



*Testimony before the Committee on Children  
Commissioner Andrea Barton Reeves  
February 16, 2023*

**HB-6643 AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE RISK ASSESSMENTS CONDUCTED AT SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS AND INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR THE PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS EXAMINATIONS**

Behavioral health screenings, including a suicide risk screening, are reimbursable for primary care providers, FQHCs and medical clinics, including school-based health centers under their medical license. Based on recent data from the Department of Public Health, 97% of medical clients at a school-based health center had a mental health screening at a medical visit in the 2020-2021 school year.

The Department currently reimburses for behavioral health evaluations performed by school districts. Suicide risk assessments may be done as part of a more comprehensive evaluation and would be fully reimbursable under Medicaid when done by a school district or a school-based health center.

The Department would appreciate the opportunity to conduct additional clinical and fiscal analysis related to this proposal, specifically adding behavioral health screening codes for school districts. In some cases, a brief screening of a student may facilitate faster intervention compared to a comprehensive evaluation, which the Department supports. If the school districts are conducting comprehensive evaluations when brief screenings are needed, this may result in a cost savings. However, the Department also wants to ensure that comprehensive evaluations are performed when necessary.