

A Key Consideration When Staffing School-Based Mental Health Programs: Hire or Partner?

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) generally have the following two approaches to provide school-based mental health services : (A) hire their own personnel (“hiring”), and (B) partner with community-based providers (“partnerships”). This infographic outlines the advantages of each approach in regard to administrative burden, access to services, and revenue.



Advantages of Hiring

Avoid MOUs

- No need to establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with providers

Note: an MOU is an agreement establishing the terms of an official partnership

Service Availability

LEA-employed providers:

- Will be present on site at school
- Will often be available to provide services on-site for longer windows of time (i.e., increased availability)

Equity

- LEAs can prioritize improving service access for all students, regardless of insurance status

Administrative Burden



Access



Revenue



Advantages of Partnerships

Billing and Data Security

- Community providers routinely manage informed consent, billing, and patient data security,¹ which lessens the administrative burden of these tasks for the school

Hiring & Retention

Community partners:

- Can hire FTEs* to provide part-time services in the schools to stay within LEA budget
- May be more effective at retaining providers by providing professional support

Efficiency

- Community providers are experienced with processing insurance claims for reimbursement

Note: * An full-time equivalent (FTE) stands for the hours worked by an employee on a full-time basis.

References: 1. Dikel, W. “Providing Mental Health Services in Public Schools- What Educators Need to Know.” Retrieved from: <http://www.williamdikel.com/providing-mental-health-services-in-public-schools-what-educators-need-to-know.html>



Southeast (HHS Region 4)

MHTTC

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