



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward Announces \$50k for Innovative School Program

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR February 8, 2017

| ISSUE: **MENTAL HEALTH, BOCES**



ILION, 02/08/17 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today announced a special state grant of \$50,000 to support the Herkimer BOCES AIM (Achievement – Inspiration – Motivation) program, a school based behavioral health program operated by Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES in collaboration with Kids Oneida.

“Our schools play such a crucial role in shaping not only minds but lives,” said Senator Seward. “The Herkimer BOCES AIM program is a pioneering initiative that supports students as they work through challenges in the classroom and at home. This specially designed program is a life changer that benefits young people, their families, and the entire community. The partnership between Herkimer BOCES and Kids Oneida has developed a true model that I am pleased to support.”

The Herkimer BOCES AIM program supports students with complex behavioral health needs that are not easily managed in a school environment. The program operates at the Pathways Academy at the Remington Educational Complex in Ilion and serves middle school students. A coordinated team of teachers, teacher assistants, a clinical care coordinator, and a behavior specialist work with the students.

Kids Oneida CEO Steve Bulger said, “The Herkimer BOCES AIM program brings together educators and health professionals to help students meet their educational and therapeutic goals while improving their social interactions within a school community. Senator Seward’s support along with the strong collaboration between Herkimer County Department of Social Services, Herkimer County Department of Mental Health, Herkimer BOCES, and Kids Oneida has helped develop a more robust children’s behavioral health system here in Herkimer County.”

Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES Chief Operating Officer James Picolla said, “Thank you to Senator Seward for securing this grant to support the AIM program at Herkimer BOCES. Along with our collaboration with Kids Oneida, this grant allows us to educate a group of children with complex health, behavioral and educational needs that

would otherwise not be able to be served in our school system due to the extra resources needed to place them in an environment to succeed. We are proud of the work in this and every program offered by the Herkimer BOCES.”