



# MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE ALLOCATION PLAN

## 2019-2020

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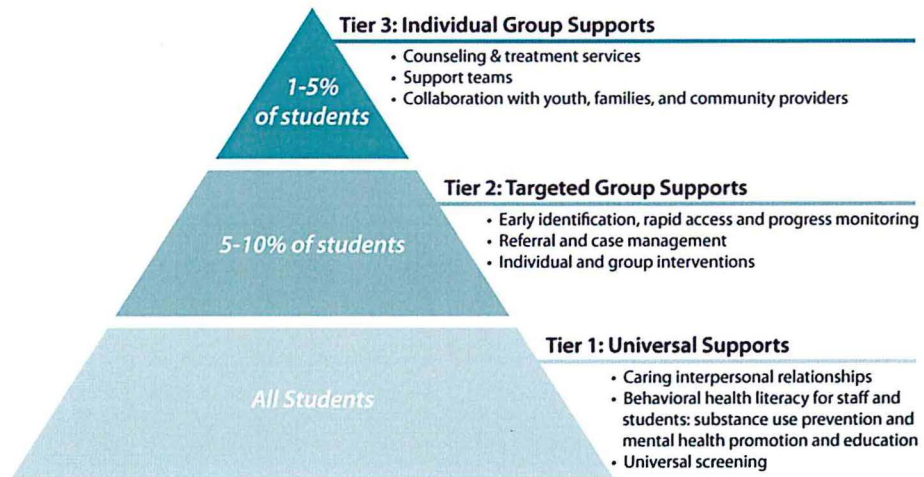
## Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan (s. 1011.62(16)(a) and (b), F.S.)

Gulf District Schools has a total population of 1,884 students attending four (4) public schools: two (2) elementary schools (grades PK – 6) and two (2) junior/senior high schools (grades 7 – 12). Both elementary schools qualify as Title I schools. The district also serves ESE students at two private schools in the Port St. Joe community and two (2) Head Start centers, one in Port St. Joe and one in Wewahitchka.

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

**Focuses 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.**

Mental health counselors and school counselors in Gulf District Schools will be focused on delivering evidence-based mental health care to children in a multi-tiered system of supports. These supports will include mental health screening, assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment, and recovery services to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and students at high risk of such diagnoses.



### **Tier 1 Interventions and Services**

- Universal screening for academic, behavioral, and emotional barriers to learning to ensure early identification and early intervention.
- Infusion of social-emotional learning into the classroom/curriculum.
- Five hours of mental health instruction for students in grades 6 – 12.
- School-wide positive behavior interventions and supports with a focus on creating a positive school climate.
- Staff development related to identification of mental health concerns and the referral process. The district’s administrators, teachers and staff strive to develop caring interpersonal relationships, behavioral health literacy for staff and students, substance use prevention and mental health education. Staff training will include the following:
  - Youth Mental Health First Aid
  - Kognito
  - CPI—Crisis Prevention/Intervention
  - Restorative Practices
  - Suicide Prevention/Intervention
  - Trauma Informed Care
  - Mandatory Reporting
  - Awareness and Prevention to Address Mental Health Related Issues
  - School-based Mental Health Leadership Teams

### **Tier 2 Interventions and Services**

Administration, teachers and staff all play a critical role in the early identification of students with mental health disorders. Teachers and school counselors, in particular, will be cognizant of students’ needs and make referrals to the mental health team so that students can receive mental health screening, assessment, treatment, interventions, and coordination of services with primary-care and other physicians and mental health agencies treating the student(s).

- Suicide risk/threat assessment.
- Individual and small group counseling. Topics may include the following:
  - Anger management
  - Anti-bullying
  - Truancy
  - Conflict Resolution
  - De-escalation
  - Grief/loss
  - Divorce
  - Diversity
  - Communication
  - Substance Abuse
  - Hyperactivity/ADHD
  - OCD

- Development and monitoring of individual student behavior intervention plans.
- Consultation with teachers and/or families to address mental and behavioral health problems.

**Tier 3 Interventions and Services**

- Direct therapy to all students in need, including individual and group counseling.
- Psychological assessments.
- Crisis intervention/response.
- Collaboration between school professionals and outside physicians, community agencies, and other mental health providers.

**Includes 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.**

Each of the four schools in the district have one school counselor, one mental health counselor, and the district employs one school psychologist who serves all four of the schools.

- Port St. Joe Elementary School—534 students—1 school counselor and 1 LCSW
- Port St. Joe High School—443 students—1 school counselor and 1 LCSW
- Wewahitchka Elementary School—466 students—1 school counselor and 1 Social Worker
- Wewahitchka High School—364 students—1 school counselor and 1 LMHC

**Identifies 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).**

The MTSS team provides referrals to mental health counselors and/or school counselors for students who need mental health interventions. Medicaid-eligible students are referred to Florida Therapy, Inc., (a community mental health agency) to provide behavioral and mental health services.

Staffing allocations will be reviewed so that the mental health needs of students are served as evenly as possible over the district.

**Includes contracts or interagency agreements with local behavioral health providers or Community Action Team services to provide behavioral health services on or off the school campus (plan must specify the type of services that are provided in the agreement).**

The district utilizes the following community resources:

- The district has an agreement with Florida Therapy, Inc. (Panama City) to provide behavioral and mental health services to Medicaid-eligible students both at school and in the home.
- The district collaborates and coordinates services with the Community Action Team (CAT) (Panama City) to provide behavioral and mental health services to students both at school and in the home.
- The district utilizes the Mobile Response Team based in Marianna to provide behavioral and mental health services to students at school and in the home.
- The district has an agreement with PanCare to provide telemedicine to students who need behavioral and mental health interventions on the school sites.
- The district has an agreement with Big Bend Community-Based Care (Tallahassee) in cooperation with Howard Medical to provide telemedicine to students who need behavioral and mental health interventions on the school sites.

**States how the plan will establish school board policies and procedures that ensure 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 for students are initiated within 30 days of referral.**

The district (in collaboration with PAEC) is in the process of developing school board policies to ensure that students are served based on the requirements of s. 1011.62(16)(a) and (b), F.S.

Procedures that ensure compliance are being developed by the district.

**Describes process for coordinating mental health services with a student's primary care provider and other mental health providers, including procedures for information sharing.**

The district's mental health counselors assigned to each school will coordinate mental health services with a student's primary care provider and/or mental health providers. During the referral process parents will be asked to sign a district *Release of Information* form with the student's primary care provider and/or mental health providers identified.

### **Information Sharing**

- Collaborate & share data between school staff and therapist.
- Use district's *Release of Information* forms with school, parent, & outside providers, including primary care physicians.
- Foster intensive family & caregiver partnerships.
- Build relationships with local mental health providers.
- Discuss mental health referrals with the School Resource Officer (SRO) when appropriate.
- Coordinate services with all health care providers.
- Network with the local office of the Department of Children and Families when appropriate.
- Communicate students' mental health services needs with the Department of Juvenile Justice, when necessary.

**Identifies 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.**

Students in grades 6 – 12 will be provided 5 hours per year of mental health instruction which will include the requirements in Rule 6A-1.094121.

At the elementary schools a school-wide character building curriculum will be implemented to provide a foundation for healthy behaviors.

At-risk students will be identified by the MTSS team at each school site. These students will be provided screening for behavior/mental health problems.

All staff will be provided training in Youth Mental Health First Aid so that they can build skills to recognize when students need referral to mental health professionals.

All staff will be provided online training in Kognito to refresh their skills in the recognition of students who may need referral for mental health services.

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

N/A—Gulf has no charter schools.

**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.**

In order to improve early identification, provide early interventions, and assist students dealing with trauma and violence the district is using the mental health allocation to add two mental health counselors so that each school site will have a dedicated mental health counselor (as well as a school counselor) who can provide a continuum of services.

The MTSS team at each school will make referrals to mental health professionals so that students are screened, assessed, diagnosed, provided intervention services, and provided treatment and recovery.

Each school-based MTSS team will meet at least monthly to discuss students' mental health needs. More frequent meetings will be held to determine the appropriate services for students requiring Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 interventions. The district administrator will be notified of students being served at Tier 2 and Tier 3, and of students being referred for emergency petitions.

## Expenditures (s. 1011.62(16), F.S.)

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

Two (2) licensed clinical social workers with DOH licensure will be employed to assure that each school in the district will have at least two counselors, one school counselor and one mental health counselor.

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

No community-based mental providers are being funded through this allocation. However, Big Bend Community Based Care, Life Management, and Florida Therapy Services, Inc. provide mental health services to our students. Additionally, PanCare and Howard Medical provide mental health kiosks for student and staff use.

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

N/A—All community mental health agencies provide services through their own funding, i.e., Life Management funding supports CAT teams and Mobile Response Teams (MRT). Florida Therapy provides services to Medicaid-eligible students and bills Medicaid directly.

**Other expenditures (specify type and amount).**

The district will spend \$5,000.00 to purchase curriculum to implement the required five hours per year of mental health instruction for students in grades 6 – 12.



## Expenditure Assurances (s. 1011.62(16), F.S.)

**One hundred percent of state funds are used to expand school-based mental health care; train educators and other school staff in detecting and responding to mental health issues; and connect children, youth and families with appropriate behavioral health services.**

One hundred percent (100%) of Gulf District Schools' Mental Health Allocation is being used to hire two (2) licensed clinical social workers with DOH licensure so that each school in the district will have a dedicated mental health counselor at each site.

**Mental health assistance allocation funds do not supplant other funding sources OR increase salaries or provide staff bonuses.**

Mental health assistance allocation funds will not be used to supplant other funding sources or increase salaries or provide staff bonuses.

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

The general fund will be used to make up the difference in funding and the district will utilize Medicaid reimbursement, the IDEA grant, and other grant funding opportunities (such as the Education Foundation Mini-Grants) to continue to fund the positions and purchase curriculum, computer equipment, materials, and supplies.

**Program Implementation Outcomes (s. 1011.62(16)(d), F.S.)**

**Identifies the number and ratios of FDOE-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).**

Each of the four schools in the district have one school counselor, one mental health counselor, and the district employs one school psychologist who serves all four of the schools.

- Port St. Joe Elementary School—534 students—1 school counselor and 1 LCSW  
Ratio: 1 counselor to 267 students
- Port St. Joe High School—443 students—1 school counselor and 1 LCSW  
Ratio: 1 counselor to 222 students
- Wewahitchka Elementary School—466 students—1 school counselor and 1 Social Worker  
Ratio: 1 counselor to 233 students
- Wewahitchka High School—364 students—1 school counselor and 1 LMHC  
Ratio: 1 counselor to 182 students

**Includes 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; number of students referred to school-based mental health services providers; number of students referred to community-based mental health service providers; number of students who received school-based interventions, services or assistance; and number of students who received community-based interventions, services or assistance.**

The district will use the FOCUS student records system to track students with mental health needs as described above.

**Plan Approval and Submission (s. 1011.62(16)(c), F.S.)**

	<b>Local school board approved the district plan. Date of approval: July 30, 2019</b>
	<b>Approved plan(s) was submitted to the Commissioner of Education by August 1, 2019 (attached).</b>