

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY

MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE ALLOCATION PLAN

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.

Tier 1: All schools, including charter schools, will participate in Positive Behavior Supports programs, as well as, a social/emotional learning curriculum (Sanford Harmony (prek-5) and LEAPS (6-12)). Activities and lessons from the District Comprehensive Guidance Plan will also be provided. Mental health literacy programs will also be utilized at the secondary level.

Tier 2: All schools, including charter schools, will provide small group lessons and embedded strategies used by teachers for targeted behaviors. Small group counseling will also be provided by school staff and mental health partners to students at risk for developing mental health challenges. Students who do not respond to the Tier 2 supports and interventions will then be provided Tier 3 individualized, intensive interventions from certified and/or licensed staff.

Tier 3: All schools, including charter schools, will provide individualized, intensive interventions and counseling services by school staff and mental health partners to identified students. Licensed mental health staff use the preliminary assessment, TWEAK assessment for substance use/abuse, the Likert Depression and Sleep Scales and the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale to assess student need. They also use some DSM-5 cross-cutting questionnaires that help assess and/or diagnose symptoms such as, anxiety, depression, and acute stress. Students assessed and diagnosed that need individualized, intensive intervention and/or mental health services are provided these services through different modalities including, cognitive behavioral therapy, trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, group play therapy and solution-focused therapy. These students are monitored by the licensed mental health providers, as well as, school staff to determine progress and response to the provided interventions and supports.

- 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.

During the first nine weeks of school, a Universal Screening instrument will be given to each student district-wide to identify students at social/emotional risk. A behavior diagnostic tool will also be used to identify specific students and behaviors for mental health services. Early Warning Systems data will also be regularly reviewed by teams to identify students at risk. Tier 2 and Tier 3 school based interventions will be planned and provided to students through School Intervention Teams (SIT). Referrals for counseling, treatment, and mental health services will be provided through school based staff, as well as, contracted mental health providers. Student recovery progress monitoring will also be conducted through SIT meetings in collaboration with mental health providers that work with the students. Licensed mental health staff use the preliminary assessment, TWEAK assessment for substance use/abuse, the Likert Depression and Sleep Scales and the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale to assess student need. They also use some DSM-5 cross-cutting questionnaires that help assess and/or diagnose symptoms such as, anxiety, depression, and acute stress. Students assessed and diagnosed that need individualized, intensive intervention and/or mental health services are provided these services through different modalities including, cognitive behavioral therapy, trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, group play therapy and solution-focused therapy. These students are monitored by the mental health providers, as well as, school staff to determine progress and response to the provided interventions and supports.

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

Both charter schools are participating in the District’s Mental Health Allocation Plan and services. They will follow the same processes as all other district schools – PBIS, School Intervention Team meetings and provision of services, and screenings and intervention programs. District staff and mental health staff will also hold monthly meetings to monitor any mental health needs at each school site in the district, including the two charter schools.

- 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 district currently has three (3) school counselors (assigned to the combination PreK-8 school and the high school, and the charter high school employs one) that work with students to provide interventions and services for mental health and behavioral needs. The district contracts with one (1) school psychologist to assist with assessment and services, if needed. All schools also directly employ RTI specialists and support staff, including the charter schools, to assist with the provision of interventions/services, as well as, the monitoring of progress.

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).

District staff will address staffing regularly to assess the need for any additional staff based on data gathered each month at school site meetings to review mental health services and needs. Contracted licensed mental health staff provide direct services to all district schools. Certified MTSS Deans, certified school Counselors, licensed school nurses, certified ESE Staffing/Program Specialists and licensed school psychologists have also been trained and instructed to provide direct class (Tier 1), small group (Tier 2) and individualized (Tier 3) instruction/intervention to students in need and who have been referred for services. The addition of these staff members and the additional services these staff members provide to students will reduce the ratio between students and certified and licensed staff and allow for the staff—both direct employees and contracted employees to spend more time providing interventions and supports to identified students in need.

- 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 district will establish school board policies and procedures for all schools, including charter schools, that address the timely provision of mental health screenings and services. Monthly Threat Assessment Team processes that address mental health screenings and services will also be included in these policies and procedures. These policies and procedures will ensure that students are screened and assessed within fifteen (15) days, diagnosed and identified within fifteen (15) days, and services are provided within thirty days (30). Regularly scheduled meetings (School Intervention Team meetings, School Leadership Meetings, District Leadership Meetings) will assist in school and district staff, as well as contract licensed mental health providers in reviewing student data to ensure that these policies and procedures of timely screening, assessment, diagnosis and services/treatment are met.

- 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.

School intervention teams will work closely with school health staff (nurses) to contact and coordinate services with primary care providers when necessary. Mental health providers, both school based and

private, will serve on the intervention teams to help identify students in need of services, to assist with progress monitoring of services and interventions, as well as to monitor the recovery progress.

All identified students in need of mental health services will have Release of Information forms signed and disseminated to the correct agencies and service providers in order to plan and provide the most appropriate services and interventions. Copies of these release forms will be kept in the student's SIT folder and Cumulative folder for access when needed.

- 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.

A Universal Screening instrument will be given to each student district-wide to identify students at social/emotional risk. A diagnostic tool will also be used to identify specific students and behaviors for mental health services. Early Warning Systems data will be regularly reviewed to identify students at risk. Tier 2 and Tier 3 school based interventions will be planned and provided to students through School Intervention Teams (SIT). Referrals for counseling, treatment, and mental health services will be provided through certified school based staff, as well as, contracted licensed mental health providers. Student recovery progress monitoring will also be conducted through SIT meetings in collaboration with licensed mental health providers that work with the students.

- 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.

A Universal Screening instrument will be given to each student district-wide to identify students at social/emotional risk. A diagnostic tool will also be used to identify specific students and behaviors for mental health services. Early Warning Systems data will be regularly reviewed to identify students at risk. Tier 2 and Tier 3 school based interventions will be planned and provided to students through School Intervention Teams (SIT). Referrals for counseling, treatment, and mental health services will be provided through school based staff, as well as, contracted licensed mental health providers. Student recovery progress monitoring will also be conducted through SIT meetings in collaboration with licensed mental health providers that work with the students. School based staff, such as, certified school counselors and MTSS deans will also provide Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports and early intervention services. Professional development will be provided to all staff on recognizing trauma and the process for referral for services to assist students dealing with trauma and violence.

B. Expenditures

- Number and licensure/certification of school-based mental health providers funded by the allocation. *The district will utilize the Mental Health Assistance Allocation to contract with Big Bend Community Based Care/Apalachee Center to provide two (2) full time contracted licensed mental health providers – one licensed mental health counselor and one masters level registered mental health counselor through the Florida Department of Health – to serve identified students in need.*

Number and licensure of community-based mental health providers funded by the allocation. *There will be no community-based mental health providers funded by the allocation. Madison County School district does have a partnership with Big Bend Community Based Care/Apalachee Center (Community Action Team) to provided wrap around services to students and families in need. Students are referred to the Community Action Team when more intensive and comprehensive services are needed.*

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

The district will utilize the Mental Health Assistance Allocation to contract with Big Bend Community Based Care/Apalachee Center to provide two (2) full time licensed mental health providers – one licensed mental health counselor and one masters level registered mental health counselor through the Florida Department of Health – to serve identified students in need.

Other expenditures:

The district will provide professional development and trainings on various mental health topics, such as, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Kognito Mental Health, Trauma Informed Care.

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.

All dollars from the Mental Health Assistance Allocation will be utilized to provide direct services to students by two contracted licensed mental health providers. If necessary, some funding may also be used for direct training to all staff.

- 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 Assistance Allocation does not supplant any other funding source and is not used to increase salaries or provide staff bonuses.

- 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).

The district will also use Medicaid reimbursement, IDEA funding and Title IV funding to assist with providing direct mental health services and interventions to identified students in need.

C. 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 district employees three (3) certified school counselors:

At the PreK-8 school the ratio is one school counselor to 900 students.

At the high school the ratio is one school counselor to 500 students.

At the charter high school the ratio is one school counselor to 195 students.

- 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.

The two licensed mental health therapists track screenings, assessments, referrals, and services through their system provided by Apalachee. Students receiving services through community based providers, such as the CAT team are also tracked in Apalachee's system. The district is provided an update monthly on the number and names of students receiving any referrals, screenings, assessments, and services. The district also tracks the number of students receiving any kind of mental health services through school intervention team data, school health data and Threat Assessment Team data.

