



Our Vision – Student Success!

MENTAL HEALTH ALLOCATION PLAN

2020-2021

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2020-2021 Mental Health Allocation Plan

“School mental health services are essential to creating and sustaining safe schools. Increased access to mental health services and supports in schools is vital to improving the physical and psychological safety of our students and schools, as well as academic performance and problem-solving skills. Additionally, in the aftermath of a crisis, school-employed mental health professionals provide supports that facilitate the return to normalcy, are sustainable, and can help to identify and work with students with more intense or ongoing needs” (National Association of School Psychologists).

The following mental health allocation plan outlines the school district’s approach “to establishing or expanding school-based mental health care” for all of our students. This allocation will be used to train educators and other school staff in detecting and responding to mental health issues; and connect children, youth, and families who experience behavioral health issues with appropriate services. It is the belief of the school district that all students should have access to quality mental health care professionals and services (school-based employees or contracted with our mental health community partners) throughout the school district regardless of the school or program where they are currently enrolled.

Planned Expenditures:

Total allocation of funds:	\$607,744.00
Funding for 5 DOE certified school social workers:	\$360,000.00
Funding for 1 licensed school psychologist:	\$ 74,000.00
Contract with CBHC for a mental health therapist:	\$ 50,000.00
Contract with CBHC for 40 psychiatric and 20 mental health consultations:	\$ 4,900.00
Professional Development & Mental Health Services Implementation Costs:	\$ 87,330.00
Charter School Disbursement	\$ 31,514.00

Any contracted CBHC staff will be licensed or certified upon hire. Funding totals are approximate and funds may be adjusted between the above earmarked categories as determined by the District Threat Assessment Team. Any roll-over funds from the previous school year will be incorporated within the Professional Development & Mental Health Services budget line. One hundred percent of state funds will be used to expand 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 with appropriate health services. Mental Health Allocation Funds do not supplant other funding sources OR increase salaries or provide staff bonuses.

Note: all local charter schools, including Babcock Neighborhood School and Florida Southwestern Collegiate High School, have elected to submit their own mental health allocation plan approved by their governing boards and will receive their proportionate share of district mental health assistance allocation funding. Charter School Disbursement total indicated above is approximate and will be determined by student FTE.

Local charter school plans will be included in the submission of the District Mental Health Allocation Plan.

Description of Mental Health Services:

Access to mental health services will be available to all students within the Charlotte County Public School District. These services will be coordinated with the students' primary health care provider and other mental health providers involved in the students' care. In addition, school-based social workers and school psychologists will work collaboratively with Charlotte Behavioral Health Care (community based mental health partner) to identify students who have one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses including students at high risk of such diagnoses. This partnership will include working to provide mental health assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and recovery services.

Charlotte County Public Schools uses a **Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)** as a framework for problem solving using data based decisions to determine and deliver appropriate evidence-based mental health care assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment, and recovery services to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and to students at high risk of such diagnoses.

Strategies to improve the early identification of social, emotional, or behavioral problems or substance use disorders as well as students dealing with trauma and violence will include the use of the early warning systems by problem solving teams. Increased involvement of school based mental health staff on problem solving teams will also expedite the identification and referral process.

Researched and evidenced based Programs and Services (MTSS):

The following programs are currently being implemented for the purpose of reducing the likelihood of at risk students developing social, emotional, or behavioral health problems, depression, anxiety disorders, suicidal tendencies, substance use disorders and students dealing with trauma and violence.

Signs of Suicide – (Tier I) for middle and high school. A researched based program implemented by Charlotte Behavioral Health Care (CBHC). School based mental health personnel, will follow-up with students who need additional on-going counseling services which includes coordination of additional mental health services with CBHC

School wide PBIS programs – (Tier I) implemented district wide

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs including but not limited to: Second Step, Sanford Harmony, The Leader In Me, – (Tier I)

Life Skills Training – (Tier I or Tier 2) program provided by Drug Free Charlotte County

Check In Check Out – (Tier 2) program Coordinated by TST teams

Restorative justice strategies, including Circles and Peer Mediation – Tier 2 programs Coordinated by trained staff at selected school sites

Behavior contracts – Tier 2 intervention Coordinated by school staff

Check and Connect – Tier 2 or 3 program Coordinated by school social workers

CINS-FINS – Tier 3 interventions Coordinated by Lutheran Services and school social workers

Strengthening Families - Tier 3 program provided by Drug Free Charlotte County

SOS (Student Outreach Services) – Tier 3 Substance Abuse Services in Schools Provided by Charlotte Behavioral Health Care

Evidence based mental health treatment services will include but not be limited to the following:

Student Outreach Services (SOS)- Substance abuse assessment and treatment program tailored to the individual student by a licensed mental health counselor. Program services are provided at the individual school site(s) by CBHC.

Psychiatric and Mental Health Consultations- school social workers and school psychologists will work to identify students with mental health diagnoses including those who are exhibiting warning signs of mental health issues, and coordinate with Charlotte Behavioral Health Care to diagnose and provide “health care plans” to provide ongoing mental health support and counseling for these students. This includes possible medication management if so determined by the medical professionals at CBHC.

Onsite Mental Health Care/Treatment will be provided to identified students by a contracted CBHC Mental Health Therapist. The therapist will provide individual and group counseling to students who have mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses. The Mental Health Therapist will coordinate treatment and safety plans with the school social worker to assure continuity of care.

Direct Employment of School Based Mental Health Providers:

All school based mental health providers will include, but are not limited to, certified school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and other certified CBHC mental health professionals. School based mental health service providers will expand and enhance school based student services to reduce the ratio of students to staff in order to better align with nationally recommended models. In 2017-18, the ratio of school social workers and school psychologists to students was above the national average: school social worker: 1:2,357 and school psychologist: 1:1,833. With the addition of the mental health allocation, the ratios for the 2019-20 school year were reduced to: school social worker: 1:1,013 and school psychologist: 1:1,578. While these are not the nationally recommended ratios of school based mental health staff, these ratios are now below the national average.

District resources, separate from the mental health allocation fund (passage of a tax referendum in 2018), allowed for an additional allocation of social workers (4) and school psychologists (3) for the 2019-20 school year. These positions were in addition to the mental health allocation ratios illustrated above.

The identification, assessment, and provision of mental health services will be completed within the timeline outlined in Senate Bill 7030 (15 days from referral to assessment and an additional 15/30 days for mental health services to be rendered).

Funding for 5 school social workers, for the 2021-21 school year, will allow for a full time social worker to be in every secondary school and Charlotte Harbor Center School. Additional social workers allows for expanded mental health services in the elementary schools and provide greater flexibility to address serious concerns as they arise. Expanded social worker services will allow greater access to mental health services for all Charlotte County Public School students.

For the start of the 2020/21 school year, the district has allocated 13 school psychologist positions and 15 social worker positions. The number of allocations at the start of the 2017/18 school year indicated 7

school social workers and 9 school psychologists. All mental health employees must obtain the appropriate certification credentials pursuant to the Department of Education rules and regulations. All social workers must obtain their Licensed Clinical Social Worker certification within 3 years of hiring.

School social workers will provide the following evidenced based practices:

- Complete risk assessments and threat assessments as needed
- Identify and assess the need for a baker act and diagnose accordingly
- Provide training and leadership for threat assessment teams,
- Provide training in mental health awareness for students and school staff
- Coordinate services with primary care and mental health providers involved in a student's care
- Communicate with other agencies and staff as needed and appropriate
- Communicate and collaborate with parents and guardians
- Document all threat assessment team services provided
- Provide individual and/or group counseling treatment for targeted individuals
- Provide or refer to existing researched or evidenced based programs
- Develop or collaborate on the development of treatment plans and safety plans
- Provide appropriate follow ups for recovery services
- Maintain a list of resources available for threat assessment teams

The continuation of funding for 1 school psychologist allows for a quicker identification of students in need of mental health and psychiatric evaluations. All students have access to a school psychologist with priority given to evaluate students referred by School Based Threat Assessment Teams (SBTAT) and the Superintendent's office Suspension Expulsion Review Team (SERT).

Contracts or Inter-Agency Agreements with Local Community Behavioral Health Providers:

The contract with CBHC for a mental health therapist allows for a therapist to serve all students in Alternative Programs and the ESE Center School. The therapist will spend 4 to 5 days per week at The Academy and the Charlotte Harbor Center School. Priority for services will be for students identified by the alternative school's threat assessment team, by Suspension Expulsion Review Team (SERT) or the District Threat Assessment Team.

The contract with CBHC for psychiatric and mental health consultations will serve all students identified by school based mental health staff as well as through SERT or District Threat Assessment Teams. This expanded contract will allow for the coordination of mental health treatment services that are part of a stipulated agreement in lieu of expulsion, a stipulated order of expulsion or included in the district's threat assessment team recommendations.

Professional development & Overall Mental Health Service Implementation Costs include:

- substitutes and professional development stipends;
- travel expenses, registration costs and related expenses for applicable mental health workshops, trainings and technical assistance;
- hourly wages for additional hours/days for the planning and implementation of mental health training programs and related services (above and beyond regularly contracted salaries- not supplanting existing district funding);
- training manuals/kits/supplies/copy costs (and other associated expenditures);
- Social Emotional Learning Curriculum;
- Mental and Emotional Health Curriculum;
- Anti-Bully Training Curriculum;
- YMHFA/TMHFA training expenses including state mandated recertification requirements;
- Providing funding for mental health related services for LGBTQ Students which include but is not limited to the coordination of funds to provide for a LGBTQ Regional Summit which will focus on the mental health needs of LGBTQ Youth;
- recruitment expenses related to the hiring of school social workers and school psychologists and;
- purchasing of communication technologies to provide telehealth services to students (cell phone costs, virtual platform expenditures, etc).

There are several requirements for professional development including:

Emergency Safety Procedures including active shooter training and school security (for students and district staff);

Threat assessment, risk assessment and crisis response training (for school based mental health staff and SROs);

Threat assessment team training (for all school based threat assessment team members);

Mental health awareness and assistance (for students and district staff); and

Training on the use and implementation of evidenced based programs

Maximizing Alternative Sources of Funding

The school district continues to work towards maximizing third-party health insurance benefits and Medicaid claiming services by billing Medicaid for counseling services provided at the Charlotte Harbor Center. A contract has also been negotiated with the Charlotte Behavioral Health Center (CBHC) to provide the school district with Mental Health and Psychiatric Consultations at a reduced rate, offsetting the cost to the school district by submitting claims to both Medicaid and third-party health insurance.

Threat Assessment Teams

School Based teams: school social worker, school administrator, Instructional staff (which could include a school counselor or Lead teacher), ESE liaison/staffing specialists, school resource officer, and school psychologist.

Duties: threat assessment teams meet on a monthly basis for the coordination of resources, assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students. Interventions may include but are not limited to: a referral to the Suspension Expulsion Review Team (SERT) or the District Threat Assessment Team, referral for mental health services, and/or referrals to existing evidenced based programs and services. After providing emergency intervention and assessment, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and/or a School Resource Officer trained in crisis intervention may determine the need for a baker act if there is imminent threat to self or others. The team will contact other agencies involved with the student and any known service providers to share information and coordinate any necessary follow up actions.

Teams will identify who to report threats to in the school community and provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of possible threats to the community, school or self. Teams may obtain criminal history record information if necessary for assessment but this information must remain confidential.

Upon determination of a threat, the team immediately reports its determination to the Superintendent's designee, the Assistant Superintendent of School Support, who will immediately attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian.

Threat assessment teams are required to report quantitative data on its activities to the Office of Safe Schools.

District Team: Assistant Superintendent for School Support, Director of Interventions and Dropout Prevention Services, Coordinator of School Psychologists, District School Safety Specialist, and Director of Exceptional Student Education.

Duties: Meets as needed to review school based threat assessment protocols and provide resources and guidance as needed. The team will review very serious substantive threats and assign a social worker and school psychologist to conduct a comprehensive mental health assessment with the student and parent/guardian as needed. Team members will contact other agencies involved with the student including but not limited to law enforcement, and any known service providers to share information and coordinate any necessary follow up actions. The team will make referrals for psychiatric consultations and/or mental health assessments and treatment as appropriate. Team members may make referrals for alternative programs in lieu of expulsion through the SERT process. The district team will also provide district training in threat assessment, risk assessment and crisis response protocols.

Collaboration:

School-community-agency collaboration is critical to providing the full continuum of mental health services to all students. Threat assessment teams (school based and/or district) will communicate,

collaborate and coordinate efforts to serve students with the agencies and programs that provide services to students experiencing or at risk of an emotional disturbance or mental illness. Including:

- State and local law enforcement agencies
- The Dept. of Juvenile Justice
- The Dept. of Children and Families
- The Dept. of Health and other health care providers
- The Agency for Health Care Administration
- Agency for Persons with Disabilities
- The Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office
- Charlotte Behavioral Health Care, including but not limited to CSU staff, CAT teams, TBOSS therapists etc...
- Multiagency network for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities, (SEDNET)

Mental Health Data Collection and Annual Outcomes/Expenditures Report

School based mental health staff will be responsible for tracking the number of students at high risk for mental health or co-occurring substance abuse disorders who received or were referred to either school- based or community based mental health service providers. The tracking of mental health data will be standardized and housed within the FOCUS Student Information System.

The school district will submit a report, beginning on September 30, 2019, and annually by September 30 thereafter, to the Department of Education that will include a review of program outcomes and expenditures for the previous fiscal year. Information contained in the report will include the number of students who: received screenings and/or assessments, were referred to school based or community-based interventions/services/assistance, and/or received school-based or community-based interventions. The report will also include school-based and community-based mental health providers paid for through the allocation as well as contract-based collaborative efforts/partnerships with community mental health programs/agencies/providers.

The 2020-21 Annual Mental Health Allocation Plan is hereby approved by the School Board of Charlotte County.

DATED THIS: 12th **DAY OF** May **2020**

ATTEST: 

Mr. Steve Dionisio, Superintendent of Schools


Mrs. Wendy Atkinson, School Board Chairman