

Mental Health Association Gets \$5.5 Mil For After School Programs at HCSD



Tiffany Greenwaldt-Simon

Jul 22, 2024

HUDSON — The Mental Health Association of Columbia and Greene is getting \$5.5 million from the state to expand after school programming in the Hudson City School District.

The funding, announced on Monday, provides \$550,000 each year for the after school program at Montgomery C. Smith Elementary school, and the same amount for the program at the Hudson Junior High School.

After School programs provide students a chance to engage in additional play while giving them a safe place to go, David Rossetti, executive director of the Mental Health Association of Columbia and Greene said in a statement.

"With all that has happened in the past few years, socialization and positive engagement opportunities for youth in afterschool programs have never been more crucial," he said. "We are immensely grateful to partner with the talented educators of the Hudson City School District for this important program."

The Learning and Enrichment Afterschool Program Supports grant, which was awarded to the mental health association from the state Office of Children and Family Services, will cover programming until 2029.

Funds from the grant will be used to give students within the school district the opportunity to engage in learning enrichment activities, and prioritize the social and emotional wellness of students.

Additional staff, updates to curriculum, new equipment and technology will also be obtained as part of the grant.

“This historic grant will robustly advance learning opportunities for students, while assisting families by providing a safe, secure educational environment for students after classes end each day,” said Juliette Pennyman, superintendent of the Hudson City School District in a statement. “These benefits are absolutely essential to a child’s maturation. We are grateful to New York State for this important investment and are excited to partner with the dynamic, dedicated team at Mental Health Association of Columbia and Greene.”

The mental health association has provided an afterschool program since 2004. The program at the Hudson City School District is expected to serve up to 200 students in the future.