



# EDUCATION **TRUTH** **PROJECT**



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## **EDUCATION TRUTH PROJECT AND THE NEW JERSEY PUBLIC EDUCATION COALITION DENOUNCES RAMAPO INDIAN HILLS SCHOOL BOARD'S INITIAL DECISION TO END MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS**

Franklin Lakes, 08/08/2023 - Education Truth Project and the New Jersey Public Education Coalition commend the Ramapo Indian Hills School Board's recent decision to reverse its initial stance and reinstate mental health programs. However, we are deeply disturbed that such a decision was necessary in the first place, as it reflects a failure on the part of the board to prioritize the well-being of students, faculty, and their families by denying them adequate mental health services.

"Mental health is essential to a student's overall development and academic success. The decision to end mental health programs until the end of 2023 demonstrated a disregard for the well-being of the school community and sent a distressing message to students, parents, and educators that their emotional needs were not a priority," said Founder and Executive Director, Matt Kazmierczak.

We call on the Ramapo Indian Hills School Board to actively engage with mental health professionals, educators, parents, and students to develop comprehensive and sustainable solutions. We urge them to prioritize allocating resources and funding for mental health initiatives that will provide ongoing support to students and faculty.

"The initial vote, whose effect was to deny mental health services to those students who need them, is but the first step on the slippery slope of denying individualized student services for those who need them," said Mike Gottseman, the Executive Director of the New Jersey Public Education Coalition.

As organizations that promote equitable and inclusive education, we will continue monitoring developments closely and advocate for prioritizing mental health services within educational institutions.

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