Judge Orders Restoration of School-Based Mental Health Grant Funds

On Monday, a federal judge ruled that funding terminated in April for the School-Based Mental Health Professionals Grant Program must be restored.

In Wisconsin, grant funding was used to expand online certification pathways, support “grow your own” initiatives for future school mental health providers, and offer statewide training and professional development to improve staff retention. Wisconsin was one of 22 states to receive the grant award last year, building on the success of the DPI’s 2020 pilot program.

The program’s impact has been significant: participating districts saw a 14 percent reduction in the student-to-mental-health-professional ratio. Additionally, 487 new students enrolled in University of Wisconsin System graduate pupil services certification programs, and since 2021-22, 348 new mental health professionals have been hired to serve in local education agencies.

The DPI is awaiting additional guidance on the restoration process and will share updates as they become available.