Shannon Spillane South Portland LD 1203

I am an LCSW in private practice and contracted mental health clinician with the LearningWorks YouthBuild program. I work with a variety of clients from all around our state, but particularly children and adolescents. I have a constant waitlist and inquiries every day looking for mental health support. I am concerned about the number of students who are falling under the radar. I was disheartened to watch my own South Portland community fail to adequately and modernly support our community after the suicide of a 14 year old student. My extensive background in trauma-informed work and adolescent development combined with my recent clinical work with the young adult population, has significantly developed my understanding of the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, technology saturation, and recent world events on the developing mind. We need more mental health support in our schools and our communities and we need it now. The students I see at the YouthBuild program have not succeeded in the public school systems for a variety of reasons. One need is abundantly clear: the need for increased access to mental health services.