Speech Comparison

Compare the structure of the two Opening Statements on the same topic.

1. Which speech is the easiest to follow? Why?

2. Which speech do you think gives the clearest message? Why?

3. Which speech do you think is more memorable? Why?

Speech A -

Madam Speaker and fellow delegates,

Mental health is an important issue that affects many students across the country. Many young people experience stress, anxiety, and other challenges that can impact their education and overall well-being. Schools play an important role in supporting students and helping them succeed.

The Student Mental Health Access Act would increase access to mental health counselors in public high schools. Having more counselors available could help students receive support when they need it and may improve academic performance, attendance, and school climate.

Research has shown that providing additional mental health services can have positive outcomes for students. It is important for schools, families, and communities to work together to ensure that young people have access to appropriate resources.

This proposal would help create healthier learning environments while encouraging students to seek support when they need it. Improving access to counseling is an investment in the future because students who receive support are better prepared to learn and contribute to their communities.

For these reasons, I encourage you to support this bill.

Thank you.

Speech B -

Madam Speaker, fellow delegates,

Last year, one in three high school students in our state reported feeling persistently sad or hopeless. That's not just a statistic; that's someone sitting in this room.

Right now, thousands of students are struggling silently. They are trying to balance school, family responsibilities, social pressure, and uncertainty about their future, without adequate support. In many of our public high schools, students share one counselor among hundreds. That is not access. That is a waiting list.

The Student Mental Health Access Act would require every public high school in our state to provide at least one full-time licensed mental health counselor. Not a volunteer. Not a rotating position. A trained professional is available every day.

This bill does three things:
First, it ensures timely access to support.
Second, it reduces long-term academic and behavioral consequences.
Third, it sends a clear message: mental health matters.

Other states that have increased school-based counseling services have reported improvements in attendance, academic performance, and disciplinary outcomes. Investing early prevents higher costs later, both financially and socially.

We cannot expect students to succeed academically if we ignore their emotional well-being.

I urge you to consider not just the numbers, but the faces behind them, and support this bill.

Thank you.