

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF GADSDEN JOINT

MENTAL HEALTH ACTION PLAN



"Putting Children First"

Roger P. Milton, Superintendent

Developed: July, 2018



"Putting Children First"

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF GADSDEN COUNTY

35 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd
Quincy, Florida 32351
Main: (850) 627-9651 or Fax: (850) 627-2760
www.gcps.k12.fl.us

Roger P. Milton
Superintendent

Table of Contents

Introduction	Page 3
Gadsden's Continuum of Mental Health Services	Page 4
Mental Health Allocation Plan	Pages 5-17
Budget Allocation	Pages 18-19

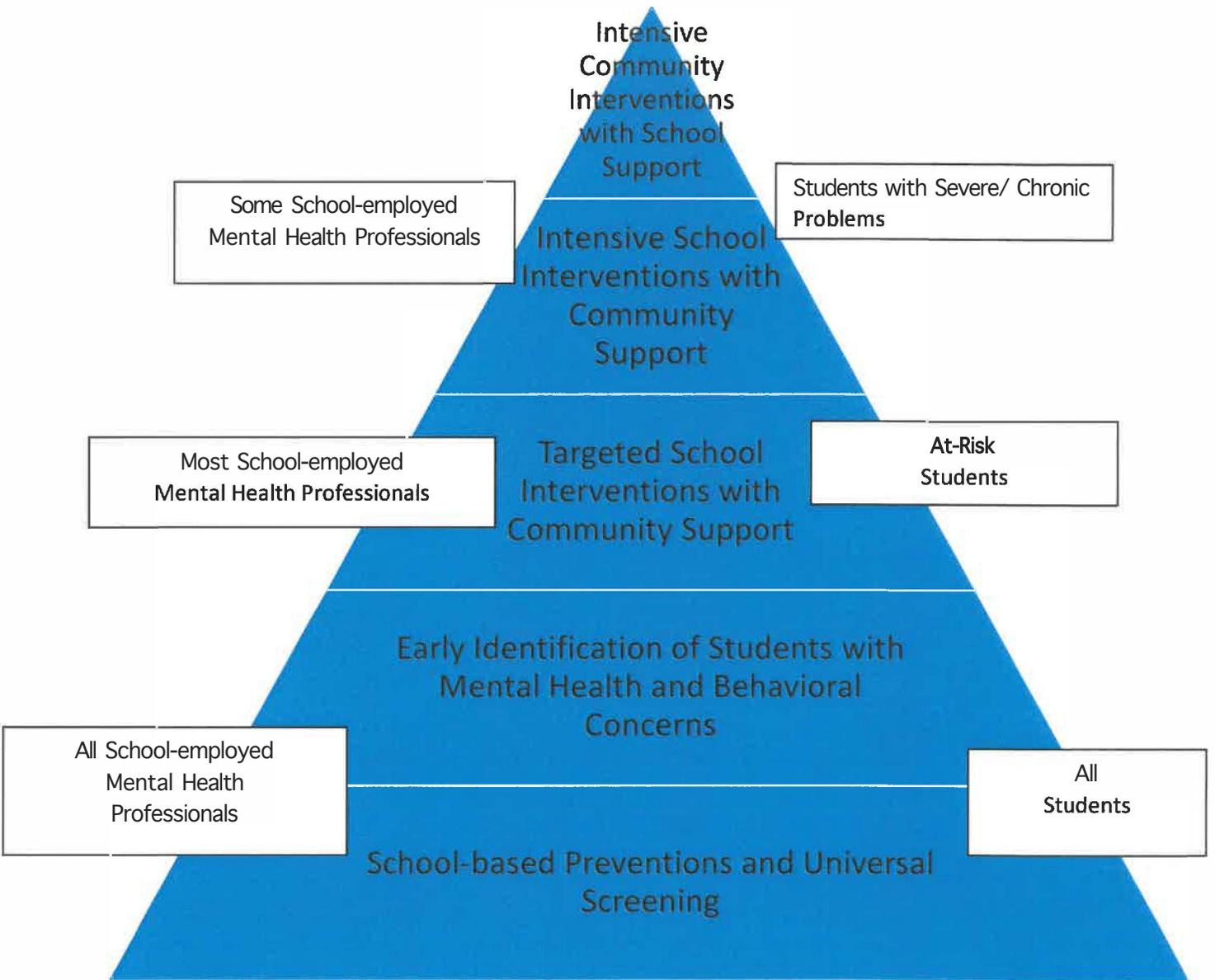
Introduction

"School mental health services are essential to creating and sustaining safe schools. Increase access to mental health services and supports in schools is vital to improving the physical and psychological safety of our students and schools, as well as academic performance and problem-solving skills. Additionally, in the aftermath of a crisis, school-employed mental health professionals provide support that facilitate the return to normalcy, are sustainable, and can help to identify and work with students with more intense or ongoing needs "(National Association of School Psychologists).

Based on research and data, mentally healthy children are more successful in school and life. The National Association of School Psychologists reports that: "Good mental health is critical to children's success in school and life. Research demonstrates that students who receive social-emotional and mental health support achieve better academically. School climate, classroom behavior, on-task learning, and students' sense of connectedness and well-being all improve as well. Mental health is not simply the absence of mental illness but also encompasses social, emotional, and behavioral health and the ability to cope with life's challenges. Left unmet, mental health problems are linked to costly negative outcomes such as academic and behavior problems, dropping out, and delinquency."

The Gadsden County School District has developed a tiered continuum of services for mental health needs of students. The continuum provides a systemic approach to identifying, assessing, diagnosing, intervention, treatment, and monitoring recovery of our students. The Mental Health continuum is inclusive of collaborative relationships with community agencies. Identification of students who may need to advance through the mental health continuum can and should come from a multitude of entry points including but not limited to:

- Their peers
- Parents/Guardians
- Teachers, deans, nurses, and other school staff
- Registration questionnaire as required by SB 7026
- Disciplinary action required by SB 7026 to include a referral for mental health screening
- Community Connection such as faith-based leaders, etc.
- Court system as defined in SB 7026
- Baker Act



Gadsden County Schools Continuum of Mental Health Services

Delivering Evidence-based Mental Health Services

Awareness Prevention Efforts that Address Mental Health and Substance Abuse Issues at Tier 1

TIER 1 refers to Universal Interventions (for all students in all settings)		
TRAINING	TARGET GROUP	PURPOSE
Bullying, Harassment, Mental Health Awareness, Substance Abuse, Student Code of Conduct Policies	Teachers, Students, Parents, Community	To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of district policies and efforts to provide a safe learning environment
Youth Mental Health First Aid	All school and district personnel	To introduce participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, including anxiety, depression, psychosis, eating disorders, substance use disorder, ADHD and other disruptive behavior disorders.
Restorative Practices	Administrators, Teachers, School Personnel	To train staff in a range of methods and strategies which can be used both to prevent relationship-damaging incidents from happening and to resolve them if they do happen.
Trauma Informed Care	Administrators, Teachers, School Personnel	To teach an approach which recognizes and acknowledges trauma and its prevalence. The training also provides tools for fostering sensitivity when working with individuals who have experienced traumatic situations.
Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) Training and Implementation in all schools	All school personnel	To reduce or eliminate poor behavior schoolwide through the encouragement of positive behaviors.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) training	Administrators, teachers, counselors	MTSS is "the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions" (Batsche et al., 2005).
Character Education	All Schools	To provide a curriculum that promotes core values such as respect, justice, citizenship, and responsibility.
The Signs of Suicide Prevention Program (SOS)	Middle and High School Staff	To provide a school-based depression awareness and suicide prevention program that is geared toward middle and high school students.
PREPaRE	School Psychologists	The NASP PREPaRE curriculum provides relevant school personnel with comprehensive training on how to establish and serve on school safety and crisis response teams.
Crisis Prevention Intervention	Administrators, ESE staff, bus drivers, additional identified staff	To teach personnel prevention strategies for safely defusing anxious, hostile, or violent behavior at the earliest possible stage.

Evidence-based Targeted Mental Health Interventions at Tier 2

TIER 2 - Strategic Interventions for students who need more support (in addition to Universal Interventions)		
Intervention	Description of Intervention	Target Group
Check and Connect	Check and Connect is a research-based program that fosters a trusting relationship between the student and a caring, trained mentor. The mentor provides the student with academic and social/emotional support.	Currently Middle and High School students who have been identified by school personnel as requiring additional support
Check in/Check Out (CICO) <i>(This is generally implemented by the school's Behavior Specialist or Guidance Counselor).</i>	Students check in with an adult at the beginning and end of each school day. CICO is a very effective strategy for positively encouraging good behavior.	Students who have been identified as having behavioral issues based on the number of referrals they have received
Zones of Regulations <i>Various personnel throughout the district have been trained in implementing this program.</i>	A curriculum geared toward helping students gain skills in consciously regulating their actions which in turn lead to increased control and problem solving.	Appropriate for all ages Currently implemented at Gadsden Central Academy and various classrooms throughout the district
Group Counseling <i>Group Counseling sessions are facilitated by Guidance Counselors, School Psychologists, and Social Workers.</i>	Students with similar concerns and/or behaviors come together to work with a trained Mental Health provider.	Students who are identified by school personnel
Peer Support Groups	Student-led groups where students provide knowledge, experience and social/emotional support to each other. School Counselors assist the students with the formation of these groups.	Upper elementary through secondary
Music Therapy	Music Therapy- Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish selected goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who	Gadsden County contracts with a local provider to deliver Music Therapy services to various at-risk groups of students.

	has completed an approved music therapy program.	
Mentoring <i>Various district personnel will serve as mentors to students as the need arises.</i>	The overall purpose of the mentoring experience is to provide opportunities for students (mentees) to learn and benefit from the knowledge, wisdom, and expertise of more experienced individuals (mentors). Mentors can provide the support, guidance, and tools to help students.	Students who are referred for additional support
Overcoming Obstacles Life Skills Program	This curriculum covers various topics such as: anger management, stress management, confidence, career planning, bullying, study skills and personal health.	Students who are identified as "at-risk" based on Early Warning Systems Indicators
Home Visits <i>Home visits will be conducted by the district social workers who may be accompanied by additional personnel such as the teacher, guidance counselor or resource officer to address various issues.</i>	Home Visits promote healthy relationships and encourage engagement between students, parents and educators.	Students who are identified as "at-risk" based on Early Warning Systems Indicators

Evidence-based Practices at Tier 3

TIER 3 - Comprehensive and Intensive Interventions (for students who need individualized interventions)		
Intervention	Description of Intervention	Target Group
Individual Mental Health Counseling	A process through which students work one-on-one with a trained mental health clinician in a safe, caring, and confidential environment.	Students who continue to have social-emotional challenges despite the intensity of interventions provided at the Tier 2 level of supports, are referred for Individual Counseling.

Family Systems Counseling	Trained personnel work with families to nurture change and development. In general, the better a family functions, the lower the stress level of all members.	Family therapy can be crucial for families in which there is illness or other similar problems.
Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans	A Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is an approach to understanding why a child acts a certain way. It uses a variety of techniques to understand what's <i>behind</i> inappropriate behaviors. This information is then used to formulate an appropriate Behavior Intervention Plan. Trained individuals within the district such as Behavior Specialists and School Psychologists conduct FBA's and develop Behavior Intervention Plans.	Students who have been identified as needing an Individualized Behavior Intervention Plan (based on student data).

Supports That Address the Mental Health Needs of Our Students

The following is a list of mental health supports available to students within the Gadsden County School District:

- ▶ Licensed Mental Health Counselors - The district currently contracts with two Licensed Mental Health Counselors who provide Individual Counseling to students.
- ▶ School Psychologists- The district currently has five school psychologists who provide with individual counseling, group counseling or consultation support to Teachers/Parents.
- ▶ School Counselors - Each school has a school counselor who is readily accessible to address the daily mental health needs of students. Additionally, school counselors facilitate groups, and are usually a point of contact between the school and other outside agencies that address the mental health needs of our students. Many Guidance Counselors are also actively involved in the Check In/Check Out program.
- ▶ Social Workers - The district plans to hire additional social workers to facilitate individual and group counseling as well as to perform home visits.

- ▶ Behavior Specialists - Each school within the district has a behavior specialist who generally responds to behavioral challenges. Behavior Specialists are also frequently involved in the Check In/ Check Out program.
- ▶ Music Therapists- The district contracts with Music Therapists to provide music therapy to at-risk groups of students.
- ▶ Parent Services - Parent services generally assists families with accessing needed resources such as food and clothing. Additionally, in conjunction with the district's Exceptional Student Education (ESE) department, they host parent training seminars.
- ▶ Volunteer Program - Volunteers generally provide additional support to students with academic and behavioral challenges within the classroom environment.
- ▶ Check/Connect Mentors - Various individuals within the district have been specifically trained as Check/Connect mentors.
- ▶ Learning Alternative Behaviors - Learning Alternative Behaviors is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling to students.
- ▶ Apalachee Center for Mental Health - Apalachee Center for Mental Health is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling to students.
- ▶ Florida Therapy Services- Florida Therapy Services is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling and family systems counseling to students.
- ▶ Capital City Youth Services - Capital City Youth Services is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling to students.
- ▶ AMI Kids - AMI Kids is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling and family systems counseling to students.
- ▶ DISC Village - DISC Village is an agency that partners with the district to provide substance abuse prevention and treatment.
- ▶ Florida State University - Florida State University partners with the district to provide individual counseling and medical care to students.

Screening Procedures for Determining which Students Need Mental Health Interventions and Treatment, and Coordination and Supports for Students Receiving These Services:

Early Warning Systems data is used to identify students who are displaying academic, social/emotional, behavior and attendance problems and may be in need of additional support. Additionally, the SAEBRS (Social, Academic and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener) will be used when students are not identified based on EWS indicators but are perceived to be "at-risk" based on Teacher/ or Parent referrals. Parent permission is obtained before a student is screened using the SAEBRS.

After students are identified using the EWS or SAEBRS data, a Student Study Team/Problem Solving Team meeting is scheduled to discuss the necessary steps to address the needs of the student. If the student is deemed in need of additional support, a referral is made to one of the providers indicated above. Providers have referral forms that must be completed by the school/parent prior to the initiation of services. Providers also have their specific assessment tools which they utilize during their first two meetings with students to determine whether or not the student is a proper fit for the services that they provide. Once services have been established, parents sign a release of records to facilitate open communication between the school and the agency/provider. This includes provision of any evaluations that have been conducted. Providers are invited to actively participate in Student Study Team meetings, Parent/Teacher conferences and Individual Educational Planning meetings. They are also encouraged to communicate frequently with the parent and school personnel.

In some instances, students have already been receiving services from an outside agency/provider prior to a Student Study Team meeting or a Parent/Teacher conference. In these instances, once the school is informed (usually by the parent or caseworker) that the student is receiving these services or has a medical condition that may adversely impact their academic progress or daily functioning, a release of information is signed to facilitate communication between the school and the agency and to obtain any evaluations that have been conducted.

Information from outside agencies are used in conjunction with school data to determine level of support that students require within an educational setting.

Evidence-based Mental Health Services for Students with One or More Co-occurring Mental Health or Substance Abuse Diagnoses and Students at Risk of Such Diagnosis:

- ▶ Check and Connect - Check and Connect is a research-based program that fosters a trusting relationship between the student and a caring, trained mentor. The mentor provides the student with academic and social/emotional support. Students are referred to the program at various schools based on Early Warning Systems Indicators. In addition, students may be referred to the program based on student, parent or teacher referrals.

Check in/Check Out (CICO) - This program consists of students checking in with an adult at the beginning and end of each school day. CICO is a very effective strategy for positively encouraging good behavior. Students who have been identified as having behavioral issues based on the number of referrals they have received in the system, participate in the Check In/Check Out program to monitor their behaviors. This is generally implemented by the school's Behavior Specialist or Guidance Counselor.

Zones of Regulations - A curriculum geared toward helping students gain skills in consciously regulating their actions which in turn lead to increased control and problem solving. Various personnel throughout the district have been trained in implementing this program.

Group Counseling - Students with similar concerns and/or behaviors come together to work with a trained Mental Health provider. Group Counseling sessions will be facilitated by Guidance Counselors, School Psychologists, and Social Workers.

Peer Support Groups - Student-led groups where students provide knowledge, experience and social/ emotional support to each other. School Counselors assist the students with the formation of these groups.

Music Therapy- Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish selected goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program. Gadsden County contracts with a local provider to deliver Music Therapy services to various at-risk groups of students.

Mentoring - A mentor guides a less experienced person by building trust and modeling positive behaviors. An effective mentor understands that his or her role is to be dependable, engaged, authentic, and tuned into the needs of the mentee. Various district personnel will serve as mentors to students as the need arises.

Overcoming Obstacles Life Skills Program - this curriculum covers various topics such as: anger management, stress management, confidence, career planning, bullying, study skills and personal health. This curriculum will be presented in a group format to students who are identified as "at-risk" based on Early Warning Systems Indicators.

Home visits - help to promote healthy relationships and encourage engagement between students, parents and educators. Home visits will be conducted by the district social workers who may be accompanied by additional personnel such as the teacher, guidance counselor or resource officer to address various issues.

Individual Mental Health Counseling - is a process through which students work one-on-one with a trained mental health clinician in a safe, caring, and confidential

environment. Students who continue to have social-emotional challenges despite the intensity of interventions provided at the Tier 2 level of supports, are referred for Individual Counseling.

- ▶ Family Systems Counseling - The focus of Family Systems Counseling is to work with families to nurture change and development. Because the family is such an important part of a person's social support network, family therapy can be crucial for families in which there is illness or other similar problems. In general, the better a family functions, the lower the stress level of all members.
- ▶ Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans - A Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is an approach to understanding why a child acts a certain way. It uses a variety of techniques to understand what's *behind* inappropriate behaviors. This information is then used to formulate an appropriate Behavior Intervention Plan. Trained individuals within the district such as Behavior Specialists and School Psychologists conduct FBA's and develop Behavior Intervention Plans.

Process for Identifying and Delivering Evidence-based Mental Health Interventions:

Early Warning Systems data is used to identify students who are displaying academic, social/emotional, behavior and attendance problems and may be in need of additional support. Additionally, the SAEBRS (Social, Academic and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener) will be used when students are not identified based on EWS indicators but are perceived to be "at-risk" based on Teacher/Parent referrals. Parent permission will be obtained prior to the administration of the SAEBRS.

After students are selected using the EWS or SAEBRS data, a Student Study Team/Problem Solving Team meeting is scheduled to discuss the necessary steps to address the needs of the student. If the student is deemed in need of additional support, a referral is made to one of the district mental health providers. Providers have referral forms that must be completed by the school/parent prior to the initiation of services. Providers also have their specific assessment tools which they utilize during their first two meetings with students to determine whether or not the student is a proper fit for the services that they provide. Once services have been established, parents sign a release of records to facilitate open communication between the school and the agency/provider. This includes provision of any evaluations that have been conducted. Providers are invited to actively participate in Student Study Team meetings, Parent/Teacher conferences and Individual Educational Planning meetings. They are also encouraged to communicate frequently with the parent and school personnel.

District Teams meet to discuss appropriate research-based interventions to be used with students based on current literature and the demographics of our students. A comprehensive list of evidence-based interventions used within the district, is published in the district's MTSS manual.

Process for Identifying and Delivering Evidence-based Substance Abuse Interventions

When identifying markers of substance abuse are present, the suspected abuse is investigated by appropriate school personnel. If addiction support is needed for the student, a referral is made to DISC Village. Additionally, parent reports of substance abuse or self-referrals are also forwarded to DISC village for additional support. DISC Village specializes in substance abuse issues.

Collaborative Partnerships with Community Providers and Agencies

The following are a list of agencies that Gadsden County schools partners with:

Learning Alternative Behaviors - Learning Alternative Behaviors is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling to students.

Apalachee Center for Mental Health - Apalachee Center for Mental Health is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling to students.

Florida Therapy Services- Florida Therapy Services is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling and family systems counseling to students.

Capital City Youth Services - Capital City Youth Services is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling to students.

AMI Kids - AMI Kids is an agency that partners with the district to provide individual counseling and family systems counseling to students.

DISC Village - DISC Village is an agency that partners with the district to provide substance abuse prevention and treatment.

Florida State University - Florida State University partners with the district to provide individual counseling and medical care to students.

State and local law enforcement - State and Local law enforcement assist in situations where students are considered to be a threat to themselves or others.

The Department of Juvenile Justice- The Department of Juvenile Justice collaborates with the district with regard to students who have been involved in some form of criminal activity.

- ▶ Department of Children and Families - The Department of Children and Families collaborates with the district with regard to students in the foster care system and in instances where there are allegations of abuse and/or neglect.
- ▶ The Department of Health and other health care providers - The Department of Health collaborates with the district to insure the accessibility of health care for all students.
- ▶ Agency for Persons with Disabilities - The Agency for Persons with Disabilities provides supports and services for individuals with disabilities.
- ▶ The Statewide Guardian Ad Litem office - The Florida Guardian Ad Litem Program advocates for the best interests of abused, abandoned and neglected children.
- ▶ Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET) - SEDNET is a collaborative resource for school districts, agencies, and families working to promote positive educational and community-based outcomes for children with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities.

Process for Referring Students to School-based Mental Health Interventions and Community-based Mental Health Providers for Treatment:

Early Warning Systems data is used to identify students who are displaying academic, social/emotional, behavior and attendance problems and may be in need of additional support. Additionally, the SAEBRS (Social, Academic and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener) will be used when students are not identified based on EWS indicators but are perceived to be "at-risk" based on Teacher/Parent referrals. Parent permission will be obtained before the SAEBRS is administered.

After students are selected using the EWS or SAEBRS data, a Student Study Team/Problem Solving Team meeting is scheduled to discuss the necessary steps to address the needs of the student. If the student is deemed in need of additional support, a referral is made to one of the providers indicated below. Providers have referral forms that must be completed by the school/parent prior to the commencement of services. Providers also have their specific assessment tools which they utilize during their first two meetings with students to determine whether or not the student is a proper fit for the services that they provide. Once services have been established, parents sign a release of records to facilitate open communication between the school and the agency/provider. This includes provision of any evaluations that have been conducted. Providers are invited to actively participate in Student Study Team meetings, Parent/Teacher conferences and Individual Educational Planning meetings. They are also encouraged to communicate frequently with the parent and school personnel.

In instances where a student is considered to be a threat to themselves or others, law enforcement is contacted. After the student has been evaluated by law enforcement they are then taken a facility

for a Psychiatric evaluation if one is deemed necessary. The school receives a document from the facility indicating that the student is now fit to attend school prior to the student returning to school.

Process for Referring Students to Community-based Substance Abuse Treatment

When identifying markers of substance abuse are present, the suspected abuse is investigated by appropriate school personnel. If addiction support is needed for the student, a referral is made to DISC Village. Additionally, parent reports of substance abuse or self-referrals are also forwarded to DISC village for additional support. DISC village specializes in substance abuse cases.

Process for Coordinating Mental Health Services with a Student's Primary Care Provider

School-community-agency collaboration is critical to providing the full continuum of mental health services to students.

Early Warning Systems data is used to identify students who are displaying academic, social/emotional, behavior and attendance problems and may be in need of additional support. Additionally, the SAEBRS (Social, Academic and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener) will be used when students are not identified based on EWS data but are perceived to be "at-risk" based on Teacher/Parent referrals. Parent permission will be obtained before the SAEBRS is administered.

After students are selected using the EWS or SAEBRS data, a Student Study Team/Problem Solving Team meeting is scheduled to discuss the necessary steps to address the needs of the student. If the student is deemed in need of additional support, a referral is made to one of the district providers. Providers have referral forms that must be completed by the school/parent prior to the commencement of services. Providers also have their specific assessment tools which they utilize during their first two meetings with students to determine whether or not the student is a proper fit for the services that they provide. Once services have been established, parents sign a release of records to facilitate open communication between the school and the agency/provider. This includes provision of any evaluations that have been conducted. Providers are invited to actively participate in Student Study Team meetings, Parent/Teacher conferences and Individual Educational Planning meetings. They are also encouraged to communicate frequently with the parent and school personnel.

In some instances, students have already been receiving services from an outside agency/provider prior to a Student Study Team meeting or a Parent/Teacher conference. In these instances, once the school is informed (usually by the parent or caseworker) that the student is receiving these services or has a medical condition that may adversely impact their academic progress or daily functioning, a release of information is signed to facilitate communication between the school and the agency and to obtain any evaluations that have been conducted.

Information from outside agencies are used in conjunction with school data to determine level of support that students require within an educational setting.

Documentation of Services

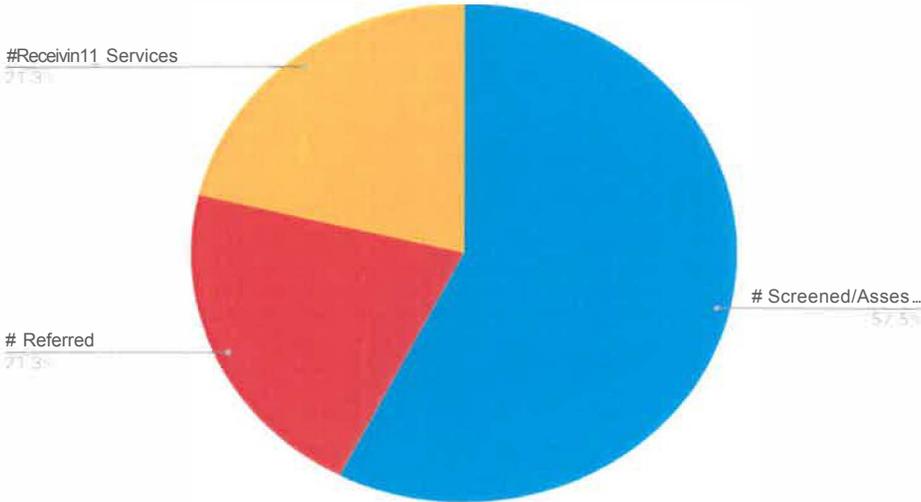
Each school will document through the Student Study Team minutes when a student is referred to a specific agency for Counseling. Once Counseling has commenced, a special code will be placed in Skyward (student database) to indicate students who are receiving counseling so that the total number of students receiving counseling services can be carefully monitored.

Outcome Data to Evaluate Effectiveness of Services

In order to assess the effectiveness of services, Early Warning Systems data such as grades, referrals, and attendance will be analyzed. Additionally, students who were initially screened using the SAEBRS (since EWS data did not signal any red flags) will be reassessed using this measure to assess progress.

Number of Students Screened/Assessed, Referred and Received Services/Assistance (School-based and Community)

The chart below indicates the number of students who were screened/assessed, referred and received services for the 2017-18 school year:



Number and Credentials of Current Mental Health Service Providers

The Gadsden County School District employs school counselors at each school. The District employs school psychologists in order to provide services to support students with identified mental health needs. The table below indicates the number and credentials of mental health service providers in Gadsden.

Service Provider	Number	Credentials
School Psychologist	5	Master's Degree from an accredited educational institution. Certification in School Psychology.
School Counselor	9	Master's Degree from an accredited educational institution. Certified by the state of Florida in Guidance and Counseling covering the level of assignment.
Licensed School Social Worker	1	Masters of Social Work
Licensed Mental Health Counselors	1.5	Licensed by the Florida Department of Health

Number of New Mental Health Service Providers Budgeted in this Plan

Due to the increasing need for Mental Health Services in Gadsden County, additional Mental Health Providers are required in order to provide effective and efficient services to students and their families.

Mental Health Allocation Plan Budget

Resource Needed	Purpose	Allocation
Social Workers (MSW)	New Position - To increase number of current Social Workers	2 x \$58,000.00 = \$116,000.00
School Psychologist	New Position - To increase number of current School Psychologists	1 x \$64,000.00 = \$64,000.00
School Counseling and Intervention Curriculum	To provide new curriculum resources for both Tier 1 Universal application and Tier 2 Group Intervention	\$7138.00
Charter FTE Allocation	Crossroad Academy Charter School is submitting their Plan	\$20,398.00
		Total= \$207,536.00