

Hernando County School District Mental Health Plan 2020-2021

(revised)



The 2019 Florida Legislature Passed Senate Bill 7030, Implementation of Legislative Recommendation of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission and was signed by Governor Ron DeSantis on May 8, 2019. Section 15 of SB7030 goes into effect July 1, 2019 and amends the Mental Health Assistance Allocation (MHAA) which provides funding to assist school districts in establishing or expanding school-based mental healthcare.

Section 1011.62(16), Florida Statutes, states that 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.

The Hernando County School District (HCSD) will maintain and continue to improve the quality and accessibility of mental health services through direct services and/or referral to outside providers.

Each school district's MHAA Plan must include all district schools, including charter schools. Hernando County Schools includes two charter schools, BEST Academy and Gulf Coast Charter. Both charter schools have elected to follow the Hernando County Schools Mental Health Plan.

Mental Health Assistance Plan

HCSD has developed and modified a Mental Health/Substance Abuse Services Decision Chart (*Appendix A*) to be used by all school based mental health providers (SBMHP) to include certified school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and consultation with school board nurses when applicable when determining next steps for a student. The Mental Health/Substance Abuse Decision Chart in conjunction with one or more of the Mental Health Screeners, will assist school district personnel and charter school personnel in determining the best evidence-based mental health service(s) to recommend for the student. When deemed appropriate for **School Based Mental Health (SBMH)** Providers to provide direct services for the students, the professional(s) will conduct an evidence-based assessment in order to identify characteristics of a mental health challenge, develop a support plan and recommend appropriate interventions in order to ensure a recovery-based model of care within a 15 day timeline. When a referral to an outside provider is more appropriate, the outside provider is responsible for a psychosocial assessment in order to diagnose, identify treatment needs, and appropriate interventions in order to ensure a

recovery-based model of care within a 30 day timeline. The HCSD implements a multi-tiered system of supports process to deliver or refer evidence based mental health care assessment, identify characteristics of a mental health challenge, recommend interventions, development of a support plan and recovery services to students with one or more co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses or referral and to students at high risk of such mental health challenges. 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.

The purpose of this multi-tiered system of supports includes:

- Strategies to increase the amount of time that school-based student services personnel spend providing direct services to students
- 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.
- 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

TIER 1: Universal strategies- focus on promoting social and emotional well-being and development of all students through the following:

- Youth and Mental Health First Aid training
- Kognito on-line training for mental health awareness/suicide prevention
- Florida Positive Behavior Support (PBS)
 - School wide behavior expectations
 - Restorative practices
 - Equity training
 - Start with Hello Programs
- School-wide Social Emotional Learning (evidence-based)
- Substance Abuse Prevention Education
- Suicide Prevention Awareness training
- District CARE Team
- Review of early warning indicator data (attendance, grades, disciplines).

School based Mental Health Role	Staff to student ratio	Responsibilities
Certified School Counselors	Elem-1-2: 700 Middle-2-3: 900 High:4 counselors at every high school with a 1:400	School-based counselors have received training in the area of mental health topics such as suicide prevention and Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) The school counselor provides Tier 1

School based Mental Health Role	Staff to student ratio	Responsibilities
		support working proactively with students through classroom intervention supports, and works collaboratively with school administration and parents.
Medically Fragile Nurses	2:23,000	The District currently employs 2(two) school board registered nurses to provide training and consultation when needed.
School Social Workers	1:1277	HCSD employs 16 school based social workers. Eight (8) are paid through MHAA. 2 more social worker positons are allocated for the 2020-2021 school year improving the student: staff ratio. All School Social Workers participate in the multi-tiered system system of support (MTSS) teams.
School Psychologists	1:2090	HCSD currently has 9 allocations (general funded) for school psychologists that are assigned to our schools to provide academic and behavioral support by participating on each schools multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) team. Two(2)school psychologist position will be added for the 2020-2021 school year further improving the student: staff ratio funded by MHAA. School psychologists are responsible for any evaluations that are referred, and reevaluations requested
Substance Abuse Counselors	1:1150	HCSD currently employs three(3) substance abuse prevention counselors. They provide Substance Abuse awareness training to staff and are available for consultation when requested.
Behavior Specialist/Analyst	1:3833	HCSD currently employs one (1) Board Certified Behavior Analyst and one (1) Florida Certified Behavior Analyst and four (4) behavior specialists. This group provides school wide support to each school for their Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) projects. (funded by General fund and IDEA)

Tier 2: Targeted strategies to support students at risk of, or with, low level mental health challenges. Tier 2 strategies include but are not limited to:

- check in/check out
- social skills groups
- social emotional learning/Purpose Prep
- evidence-based screeners for identification of necessary intervention
- small group session
- monitoring of intervention fidelity and the student
- referrals to community providers when appropriate

Hernando County has two (2) school-based mental health programs that serve students with DSMV diagnosis or characteristics. Project STARFISH for grades K-5 and Project SEAHORSE for grades 6-12. These programs are Medicaid funded. These programs have a referral process and students participating receive therapeutic services. In addition, the PACE Center for Girls (Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) contract) offers mental health counseling service in two (2) Hernando County schools: Challenger K8 and Explorer K8. These schools were selected to receive the “REACH” program based on HCSD at-risk data.

Mental Health Role	Responsibilities
Certified School Counselors	Provides small group instruction such as anti-bullying /harassment at the elementary level, anger management, conflict resolution, and progress monitoring of interventions. Counselors provide small group intervention such as coping skills, anger management, check-in/ check-out monitoring, etc.
School Social Workers	Provides evidence based small group instruction to students referred during MTSS team meetings or from Social Worker/MH referrals, within 15 days of screening/assessment that has identified needs. Participate on initial review FBA/BIP, 504, and problem solving committees to provide mental health related recommendations for accommodations, interventions, and supports. Maintain progress monitoring for all Tier 2 interventions provided by School social workers.
School Psychologists	May provide small group instruction once students have been referred/identified by MTSS team process. Small group instruction consists of evidence based curriculums such as Zones of Regulation, conflict resolution, anger management, and Second Step. This also includes progress monitoring of Tier 2 interventions.
Substance Abuse Counselors	Provides Tier 2 small group classes addressing positive behavior, (anti bullying for grades 6-12), anger management, substance abuse, and sexual harassment.

Mental Health Role	Responsibilities
Behavior Specialist/Analyst	Provides Tier 2 small group support and may provide direct services for small group evidence-based curriculums such as Zones of Regulation. The Behavior Specialist will also be responsible for progress monitoring of Tier 2 interventions utilizing RtIB.

TIER 3: Intensive, ongoing strategies to support those with significant mental health needs such as:

- individualized counseling
- transition support may be provided for students re-entering from short term hospitalization
- transition support may be provided for students returning from residential treatment/DJJ,
- REACH program provides individualized counseling at two (2) school sites via the agreement between HCSD and the PACE program.
- referrals to community providers when appropriate

Mental Health Role	Responsibilities
Certified School Counselor	Provides individualized counseling to students in need of mental health support or follow referral process to school social workers or community. Responsibilities to include de-escalation and assessment for risk/ideations to harm self.
School Board Nurses	Provides individualized medical support as it relates to mental health and communicates with school social workers, counselors, parents, and administrators.
School Social Workers	Provides individualized counseling within 15 days of qualifying assessment, using evidence-based interventions to students identified for assessment through the MTSS process, a direct referral, or individual crisis; collaborate with primary/community care providers for continuum of care. Support guardians with community resource information, including mental health care providers, psychoeducational materials and resources. Multi-disciplinary team meeting referrals/participation, and student/guardian re-entry support after hospitalization for mental health concerns. Responsibilities to include de-escalation and assessment for risks/ideations to harm self. Maintain progress monitoring for all Tier 3 interventions provided by School Social Workers.
School Psychologists	Provides individualized counseling when deemed appropriate, facilitates the development of individualized behavior intervention plans, and progress

Mental Health Role	Responsibilities
	monitoring of Tier 3 interventions. School Psychologists are responsible for completion of recommended evaluations and reevaluations.
Substance Abuse Counselors	Provides individualized substance abuse assessment and counseling based on referrals and requests when deemed appropriate.
Behavior Specialist/Analyst	Provides individualized behavior intervention support, progress monitoring of the behavior intervention plan, and provides crisis intervention.

HCSD has 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 district 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.

- HCSD Exceptional Student Education Department oversees Project Starfish and Project Seahorse. Project Starfish provides services for a maximum of 10 students. This program is located at Pine Grove Elementary. Project Seahorse provides school based mental health supports on a referral system at the alternative school, Endeavor Academy. ESE has hired a social worker to specifically provide individual and group counseling to the students enrolled in these two programs. This position is general funded.
- Baycare (community behavioral health agency) currently provides (5) community mental health personnel that provides prevention and Tier 2 services to HCSD middle schools via community grant.
- HCSD has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Mobile Response Team and with the Community Action Team to provide crisis and community services for individuals and families. Social Workers can refer to the community action team for those students that meet the criteria.
- HCSD has interagency agreements between Florida Department of Children and Families, Kids Central Inc. (including The Centers, Inc., Youth and Family Alternatives, and LifeStream Behavioral Center), Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, and Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities to coordinate services for children served by the Florida Child Welfare System.

- HCSD has Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PACE Outreach for Girls and the REACH program.
- HCSD Student Services meets monthly with multi agencies to provide mental health supports as a district to review and provide wrap around services for students and families.

Program Implementation and Outcomes

The number and ratios of Florida Department of Education-certified or licensed school-based mental health services providers employed by the district is listed in the MTSS Tiered interventions. Due to the increase in the 2020-2021 Mental Health Assistance Allocation, additional school based mental health positions have been added providing direct mental health services to students and will improve the student: staff ratio. This will include the addition of two (2) school psychologists to expand services and two (2) social workers to provide direct services at assigned schools.

School Based Mental Health Personnel (SBMH) will track and enter their data monthly. SBMH will make this data available to the Compliance Monitor of Mental Health Services and Threat Assessments who will report to FLDOE and monitor for compliance.

- number of students screened/assessed
- number of students referred to either school-based or community-based providers for services or assistance
- number of students received school-based or community-based interventions, services or assistance
- school-based and community-based mental health providers, including licensure type, paid for from funds provided through the allocation
- contract based collaborative efforts or partnerships with community mental health programs, agencies or providers.
- Mental Health/Substance Abuse Decision Chart (Appendix A) reflects the 15 day required timeline for assessing and initiating school based mental health services and the 30 day required timeline for community based initiation of mental health services providers. School administration and SBMH personnel receive this training annually.
- A social worker referral form and link is to all stakeholders (Appendix B). This link will automatically notify the social worker of a social worker referral as well as create a mental health tracking database and to meet the required 15 day timeline. School administration and SBMH personnel receive this process training annually

- A list of free screeners is provided for trained staff to select from based on the referring concern. (*Appendix C*).
- School counselors and school social workers will complete the “Hernando County School District Social Worker Referral link (*Appendix B*) when referring to an outside mental health agency. This data will be tracked and monitored on the Social Worker Database by the school social workers and reviewed monthly.
- School-based mental health personnel who complete Tier 2 and Tier 3 mental health screenings keep and provide a log of these screenings and document these assessments on their google doc database.
- HCSD benefits from support for mental health from our discretionary projects such as Severely Emotionally Disturbed Network (SEDNET), Florida Diagnostic Learning Resource Systems (FDLRS), and Project 10.
- *Please see attached the distance learning plan for mental health services.

Expenditures and Assurances

HCSD will use 100% of the Mental Health Assistance Allocation (MHAA) to provide support for direct mental health services by increasing the number of mental health care providers available to students and training. As noted in the plan, the additional funds will be allocated to school based mental health personnel to include school psychologist and social workers, trainings for school-based mental health staff includes, but not be limited to, state and national mental health conferences/school based mental health personnel trainings (webinars) to also include substance abuse.

These funds do not supplant other funding sources, increase salaries, or provide staff bonuses.

Estimated Total Allocation Funds	\$859,295.00
Compliance Monitor of Mental Health Services and Threat Assessments-10%	\$8,283
8 School Social Workers	\$531,000.00
2 School Social Workers (2020-2021 school year)	\$134,000.00
2 school psychologist (2020-2021 school year)	\$147,000.00
*There are an additional 6 School Social Workers that provide mental health services (funded through HCSD general revenue approximately \$372,000)	
Mental Health Trainings and Conferences	\$18,012.00
Tier 2 and Tier 3 Evidence Based Curriculum including training	\$21,000.00

Community-based mental health providers	\$0.00
School district expenditures for services provided by contract-based collaborative efforts or partnerships with community-based mental health program agencies or providers (funded through Medicaid dollars, grants and no cost programs)	\$0.00

**=indicates other funding sources*

Note: Funding totals are approximate and funds may be adjusted between the earmarked categories as determined by the mental health committee.