

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH STATE LEGISLATION IN THE SOUTHEAST: A TIERED APPROACH



Updated November 2019



In the Southeast region, state leaders and legislatures are proposing and implementing key policies concerning the financing and provision of school-based mental health services, including prevention, screening, and treatment.



MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

KENTUCKY

KENTUCKY SCHOOL SAFETY AND RESILIENCY ACT: KY SB1 (2019)



TIER 1 SERVICES: MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION

- By January 1, 2020, require the Department of Education to make a tool kit available to assist school districts in developing a trauma-informed approach
- By July 1, 2020, require each local board of education to develop a plan for implementing a trauma-informed approach
- Require school district superintendents to appoint a school safety coordinator



TIER 2/3 SERVICES: EARLY INTERVENTION TREATMENT

- Amend [KRS 156.095](#) to require suicide prevention awareness information be provided to all students; require suicide training provided to staff to include the recognition of signs and symptoms of mental illness
- By July 1, 2021, as funds become available, require each school district to provide a mental health professional for every 1,500 students, with the goal of having 1 counselor for every 250 students, spending 60% or more of his/her time on direct services



FUNDING/SUSTAINABILITY

- Allow the board of directors of any public- school district foundation to accept gifts or donations restricted for school security purposes and use them exclusively for the purpose granted
- Encourage the organization of foundations to support public school districts for which no foundation exists
- Direct the Office of Education Accountability to conduct a study on the use of guidance



SCREENING

- Require development of a school security risk assessment tool

FLORIDA

MARJORY STONEMAN DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL
PUBLIC SAFETY ACT: FL SB 7026 (2018)



TIER 1 SERVICES: MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION

- Require student disclosure of mental health referrals at registration



TIER 2/3 SERVICES: EARLY INTERVENTION TREATMENT

- Require the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to contract for community action treatment teams to provide behavioral health and support services
- Require the DOE to establish evidence-based youth mental health awareness and assistance training program to prepare school personnel to identify, understand the signs of, and help a person who is experiencing or developing an emotional disturbance, mental illness, or substance use disorder
- Require students expelled for firearms or certain threats be referred for mental health services



FUNDING/SUSTAINABILITY

- Create the Mental Health Assistance Allocation within the Florida Education Finance Program to provide funding to assist school districts in establishing or expanding school based mental health care. Allocate over \$69 million to the DOE to fund this program with each school district receiving a minimum of \$100,000. Appropriate \$500,000 in recurring funds and \$6,200,000 in nonrecurring funds to DOE to implement youth mental health awareness training
- Require that at least 90% of a district's allocation be spent to:
 - 1) Provide mental health assessment, diagnosis, intervention, treatment, and recovery services to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnosis and high-risk students;
 - 2) Coordinate such services with a student's primary care provider and the student's other mental health providers

Additional Florida legislation, [FL SB 1418](#), implements 2 recommendations of a DCF task force on [Baker Act](#) cases involving minors including encouraging school districts to adopt a standardized suicide assessment tool for school-based mental health professionals.

MISSISSIPPI

MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL SAFETY ACT OF 2019: MS HB 1283



TIER 1 SERVICES: MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION

- Require the School Safety Grant Program administered by the state department of education to include a pilot program to implement a developmentally appropriate social and emotional curriculum for students in grades K-5
- Require school employees to complete a training or professional development course in mental health every 2 years



TIER 2/3 SERVICES: EARLY INTERVENTION TREATMENT

- Require community mental health centers and facilities to develop a state-standardized memorandum of understanding (MOU) with school districts in order to expand student access to local mental health resources under the regional behavioral management program



FUNDING/SUSTAINABILITY

- Establish a School Safety Grant Program within the State Department of Education, using only existing staff and resources, to assist eligible public-school districts in financing programs to provide school safety



SCREENING

- Train school personnel to conduct initial behavioral health screenings of students who experience stress or are at risk of harm

TENNESSEE

TN HB 405 (2019)



TIER 1 SERVICES: MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION

- Require the Department of Education (DOE) to develop a training program on ACEs
- Authorize Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to include information on administering an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) assessment in their ACEs training



FUNDING/SUSTAINABILITY

- Establish that DOE will require one full-time person to expand the Training of Trainers (TOT) model to be adopted by LEAs with a mid-range salary of \$97,501
- Provide for a one-time increase in state expenditure of \$100,000 in FY19-20 and a recurring increase in state expenditure of \$10,000 in FY20-21 and subsequent years to train new district personnel. The mandatory recurring increase in expenditure is estimated to exceed \$6,862,000 (146 districts x \$47,000 salary and benefits for one additional full-time employee)



SCREENING

- Require local boards of education to adopt a policy that requires schools within the LEA to conduct an ACEs assessment before assigning disciplinary action

GEORGIA

GA APEX EXECUTIVE ACTION
(LAUNCHED IN 2015)



TIER 1 SERVICES: MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION

- Require that schools engage in school-wide mental health prevention initiatives that promote student well-being, as well as parent and staff education



TIER 2/3 SERVICES: EARLY INTERVENTION TREATMENT

- Place mental health providers in schools to provide services like screening, assessment, counseling and therapy, and referrals to community support services



FUNDING/SUSTAINABILITY

- Allocate \$8.4 million from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disorders to bolster APEX programs which support partnerships between mental health clinics and schools for school-based mental health services (Governor's action)--Context: Providers able to bill for 75-90% of the students served each month

Sources used for policy updates include: individual state legislature websites (i.e. the [Florida Senate website](#)), databases (i.e. [Mental Health America](#) and [National Conference of State Legislatures](#)), and state news outlets (i.e. [The Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#)).



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