



State and Local Coordination in Developing World-Class Mental Health Plans for Florida's Students and Families

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
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Florida's Commitment to Meeting Students' and Families' Mental Health Needs

- In 2019, the state budget included **\$75 million in mental health funding** and **\$5.5 million for Youth Mental Health First Aid**.
- Additionally, the State Board of Education passed a rule requiring every Florida public school to provide students in grades 6-12 **at least five hours of mental health instruction**.
- Building on those investments, the current budget **increased mental health funding by \$25 million** and included \$5.5 million for Youth Mental Health First Aid.

Recap of Florida's Response

- In mid-March, Florida's schools transitioned to distance learning in response to COVID-19.
- Commissioner Corcoran made clear that students must continue receiving high-quality education services through distance learning, and local education leaders' quick action was remarkable.

Recap of Florida's Response

- Recognizing that many students rely on school-based mental health services, FDOE permitted K-12 school districts to redirect unspent 2019-2020 funds from the Safe Schools and Mental Health allocations to virtual and telephonic mental health counseling services for students who need emotional support due to COVID-19.
- Chancellor Jacob Oliva issued guidance to aid districts and schools in providing telehealth services:
<http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/19887/urlt/050520-mbhtsfs.pdf>.

Planning for the 2020 – 2021 School Year

- In response to parental input, FDOE announced that all families will have the option to attend brick-and-mortar school in fall 2020.
- It is imperative that we are meticulous in anticipating students' and families' needs and ensuring every school's and district's mental health plans have provisions to ensure that services are provided seamlessly in accordance with Florida statute.
- School districts and charter school governing boards must provide the full panoply of services, with a focus on aligning services for those in brick-and-mortar with those who choose remote learning.

Research-Based Factors to Consider

- 20% of students experience mental health issues that interfere with school, and most will turn first to their school for help (Kaffenberger & O-Rorke-Trigani, n.d.).
- Parental stress, mental health, and poverty are predictors of child abuse (Crouch & Behl, 2001; Nair et al., 2003).
- Abused students suffer from more behavioral problems (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2019); poorer academic performance (Bick & Nelson, 2016); limited social connectedness and lower self-esteem (Herrenkohl et al., 2017); and increased anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorders (Sege et al. 2017).



Section 1011.62(16), Florida Statutes

The mental health assistance allocation was created to provide funding to assist school districts in establishing or expanding school-based mental health care; train educators and other school staff in detecting and responding to mental health issues; and connect children, youth and families who may experience behavioral health issues with appropriate services.

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element One

- A focus on a multi-tiered system of supports to deliver evidence-based mental health care assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and recovery services to students with one or more co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and to students at high risk of such diagnoses.
- The provision of these services must be coordinated with a student's primary mental health care provider and with other mental health providers involved in the student's care.

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element One: Exemplar District Examples From 2019-2020

- **School District of Desoto County Public Schools**
 - Organized mental health supports to students within a tiered framework to include roles and responsibilities of the school based mental health providers and community mental health partners. (pg.3)
 - [Desoto County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Hernando County Public Schools**
 - Provide evidenced-based intervention strategies at each tier to include services provided by school-based and community mental health providers. (pg.2)
 - [Hernando County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Osceola County Public Schools**
 - Established a system for parents and guardians to sign a release of information so that schools can coordinate mental health services with primary caregiver. (pg.3)
 - [Osceola County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Two

- Direct employment and/or contracted relationships with school-based mental health service providers to expand and enhance school-based student services and to reduce the ratio of students to staff in order to better align with nationally recommended ratio models.
- Strategies to increase the amount of time that school-based student services personnel spend providing direct services to students, without interrupting core academics. This may include the review and revision of district staffing resource allocations based on school or student mental health assistance needs.

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Two: Exemplar District Examples From 2019-2020

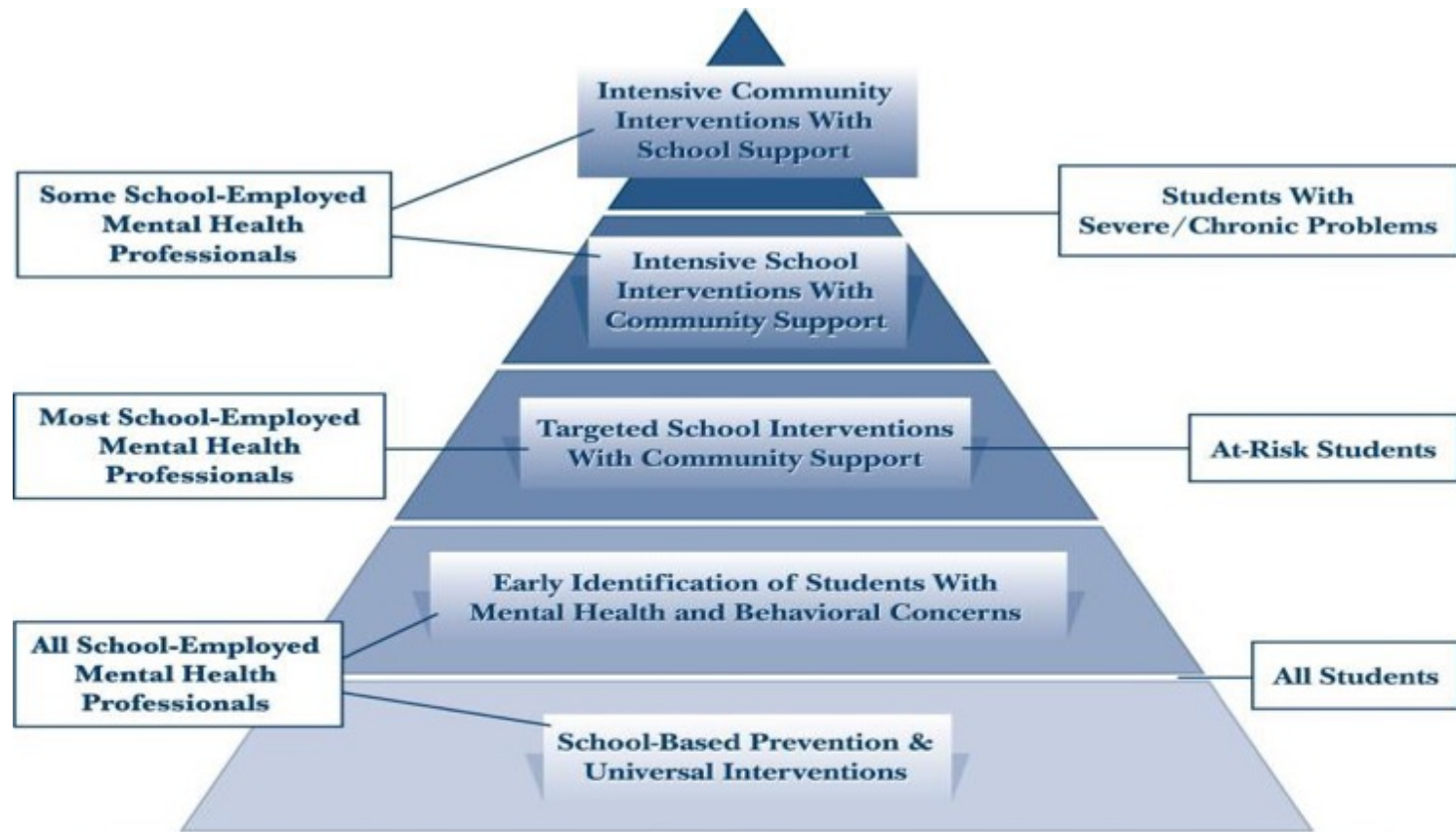
- **School District of Marion County Public Schools**
 - Employed additional mental health personnel (school counselors, school social work and school psychologists) to increase the amount of direct student services.
 - [Marion County Public Schools Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Miami-Dade County Public Schools**
 - Created positions titled Mental Health Coordinators, Mental Health Professionals and Social Service Facilitators to allow a greater range of mental health service providers access to public school employment.
 - [Miami-Dade County Public Schools Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Sumter County Public Schools**
 - Directed school administration to review and revise current school counselor duties to ensure that school counselors have protected time for direct mental health services to students.
 - [Sumter County Public Schools Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Three

- Contracts or interagency agreements with one or more local community behavioral health providers or providers of Community Action Team services to provide a behavioral health staff presence and services at schools.
- Services may include, but are not limited to, mental health screenings and assessments, individual counseling, family counseling, group counseling, psychiatric or psychological services, trauma-informed care, mobile crisis services and behavior modification.
 - These behavioral health services may be provided on or off the school campus and may be supplemented by telehealth.

School and Community Collaboration



The Continuum of School Mental Health Services

Adapted from "Communication Planning and Message Development: Promoting School-Based Mental Health Services" in *Communique*, Vol. 35, No. 1. National Association of School Psychologists, 2006.

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Three: Key Partnerships for an Effective Mental Health Plan

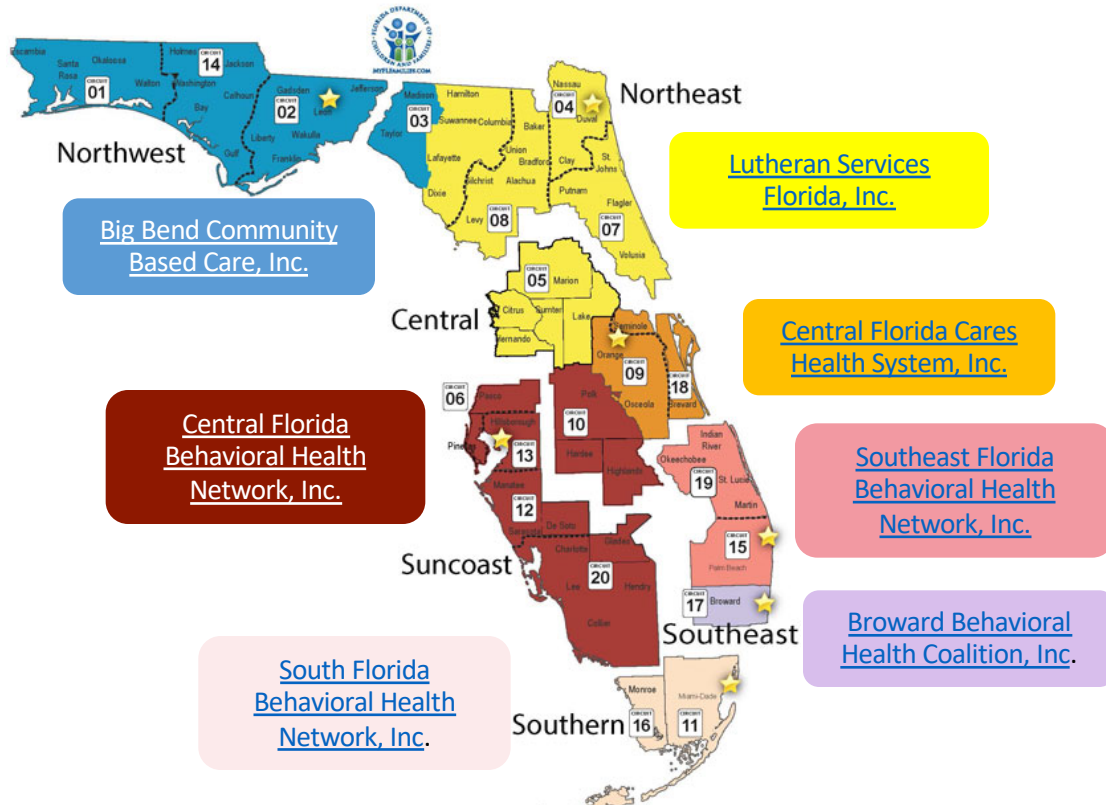
HOUSE BILL 945

- Requires the Department and the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), beginning FY 2020-21 through FY 2021-22, to collaboratively take appropriate action within available resources to meet the behavioral health needs of certain children and adolescents who use crisis stabilization services more effectively.
- Requires the Department to contract with the Managing Entities for crisis response services provided through mobile response teams (MRTs) for the provision of immediate, onsite behavioral health services to children and young adults through age 25 who meet specified criteria.

Department of Children & Families Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Oversight of regional system of care for the prevention, treatment, and recovery of children and adults with mental health and substance abuse disorders.

Funds behavioral health services for the indigent, uninsured and underinsured through contracts with [Managing Entities](#).



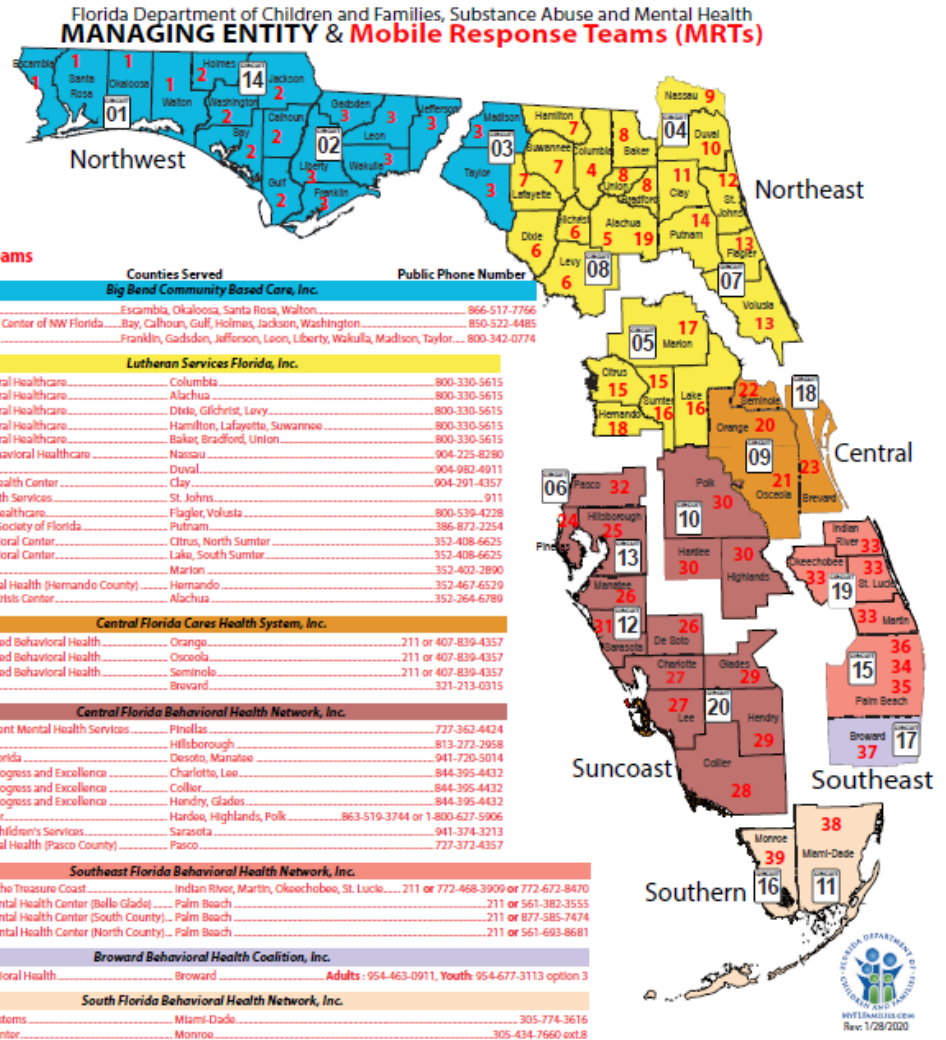
[Download Managing Entities Map.pdf](#)

Goal:

To improve coordination of behavioral health services, decrease unnecessary hospitalizations, and provide behavioral health interventions 24/7, 365 days per year.

MRTs provide readily available crisis care in the community for individuals 25 and younger.

MRTs increase opportunities to stabilize individuals in the least restrictive setting to avoid the need for jail or hospital/emergency department utilization.



[Download MRT Map and contact information.pdf](#)



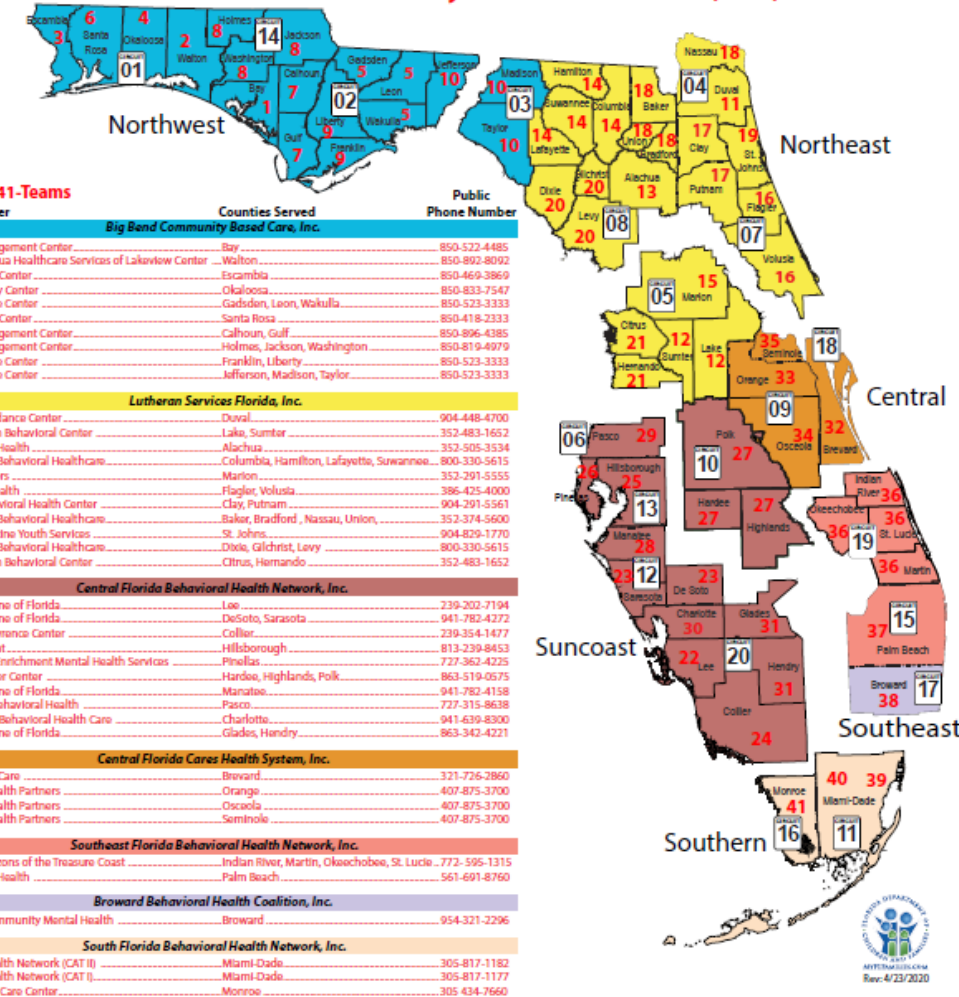
Goal:

To assist young persons with a mental health diagnosis and complex needs such as a history of hospitalizations, involvement with juvenile justice or school problems to successfully remain with their families and connected to their community.

CAT Model:

Integrated service delivery approach, and utilizes a team of individuals to comprehensively address the needs of young persons (and their family) **ages 11-21.**

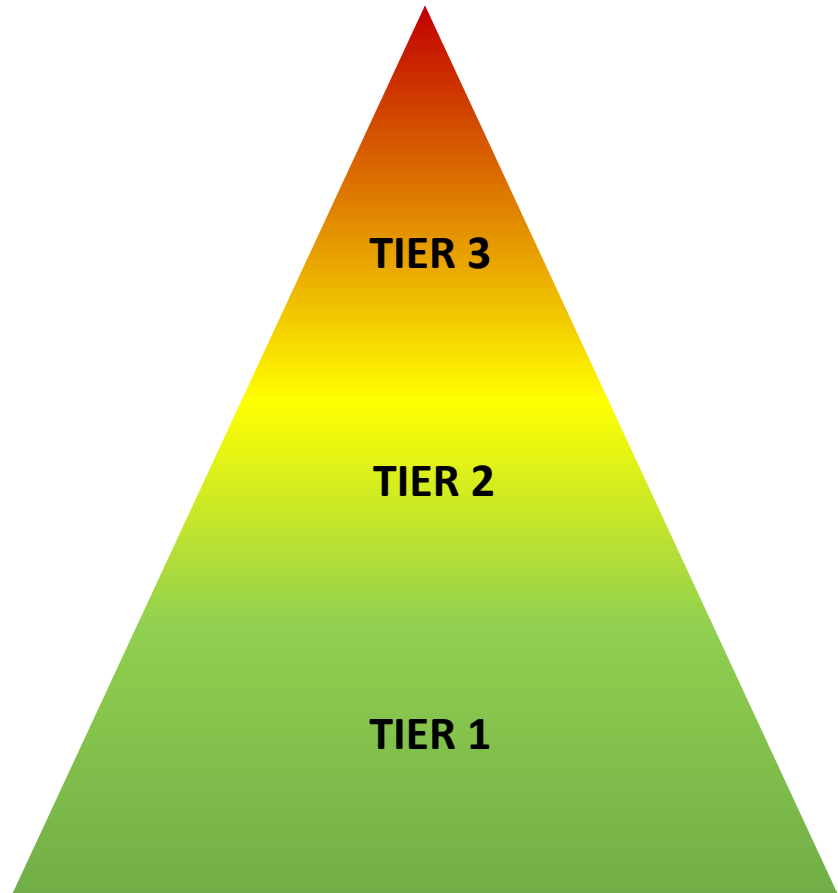
Florida Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health **MANAGING ENTITY & Community Action Treatment (CAT) Teams**



[Download CAT Map and contact information.pdf](#)



MTSS and DCF Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services



Intensive

Intervention – focus on reducing risk factors for progression of substance abuse and mental health problems

Or Higher

Targeted

Prevention Indicated – at-risk

Prevention Selective – risk is higher than average

Universal Prevention - Provided to general public or whole population not on the basis of individual risk

Universal Direct – Group of participants using curricula, programs, and classes

Universal Indirect – Population-based programs and environmental strategies

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Three: Exemplar District Examples From 2019-2020

- **School District of Manatee County Public Schools**
 - School District and Health Department School Nurses Trauma Informed Care trained and collaborate with community agencies for mental health services.
 - [Manatee County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Okaloosa County Public Schools**
 - Engages in collaborative partnerships with several community agencies, both on and off site.
 - [Okaloosa County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Volusia County Public Schools**
 - Utilize a centralized Community Resource/Case Management Database software to increase the connectivity between community providers and youth and families in need and developed a care coordination process for referrals to community agencies.
 - [Volusia County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Four

- Policies and procedures, including contracts with service providers, that will ensure students who are referred to a school-based or community-based mental health service provider for mental health screening for the identification of mental health concerns and ensure that the assessment of students at risk for mental health disorders occurs within 15 days of referral.
- School-based mental health services must be initiated within 15 days after identification and assessment and support by community-based mental health services providers for students who are referred for community-based mental health services must be initiated within 30 days after the school or district makes a referral.

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Four: Exemplar District Examples From 2019-2020

- **School District of Seminole County Public Schools**
 - A decision tree was established and processes were implemented for services to be used by school staff to ensure students receive the applicable services in the mandated timeframe of identification and assessment as it relates to the referral process.
 - [Seminole County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Brevard County Public Schools**
 - Mental health screenings and processes have been improved with the development and implementation of districtwide procedural forms as a tool to track mental health referrals.
 - [Brevard County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Five

- Strategies or programs to reduce the likelihood of at-risk students developing social, emotional or behavioral health problems, depression, anxiety disorders, suicidal tendencies or substance abuse disorders.

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Five: Exemplar District Examples From 2019-2020

- **School District of Pasco County Public Schools**
 - Outlines evidence-based prevention strategies and the services provided by the school based mental health provider to address the reduction of risk factors for mental health problems in students. (pg.2)
 - [Pasco County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Lee County County Public Schools**
 - Implements evidenced based programs such as trauma informed care, CHAMPS, and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (BPIS) as universal mental health prevention programs. (pg.3)
 - [Lee County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Six

- Strategies to improve the early identification of social, emotional or behavioral problems or substance abuse disorders to improve the provision of early intervention to assist students in dealing with trauma and violence.
- A plan to support students to return to brick and mortar by providing counseling and other supportive services to students affected by the pandemic is strongly encouraged.

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Six: Key Considerations

- Be aware of significant changes in the behavior & performance, relative to past level of functioning, same-aged peers, demographically similar students, and have the tiered processes in place to address and support.
- Carefully consider all performance data collected during the distance learning & school reentry period and be cognizant of the possible over- and under-identification of students with disabilities.
- Be ready to teach and/or reactivate executive functioning skills – *organization, planning, prioritization, attention, regulating emotion and self-monitoring*.
- Promote self-care among faculty and staff, building healthy habits to combat stress & compassion fatigue.
- Think through and prepare to discuss with students (in an age-appropriate manner) the more recent topics faced in your local communities.

Elements of a High Quality Mental Health Plan

Element Six Exemplar District Examples From 2019-2020

- **School District of Hillsborough County Public Schools**
 - Strategies were implemented to improve the early identification of social, emotional, or behavioral problems or substance abuse disorders, to improve the provision of early intervention services, and to assist students in dealing with trauma and violence. This includes providing services to at-risk students in order to reduce the likelihood of mental health illness.
 - [Hillsborough County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)
- **School District of Sarasota County Public Schools**
 - Developed prevention and early intervention systems to include student, school based mental health providers and community partners.
 - [Sarasota County School District Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan](#)

Elements for Creating a Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan Vision

- Incorporate all school based mental health service providers (school counselor, school nurse, school psychologist, school social worker) in the development and implementation of mental health services.
- Strengthen collaboration and communication between school based mental health provider, with families, mental health community partners and youth serving agencies.
- Use the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) as a framework to deliver mental health prevention and intervention services.
- Make mental health data-based decisions using tools like the School Health and Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPES) needs assessment to determine needs of students in the district.
- Use the data from the needs assessment to implement universal prevention and intervention strategies for all students (tier one) and those students who may require more intensive services.

Florida's System of Supports for School-Based Mental Health Services

TIER 3

Individualized Intensive

Decision-rules & referral-
follow-up procedures
Data and strategy sharing between
school and agency staff
Individualized counseling/ intervention,
behavior support plans
Intensive progress monitoring
Wrap around & crisis planning
Intensified family partnership and communication

TIER 2

Supplemental/At-Risk

Decision rules for early identification and access
Evidence-based group social, emotional, and behavioral
interventions based on need
Monitoring of intervention fidelity and student progress

TIER 1

Universal Prevention

Universal screening and progress monitoring
Needs assessment and resource mapping
Reduced Risk Factors - Create orderly and nurturing classrooms and public space,
fair and positive discipline, curtailed bullying
Increased Protective Factors - Social-emotional skills instruction,
positive/secure relationships, predictable environment
Restorative and Trauma Informed Practices
Data-based problem solving leadership teams - Including youth serving agency, youth and family
School-wide mental wellness initiatives to increase awareness and reduce stigma
Youth Mental Health First Aid Training, Wellness Fairs, Behavioral Health Campaigns

FOUNDATION

- a. Integrated Leadership Teams – expand teams and roles
- b. Effective data systems
- c. Strong Universal implementation
- d. Continuum of supports
- e. Youth-Family-School-Community Collaboration at All Levels –
culturally responsive
- f. Evidence-base practices at all levels
- g. Data-based continuous improvement
- h. Staff Mental Health Attitudes, Competencies, and Wellness
- i. Professional development and implementation support
- j. Policy changes that protect confidentiality but promote
mental health collaboration and flexibility

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