



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**  
fldoe.org



# 2022-23 Mental Health Application

## Part I: Youth Mental Health Awareness Training Plan

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## Table of Contents

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<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Part I. Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section A: MHAA Plan Assurances</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section B: Planned Outcomes</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section C: Charter Program Implementation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Section D: Direct Employment</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Section E: MHAA Planned Funds and Expenditures</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Section F: Charter Governing Board Approval</b>	<b>12</b>

## Introduction

The purpose of the combined mental health application is to streamline and merge two programs into one application. The Youth Mental Health Awareness Training (YMHAT) Plan and the Mental Health Assistance Allocation (MHAA) Plan are to provide supplemental funding to districts so schools can establish, expand and/or improve mental health care, awareness and training and offer a continuum of services. These allocations are appropriated annually to serve students and families through resources designed to foster quality mental health. This application is separated into two primary sections: Part II includes the YMHAT Plan and Part III includes the MHAA Plan.

### Part I. Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

In accordance with s. 1011.62, F.S., the MHAA Plan allocation is to assist districts with establishing or expanding school-based mental health care; training educators and other school staff in detecting and responding to mental health issues; and connecting children, youth and families who may experience behavioral health issues with appropriate services.

### Submission Process and Deadline

The application must be submitted to the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) by August 1, 2022.

There are two submission options for charter schools (MHAA Plan Only):

- Option 1: District submission includes charter schools in their application.
- Option 2: Charter school(s) submit a separate application from the district.

## Part I: Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

s. 1011.62, F.S.

### MHAA Plan Assurances

#### The Charter School Assurances

One hundred percent of the state funded proportionate share is 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.

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

Collaboration with FDOE to disseminate mental health information and resources to students and families.

Yes

Includes a system for tracking the number of students at high risk for mental health or co-occurring substance use 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.

Yes

#### A Charter school board policy or procedures has been established for

Students referred to a school-based or community-based mental health services provider, for mental health screening for the identification of mental health concerns and students at risk for mental health disorders are assessed within 15 calendar days of referral.

Yes

School-based mental health services are initiated within 15 calendar days of identification and assessment.

Yes

Community-based mental health services are initiated within 30 calendar days of referral.

Yes

Individuals living in a household with a student receiving services are provided information about behavioral health services through other delivery systems or payors for which such individuals may qualify if such services appear to be needed or enhancements in those individuals' behavioral health would contribute to the improved well-being of the student.

Yes

District schools and local mobile response teams use the same suicide screening instrument approved by FDOE pursuant to s. 1012.583, F.S., and Rule 6A-40010, Florida Administrative Code.

Yes

Assisting a mental health services provider or a behavioral health provider as described in s. 1011.62, F.S., respectively, or a school resource officer or school safety officer who has completed mental health crisis intervention training in attempting to verbally de-escalate a student's crisis situation before initiating an involuntary examination pursuant to s. 394.463, F.S. Such procedures must include strategies to de-escalate a crisis situation for a student with a developmental disability as that term is defined in s. 393.063, F.S.

Yes

The requirement that in a student crisis situation, the school or law enforcement personnel must make a reasonable attempt to contact a mental health professional who may initiate an involuntary examination pursuant to s. 394.463, F.S., unless the child poses an imminent danger to self or others before initiating an involuntary examination pursuant to s. 394.463, F.S. Such contact may be in person or using telehealth, as defined in s. 456.47, F.S. The mental health professional may be available to the school district either by contracts or interagency agreements with the managing entity, one or more local community behavioral health providers, or the local mobile response team, or be a direct or contracted school district employee. Note: All initiated involuntary examinations located on school grounds, on school transportation or at a school sponsored activity must be documented in the Involuntary Examinations and Restraint and Seclusion (IERS) platform.

Yes

Parents of students receiving services are provided information about other behavioral health services available through the student's school or local community-based behavioral health service providers. Schools may meet this requirement by providing information about and internet addresses for web-based directories or guides for local behavioral health services.

Yes

## Planned Outcomes

**Identify two specific and measurable goals that will be accomplished within the 2022-23 school year, and specify which component of Charter Assurance 1.a. directs that goal (refer to the Guidance Tab if needed).**

Charter Assurance 1: Train educators and other school staff in detecting and responding to mental health issues:

State funds are used to accomplish Focus Academy's Target Staff Training Goal for YMHFA and for Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (CPI) Training for the 2022-2023 School Year at 100% with new and returning employees completing initial training and/or recertification training on site at the start of each school year. Staff hired after the start of the school year will participate in on site YMHFA training within the first two months of hire. Focus Academy's Mental Health Team Clinical Supervisor is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Youth Mental Health First Aid Trainer, having completed the 3 day Trainer Training in Youth Mental Health First Aid in conjunction with the Florida DOE. As a result, all Focus Academy instructional and non-instructional staff members are currently certified in YMHFA, having completed the 8 Hour Youth Mental Health First Aid Training, receiving certification as Youth Mental Health First Aid responders allowing Focus Academy to maintain a 100% rate of staff certification. Annually during staff training week, all staff participate in an experiential Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training course via the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). Focus Academy's principal is a certified CPI

Trainer and provides the annual staff training on site. This two day training is designed to teach best practices for safely de-escalating and managing challenging situations and behaviors. Staff learn and practice verbal and non-verbal strategies for identifying, safely intervening in, and defusing a potential crisis situation. This training is especially significant in assisting our staff in understanding and appropriately responding to student behavior in a proactive manner with the goal of decreasing incidences of student aggressive behaviors and increasing overall student and school safety.

Charter Assurance 2: Expand school based Mental Health care:

State funds are utilized to enable Focus Academy students to continue to be served by a collaborative Mental Health Team (MHT). The MHT will include a full time Mental Health/Behavioral Specialist and 2 full time Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMHC), including one who is a State Qualified Supervisor, who will provide both MHT support and clinical supervision for our team. All licensed MHT members are licensed via Florida Statutes Chapters 490/491. The team will typically also include one or more Mental Health Counselor Interns from the University of South Florida Masters program in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling who will be supervised by the state licensed members of the MHT. The MHT provides evidence based assessment, diagnosis and treatment for all students assessed to be in need of such services, including students with one or more co-occurring mental health or substance abuse diagnoses and students who may be deemed to be at higher risk for such diagnoses. Assessment, diagnosis, intervention and treatment is provided from a proactive, mental wellness approach, rather than a reactive approach. As a result mental health concerns are identified and responded to quickly and comprehensively, increasing overall student well being and supporting a more positive global school climate.

## Charter Program Implementation

<b>Evidence-Based Program</b>	Small Group Social Skills Training
<b>Tier(s) of Implementation</b>	Tier 1, Tier 2
Describe the key EBP components that will be implemented.	
<p>Small Group Social Skill Training is a Mental Health Team facilitated, evidence based pro-active/therapeutic support/social-emotional learning group program that all Focus Academy students will participate in throughout the 2022 - 2023 school year. Regularly scheduled group support for our entire student population includes, Social/Emotional Self-Care curriculum, social skill development via group Drama Therapy, Mindfulness and self regulation training, and other group therapeutic/supportive interventions, provided multiple days per week for all students, based on individually assessed student need and consistent with each student's IEP goals/objectives. All students participate in these broad based social skills groups. Groups focused on specific mental health concerns such as significant emotional issues including; anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and trauma disorders, are provided for students as needed and are facilitated by a school based licensed mental health counselor. Group facilitators utilize specific assessment criteria, adapted to enhance relevance to our adolescent and young adult ESE population, to enhance early identification of social/emotional concerns and to continually assess for ongoing issues and progress. The proactive therapeutic work provided via the ongoing groups enables students to improve and enhance a variety of essential skills including social competency, coping skills and executive functioning skills, which enhances students' overall ability to successfully navigate relationships in school and other environments and serves to enhance overall social/emotional wellbeing. Students assessed to be at risk for more serious mental health concerns are seen in small groups with a more specific focus such as depression, anxiety, trauma, substance abuse, as deemed necessary.</p>	
<p>Explain how your district will implement evidence-based mental health services for students to improve the early identification of social, emotional, or behavioral problems or substance use disorders, as well as the likelihood of at risk students developing social emotional or behavioral problems, depression, anxiety disorders or suicidal tendencies, and how these will assist students dealing with trauma and violence.</p>	
<p>This consistent group support as described above, improves our Mental Health Team's ability to provide early identification and intervention of social/emotional/behavioral and/or substance use concerns and to identify and assist students who may be experiencing trauma or violence in home or other environments. Via daily group interaction, students who may be at-risk for serious mental health concerns are easily identified and our LMHC therapists who have already established relationships of trust and rapport with these students via the daily social skills training groups, can more successfully reach out to these students and provide the needed interventions. The Focus Academy Mental Health Team provides ongoing support for students and the daily group interventions enable our mental health professionals to establish relationships and to get to know each of our students well enough to effectively identify those students at risk for mental health, behavioral, substance abuse and another concerns. Once identified, these students may be seen by LMHC members of our mental health team for specifically focused small group therapy or for individual therapy as appropriate.</p> <p>Students will benefit from enhanced mental health support as a result of mental health team staffing increases. Our program currently includes two full time, school-based licensed mental health professionals and one social/emotional behavioral support therapist. Additionally, our program will have the support of one or more mental health counselor interns per semester, as a result of our partnership with the USF Department of Rehabilitation and Counseling Masters program.</p> <p>Along with group and individual counseling and behavioral support as needed, our mental health team works collaboratively with teaching staff to provide increased Social Emotional Learning (SEL) opportunities for both all students throughout the school day. Relevant SEL activities are infused within the curriculum throughout the school day to provide ongoing mental wellness support to all of our students</p>	

and to enable teaching staff to be able to more effectively identify and refer students in need of services at at risk for mental health or substance abuse concerns.

Explain how the supports will deliver evidence-based mental health care assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and recovery services to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and to students at high risk of such diagnoses.

As a result of the proficiency, expertise and skills of our mental health team therapists, the size of our mental health team in relation to our student population, as well as the ongoing training of and communication with teaching and support staff re: student mental health needs, most student mental health concerns can be addressed quickly and effectively - typically within a day or two of referral and immediately for crisis situations, enhancing our ability to successfully meet students' social/emotional needs. Specific evidence-based protocols for assessment, diagnosis and treatment have been established to meet the distinct needs of our adolescent and young adult ESE population, enhancing the efficacy of our approach to addressing the mental health needs of our students. The supports in place for all students, via broad based school wide small group therapy, in addition to groups focused on specific mental health concerns, as well as individual counseling and crisis intervention protocols, enables Focus Academy's Mental Health Team to consistently deliver evidence-based mental health services to all students as needed. Evidence based services include assessment, diagnosis, group and individual therapy, and crisis intervention services to students with a variety of mental health concerns including co-occurring diagnoses such as substance abuse as well as all students at high risk of various diagnoses.



<b>Evidence-Based Program</b>	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
<b>Tier(s) of Implementation</b>	Tier 1, Tier 2
Describe the key EBP components that will be implemented.	
<p>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a form of psychotherapy used by our therapists as appropriate with Focus Academy students, which is designed to help individuals recognize unhelpful thoughts and behaviors and learn how to change them. CBT focuses on the present and the future, rather than on the past. CBT focuses on practical everyday applications. This approach to therapy helps our students to understand the negativity of their thought patterns and learn how to replace them with more positive ones. Discovering new ways of looking at things helps our students to learn how to respond differently and improve responses to stressful situations.</p> <p>Our therapists utilize CBT with our students to teach and practice skills that can be put into practice immediately. CBT can be utilized in group or individual counseling and even in work with families. Treatment plans are adapted to meet cultural or regional differences and to meet the needs of our students with varying abilities and social/emotional needs.</p> <p>CBT techniques may include drama therapy techniques such as role playing, as well as play therapy and the use of therapeutic art activities. Trauma Focused CBT is an effective approach to use with young people affected by a wide range of traumatic events, from abuse to natural disasters. The therapist is able to focus on behavioral and cognitive issues directly related to the trauma the student has experienced. CBT can be used effectively in group therapy and groups may include students who are dealing with the same or similar problems.</p> <p>CBT has been shown to be an effective intervention for anxiety and mood disorders, including suicidal ideation and is used by our therapists at Focus Academy to address these issues via both individual and small group therapy as appropriate.</p> <p>Focus Academy's approach to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy has been adapted to effectively meet the unique needs of our student population.</p>	
<p>Explain how your district will implement evidence-based mental health services for students to improve the early identification of social, emotional, or behavioral problems or substance use disorders, as well as the likelihood of at risk students developing social emotional or behavioral problems, depression, anxiety disorders or suicidal tendencies, and how these will assist students dealing with trauma and violence.</p>	
<p>Students may be referred for group or individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy by a member of the Focus Academy mental health team, or by a teacher, parent, school administrator or private therapist. As an evidence based mental health approach, CBT can provide our students with realistic strategies to improve their emotional well being and behavioral responses. Once these strategies become habit, the new skills can positively impact students throughout their lives, replacing negative reactions with improved self-image, new coping mechanisms, problem-solving skills and greater self-control.</p> <p>Address problems and work out solutions</p>	
<p>Explain how the supports will deliver evidence-based mental health care assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and recovery services to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and to students at high risk of such diagnoses.</p>	
<p>CBT can help students address problems and work out solutions. It can help them to understand how thoughts and emotions affect their behavior and how changing their thoughts and emotions can change this behavior and the way they feel.</p> <p>CBT is a safe, effective approach to therapeutically addressing a wide range of mental health issues and</p>	

concerns. Treatment may involve recognizing how inaccurate thinking can worsen problems as well as learning new problem-solving skills. Students benefit by gaining confidence and a better understanding and appreciation of their strengths and self-worth. Anxiety and stress decreases as students learn how to face fears and challenges and problem solve solutions. Students use role play and learn calming techniques to utilize when faced with potentially challenging situations.

<b>Evidence-Based Program</b>	
<b>Tier(s) of Implementation</b>	[none selected]
Describe the key EBP components that will be implemented.	
Explain how your district will implement evidence-based mental health services for students to improve the early identification of social, emotional, or behavioral problems or substance use disorders, as well as the likelihood of at risk students developing social emotional or behavioral problems, depression, anxiety disorders or suicidal tendencies, and how these will assist students dealing with trauma and violence.	
Explain how the supports will deliver evidence-based mental health care assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment and recovery services to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses and to students at high risk of such diagnoses.	

## Direct Employment

### MHAA Plan Direct Employment

#### School Counselor

*Current Ratio as of August 1, 2022*

0

*2022-2023 proposed Ratio by June 30, 2023*

0

#### School Social Worker

*Current Ratio as of August 1, 2022*

0

*2022-2023 proposed Ratio by June 30, 2023*

0

#### School Psychologist

*Current Ratio as of August 1, 2022*

0

*2022-2023 proposed Ratio by June 30, 2023*

0

#### Other Licensed Mental Health Provider

*Current Ratio as of August 1, 2022*

1:60

*2022-2023 proposed Ratio by June 30, 2023*

**1:60**

## **Direct employment policy, roles and responsibilities**

**Explain how direct employment of school-based mental health services providers (school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors and other licensed mental health professionals) will reduce staff-to-student ratios.**

During the 2022 - 2023 school year Focus Academy will continue to be served by a collaborative Mental Health Team (MHT). The Mental Health Team will include 2 full time Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMHC), including one who is a full time on-site clinical supervisor who is an LMHC - State Qualified Supervisor who will provide both MHT support and clinical supervision for our team. All licensed MHT members are licensed via Florida Statutes Chapters 490/491. A full time Mental Health/Behavioral Specialist also provides support as a member of the Focus Academy Mental Health Team. The team will also include one or more Mental Health Counselor Interns from the University of South Florida Masters program in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling who will be supervised by the state licensed members of the Mental Health Team.

This represents a continuation of the level of MHT staffing from last school year which will continue to provide direct service and support to our students and a reduced Mental Health staff to student ratio of 1:40. Maintaining this level of support will enable our school-based MHT to continue to positively impact our global school climate, to provide an increased level of support to teachers in our classrooms and to enhance the overall positive well-being of our student population. Maintaining the current staffing hours will allow for continued support of our comprehensive on-site mental health services for our students and will positively impact the number of students we are able to serve.

**Describe your school's established policies and procedures 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).**

Maintaining our current Mental Health Team staffing hours for the coming school year represents a proactive approach to effectively addressing the anticipated increase in the need for student MH support due to the far reaching and ongoing impact of various life stressors and given the high risk and specific nature of increased mental health needs unique to our student population.

Additionally, in order to maintain the amount of time the MHT spends providing direct services to our students, the processes for referral, assessment, scheduling and documentation are continually updated as needed, and have been streamlined and digitized, allowing the MHT to more efficiently respond to referrals, schedule appointments, provide thorough documentation and in so doing to increase the number of students receiving needed services and the level of supports being provided.

In addition to as needed consultation, the MHT participates in weekly face to face meetings with teaching staff in order to review student progress, address teacher concerns and plan and implement supports moving forward.

**Describe the role of school based mental health providers and community-based partners in the implementation of your evidence-based mental health program.**

The Focus Academy Mental Health Team understands the consequential importance of consistent and timely response to mental health referrals. As such, our current policy requires response to routine referrals of students at risk for mental health concerns to be screened or assessed as quickly as is possible, typically within the same day as referral, but at maximum within 2 school days of the date of the referral. Following screening/assessment, if appropriate, students are scheduled for on campus Mental Health support within 1- 2 days, providing a total turnaround time of a maximum of 4

days from referral to implementation of services for routine Mental Health referrals. Immediate response is required and provided for students on campus believed to be experiencing a crisis situation such as suicidal ideation or any situation requiring the initiation of a Behavioral Threat Assessment. The Mental Health Team provides daily group SEL based counseling sessions for all students as well as targeted small group psychotherapy and individual psychotherapy for students identified as needing more intensive services. A community based licensed clinical psychologist is contracted to provide psychological testing as needed.

### Community Contracts/Interagency Agreements

**List the contracts or interagency agreements with local behavioral health providers or Community Action Team (CAT) services and specify the type of behavioral health services being provided on or off the school campus.**

Julie Reich, PhD, Licensed Clinical Psychologist - Provides off-campus psychological testing for our students as needed.

### MHAA Planned Funds and Expenditures

#### Allocation Funding Summary

**MHAA funds provided in the 2022-2023 Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP)**

\$ 5,570.00

**Unexpended MHAA funds from previous fiscal years as stated in your 2021-2022 MHAA Plan**

\$ 0.00

**Grand Total MHAA Funds**

\$ 5,570.00

#### MHAA planned Funds and Expenditures Form

Please complete the MHAA planned Funds and Expenditures Form to verify the use of funds in accordance with (s.) 1011.62 Florida Statutes.

The allocated funds may not supplant funds that are provided for this purpose from other operating funds and may not be used to increase salaries or provide bonuses. School districts are encouraged to maximize third-party health insurance benefits and Medicaid claiming for services, where appropriate.

The following documents were submitted as evidence for this section:

MHAA_Planned_Expenditures_Report_Focus_Academy_2022-2023_(004)_(1).pdf
<i>MHAA Planned Funds and Expenditures - Focus Academy 2022-2023</i>
<a href="#">Document Link</a>

### Charter Governing Board Approval

This application certifies that the **Hillsborough County Public Schools** governing board has approved the Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan, which outlines the local program and planned expenditures to establish or expand school-based mental health care consistent with the statutory requirements for the mental health assistance allocation in accordance with section 1011.62(14), F.S.

#### Governing Board Approval date

Monday 7/25/2022