

Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

Submitted by Judy Tatem
Office of Safe Schools
Columbia County School District

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Section 1 – Evidence-based Mental Health Services

The Columbia County School District is committed to delivering evidence-based Mental Health services to the students of Columbia County. Mental Health services are categorized into three different tiers ranging from awareness and prevention to intervention and recovery. A referral process for Mental Health services is available to families for students who may struggle with a variety of barriers to learning including social, emotional, and behavioral problems. Four At-Risk Intervention specialist will provide provision of mental health assessment, diagnosis, and intervention, treatment, and recovery services to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and students at high risk of such diagnoses. The At-Risk Intervention Specialist are master level mental health counselors and one school certified counselor.

Tier 1 programs seek to address mental health issues at the awareness and prevention levels. These programs are designed to be implemented with the faculty and staff and/or the student body of the entire school. Tier 1 programs are not intended to isolate individual cases of mental health need, but provide training and programs in order to create an awareness of mental health issues and provide a forum for individuals who may need further assessment to be identified and referred.

- I Am Listening is a district-wide awareness campaign that seeks to empower all district employees (administration, faculty, staff, and support staff, full-time and part-time) and all students to listen to and seek the interests of others. The campaign is designed to foster open communication among the district's employees and students.
- Youth Mental Health First-Aid is an 8-hour mental health awareness program designed to train all administration, faculty, and staff personnel in helping adolescents who are experiencing mental health or addiction challenges or are in crisis. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a five-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations.
- Schools will implement character education through various methodologies (classroom management, school announcements, etc.) to assist students with learning basic social skills and manners that will contribute to the overall morale of the student body.
- Monique Burr Foundation (MBF) Child Safety Matters is an elementary and secondary school curriculum that seeks to educate and empower students, school personnel, and parents with information and strategies to prevent bullying, cyber-bullying, digital abuse and all types of child abuse. The curriculum includes lessons and activities on topics such as safety and responsibility, safe adults, social and emotional learning, character development, bullying and cyber-bullying, and technology/digital dangers (gaming, virtual reality, and social media).
- Other awareness programs such as Rachel's Challenge, 9th Grade Success Class, Red Ribbon Week, and Strength and Difficulties Questionnaires may be used as needed to promote the well-being of students.

Tier 2 programs, in addition to general mental health awareness, seek to provide evidence based mental health care treatment to children and include interventions and services to specific groups of students. These programs are designed to be implemented by At-risk Intervention Specialists (mental health counselors) or representatives from our partner agencies. Tier 2 programs are not intended to isolate individual cases of mental health need, but provide training and programs in order to create an awareness of mental health issues and provide services to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and students at high risk of such diagnoses. It will also provide a forum for individuals who may need further assessment to be identified and referred. Coordination of such services with a student's primary care provider and with other mental health providers involved in the student's care will be done.

- Why Try Program – The Why Try program is a resilience education curriculum that provides simple, hands-on solutions for drop-out prevention, violence prevention, truancy reduction, and increased academic success. It teaches social and emotional principles to youth in a way they can understand and remember.
- SBIRT – Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment is an evidence-based practice used to identify, reduce, and prevent problematic use, abuse and dependence on alcohol and illicit drugs. It is an approach to screening and early intervention for substance use disorders and people at risk for developing substance use disorders.
- The At-risk Intervention Specialists for each school will organize, implement and provide treatment to At-Risk Students. The At Risk Specialists will provide counseling for social skills, anger management, and other mental health issues as identified among students by parents, school personnel and student's primary care provider.
- The At-risk Intervention Specialists (Mental health counselors) will provide consultation with teachers and parents regarding evidence-based classroom supports and strategies for at-risk students. These strategies will provide treatment and recovery.
- All Star –Meridian offers this program to provide At Risk Students a continuum for treatment and recovery, for grades 4-12, with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and students at high risk of such diagnosis. Designed to delay the onset of risky behaviors with those At Risk adolescents. All stars aligns with the National Health Education Standards allowing for easy integration into any health or wellness curriculum.
- Girls Circle- Meridian- offers this program. Is a structured group for girls from 9-18 years, integrating relational theory, resiliency practices, and skills training in a specific format designed to increase positive connection, personal and collective strengths, and competence in girls. This program provides intervention and recovery services to girls with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and students at high risk of such diagnoses.

Tier 3 mental health services are those services provided to individual students based on recommendations or referrals from school personnel, family members or student's primary care provider. While Tier 2 services are implemented in groups, Tier 3 services, while often the same as Tier 2, are implemented individually.

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- The At-risk Intervention Specialists (mental health counselors) for each school will assess, implement, coordinate, treat and provide other mental health services for individual counseling. Social skills, anger management, mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses as identified among students by parents and school personnel and the At Risk Specialist and other partnering agencies will handle student's primary care provider.
- Students who are identified as needing Tier 3 intervention services are referred to individual counselors or psychologists that are provided by the district's agency partners such as Meridian Behavioral Health Care, Corner Drug store, University of Florida Psychology Department, Haile Market Therapy and Resolution Health Alliance.
- Meridian Behavioral Health Care provides an in-school therapist at every school based on Medicaid availability.

The district collaborates with several local agencies to provide support for addressing mental health needs within the district. The district employs a case manager to work with the families of students who have been identified and referred as at-risk students. The case manager assists families with identifying problems and referring to the Mental Health services that best meet their needs. The case manager helps families consider variables such as cost, insurance, transportation, and willingness to participate, all of which potentially affect the effectiveness and outcome of the services provided. The case manager recommends services for assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment, and recovery based on the history and need of the individual. Outcome feedback forms go to the school personnel and the referral source. The case manager facilitates communication between the agencies and the district in order to track the student's progress. The District will also track referrals provided to all outside agencies and contracted staff. The schools and district will continue to review and problem solve based on outcome data as provided from climate surveys, Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and Focus tracking. The district's agency partners provide the following support services:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – This service provides counseling for mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and anger management.
- Parent Behavior Management Training – This service provides parents with the tools to help their students cope with various behavioral disorders.
- Parent Mental Health Diagnosis Training – This service equips parents in understanding mental health diagnosis and implementing interventions.
- Functional Family Therapy – This service provides counseling that assists families in dealing with delinquent and disruptive behavioral issues.
- Counseling is also provided to help student develop social skills aimed at making them more successful in the classroom as well as solution focused therapy for academic under achievement.

Section II – Personnel and Agencies Providing Mental Health Services

Columbia County currently works with several outside agencies to provide Mental Health counseling. Because of the Mental Health Allocation funds, our district will be able to provide more services. Through a referral system students are identified. These referrals are logged into a database when the Safe Schools Office receives them. The parent is contacted to schedule an appointment to speak with our Case Manager. During this meeting, the Case Manager will collect information through a social history questionnaire and process referrals to set up counseling with our partnering agencies. This information is added into the database. A feedback form will be provided to the referral source. Each month the outside agency will provide a list of those seen and those being released from services.

Section III- Resource Allocation for Mental Health

Columbia County School District received \$320,460 for the 2018-2019 school year. From the \$320,460 Belmont Charter School will receive \$16,000 based on FTE. Four At-Risk Intervention Specialists (3 mental health counselors and 1 certified school counselor) (\$213,272.36) and a Case manager (\$20,000) has been hired. The At- Risk position will aid in helping students and parents, identifying student needs and providing tier 2 and tier 3 supports. The Case Manager will meet with the parents/guardians to determine the appropriate counseling services and coordinate with the student's primary care provider and with other mental health providers. The Director of Safe Schools will receive (\$30,000) to ensure the program coordination of mental health services is done with fidelity and working at it highest potential. Our budget allocation documentation will verify that a minimum of 90% of funds will be spent on coordination of mental health services or direct mental health service and interventions are properly monitored and implemented within our district.

Currently our district places students into our agencies based mainly on the student's insurance provider. Agencies then bill the insurance company directly. Our goal is to not only provide services for those insured but also, assist in helping everyone receive services. Some families cannot afford the high co-payment. A \$5,000 budget to help these families who's child has been identified with a mental health disorder and seeking help is allocated. A \$5,000 budget is allocated for Mental Health Assessments. \$5,000 for mental health treatment for those families that cannot pay for such treatment;

Prevention measures such as Why Try, Why Try Resiliency, All Stars, Girls Circle, Monique Burr, SBIRT and others are evidence based curriculum to be used as prevention tools in our district. The remainder of the monies will be used to train our At-Risk Specialist and purchase evidence based curriculum. Why Try has on-line Training of \$599.00/per user and a yearly subscription fee of \$99.00/ user. Why Try Student journals cost \$5.00/ journal. All Stars and Girls Circle is a

program run by Meridian Behavioral Health. The fees for these groups are \$970.00/ 13-week one-hour group.

Columbia County has 14 schools. Currently only 4 At-Risk Specialists (mental health counselors) are providing services to these schools. In order to increase effectiveness there is a need for more specialists. If further funding is provided, Columbia County School's goal would be to place an At-Risk Specialist in each of our schools. As we increase the amount of professionals, we will also have the ability to reach more students.

The need for mental health is increasing at alarming rates. Our district, with the direction of our Superintendent, is working hard to provide services to those students and their families that struggle with Mental Health issues.

An additional \$450,000 is requested in order provide each school with their own Specialists. This increase will provide a need for an additional \$50,000 to provide training and curriculum. We are very grateful for the funding and attention given to Mental Health.

Budget:

• Total Allocation:	\$ 320,460.00
• Charter School Fund	\$ 16,000.00
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	\$ 304,460
• At Risk Specialist	\$ 213,272
• Case Manager	\$ 20,000
• Director of Safe Schools	\$ 30,000
• Family help	\$ 5,000
• Mental Health Assessments	\$ 10,000
• Mental Health Treatment	\$ 10,000
• All Star Meridian Program	\$ 3,000
• Curriculum	\$ 13,188