



Developmental Research School  
at the University of Florida

## UF Lab School Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan 2018 - 2019

### **Evidence-Based Mental Health Services:**

P. K. Yonge Developmental Research School is a K-12 school serving approximately 1,155 students from 31 cities including Gainesville. P.K. Yonge's Mental Health awareness and crisis prevention efforts vary across this wide distribution of students' ages and emotional development. Tier 1 social-emotional and mental health supports for elementary classrooms, include students engaging in the Caring School Community curriculum and participating in Daily Morning Meetings that address social-emotional skills. Additionally, a component of our language arts curriculum developed by the Center for the Collaborative Classroom, has a strong social-emotional component. Grade-level data including teacher observations of child interactions, attendance, discipline referrals, and achievement scores are reviewed several times throughout the year. These data are utilized to inform school policy and infrastructure decisions, teacher resources, and environmental enhancements to foster a system of positive behavioral supports.

In 6th Grade, we have implemented an Advisory component to address the social and emotional well-being of our students. Weekly sessions support their acclimation to the middle school environment, help to reduce bullying and social isolation, and support students' mental health. Through the weekly Advisory meetings faculty are positioned to identify students who need more direct support during this critical year of transition. Student well-being is monitored through reviewing teacher observations of student interactions, motivation, engagement, and work completion. Additionally, data on attendance, discipline referrals, and achievement progress are tracked. Grade-level data inform classroom strategies and any additional systems-level initiatives that may be needed (e.g., student mentoring).

In grades 7-12, we track student involvement in extracurricular activities, such as clubs, athletics, and visual and/or performing arts, with the goal of each student being engaged in at least one activity that provides a niche space for them at P.K. Yonge. Additionally, secondary students in grades 6-12 receive classroom guidance lessons from school counselors who push into English Language Arts and Social Studies classrooms. These lessons encompass such topics as stress management, conflict mediation, social media use, bullying/cyberbullying, and goal-setting. Tier I data reviews for grades 7-12 include teacher observations of student connectedness to the school, credit tracking, attendance, discipline referrals, and achievement scores.

P.K. Yonge's goal for Tier 1 is to assure the core program is meeting the social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs of at least 85% of students, much like the academic-side of our MTSS model. Identification of individual student needs for Tiers II and III includes approximately 10% and 5% respectively.

Our Student and Family Services Team consists of a Director of Student and Family Services, the Principal, the Assistant Principal, K-12 School Counselors, Elementary and Secondary Behavioral Support Specialists, a School Psychologist, the School Nurse, and the School Resource Officer. This Team meets weekly to discuss systems of support and students of concern.

Each year we conduct a student survey to determine student perceptions related to safety, substance abuse and mental health needs. The survey is adapted from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics' School Climate Survey with selection of items tailored to the unique needs of P. K. Yonge. Domains include Acceptance of Diversity, Interpersonal Communication and Relationships, School Belonging and Connectedness, and School Safety. Quantitative analyses are derived from Likert scale item ratings and qualitative analyses identify prevalent themes from open-ended questions. This data is analyzed by our UF Psychologist and shared with the Student and Family Services Team. We then determine action steps to address areas of need and concern. The most recent data indicate the majority of P. K. Yonge students have high personal regard for teachers; feel supported by friends and teachers; feel connected to the school through sports, the performing arts center or club affiliation; and feel safe in the school knowing they have a teacher, counselor, or administrator they can go to for social-emotional supports. However, the school also identified needs for greater bully prevention and awareness as well as a need to foster more supportive teacher-student interactions among two middle school cohorts. Additionally, significant mental health stressors were reported from several individuals in three high school cohorts. In response, the school is planning to hire an additional school counselor at the secondary level. Teachers also will be provided with strategies for both identifying and supporting students experiencing mental health distress through the ongoing mentorship of the Learning Community Leaders and other preplanning professional development supports initiated by administration.

At a more micro level, students of concern are discussed at Grade Level Student Success Team meetings, which take place twice each quarter. At this meeting, student academic performance, attendance, and social-emotional status is discussed; plans to address individual student needs are constructed with plans for ongoing monitoring included in the action steps. Parents are often included in the construction of action plans.

Students who need Tier 2 social emotional support are referred to one of our four school counselors. Students receive differentiated counseling, both individual and small group, based on their needs. Progress is monitored, families are engaged in the process when struggles persist, and the counselors also connect parents/guardians to community resources for additional supports. Issues with discipline and/or attendance are addressed by our behavior support personnel.

Students who require Tier 3 social emotional support are referred to our school psychologist and school psychology doctoral intern. Issues with discipline and/or attendance are handled by our behavior support personnel. For serious discipline issues, the School Resource Officer and/or other members of the University Police Department may be engaged with a student.

**Supports that Address Mental Health Needs (assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment, and recovery):**

Students who are referred for Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 counseling and/or school psychology services are assessed using normed instruments appropriate to the issues being experienced by the student. At Tier 2 assessments may include screenings for social skills, motivation, and/or common child/adolescent emotional needs (e.g., test anxiety, self-regulation, frustration tolerance). These results will inform behavioral goals. Subsequently, counseling and behavior interventions will target skills needs (e.g., building stress coping mechanisms, fostering self-reliance and self-efficacy, and generating problem-solving strategies). Progress is monitored and utilized to inform intervention duration and modifications as needed. At Tier 3 assessments may include behavioral observations as well as mental health omnibus measures. Additionally, extended Tier 3 services without adequate progress may prompt referrals for special education eligibility and thus may include mental health diagnostic rating scales (e.g., anxiety, depression, oppositional defiant disorder) and/or behavioral measures. These data will guide intervention decisions which may include behavioral contracts with positive reinforcement plans, check-in/check-out procedures, assigning adult mentors, and counseling therapies (e.g., Brief Solution Focused Therapy, Mindfulness, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Exposure-Response Prevention Therapy). Progress is monitored utilizing a range of mental health measures and outcome data will inform the duration and intensity of interventions as well as any modifications.

Students who are experiencing severe crisis may be transported to crisis centers for intensive intervention. In this case, we seek to obtain a Consent to Share with outside treatment providers so that we remain as informed as possible of student needs and interventions. Upon a student's return to school, we conduct a Re-Entry Meeting, in which we develop action steps for the student's transition back into school and scaffolding support moving forward.

## **Evidence-Based Mental Health Services for Students with One or More Co-Occurring Mental Health or Substance Abuse Diagnoses and Students at Risk for Such Diagnosis:**

Significant mental health needs that may include substance abuse, comorbidities, psychopharmacology, medically-fragile status, and/or criminality require a multi-faceted and often multi-agency approach to comprehensive service delivery. In these instances, Student and Family Services will collaborate with multiple in-school and outside providers to design an individualized support plan for the student. The school obtains consent to collaborate with outside care providers regarding absences for treatment, counseling or behavioral interventions, and monitoring of drug screenings. Medication needs may be coordinated between the student's primary physician or psychiatrist and the school nurse. P. K. Yonge also has established procedures for monitoring criminal acts and court proceedings when youth have pending or adjudicated circumstances. The school also has procedures for addressing student needs if they are at risk for neglect or abuse and removed from custodial care. Additionally, transitional hospital and home bound services can be implemented as needed. Collaborating with families on intervention decisions will always be an important consideration given their insights on the student's needs and the desire to extend intervention to home applications. Evidence-based mental health services for high-risk individuals vary depending on the diagnoses and confounding personal circumstances. Generally, psychoeducation, relaxation training and cognitive-behavioral therapies (CBT) are effective in addressing internalizing disorders (e.g., anxiety, depression). However, for some specific internalizing disorders (e.g., separation anxiety disorder, phobias, social anxiety, test anxiety) adding exposure therapy and/or successive approximations may be particularly helpful. For obsessive-compulsive disorder, exposure may be considered first-line treatment and relaxation training may be counterproductive. For depression including behavioral activation technique can also improve results when coupled with CBT. For externalizing disorders behavioral modification strategies and CBT also can be an effective treatment for specific needs (e.g., anger management, oppositional/defiance). When more aggressive externalizing symptoms present, family therapy is often recommended. For younger children, Parent-Child Interactive Therapy may be especially helpful. Brief solution-focused therapy is noted to be effective in improving motivation, especially with minority students. Regardless of the mental health intervention, generalization of the skills beyond the therapy session is a goal and may often be facilitated through behavioral modification techniques. Additionally, as the research on evidence-based interventions (EBI) is continuously emerging it is important that the school direct service providers remain current on the literature. Fortunately, P. K. Yonge has a consistent history of promoting personnel continuing education training and there are a number of national clearinghouse resources for EBIs (e.g., SAMHSA, What Works Clearinghouse, Promising Practices Network, Social Programs that Work).

### **Collaborative Partnerships with Community Providers and Agencies:**

As a Developmental Research School, we partner with the School Psychology and School Counseling programs at the University of Florida to develop support systems for assessing, diagnosing, intervening and treating the mental health needs of our students.

Additionally, we work to build and maintain relationships with our two primary mental health crisis facilities, Meridian Behavioral Healthcare and UF Health at Vista. We have toured the facilities and met with doctors and other providers so that we are informed about the facility procedures and protocols. We seek to obtain Consent to Share documentation so that we can support a continuation of services after a student has undergone mental health intervention and treatment by these providers.

The University of Florida Police Department (UPD) collaborates with us on issues involving students at risk. We provide regular updates on students of concern after our weekly Student and Family Services meetings. The UPD has supported us with multiple investigations, imposing trespass orders, and removing weapons from a student's home, for example, as well as providing extra security for special events or when students were feeling especially vulnerable (e.g., after the Parkland tragedy). Our School Resource Officer, an employee of UPD, has an office on our campus, and serves as the liaison between P.K. Yonge and UPD.

In an effort to better serve our students and families, we created a resource list of service providers. We make this available to families who may need help from outside agencies.

### **Process for Coordinating Mental Health Services with a Student's Primary Care Provider and Other Mental Health Providers, Including Procedures for Information Sharing:**

P. K. Yonge has created a written set of policies and procedures for collaborating with local mental health providers and child agencies. These guidelines include Consent-to-Share information forms, parental notice documentation, emergency procedures, confidentiality requirements, and quick reference contact information.

### **Number of Students Screened/Assessed, Number of Students Referred for Services, and Number of Students Receiving Services/Assistance (School-Based and Community):**

School Psychology typically provides direct services for approximately 200 students per year. About 120 of those are screenings (academic and/or behavioral observations). Approximately 30 will receive in-depth evaluations that include mental health components and approximately 50 will receive counseling. Often 25-40 will present with more than one mental health diagnoses that is chronic.

### **Number and Credentials of Mental Health Services Providers Employed by the District:**

P. K. Yonge employs a licensed Psychologist who also is a nationally certified School Psychologist.

Diana Joyce-Beaulieu, Ph.D., NCSP  
Psychologist PY6872, Scholar  
UF School Psychology Practica Program Coordinator

With the Mental Health Assistance Allocation we will add one school counselor (trained and certified as a mental health counselor); a part-time doctoral student in school counseling earning a Ph.D. in mental health counseling; and a part-time doctoral student with training in mental health counseling. In addition, a newly hired UF Assistant Professor in School Psychology will be assisting with analysis of mental health screening data to support program planning and improvements at Tier 1.

### **Number and Credentials of Mental Health Services Providers Contracted by the District:**

Not applicable

**90% of our allocated funding (\$125,445) will be allocated to direct mental health services or coordination of such services with primary care and mental health providers as follows:**

- New counselor (1.0 FTE) to increase available mental health services/support
- Part-time School Counseling doctoral-level intern to provide T3 mental health counseling for identified students
- A part-time aide to support students who require supervision to prevent self-harm
- Part-time doctoral-level School Psychology intern

### **Assurances that Mental Health Assistance Allocation Does Not Supplant Other Funding Sources OR Increase Salaries or Provide Staff Bonuses:**

The UF Lab School/P.K. Yonge DRS Mental Health Assistance Allocation will be used to add the following service providers/services to address students' needs mental health supports: an additional 1.0 FTE school counselor; a part-time School Psychology Intern; a part-time School Counseling Intern with expertise in mental health; and a student aide to protect identified student(s) from self-harm. No funds from the Mental Health Assistance Allocation will be used to increase salaries or provide staff bonuses.

**How District will Maximize Use of Other Sources of Funding to Provide School-Based Mental Health Services, Where Appropriate (e.g., Medicaid Reimbursement, 3rd party Payments, Grants):**

Five years ago considerable time was invested by the P.K. Yonge School Psychologist in an effort to set-up Medicaid reimbursed services, including meetings with the State commission. We hit a roadblock when we were not recognizable as a reimbursable district. We will try again to explore this option in the coming year.

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1.0 FTE	NEW Counselor	67,438
.75 FTE	School Psychology Intern	26,400
.33 FTE	Mental Health Counseling Intern	11,200
1.0 FTE	Mental Health, Student Aide	20,407
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>125,445</b>

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