

For Immediate Release –April 5th,2019



To Plainville Families:

King Philip Superintendent Paul Zinni, Norfolk Superintendent Ingrid Allardi, Plainville Superintendent David Raiche and Wrentham Superintendent Allan Cameron are pleased to announce that the four school districts have been awarded a \$311,150 grant from Governor Baker's office to support student behavioral and mental health services.

"Like all school districts, many students in our four districts struggle with social-emotional challenges and behavioral health," Superintendent Zinni said. "We are all thankful that the Baker-Polito administration recognized our need to offer more comprehensive supports and programming to our students and are looking forward to putting these initiatives in place."

The majority of grant funds will support the hire of two full-time social workers who will service all four districts, as well as the hiring of a wellness director that will act as a consultant to the districts for one year.

"These new positions across the districts will provide much needed support to students in all grades," Superintendent Cameron said. "It is our hope that their presence will offer students an accessible, comfortable avenue to access counseling, programming and other supports."

The social workers will support students in need of social-emotional and/or behavioral health support through counseling, family stabilization services and by connecting them to local and regional resources. The wellness director will work with the district for one year starting on July 1 to bring in outside resources to the schools, identify the supports available locally to students and coordinate health and prevention programming and supports between the four districts.

A portion of the grant, approximately \$26,000, will also fund professional development among leadership teams in the four districts, including superintendents, principals and special education directors. The training will focus on supporting students dealing with trauma, social-emotional challenges and behavioral health needs, and will emphasize the creation of safe, welcoming environments for students. The grant will also fund new anti-bullying curriculum at each district.

"We've seen a significant increase in the number of students struggling in the area, and statewide," said Superintendent Raiche. "We're so thrilled to be able to connect students and their families to wraparound services that will provide much needed support."

Superintendent Allardi also praised the collaboration between the districts to seek out the grant. "We've been working really hard to collaborate between the four districts to share services and resources. It has been a fantastic partnership. This has been a great example of what we've been able to do, collaborating as a region."