



September 1, 2020

Dear Clifton High School students, families, faculty & staff,

There has been some devastating news that we would like you to be aware of.

Governor Murphy has proposed some very serious cuts to the NJ Department of Children and Families. How will this affect our district? These proposed cuts have eliminated ALL funding to School Based Youth Services Programs in the state of NJ. This is the funding that created and supports The Teen Center at Clifton High School. The Teen Center has been at CHS for almost 15 years, and serves well over one thousand students each year through workshops, counseling, individual services, tutoring, and college advisement. In addition, we serve families in order to provide mental health and supportive services. The Clifton School District is incredibly supportive, what we need is your help at the legislative level to reinstate this necessary funding.

What we need:

- Reach out to your legislators at the emails/links provided. You can start with this statement: “Please restore funding for all the School-Based Youth Services Programs throughout New Jersey. The budget cannot be balanced on the backs of children and youth in need, especially in these uncertain times.” Add a personal testimony – how has The SBYSP Teen Center (you must say School Based Youth Services Program) impacted you or your child? Also send the above to [Submit Testimony](#) by September 11<sup>th</sup>.

- Sign the Change.org petition link:

<https://www.change.org/p/governor-phil-murphy-and-senator-stephen-m-sweeney-save-school-based-counseling-youth-services-programs-in-new-jersey>

- Call legislators and tell them to save School Based Youth Services Programs across NJ – tell them how school based at CHS’s Teen Center has helped the CHS community.

Find your legislator here: [Find Your Passaic County Legislators Here](#)

[Write the Governor](#)

[Senate & Senate Leadership](#)



As you know, our focus has been on improving outcomes for our CHS youth, making it more likely that they graduate and lead healthy and productive lives. We have provided mental health counseling, prevented suicide, reduced depression and anxiety; we have helped students with social issues, navigating family conflict, personal struggles and academic issues. We have helped with college applications, job applications, class assignments, heart breaks and grief. We provided support when the school grieved the loss of students and we celebrated with students for each personal victory. Our groups provided CHS students with community service opportunities, leadership programming, wellness education and Wellness Day, peer support and education events. We have provided groups and resources on topics such as substance abuse, bullying, dating violence, pregnancy prevention and many other topics for healthy development. We have run free summer programming. Each year, we provide college advisement events, suicide prevention workshops and parent presentations, as well as workshops to reduce stigma around mental health. We started a GSA to provide support and advocacy to our LGBTQ+ youth. We have cared for, supported, encouraged, hugged and cheered our young people. And now we need your help to save the program so that generations to come will be afforded this same. Whether you have personally benefited from our services or understand how crucial these services are for our students, we need your help and support. Please take five minutes to let our legislatures know that these cuts will do more harm to our youth and families.