



TO: SUNY University Faculty Senate
FROM: Health Science Centers Sector of the SUNY University Faculty Senate
RE: Resolution: Successful Implementation of the SUNY Health, Wellness, and Well-Being Infrastructure and Leadership Architecture
DATE: 191st Plenary, April 7-9, 2022
LOCATION: Tarrytown, NY
RESOLUTION #: 191-01-1
VOTE TALLY: For: 39 / Against: 2

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS SUNY and New York State value the importance of wellness for their employees as noted by currently available resources promoted by the NYS Employee Assistance Program and NYS Family Benefits Program on their website¹ and NYS: <https://wellnys.goer.ny.gov/> under the heading “WellNYS Everyday”; and

WHEREAS SUNY has a compendium of resources under the “Health & Wellness” subsection of Benefits on their website², where

- wellness programs are measures and resources provided by institutions that support the wellbeing of individuals including but not limited to HR Benefits, resources to improve work efficiency and to eliminate redundancy/waste/inefficiency, education and training, mentorship, and resources addressing all the domains of well-being; and
- well-being activities are specific measures individuals take to optimize their physical, mental/emotional, social, spiritual, occupational, intellectual, financial, and environmental health; and

WHEREAS on June 23, 2021, the SUNY Board of Trustees, upon the recommendations of Chancellor Malatras to approve SUNY’s Student Mental Health and Wellness Task Force recommendations, approved expanded mental health services for students across its 64 colleges and universities to build on the comprehensive program launched in 2020 described in detail³; and

WHEREAS SUNY has committed to creating permanent mental health and wellness positions at SUNY to include the position of Associate Vice Chancellor for Health and Wellness to lead system-wide expansion of mental health services and to include a SUNY mental health and wellness advisory committee that “will lead the enhancement and mobilization of mental health and wellness services, harmonize efforts across campuses, and provide periodic progress updates to SUNY Board of Trustees”³; and

WHEREAS SUNY has not created a consistent platform, structure, or guidelines for each of the SUNY institutions to adhere to, nor created the aforementioned position of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Health and Wellness; and

WHEREAS SUNY is suffering from employee burnout and vacancies across all campuses and sectors despite being in a better financial position in 2022 than in previous years;

WHEREAS EAP programs available to SUNY employees are not designed for wellness and preventative care and are not standardized across SUNY campuses.

RESOLUTION:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the SUNY University Faculty Senate expects that the SUNY Chancellor will work to expand the structure supporting health, wellness, and well-being consistent with the recommendations that the Board of Trustees approved on June 23, 2021, to include both students and

employees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in anticipation that the Interim Chancellor will name a SUNY Associate Vice Chancellor for Health, Wellness, and Well-being to serve the SUNY system, the SUNY University Faculty Senate requests that the Associate Vice Chancellor of Health, Wellness and Well-being portfolio include the following responsibilities:

- Rename the SUNY Mental Health and Wellness committee to “SUNY Health, Wellness, and Well-being” committee, and chair this committee.
- Consult with designees of the SUNY University Faculty Senate and existing campus Wellness Officers.
- Fund and deploy a network of Wellness and Chief Wellness Officers at all SUNY campuses with distinct and overarching responsibilities to be designated in conjunction with the SUNY Health, Wellness and Well-being committee.
- Provide regular reports to the SUNY Chancellor, the SUNY Board of Trustees, and to each institution so that best practices can be implemented as appropriate and relevant across the institutions respecting individual needs, demographics, and resource availability.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the SUNY University Faculty Senate requests that Governor Hochul and the Interim Chancellor work together to allocate funding and appropriate resources for

- designating/hiring appropriately qualified individuals to serve as Assistant/Associate Dean of Wellness and/or Chief Wellness Officer on campuses; and
- harnessing the resources of the SUNY CPD in coordinating professional development in health and wellness for the employees in the SUNY system.

BACKGROUND:

1 <https://www.suny.edu/benefits/balance/>

2 <https://www.suny.edu/benefits/wellness/>

3 <https://www.suny.edu/suny-news/press-releases/6-21/6-23-21/mental-health-services.html>