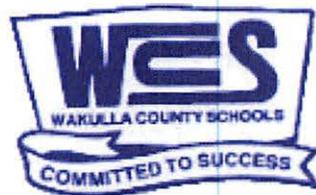


**Wakulla County School District 2019-20  
Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan**



## **A. Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan**

- Describe the delivery of evidence-based mental health assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and recovery through a multi-tiered system of supports.

The Wakulla County School District County is improving the quality of mental health care for children by identifying evidence-based treatments and providing effective strategies for implementing and supporting their delivery. School-based mental health services will be delivered within a multi-tiered system of supports – universal/prevention, targeted intervention, and intensive intervention. Each tier of support represents a mental and behavioral health service which may be provided for students in both general and special education. Universal preventions (Tier I) are provided for all students and address the needs of 80-90% of the student population. Secondary or targeted (Tier II) interventions are provided for students at-risk of developing mental health challenges. These efforts address the needs of 5-15% of the students. Tertiary or intensive interventions (Tier III) address the needs of 1-5% of the student population, reducing the effects of symptoms that may already be problematic. Tier II and Tier III interventions are anchored in Tier I interventions and are natural extensions or intensified extensions of Tier I. For example, students who do not sufficiently respond to school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports (Tier I), receive targeted interventions at Tier II, and students whose problem behavior persists despite Tier I and Tier II intervention, receive intensive intervention at Tier III. Examples of interventions include, but are not limited to:

**Tier I: Social-Emotional Learning Curriculums implemented in K-5, 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 9<sup>th</sup> grade; PBIS (district-wide); Kagan (district wide); AVID (middle and high school; 2 elementary schools); Pre-K-Good Behavior Game; Changing/Growing (district-wide 4th grade); ELA/Social Studies (Florida Standards district wide curriculum, elementary classroom instruction); Guidance Lessons (district wide, elementary); Substance Abuse and Violence Education (S.A.V.E.) for 5<sup>th</sup> graders district-wide.**

**Tier II: Targeted interventions through SEL curriculum or PBIS, Small group instruction/support on topics such as managing grief (loss); conflict resolution; making healthy decisions; developing positive communication skills; anger management; self- advocacy; organizational skills; executive functioning; strategies for coping with anxiety; coping with depression and time management. Groups will be run by school counselors, deans of student services, and mental health professionals from agencies contracted or partnering with Wakulla County School District. Typically, groups will meet 6-8 weeks.**

**Tier III: Intensive interventions through SEL curriculum or PBIS; Individual based counseling based on the individual's diagnosis or referral. This counseling is typically provided on a weekly basis by a licensed mental health professional. Types of therapies will vary by the needs of the student but can include any of the following evidence based treatments:**

**Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) (e.g., relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; identifying triggers and developing adaptive coping skills, challenging cognitive distortions such as "black and white" or "all or nothing" thinking styles)**

**Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) (e.g. empirically-based framework to increase Distress Tolerance skills, Interpersonal skills, Emotion Regulation skills, and Mindfulness)**

**Social Perspective Taking (e.g. thinking about what others are thinking)**

**Self-Regulation Behavioral Strategies (e.g., deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, visualization)**

**Assertive Communication Strategies**

**Problem-Solving Strategies**

Solution-Focused Problem Solving (e.g., identifying barriers to desirable outcomes such as coming to school and strategies to overcome those barriers)

School and parent behavioral consultation (e.g., establishing self-monitoring forms with teacher prompting, use of check-and-connect for truancy)

- State how the plan will focus on 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.

Students with One or More Co-occurring mental health or substance abuse diagnoses will be identified based on parent/student disclosure on school registration and/or school medical information. While commonly used to refer to the combination of substance-use and mental disorders, the term co-occurring disorder also refers to other combinations such as mental disorders and intellectual disability. Individuals with co-occurring disorders are best served through integrated treatment. This treatment requires collaboration across disciplines (e.g. psychiatrist, pediatrician, clinical therapist, and educator). The treatment planning addresses both mental health and substance abuse, each in the context of the other disorder. In the Wakulla County School District, students with serious emotional disorders and at-risk of co-occurring substance abuse are provided a specialized Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and related services. Related services may include intervention by a school social worker or a contracted behavior analyst through Behavior Management Consultants (BMC) who provides highly structured, individualized behavioral intervention during the school day. School social workers provide intensive intervention (individual and/or group counseling) and case management. The Apalachee Center is often involved with these students also providing additional therapeutic counseling and psychiatric services (e.g. crisis intervention) during afterschool hours. Students with autism spectrum disorders and co-occurring mental health disorders requiring intensive educational intervention receive specialized support services from a school-based speech-language pathologist and behavior analyst (BMC). The WCSD facilitates additional services for families through the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD).

Students will be monitored through the EWS, behavior intervention plans, and individualized education plans to ensure that supports are effective. If the student is need of more intense services/accommodations, the school RtI or IEP team will meet and problem solve. Students who have been evaluated and referred to the psychiatric center two or more times will be referred to the district Community Action Team(CAT) and information will be shared with the school Threat Assessment Team.

Evidence Based services are provided at each Tier. At Tier I, classroom teachers are trained to use social emotional learning curriculums that are evidence based and approved by the Collaborative for Social Emotional Learning (CASEL). Student services personnel are trained in using evidence based small group programs on topics such as coping with anxiety, conflict resolution, and making healthy decisions are used in Tier II. At Tier III types of evidence based treatments used by mental health professionals can include: Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Intensified Instruction for Social Skills, Social Perspective Taking, Self-Regulation Behavioral Strategies, Assertive Communication Strategies, Problem-Solving Strategies, Solution-Focused Problem Solving, School and parent behavioral consultation.

- Describe the process for coordinating mental health services for students at charter schools that are part of the school district's plan.

The COAST charter school uses the funds allocated to develop and implement their own mental health plan. The WCSD collaborates with COAST charter to share informational resources and best practices.

- Include direct employment of school-based mental health services providers (i.e., school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors and other licensed mental health professionals) to reduce staff-to-student ratios and meet student mental health assistance needs. The WCSB has expanded school-based mental health services to focus on early identification and use of evidence-based interventions for social-emotional or mental health issues. The Wakulla County School District will use the Mental Health Assistance Allocation funds pay the salaries of a Mental Health Coordinator and two School Social Workers.

- Identify strategies to increase the amount of time student services personnel spend providing direct mental health services (e.g., review and revision of staffing allocations based on school or student mental health assistance needs).

Based on our districts mental health needs, the Wakulla County School District has employed a mental health coordinator to provide coordination of care with student services, community agencies and mental health professionals. In addition, we have employed three social workers that serve the students of our district by providing therapy, case management, and crisis assessments.

- State how the plan will establish school board policies and procedures for all schools, including charter schools, to ensure:

1. Students referred for a mental health screening are assessed within 15 days of referral;
2. School-based mental health services are initiated within 15 days of identification and assessment; and
3. Community-based mental health services are initiated within 30 days of referral.

The Wakulla County School Board, in collaboration with the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium, is in the process of aligning current school board policy with recent legislation. When finalized, the Mental Health Handbook, contracts with service providers, and Memorandums of Understanding with local service providers will be revised to include all statutory requirements.

The Wakulla County School District has updated our data management system to include the dates of referrals, initial assessments, and initiation of services with school based or community based providers.

- Describe the process for coordinating mental health services with a student's primary mental health care provider and other mental health providers involved in the student's care.

The Wakulla County School District supports a System of Care approach for coordination and continuity of mental services between schools, agencies, and community providers, especially for those youth who are involved in multiple agencies. Regularly scheduled meetings between the Mental Health Coordinator and primary mental health care providers are held monthly to monitor progress of students provided with services and to troubleshoot barriers that might be preventing progress and ensure continuity of care. Student services personnel meet quarterly with the District Mental Health Coordinator to discuss group or individual counseling and other tiered mental health supports provided in the schools.

- Identify strategies or programs to reduce the likelihood of at-risk students developing social, emotional or behavioral problems; depression; anxiety disorders; suicidal tendencies; or substance abuse disorders.

During the 2018-19 school year, the WCSD contracted with the FSU Multidisciplinary Center to fully implement "The Good Behavior Game" social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum in Pre-K. We will continue to provide this SEL during the 2019-20 school year. The Wakulla County School District did

a partial implementation of “Sanford Harmony” social emotional learning curriculum during the 2018-19 school year and will fully implement during the 2019-20 school year. This will be for Kindergarten through fifth grade. Middle schools will be implementing a social emotional learning curriculum in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and the high school will implement SEL in 9<sup>th</sup> grade during the 2019-20 school year.

• Identify strategies to:

1. Improve the early identification of social, emotional or behavioral problems or substance abuse disorders;
2. Improve the provision of early intervention services; and
3. Assist students dealing with trauma and violence.

Behavioral, social and emotional health needs are identified by school administrators, teachers, school nurses, school counselors, contracted psychology interns, and other school staff. A school-based problem solving team supports the at-risk student by identifying and resolving the academic, behavioral, and/or social problem. Early warning system indicators (screening) including but not limited to, attendance, discipline, course performance, and state assessment data are considered in making decisions. In collaboration with the parent, a Response to Intervention Plan is developed, implemented, and progress monitored. Adjustments to the interventions are data driven decisions. Individual student assessments are conducted when written parental consent is obtained. The WCSD contracts with the FSU Multidisciplinary Center to provide psychology interns, operating under the supervision of Dr. Anne Selvey, Ph.D., Dr. Amber Farrington, Ph.D. or Dr. Lauren Hutto Ph.D. to be part of the school-based problem-solving team. Part of their role is to complete assessments of a student’s social-emotional functioning and how it affects educational performance. This assessment administered individually requires informed parent consent. The school psychologist does not give a medical/psychiatric diagnosis within the school system. Based on data, the school-based team determines the level of student support/intervention needed, and monitors their progress. If necessary, the team at each school determines if a student meets eligibility criteria for an exceptionality under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

All Wakulla County School Board Employees (instructional and non-instructional) that come into contact with students either have been trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid, or are scheduled for training during the 2019-20 school year. This training has improved the early identification of social, emotional, or behavioral problems and substance use disorders. The role of Mental Health Coordinator is to improve provision of early intervention services by monitoring referrals, intakes, and continuity of care. All schools are given professional development in “Trauma Informed Care” which instructs all employees in the use of universal precautions and creates an awareness of the signs and symptoms of trauma. This assists in the identification and treatment of students dealing with trauma and violence. In addition, all employees are trained in mandatory reporting. Wakulla County School District contracts with Florida State University Multidisciplinary Center for psychology interns to provide Tier II/III mental health counseling; Behavior Management Consultants to provide behavioral interventions by Board Certified Behavioral Analysts and develop Functional Behavioral Assessments(FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plans(BIP); an art therapist to provide services to elementary students with emotional/behavioral disorders and a music therapist for students with disabilities who have sensory needs. The district maintains Memorandums of Understanding with Disc Village to provide counselors for substance abuse and decision making in secondary schools, a Memorandum of Understanding with Capital City Youth Services to work with homeless youth and provide counseling within the schools or in their local office. A Memorandum of Understanding with Wakulla County Health Department utilizes their health educators to provide Tier I lessons on decision making; assisting parents/families with understanding cyber bullying and recognizing risky technology applications. A Memorandum of Understanding with Big Bend Community Based Care

and Department of Children and Families provides the opportunity to share information regarding students in the Dependency System and problem solve to provide interventions to meet their needs.

#### **B. Expenditures**

- Number and licensure/certification of school-based mental health providers funded by the allocation.

The Wakulla County School District has employed two registered clinical social workers that have a Masters in Social Work. Both are participating in a supervised internship program to become Licensed Clinical Social Workers. Each currently holds an "Registered Clinical Social Work Intern" license for the state of Florida.

- Number and licensure of community-based mental health providers funded by the allocation.

The Wakulla County School District uses MHAA funds to contract with the FSU Multidisciplinary Center to provide mental health services. We contract for one therapist who is a Ph.D intern working under the supervision of licensed psychologist, Dr. Amber Farrington, Ph.D.

- School district expenditures for services provided by contract-based collaborative efforts or partnerships with community-based mental health program agencies or providers.

FSU Multidisciplinary Center 30,000.00

Behavior Management Consultants 90,000.00

Art Therapist 20,612.00

- Other expenditures.

Social Emotional Learning Curriculums, Materials and supplies for mental health trainings

#### **C. Expenditure Assurances**

- State how 100 percent of funds are used to expand school-based mental health care; train educators in responding to mental health issues; and connect children, youth and families with appropriate behavioral health services.

The WCSD will spend approximately 15,000.00 for contracted mental health services with the FSU Multidisciplinary Center. Three new positions were created. A Mental Health Coordinator (Principal on Special Assignment), at the cost of 103,200.00, to progress monitor Tier I, Tier II and Tier III services and student progress. The Mental Health Coordinator will also insure that MOUs and contracts are in place with community service providers; facilitate referrals to the Community Action Team(CAT); facilitate mental health training for faculty/staff; insure communication between therapists, counselors, deans of student services and school Threat Assessment Teams. Two additional Registered Clinical Social Work Interns were added at the cost of 96,920.00. Our charter schools portion of the Mental Health Allocation will be approximately \$5,700.00.

- Provide a statement that ensures the Mental Health Assistance Allocation does not supplant other funding sources, increase salaries or provide staff bonuses.

The Mental Health Coordinator (Principal on Special Assignment) and one social worker position was created in 2018-19 with the Mental Health Assistance Allocation funds. We will add one additional social worker position this year. The contract with the Multidisciplinary Center to provide mental health services was created in 2018-19 with the Mental Health Assistance Allocation funds. These expenditures do not supplant other funding sources.

- Describe how the district will maximize the use of other sources of funding to provide school-based mental health services (e.g., Medicaid reimbursement, third-party payments and grants).

IDEA funding provides art and music therapy, behavioral services and mental health counseling for students with disabilities. Medicaid Fee for Services helps cover salaries of paraprofessionals needed for student safety and Medicaid Administrative Claiming helps fund a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

#### **D. Program Implementation and Programs**

- Identify the number and ratios of Florida Department of Education-certified or licensed school-based mental health services providers employed by the district (i.e., school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors and other mental health services providers by licensure type).

The approximate ratio of students to certified or licensed mental health providers is 1:340 for the Wakulla County School District. The WCSD employees four certified Guidance Counselor/Associate Dean of Student Services and one Licensed Clinical Social Worker to serve our four elementary schools. The middle schools each have two certified Guidance Counselors/Associate Deans of Student Services and one Registered School Social Work Intern (MSW). Our high school has four certified Guidance Counselors/Associate Deans of Student Services and a Registered School Social Work Intern (MSW).

- Describe a system for tracking 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 services providers; the number of students referred to community-based mental health services 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.

A Mental Health Assistance Plan Outcomes Report will be submitted to the Department of Education, annually, by September 30th each year, pursuant to requirements of the District's receipt of funds for the expansion of school mental health services. Data entry systems are in place to track 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 services providers; the number of students referred to community-based mental health services 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. Data is entered into the systems and monitored by the Mental Health Coordinator and school counselors.