School Social Work
Association of America

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PROCLAMATION

National School Social Work Week
March 3-9, 2024

Expressing support for the designation of the week beginning March 3, 2024, as "School Social Work Week".

Whereas the importance of school social work through the inclusion of school social work programs and services has been recognized in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.);

Whereas school social workers are exceptionally skilled in providing services to students who face serious challenges to school success, including disability, poverty, discrimination, abuse, neglect, mental illness, homelessness, bullying, familial stressors, and other barriers to learning;

Whereas school social workers are needed more now than at any time in recent memory, as more students are struggling with mental and behavioral health disorders, with nearly 1 in 6 children from 2 to 8 years old (17.4 percent) having a diagnosed mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder;

Whereas individuals who wish to access community mental health services often find such services unavailable, inaccessible, or inadequate;

Whereas school-based mental health programs are critical to early identification of and early intervention for mental health problems;

Whereas school social workers, being licensed mental health professionals in schools in the United States, provide necessary assessment, interventions, counseling, family outreach, and community referrals;

Whereas school mental health programs are critical to the early identification of mental health problems and in the provision of appropriate services when needed;

Whereas school social workers maintain knowledge of school culture and school climate which are necessary for responsible school safety planning;

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Whereas fewer than 1 in 5 children in need of mental health services actually receive these services, and research indicates that school mental health programs improve educational outcomes by decreasing absences, dropout rates, and discipline referrals, while improving academic achievement;

Whereas school social workers serve as vital members of a school's education team, playing a central role in creating partnerships between the home, school, and community to ensure student academic success; and

Whereas the celebration of "School Social Work Week" during the week beginning March 3, 2024, highlights the vital role school social workers play in the lives of students in the State of state: Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives, Senate, or Governor—

(1) supports the designation of "School Social Work Week";

(2) honors and recognizes the contributions of school social workers to the successes of students in schools across state; and

(3) encourages the people of state to observe "School Social Work Week" with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the vital role of school social workers, in schools and the community as a whole, in helping students prepare for their futures as productive citizens.