

# Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

2019-2020

## A. Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

Senate Bill 7030, Section 15, passed by the 2019 Florida Legislature, amends the Mental Health Assistance Allocation (MHAA) which provides funding to assist school districts in establishing or expanding school-based mental health care.

To fully implement Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan, the District established the Department of Mental Health Services in July 2018 to expand services and work in collaboration with other District offices. This department ensures the coordination of:

- School and community-based resources in an effort to deliver evidence-based mental health care for M-DCPS students including mental health screenings, assessments, intervention, treatment and recovery services through a multi-tiered system of support.
- Evidence-based mental health services for students with one or more co-occurring mental health or substance abuse diagnoses and students at high risk of such diagnoses.
- School and community-based mental health providers
- Contract-based mental health services
- Threat Assessment and Mental Health Teams which will be responsible for screening, assessment, diagnosis, intervention, and recovery services
- Data with the office of Assessment, Research, and Data Analysis to accurately capture data on all mental health services provided to M-DCPS students (screenings/assessments; number of students that are referred for services; and how many receive services/assistance – school and community-based)
- Staff credentials with the Office of Human Capital Management to ensure all Mental Health Service providers employed by the District are appropriately credentialed
- Outside service providers holding the appropriate credentials
- Training on the following:
  - Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for Mental Health
  - District's Progression of Mental Health Support
  - Trauma-Informed Classrooms
  - Mental Health Referral Procedures
  - Facilitating Mental Health Team Planning Meetings
  - Developing Mental Health Plans
  - Monitoring Intervention and Recovery Services

- Threat Assessment Teams
- Mental Health Awareness Programs

### **Research-Based Multi-Tiered System of Support**

M-DCPS provides students with a comprehensive and data-rich Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to address the mental health concerns of all students within the District. M-DCPS' MTSS ensures successful educational outcomes for all students by using a data-based problem-solving process to evaluate the effectiveness of all interventions being provided within each tier. Interventions focus on academic performance, social-emotional instruction and support, behavioral issues, as well as mental health. The District's MTSS is a three-tiered approach that moves through a progression of support to meet the unique academic, behavioral and mental health concerns of all students.

### **Tier 1 Services and Support Model (Universal/Prevention)**

Tier 1 provides school-wide programming that addresses the universal social/emotional needs of all learners. Each year, all schools, are required to examine data in both school culture and academic programs through the School Improvement Process (SIP) and identify which essential practices led to the data findings. Schools then develop outcome statements, priority actions, and the implementation steps required to facilitate school improvement. Using the framework of Effective School Culture, each school is required to identify opportunities for improvement within the areas of relationships; engaging learning environment; support, care, and connections; physical and emotional safety; and clearly defined expectations. In order to appropriately identify the outcome statements, priority actions, and the implementation steps within the SIP, each school's leadership team attends a 3-day Summer Institute. During this development, leadership teams disaggregate data within the areas of academic performance, teacher/student climate survey results, teacher/student attendance, percent of students with disciplinary referrals, and the percent of students who have met 2+ Early Warning System (EWS) Indicators (absent 10% of school year, 1+ suspensions, failed ELA course, failed math course, ELA level 1, and math level 1). Such strategies are designed to improve the early identification of social, emotional, and behavioral problems or substance abuse disorders and improve the provision of early identification services.

M-DCPS offers a variety of Districtwide prevention programs and fosters partnerships that focus on mental wellness. Through the District's Values Matter Miami initiative, schools are provided a comprehensive, value-based program aligned to specific core values: Citizenship, Cooperation, Fairness, Honesty, Integrity, Kindness, Pursuit of Excellence, Respect, and Responsibility. Schools are provided with interactive, grade-appropriate lessons to support the development of behaviors aligned to our District's values. Additionally, M-DCPS was the first school district in the nation to enter into a formal partnership with *Sandy Hook Promise* in order to implement their *Know the Signs* programs. These programs train youth and adults to identify, intervene, and provide help for individuals before they cause harm to themselves

or others. All M-DCPS high schools and middle schools have participated in Sandy Hook Promise's *Say Something* assembly program. This program directly addresses the need for students to speak up and get assistance for classmates who may be showing signs of depression, suicide, or other mental health issues. All secondary schools and K-8 Centers have also participated in Sandy Hook Promise's *Start with Hello* assembly program, which teaches students the importance of eliminating social exclusion and creating a more connected school environment.

### **Tier 2 Services and Support Model (Targeted – Supplemental/At-Risk)**

Tier 2 provides targeted interventions for identified students that address specific academic performance, social-emotional development, behavioral issues, as well as mental health concerns. Principals are provided with live data dashboards that allow them to identify students who need Tier 2 services. Data includes: attendance, Early Warning Signs (EWS), academic performance, and percent of students with disciplinary referrals. The services provided in Tier 2 include: academic advisement, individual/group counseling, Restorative Justice Practices, peer mentorship, partnerships with community-based agencies, as well as ongoing progress monitoring. Mental health professionals within schools are provided ongoing training from the Department of Mental Health Services, the Division of Student Services, and the Department of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) in order to provide students with comprehensive Tier 2 support that addresses mental wellness. These trainings include building skills in the areas of mental health assessment, intervention, and support for students, especially those who have been exposed to trauma or those who have acute mental health needs.

School support staff/mental health professionals will continue to collaborate to provide targeted support services. Students will be referred to school-based mental health professionals for screening and identification of mental health concerns.

### **Tier 3 Services and Support Model (Individualized/Intensive)**

Tier 3 provides intensive support that is individually designed to address the specific needs of students' academic performance, social-emotional development, behavioral issues, as well as mental health concerns. Student's with one or more co-occurring mental health or substance abuse diagnoses and students at high risk of such diagnoses are provided intensive Tier 3 support. In order to address the needs of students requiring Tier 3 support, the school will convene a Student Support Team (SST) meeting. Participants of these SST meetings include: the principal, school counselor, teacher(s), ESE staff, licensed social worker and/or licensed psychologist, as well as the parent/guardian, and student. The intent of this meeting is to assess the most appropriate intervention(s) for the impacted student. Services include: referral to an alternative location, referral for a mental health evaluation, development of a Social Emotional/Behavior Intervention Plan (SE/BIP), and/or the initiation of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). If it is determined that a mental health evaluation is required, a follow-up Mental Health Team meeting will be scheduled. During this meeting, the diagnosis will be reviewed, and a mental health support plan will be developed, implemented, and monitored.

## **School-Based Mental Health Providers**

Every student in M-DCPS has access to a certified and/or licensed mental health professional at their school site. Currently, M-DCPS employs school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and Trust Counselors that are assigned to schools to directly support student mental health services. In addition, 30 mental health coordinators were hired during the 2018-2019 school year to further expand and enhance the school-based student services. Moving forward, M-DCPS will hire an additional 10 mental health coordinators, bringing the total to 40, to further reduce the ratio of students to staff and better align with national recommended ratio models. Partnering with The Children's Trust has also allowed M-DCPS to reduce the ratio of students to staff as the agencies working under this agreement are stationed in some schools. These entities employ nurses, mental health professionals, and social workers within schools across the District to provide additional school-based mental health services and support to students.

Participation in ongoing professional development and training has allowed student services personnel and school-based mental health providers within our schools to ensure an increased amount of time is spent providing direct mental health services. The emphasis encompasses evaluating and developing students while monitoring their wellness. Additionally, school-site administrators are directed to refrain from assigning teaching and other non-counseling duties to student services personnel and school-based mental health providers. District staff from the Department of Mental Health Services, the Division of Student Services, and the Department of Exceptional Student Education also provide direct oversight in order to ensure the amount of time spent providing direct services to students is maximized. The needs of students, individually and by school are reviewed regularly and aligned with allocated resources and placement of staff based on school or student mental health assistance needs.

## **Community-Based Mental Health Providers**

The Department of Mental Health Services coordinates services and establishes partnerships, contracts and interagency agreements with nationally accredited local community behavioral health providers and providers of Community Action Teams. M-DCPS staff maintain regular communications and attend meetings with local agencies, including the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Children and Families, Thriving Minds (formerly South Florida Behavioral Health Network), and Florida International University's Center for Children and Families, to discuss community needs for children and families. Services may include, but are not limited to, mental health screenings, assessments, individual counseling, family counseling, group counseling, psychiatric or psychological services, trauma-informed care, mobile crisis services, and behavior modification. These services are provided on or off school campus.

The Department ensures that District and community service providers are collaborating and sharing information to best address the needs of students. The sharing of information does require parent consent and release of information consent amongst agencies. Coordination of services includes a student's primary mental health care provider and other mental health providers involved in the student's care. Services provide direct mental health services,

including assessment, diagnosis intervention, treatment, and recovery services, to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and students at risk of such diagnoses.

In collaboration with The Children's Trust of Miami, current partnerships include:

- Community Health of South Florida
- Nicklaus Children's Hospital
- Citrus Health Network
- Borinquen Medical Center
- Jessie Trice Community Health Center
- University of Miami

The Children's Trust, in collaboration with M-DCPS and the Miami-Dade County Health Department, developed this initiative to bring comprehensive health services to schools in Miami-Dade to improve access to high-quality health care. Social workers and other mental health professionals provide services such as screening; assessment for developmental, social, emotional, and behavioral well-being; or early identification, and primary prevention of challenges. Also, services are provided for a timely, responsive assessment of intervention services needs for at-risk students. They also provide follow-up referral or assessment services based upon screening results.

Schools are staffed with a team of professionals including a nurse or nurse practitioner and a licensed clinical social worker. Schools with high enrollment have the option to augment staffing coverage with additional support from a licensed practical nurse.

In addition, M-DCPS has contracted with and works in partnership with the following providers/agencies as a referral option for students in need of mental health assistance:

- Citrus Health Network, Inc.
- Ayuda, Inc.
- Chrysalis Health, Inc.
- DTT Coaching Services, LLC
- Empowering Youth, Inc.
- Board of Trustees (Florida International University)
- The Village South
- Healthy Connections CMHC, Inc.
- Jewish Community Services of South Florida
- Prosperity Social and Community Development Group, Inc.
- Neurohealth Professional of Florida, Inc.
- Invo Healthcare Associates, LLC

Providers are required to provide descriptions of their evidence-based practices. Any new providers that are selected to work with M-DCPS through the Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan will be required to describe, in detail, their evidence-based practices. Additionally, M-DCPS and the provider ensure the parent/guardian has signed the consent

form before services take place. To ensure greater access to these services, agencies will provide such services at the agency or at the student's school or home.

These contracted providers serve as vehicles to further support the coordination of mental health treatment services for students. Services include screenings and assessments, individual counseling, family counseling, substance abuse intervention, teacher/parent consultation, and case management. These contracts allow for the coordination of mental health treatment services to further meet the needs of students. M-DCPS will work to ensure that third-party health insurance benefits and Medicaid claiming for services will be maximized where appropriate. All mental health providers are required to bill Medicaid when applicable.

### **Assessment Timeframe**

M-DCPS' Threat Assessment/Mental Health Services Guide for School Administrators aligns with School Board policies and procedures to ensure timely services for students who are referred to a school-based or community-based mental health service provider. Such procedures focus on a 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. Policies further ensure that school-based mental health services are initiated within 15 days after identification and assessment. Furthermore, policies dictate that support from community-based mental health service providers for students who are referred for these services must be initiated within 30 days after the school or District makes a referral. Ongoing training with school administrators and mental health providers will detail these policies for school-site compliance. Contracts and regular meetings with community-based agencies and providers will ensure these timeframes are met. Additionally, District staff from the Department of Mental Health Services, the Division of Student Services, and the Department of Exceptional Student Education provide direct oversight as well in order to ensure compliance. All charter schools that elect to follow the M-DCPS plan will adhere to the same timeline, policies and procedures.

### **Charter Schools**

Charter schools that choose the M-DCPS (Non-Charter) plan will receive the services of the mental health coordinators on an itinerant basis as well as the referral option to contracted mental health service providers and professional development. School administrators and staff will receive the same training and must follow the same guidelines with the oversight from the Office of Compliance and Support/Charter Schools as well as the Department of Mental Health Services.

### **Coordination of Services with Primary Mental Health Care Provider Care and Other Mental Health Providers**

Following a referral for a Mental Health Screening Assessment or Threat Assessment Team meeting, a Mental Health Team meeting will take place to review outcomes/diagnosis and develop the Mental Health Plan. The purpose of this meeting is to coordinate mental health support services as well as progress monitoring procedures. Participants of this meeting will include administration, a school counselor, mental health coordinator, ESE staff, teacher(s), a parent/guardian, the student, school psychologist, the school social worker who conducted

the Mental Health Screening/Assessment, the primary mental health care provider (if applicable), and/or the outside mental health provider. This collaboration will allow all parties to be informed to assist with the appropriate treatment and follow-up for students.

The student's primary mental health care provider works closely with the student by providing mental health counseling services based on student needs. To further enhance mental health services/support for students, student services personnel, who are considered the primary mental health care provider, refer students to mental health contracted agencies based on demonstrated need of intensive mental health services. The primary mental health care provider is responsible for follow-up communication between the parent/guardian and the agency.

### **Strategies and Programs**

In addition to the Multi-Tiered System of Support, M-DCPS identifies and incorporates strategies and 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. Strategies are also in place to improve the early identification of social, emotional, or behavioral problems or substance abuse disorders to improve early intervention to assist students in dealing with trauma and violence. M-DCPS is incorporating a series of trainings geared towards recalibrating ways to view destructive student behavior to support the fostering of resilient learners. Strategies focus on creating trauma-sensitive classrooms to ensure school-based mental health providers and teachers are best equipped to assist students. Specific programs and strategies are delineated within each Tier. In addition, the following evidence-based strategies/resources are being utilized to further support students:

- MAWI Learning – a social-emotional learning program
- Cloud 9 – a social-emotional learning program
- “Ending the Silence Program” – student program in partnership with the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI)
- Teen Mental Health First Aid – selected to pilot this program for teens in partnership with the National Council for Behavioral Health
- “Mindful Peer Exchange” – in partnership with Florida International University’s Counseling and Psychology Department
- Student Awareness/Support Campaigns – “Counselor on Duty,” “Don’t Stall Just Call,” “We Can Help,” and “Mental Wellness Matters”

### **Student Success Centers/Pathways Program**

M-DCPS has also incorporated two programs that serve as alternatives to outdoor suspension to ensure students receive the same mental health support as they would at their home school. The Student Success Center (SCC) supports the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students. These centers provide an educational setting for students ages 11 and older for Level III-IV behavior and habitual Level II infractions of the Code of Student Conduct. The various SSC sites offer a safe environment in which students receive counseling, tutoring, and mentoring services based on need from certified teachers and mental health professionals. Students attending the program have the opportunity to

complete school through the duration of their SCC assignment, and wrap-around services are delivered to students and families.

Additionally, M-DCPS has incorporated the Pathways Program, which is a temporary Alternative Educational Setting (AES) placement for students in grades 6-12 who commit the most serious infractions of the Code of Student Conduct (Levels IV and V) and may be recommended for expulsion. This program also supports the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students. Students are assigned to the Pathways Program during the period of time which would have traditionally resulted in a 10-day outdoor suspension preceding expulsion. While assigned to the Pathways Program, students continue to receive academic support, in-house counseling services and wrap-around services from school staff and community agencies.

### **M-DCPS Progression of Mental Health Support**

The District established the Progression of Mental Health Support, which details a step-by-step process to ensure students who are experiencing behavioral challenges or pose a threat to self, school, or others, are immediately assessed and provided the appropriate support services.

### **Mental Health Awareness Training**

Pursuant to Florida Statute, M-DCPS educators and other school staff are participating in trainings designed to detect and respond to mental health issues and to connect children, youth and families who experience behavioral issues with appropriate services. M-DCPS has incorporated a training plan that includes Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training for staff following the Train-the-Trainer model. YMHFA is operated by the National Council for Behavioral Health and is a national authority on training and certification in youth mental health awareness and assistance. This evidence-based training is designed to facilitate mental health literacy and give adults the necessary skills to identify and interact with youth who are developing a mental health challenge or experiencing a mental health crisis.

Additionally, M-DCPS has implemented the Kognito K-12 At-Risk for Educators training, a supplemental, blended mental health awareness training model where school-site educators and staff participate in a simulation that provides them with the opportunity to learn the skills needed to identify if a student is having a mental health challenge or crisis, how to interact with them, and how to guide them to professional help.

In addition to teacher and staff trainings, the Department of Mental Health Services is broadening its awareness program for all stakeholders. A series of parent and community presentations continue to take place to ensure mental health education is provided for a greater awareness of the early warning signs, how parents and the community can support, and how to obtain assistance through M-DCPS via school and community resources. Many presentations are supported by entities such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness, South Florida Behavioral Network, and local municipalities.

## **SEDNET - Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities**

SEDNET focuses on supporting and representing the needs of students and improving the coordination of services for children with or at risk of emotional or behavioral disabilities and their families. The M-DCPS SEDNET coordinator communicates with local receiving facilities to address the unique needs of students who have been hospitalized under the Baker Act. Established procedures for student re-entry to school ensure ongoing support and services are provided upon the student's return to school. Additionally, the SEDNET coordinator (Department of Exceptional Student Education) will assist with training for Youth Mental Health First Aid implementation as required by Florida Statute.

### **Coordination of Mental Health Services**

The establishment and training of Threat Assessment Teams and Mental Health Teams has ensured a more timely process of not only identifying students in need of mental health assistance, but in supporting the planning, coordination, collaboration, and follow-through of services for students in need of such support. Mental Health Teams consist of all parties involved in supporting a student's care. All efforts are made to ensure the parent/guardian, school and community providers, and the student's primary mental health care provider are included to best support ongoing mental health services for the student.

### **Mental Health Screening and Assessment Procedures**

Students who have not experienced successful outcomes as a result of the interventions of the MTSS will require a convening of the Student Support Team. The intent of this meeting is to review all interventions that have been provided to the student; review academic and behavioral progress; as well as the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), if applicable; and determine if the appropriate course of action is to refer the student for a Mental Health Screening/Assessment. Participants of this meeting will include administration, a school counselor, ESE staff, teacher(s), a parent/guardian, the student, and a licensed a psychologist or social worker.

### **Mental Health Team Meeting/Mental Health Plan**

Following a referral for a Mental Health Screening Assessment or Threat Assessment Team meeting, a Mental Health Team meeting will take place to review outcomes/diagnosis and develop the Mental Health Plan. The purpose of this meeting is to coordinate mental health support services as well as progress monitoring procedures. Participants of this meeting will include administration, a school counselor, a mental health coordinator, ESE staff, teacher(s), a parent/ guardian, the student, a school psychologist or the school social worker who conducted the Mental Health Screening/Assessment, primary mental health care provider (if applicable), and/or the outside mental health provider. This collaboration will allow all parties to be informed to assist with the appropriate treatment and follow-up for students.

### **Threat Assessment Teams**

Threat Assessment Teams have been established at each M-DCPS school site. The team's duties include the coordination of resources, assessment, and intervention with individuals

whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of themselves, the school, or others. The M-DCPS Threat Assessment Teams are in accordance with Florida Statute and are comprised of a school administrator, law enforcement officer, teacher and mental health professional. These teams are trained following the Sandy Hook Promise model and have been provided resources to conduct threat assessments. This model is based on the Virginia model, which is considered a best practice in this area of school safety.

Additionally, the threat assessment protocols will evolve in the future based on the model threat assessment policies that will be developed by the Florida Department of Education's (FLDOE) Office of Safe Schools. The protocols include referrals for the following mental health services currently identified by M-DCPS:

- Baker Act
- Exceptional Student Education
- Counseling
- Health Connect
- Contracted Agencies
- Police

### **Threat Assessment Process**

When a preliminary determination is made that a student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to him/herself or others, the Threat Assessment Team shall be notified to determine the best course of action to take. Upon the team's preliminary determination that a student poses a threat to him/herself or others or exhibits significantly disruptive behavior or a need for assistance, the team may obtain criminal history record information and information that is considered exempt from disclosure under Chapter 119 F.S. to ensure the safety of others. Entities that may provide such information include, but are not limited to, school districts, school personnel, state and local law enforcement, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Health, Agency for Health Care Administration, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Department of Education, the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office, and any such service or support provider contracting with these agencies. When an immediate mental health or substance abuse crisis is suspected, school personnel shall follow current policies and practices established by M-DCPS to engage behavioral health crisis resources. For incidents taking place outside of normal school hours, the Threat Assessment Teams convene during the next business day to determine whether the threat was deemed transient or substantive. Additionally, the team works with the school's Mental Health Team to coordinate resources, assessment, and intervention with the individuals whose behavior may have posed a threat to the safety of school staff or students.

### **B. Expenditures**

During the 2018-2019 school year, the first year of the allocation, M-DCPS hired 30 school-based mental health coordinators. These 30 all hold a Master's Degree and certification in

the fields of Social Work, Mental Health Counseling, Guidance and Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy, and/or Psychology.

Via the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, M-DCPS solicited proposals from community-based mental health providers. The following 12 contracted providers were selected to support the needs of students and families on a referral basis. The agencies hold the required licensure/certification to practice psychology, clinical social work, mental health counseling, marriage and family therapy, or psychology in the State of Florida

- Citrus Health Network, Inc.
- Ayuda, Inc.
- Chrysalis Health, Inc.
- DTT Coaching Services, LLC
- Empowering Youth, Inc.
- Board of Trustees (Florida International University)
- The Village South
- Healthy Connections CMHC, Inc.
- Jewish Community Services of South Florida
- Prosperity Social and Community Development Group, Inc.
- Neurohealth Professional of Florida, Inc.
- Invo Healthcare Associates, LLC

Allocated funds will be utilized to further enhance and support the implementation, collaboration and oversight of mental health services to ensure all mental-health-related matters are addressed following established guidelines and that the follow-up process for each student referred is supported through its entirety:

<u>Requested Positions/Services</u>	<u>Salary/Benefits</u>
Personnel (3 Administrators, 3 Program Specialists and 40 Mental Health Coordinators to directly serve students)	\$3,900,000.00
Outsourcing of Mental Health Services/Providers (Contracted services with agencies that focus on mental health prevention as well as provide evidence- based mental health care and treatment for students)	\$2,000,000.00
Contracted Services (Organizations that focus on social emotional learning and mental wellness strategies)	\$200,000.00
Professional Development/Training	\$500,000.00

Total Estimated Allocation (Non-Charter)	\$6,600,000.00
Total Estimated Allocation (Charter Schools) *	\$1,776,000.00

\*Should a charter school choose to remain in the M-DCPS (Non-Charter) plan, the estimated allocations will be adjusted accordingly.

The administrative positions and Program Specialists in the Department of Mental Health Services are responsible for the coordination and monitoring of student mental health referrals, District and community resources, and the delivery of evidence-based mental health care and treatment for M-DCPS students. This Department will ensure referred students are accessing services and will assist in removing barriers that may hinder treatment.

The addition of the Mental Health Coordinator positions will further expand support in all schools including elementary, middle, and senior high, provide greater flexibility to address serious concerns as they arise, and reduce the ratio of students to staff to better align with nationally recommended ratio models. These services are directly tied to students and are reviewed and adjusted based on school or student mental health assistance needs. These employees assist and support students and families with social, emotional, and physical development needs to enhance and maximize student success. Additionally, they provide evidence-based practices, including risk assessments and threat assessments, as needed. They also support a more timely identification of students in need of mental health and psychiatric evaluations. Priority for evaluation is given to students referred by Threat Assessments Teams. Principals are directed each year to refrain from assigning teaching and other non-counseling duties to school-site mental health service providers in order to maximize the amount of time spent providing direct services to students.

The outsourcing of mental health services as related to the referral process is critical to ensure a stronger collaboration among the school, community, and agency to provide a full continuum of mental health services to students. This outsourcing of referrals allows for a fully operational system where there is two-way communication occurring within the system. Data is collected to align with the new statute for reporting purposes. This requirement allows services to be coordinated in a more precise manner and facilitates progress monitoring.

Additionally, mental health/social-emotional learning programs will assist efforts to reduce the stigma around mental health; teach compassion, and empathy; build positive school climate; identify, report and prevent bullying; provide sensitivity training in the areas of race, gender, social economic status, linguistic differences, and disability; and promote a culture of respect. Further, an external reviewer will assess the overall implementation of these initiatives.

Funds earmarked for Professional Development/Training will provide for temporary instructor coverage, registration costs for related workshops, training and technical assistance and other associated costs. There are several requirements for Professional Development/Training including threat assessment, risk assessment, and mental health awareness training for school-based staff. In addition to school-site staff, bus drivers will

participate in a mental health awareness training. These trainings are required for the implementation of evidence-based programs.

### **C. Expenditure Assurances**

Regarding the noted allocation and expenditures, one hundred percent of state funds are 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 behavioral services.

This plan does not supplant other funding sources, increase salaries, or provide staff bonuses.

Additionally, in an effort to utilize other funding sources to provide school-based mental health services, M-DCPS seeks additional funding options. The District works diligently to ensure opportunities are maximized, where appropriate, to seek Medicaid reimbursement and third-party payments. The District is also working closely with the contracted community-based agencies to ensure these options are utilized. Furthermore, the District submitted a proposal to the National Council of Behavioral Health and was selected to participate in their Teen Mental Health First Aid Pilot Program. Additionally, the District submitted a grant application to the Department of Justice for their STOP the Violence Prevention and Mental Health Training Program. Awards are expected to be given in September 2019, and, if selected, M-DCPS would receive \$500,000 in funding to support such programs in schools.

### **.D. Program Implementation and Outcomes**

M-DCPS employs 627 school counselors, 212 school psychologists, and 170 school social workers. The ratio of students to staff by category are:

- 1 school counselor to 473 students
- 1 psychologist to 1,400 students
- 1 school social worker to 1,746 students

All school counselors, social workers, and psychologists hold Master's Degrees and certification in Guidance and Counseling, Social Work, and/or Psychology.

### **System for Tracking Student Data**

M-DCPS has a comprehensive tracking system that includes a District Student Case Management System (SCMS), Early Warning System (EWS), a collaboration site for Threat Assessment data, and access to the data from multiple community providers.

The SCMS supports the documentation of students being referred to and receiving mental health services. Both the SCMS and EWS platforms provide data needed to drive decision-making in schools. The systems assist schools in identifying data associated with students who may be at risk and require support. Some of the data indicators used include students'

state and local assessment results, attendance data, discipline information, course information and demographic indicators. The data is analyzed to create at-risk indicators that guide school-based teams to prioritize student needs. Each school's School Support Team/Mental Health Team meets regularly to discuss students with such at-risk concerns and to develop intervention plans tailored to the individual students' needs. The intervention plan may include individual or group counseling provided by school-based mental health professionals and referral to community-based agencies.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the District established additional data entry codes to support the documentation of students being referred to and receiving mental health services. Also, M-DCPS established a collaboration site that captures Threat Assessment Forms for further tracking. Additionally, M-DCPS works in collaboration with The Children's Trust and 12 contracted agencies to acquire and review data on a regular basis.

M-DCPS' comprehensive data systems support a tracking mechanism for school and District personnel to better identify the number of students at high risk for mental health or co-occurring substance abuse disorders who received mental health screenings or assessments; the number of students referred to school-based mental health providers; the number of students referred to community-based mental health service providers; the number of students who received school-based interventions, services, or assistance, and the number of students who received community-based interventions, services, or assistance.