS)

Good afternoon:

My name is Karen Tarasevich, and I am the Superintendent of Schools for West Warwick Public Schools in West Warwick, Rhode Island. I am writing in strong support of H8180, as these bills are critical to ensuring that students and families have access to timely and effective behavioral health crisis support.

In schools, we regularly see students in behavioral health crisis, and too often, our only options are emergency services or the emergency room. These responses are not always appropriate and can disrupt a child’s education.

Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) provide a better solution—offering immediate, community-based support that helps stabilize students and keep them engaged in school.

H8180 is critical because it ensures these services are available to all students, regardless of insurance. Schools don’t see coverage—we see children who need help. H8180 strengthens the system so we can rely on consistent, timely support.

Without access to MRSS, crises escalate, impacting not only the student but the entire school environment. These bills are essential to supporting student well-being, school stability, and long-term success.

When behavioral health crises are not addressed promptly, the impact extends beyond the individual student—it affects classroom environments, school safety, staff capacity, and overall school climate. Investing in MRSS is not only an investment in children’s behavioral health but also in their education and long-term success.

I respectfully urge you to support H8180 to ensure that Rhode Island's children, families, and schools have access to a reliable, equitable, and effective crisis response system.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Tarasevich

Karen A. Tarasevich, [M.Ed](#)
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