



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**  
fldoe.org



## 2023-24 Mental Health Application

Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

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## Introduction

### Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan

s. 1006.041, F.S.

#### MHAA Plan Assurances

##### The District Assures

One hundred percent of state funds are used to establish or 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

Other sources of funding will be maximized-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

A system is included 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

Yes

Review for compliance the Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plans submitted by Charter Schools who opt out of the District's MHAAP.

Yes

Curriculum and materials purchased using MHAA funds have received a thorough review and all content is in compliance with State Board of Education Rules and Florida Statutes.

Yes

##### A school board policy or procedure 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-4.0010, F.A.C.

Yes

Assisting a mental health services provider or a behavioral health provider as described ins. 1006.041, 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 ins. 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 ins. 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, 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

The Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan must be focused on a multitiered system of supports to 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. s. 1006.041, F.S.

Yes

## District Program Implementation

<b>Evidence-Based Program</b>	WhyTry?
<b>Tier(s) of Implementation</b>	Tier 1, Tier 2
Describe the key EBP components that will be implemented.	
<p>WhyTry? Is an evidence based program that can be used at all three tiers to improve social emotional behavior and academics. It is based on CBT, Brief therapy, reality therapy and client centered strategies. WhyTry has resulted in improved academics, behavior and engagement.</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>WhyTry? training has been provided to school counselors, social workers and behavior staff to allow them to provide counseling/behavior intervention with this evidence based strategy.                  WhyTry? may be used in whole class, individual or small group settings. Through participation in WhyTry? students will develop skills in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Goal setting</li> <li>2. Understanding choices and consequences</li> <li>3. Recognizing their strengths</li> <li>4. Choosing how they present themselves</li> <li>5. Choosing how to respond to negative situations</li> <li>6. Increasing positive motivation</li> <li>7. Coping strategies</li> <li>8. Identifying problems and solutions</li> <li>9. Understanding the relationship between desire, time and effort</li> <li>10. Developing strength of character</li> <li>11. Allowing others to help</li> <li>12. Perspective</li> </ol>	
<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>Students participating in WhyTry will improve coping skills, manage behaviors and improve academic success as reported by students, parents and teachers and measured by discipline referrals and grades</p>	

<b>Evidence-Based Program</b>	Hope Squad Peer to Peer Suicide Prevention Program
<b>Tier(s) of Implementation</b>	Tier 1, Tier 2
Describe the key EBP components that will be implemented.	
<p>Hope squad is an evidence based program intended to train students to identify peers in need of support, reach out and help them access an adult mental health helper.</p> <p>Findings show that Hope squad schools have less suicide related stigma than non Hope Squad schools, significantly more referrals for mental health support.</p> <p>annual pre/post surveys indicate that Hope Squad curriculum is effective in improving the knowledge, skills and self-efficacy of members.</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>Hope Squads are peer nominated support groups with school based mental health professionals serving as advisors.</p> <p>Students are trained in QPR and participate in a curriculum to learn how to identify warning signs for mental health, reach out to peers and refer them to adult mental health support.</p> <p>Hope Squads meet monthly, learn through established curriculum and work together to create schoolwide activities to reduce mental health stigma and help peers know how to access help.</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>Hope squad members learn skills in mental health warning signs, QPR, seeking help, resilience, self care and more. Students take a pre and post survey annually.</p> <p>Survey results will show an increase in students' confidence in their ability to identify warning signs and ability to seek help for a friend.</p>	

<b>Evidence-Based Program</b>	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
<b>Tier(s) of Implementation</b>	Tier 2, Tier 3
Describe the key EBP components that will be implemented.	
Cognitive behavior therapy has proven effective in reducing trauma symptoms, depression, anxiety and behavioral problems. CBT focuses on challenging unhealthy thought patterns, changing learned unhealthy behaviors and developing coping skills for dealing with challenging thoughts and feelings.	
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>Cognitive behavioral therapy and CBITS strategies are implemented through individual and small group counseling by our school counselors and social workers. During counseling sessions mental health professionals will work with students to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviors</li> <li>2. Identify unhealthy thought patterns</li> <li>3. Replace unhealthy thoughts with positive self talk</li> <li>4. Identify unhealthy behaviors deriving from negative thoughts and feelings</li> <li>5. Identify and utilize healthy coping skills to manage emotions and change behavior</li> <li>6. Expand their feelings vocabulary and be able to express how they are feeling</li> </ol>	
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.	
Students participating in CBT based counseling will improve coping skills, manage behaviors and improve academic success as reported by students, parents and teachers and measured by discipline referrals and grades.	

<b>Evidence-Based Program</b>	Zones of Regulation
<b>Tier(s) of Implementation</b>	Tier 1, Tier 2
Describe the key EBP components that will be implemented.	
<p><a href="https://zonesofregulation.com/research--evidence-base.html">https://zonesofregulation.com/research--evidence-base.html</a></p> <p>Zones of Regulation is primarily used in elementary and middle school settings to work on developing feelings identification, behavior management and coping strategies.</p> <p>"The Zones of Regulation provides a common language and compassionate framework to support positive mental health and skill development for all, while serving as an inclusion strategy for neurodiverse learners, those who have experienced trauma, and/or have specific needs in terms of social, emotional, and behavioral development."</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>Zones of regulation is practiced in classrooms, small group and individual counseling sessions by teachers, counselors and social workers.</p> <p>Students will participate in lessons and activities used to gain skills in the area of self-regulation and emotional control as well as executive functioning and social awareness. Students will increase skills in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying feelings</li> <li>2. Understanding their feelings in context</li> <li>3. Developing effective self regulation strategies</li> <li>4. Understanding when and how to use these strategies.</li> <li>5. Developing problem solving skills</li> <li>6. Understanding how their behaviors impact others</li> </ol>	
<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>Students participating in Zones of Regulation will improve coping skills, manage behaviors and improve academic success as reported by students, parents and teachers and measured by discipline referrals and grades.</p>	



<b>Evidence-Based Program</b>	Habitudes
<b>Tier(s) of Implementation</b>	Tier 1, Tier 2
Describe the key EBP components that will be implemented.	
<p>Habitudes provides the tools that help educators connect with students and staff today while instilling the soft skills that equip them to lead. Habitudes offers programs for both middle school and high school students. Habitudes is comprised of developing Life Skills curriculum; some of the topics include: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision Making.</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>Habitude curriculum will be assigned by the district to all secondary schools. Consistency in this framework, encourages common language around developing life skills that benefit mental wellness, resiliency, and mental well-being supports for students across the district. Lessons will be selected based on the concepts that support mental wellness and resiliency standards.</p> <p>Lessons and activities will be facilitated by educators in small or large group settings.</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>Students participating in Habitudes lessons and activities will learn essential life skills, how to manage behaviors and stressors, and how to seek support in their schools and community to ultimately improve academic success and overall well-being.</p>	

**Direct Employment**

**MHAA Plan Direct Employment**

**School Counselor**

*Current Ratio as of August 1, 2023*

**1:438**

*2023-2024 proposed Ratio by June 30, 2024*

**1:438**

**School Social Worker**

*Current Ratio as of August 1, 2023*

**1:1300**

*2023-2024 proposed Ratio by June 30, 2024*

**1:1300**

**School Psychologist**

*Current Ratio as of August 1, 2023*

**1:2481**

*2023-2024 proposed Ratio by June 30, 2024*

**1:2166**

### **Other Licensed Mental Health Provider**

*Current Ratio as of August 1, 2023*

**1:1300**

*2023-2024 proposed Ratio by June 30, 2024*

**1:1300**

### **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.**

22 school social workers and 2 mental health specialists allows us to expand and enhance school based student services by reducing the ratio of school based mental health specialists to students. Social worker's primary responsibility is to provide individual and small group counseling/behavior intervention at Tier 2 and 3 using evidence based practices. This in addition to the services our school counselors provide.

**Describe your district'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).**

ACPS has been and is carefully reviewing the role of the school counselor. ACPS is looking to adding more

guidance clerical hours and hiring family liaison so that counselors can spend more time providing direct services. Family liaisons district -wide have been trained to provide support for basic needs and family engagement services to bolster the student and counselor relationship.

School social worker's focus is to specifically provide evidence based intervention, increasing the services provided to students and reducing barriers to access of mental health care.

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

School based counselors and social workers provide Tier 2, and 3 counseling and behavior intervention utilizing evidence based mental health programs and refer to community agencies for counseling. Community based providers provide mental health screenings/assessments, individual counseling, family counseling, group counseling, psychiatric services, and mobile mental health/ medical services.

### **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.**

1. Licensed Mental Health Counselor with Meridian Behavioral Health. These services include individual and/or small group counseling on school campus sites.
2. Licensed Mental Health Counselor with Village Counseling Center. These services include

individual and/or small group counseling on school campus sites.

3. Licensed physicians/Year 5/6 Psychiatry Fellows with the University of Florida Psychiatry. These services include Psychiatry consultation and follow up consultation on school campus sites.

4. Licensed Mental Health Counselor with Hazel Health. These supervised telehealth services will include individual counseling virtually on school campus sites.

5. Mental Health Counselor/Social Workers under the supervision of a Licensed mental health provider with UF Pals. These services include individual and/or small group counseling on school campus sites.

6. Licensed Mental Health Counselor/Social Workers with Chrysalis Health (CAT). These services include individual counseling on school campus sites, medication management, family counseling, and wraparound services.

### MHAA Planned Funds and Expenditures

#### Allocation Funding Summary

**MHAA funds provided in the 2023-2024 Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP)**

\$ 1,598,008.00

**Unexpended MHAA funds from previous fiscal years**

\$ 686,052.00

**Grand Total MHAA Funds**

\$ 2,284,060.00

#### 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.) 1006.041 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:

*No files were uploaded*

### School District Certification

This application certifies that the **Alachua County Public Schools** School Superintendent and School Board approved the district's 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 s. 1006.041(14), F.S.

**Note:** The charter schools listed below have **Opted Out** of the district's Mental Health Assistance Allocation Plan and are expected to submit their own MHAAP to the District for review.

#### Charter Schools Opting Out

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#### School Board Approval Date

Tuesday 7/18/2023