

April 15, 2025

Rep. Alyse Galvin  
Alaska House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

*Sent via email*

Re: Trust support for HB105 – Public Schools: Mental Health Education

Dear Rep. Galvin,

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (Trust) supports HB105, which adds mental health to the existing health education curriculum statutes and directs the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to develop guidelines for instruction in mental health in consultation with the Alaska Departments of Health (DOH), Family and Community Services (DFCS), and representatives from Tribal and behavioral health stakeholders. Further, the bill acknowledges the important of accountability through obligatory reporting, and parents' rights through the parental notification requirement.

For many years the Trust has devoted resources to addressing the stigma experienced by Trust beneficiaries; Alaskans who experience mental illness, substance use disorders, traumatic brain injuries, developmental disabilities, and Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. As such, the Trust supports the intent of this legislation to destigmatize mental illness and encourage students to recognize early signs of distress in themselves and others. The Trust also strongly supports current school district and state efforts to increase social emotional learning skills and mental health supports for students and educators. These evidence-based practices prioritize student wellness and promote positive learning environments that improve academic performance and keep kids safe.

With a growing body of national research indicating increasing rates of youth experiencing mental health conditions, this legislation is a positive step in helping address this public health issue in our state. The Trust recently led on the development of a series of reports that examine the role of schools in youth mental health, the state of youth mental health, and activities that can advance progress towards a comprehensive system of care leveraging school systems. You can read [Mental Health in Alaska Schools Phase Two: The State of Student Mental Health & Promising Approaches](#), along with several case studies highlighting existing practices, on the Resources section of our webpage, [alaskamentalhealthtrust.org](http://alaskamentalhealthtrust.org).

We appreciate your leadership on this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Mary Wilson, MD  
Chief Executive Officer