

Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

Submitted by  
Office of Safe Schools  
Lafayette County School District

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## Section 1 – Evidence-based Mental Health Services

The Lafayette County School Board is committed to delivering evidence-based Mental Health services to the students of Lafayette 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.

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 a forum for individuals who may need further assessment to be identified and referred.

- 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.
- All 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. More specifically:
  - Monthly character education lessons will be provided at Lafayette Elementary School. In addition, an annual anti-bullying training will be delivered by the School Resource Office to students and staff with the goal of identifying a common language around bullying and a consistent set of responses to bullying behavior.
  - Daily, at the Lafayette County Middle/High School, via morning announcements, specific character traits are highlighted and explicated with relevant quotations.
- In the spring of the school year, the School Resource Officer will work with fifth graders, using archery, to teach resilience and overcoming adversity in order to inoculate them against the stress of moving to middle school the following year.
- The School Resource Officer currently implements the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) curriculum with rising sixth graders. This program will be expanded to reach students in grades 4 through 6 in the 2018-2019 school year.
- Mental Health Awareness and Prevention training will be provided at all grade levels to increase student and staff sensitivity to mental illness and to promote a positive school culture around responding to the needs of others.

Tier 2 programs, in addition to general mental health awareness, seek to provide mental health interventions and services to specific groups of students. Tier 2 programs are not intended to isolate individual cases of mental health need, but provide small group training and programs to address elevated need as identified through early warning indicators such as attendance,

discipline referrals, and grades, and/or marked changes from baseline behavior or mood. These programs are intended to raise self-awareness in the participants and to provide a pathway for individuals who may need further assessment to be identified and referred.

In order to receive Tier 2 or Tier 3 services, the following referral processes will be followed:

- Early Warning System: Monthly, school-based Threat Assessment Teams will review all students' attendance, discipline referrals, and academic achievement data in order to identify which students might benefit from an increased intensity of mental health support.
- Teacher referral: Individual teachers may refer students for review by the Threat Assessment Team by submitting a referral to their school counselor. Referrals should be accompanied by data (objective or anecdotal) clearly indicating the reason for referral.
- Family referral: Family members of students may refer their children for review by the Threat Assessment Team by approaching any school staff member or SRO and request assistance.
- Self-referral: Students may approach any school staff member or SRO and request assistance.
- Information gleaned from Fortify FL and social media monitoring will also be used to determine whether students pose a threat or are in need of additional mental health support.

At Tier 2, students will be referred to the school's MTSS team in order to identify strategies that have been implemented and were unsuccessful, recommend strategies to be tried next, and determine whether the student should be referred for Tier 3 interventions, based on screenings and data reviewed by the MTSS team.

- For students at Lafayette County Middle/High School, an attendance initiative will address truancy or frequent absences via individualized positive messaging (text message).
- At the elementary school, students who are identified as needing additional intervention, beyond Tier 1 will work in small groups in the school's garden with the goal of encouraging open conversation and surfacing underlying issues that can be addressed in this forum, by the group or the school guidance counselor.
- In both the Elementary and the Middle/High School, evidence-based social, emotional, and behavioral intervention groups will be facilitated by the school counselor, based on need.

The Director of Safety and Mental Health will provide information and consultation support to teachers, students, and families (as needed) regarding school and community-based supports and services that may address identified needs.

Tier 3 mental health services are those services provided to individual students and their families based on recommendations or referrals from school personnel or family members. While Tier 2 services are implemented in groups, Tier 3 services, while often the same as Tier 2, are implemented individually.

- Lafayette County School Board will hire a full-time licensed psychologist to provide screening, evaluation and therapy services to students referred for mental health services or referred for eligibility determination for disability-related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Students who are identified as needing Tier 3 intervention services may also be referred to individual counselors or psychologists that are provided by the district's agency partners such as Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Solutions in Education, and Children's Home Society.

#### Facilitating, Supporting, and Monitoring Recovery

- Early Warning System data, such as attendance, discipline referrals, and grades will be monitored for each student who received Tier 2 or Tier 3 mental health support in order to gauge the impact of therapies and community-based supports.
- Teachers will provide objective and anecdotal data to the MTSS team, monthly, for all students who receive Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports in order to monitor impact.
- Families of students will provide anecdotal feedback to the MTSS team and/or the therapist working with the student and family in order to know whether improvements at school are being carried over in-home.
- The subjective experience of the student in response to therapy will be reported to the MTSS team through the therapist or counselor along with any assessment data the therapist is using to drive treatment.

In the event that improvements in student functioning are not noted and/or there is a recurrence of the original symptoms or behaviors, the MTSS team will adjust interventions and supports to address this recurrence.

The district will partner local agencies to provide support for addressing mental health needs within the district. The district's Director of Safety and Mental Health will provide case management and care coordination services to families in order to ensure continuity of care and communication among medical professionals working with the family, and facilitate access to other supports and services available through community partners and agencies. In the role of case manager, the Director of Safety and Mental Health facilitates communication between the agencies and the district in order to track the student's progress. 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 underachievement.

## Section II – Collaboration and Coordination of Services

Lafayette County currently works with Meridian Behavioral Health to provide school-based counseling services. Because of the Mental Health Allocation funds, our district will be able to provide more services. Students will be identified through the referral processes outlined above. These referrals will be logged into a database when the Director of Safety and Mental Health receives them. The parent is contacted to schedule an appointment to speak with our Director of Safety and Mental Health. During this meeting, a social history questionnaire and other demographic and financial information will be collected in order to process the referral and to set up counseling. If the student does not have health insurance coverage, steps to obtain coverage for the student will be initiated. As part of their case management duties, the Director of Safety and Mental Health will monitor student participation in therapeutic supports.

## Section III - Data Management

Using a combination of Skyward Student Information System and data kept in a spreadsheet curated by the Director of Safety and Mental Health, the following variables will be tracked:

1. Number of students screened
2. Number of students assessed
3. Number of students referred for mental health services
  - a. Number of students who received mental health services (school-based)
  - b. Number of students who received mental health services (community-based)

Additionally, the district will maintain records on the number and credentials of all of the counselors and therapists providing services either as direct employees of the district or as contracted providers.

## Section IV- Monitoring of Expenditures

Lafayette County School Board received \$126,200 for the 2018-2019 school year to be expended as follows

- Licensed School Psychologist:  
\$84,500 (salary & benefits)
- Director of Safety and Mental Health:  
\$78,000 (salary and benefits)  
(12,622) (10% of the Mental Health Allocation)  
(\$65,378) - The rest of this expense will be absorbed with other district funding.
- Contracted Mental Health Services  
\$29,098