



Sacramento County Mental Health Board

June 6, 2022

Ryan Quist, PhD
Behavioral Health Director
7001-A East Parkway
Sacramento, CA 95823

To: Sacramento County Board of Supervisors
Re: Mental Health Board PEI Recommendations

Dear Dr. Quist:

The Sacramento County Mental Health Board (MHB) has reviewed the proposed county budget for fiscal year (FY) 2022-23. We have evaluated how it aligns with the policy and fiscal recommendations we have made in the past year. In February 2022, the MHB issued its report, "Improving School-based Mental Health Services." The report highlighted grave concerns regarding students in Sacramento County at the 7th, 9th, and 11th grade levels. Over 35% of students at schools in the districts reported that they had chronic, sad, or hopeless feelings in the past 12 months. In addition, White, Hispanic or Latino, Mixed races, and female students had high rates of suicidal ideation, ranging from 20%-25%. Special populations, such as Transgender and Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual youth, had very elevated rates reaching 65%-70%.

Based on these findings, we made the following recommendations regarding the expenditure of Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) funds:

- Suicide Prevention Programs should be augmented to target high risk middle school and high school students in identified racial/ethnic groups, females, and youth in Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation categories
- The next Annual Update to the MHSA Three Year Program and Expenditure Plan should include for funds for programs related to the following:
 - ✓ Stigma reduction
 - ✓ Suicide prevention
 - ✓ Mental health literacy and awareness training for students, teachers, parents, other school staff, and community partners
 - ✓ Early behavior identification and interventions for students struggling academically or acting inappropriately in preschool through K-12
 - ✓ Early warning systems to identify children before mental health crises, school failure, and suspensions occur
 - ✓ Ensure services, interventions, and trainings are ethnically, linguistically, and culturally relevant
 - ✓ Extend support for peer mentoring programs being funded by current PEI funds and expand support for these types of program in the future
- Based on input from youth, additional PEI funds should be used:

- ✓ To create coping tools for youth for stress reduction, relaxation, managing uncertainty, time management, and positive thinking.
- ✓ To address loneliness, continue to support virtual gathering spaces for youth to connect, gain skills, and enrich themselves.
- ✓ To create Wellness Centers on school campuses, convening groups of students to create the Wellness Center design.

You have informed us that the State budget for FY 2022-23 includes funds for these activities and that it would not be necessary to fund them at the county level. Consequently, the MHB will delay these recommendations for one year. At the end of FY 2022-23, we will evaluate whether State efforts have been sufficient to meet the needs of students in Sacramento County. If we are not satisfied, we will revisit these recommendations for the FY 2023-24 budget year.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations. If you have any questions about this issue, please contact me at (916) 267-8667 or by email at LoranSheley@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



Loran Sheley, Chairperson
Sacramento County Mental Health Board