Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration (MHSP)
Grant Program

FY2022 Grant Competition Applicant and Stakeholder Resource

Eligible Applicants:
High-need local educational agencies (LEAs), state educational agencies (SEAs) on behalf of one or more high-need LEAs, and institutions of higher education (IHEs). Eligible applicants must meet the Absolute Priority by proposing a school-based mental health partnership which must include (1) one or more high-need LEAs or an SEA on behalf of one or more high-need LEAs and (2) one or more eligible IHEs.

This document is a brief summary of the MHSP program priorities and application requirements. Do not rely solely on the information in this document for guidance. Please refer to the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) and the program priorities published in the Federal Register for additional information, as these are the official documents governing the competition.

Mental Health in Schools

Like good physical health, positive mental health promotes success in life. As defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood."[1]

Challenges

There are increases in student mental health needs, including those resulting from:

- Impacts from COVID-19
- Disasters or Traumatic Events
- Adverse Childhood Experiences

Support for the mental health of children and youth increases educational opportunities by **creating conditions for students to fully engage in learning**

Solutions

MHSP grants aim to address student mental health needs by providing:

- Partnerships to train more providers
- More providers from diverse backgrounds
- Training in inclusive practices

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm.

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MHSP Grant Program

The MHSP Program provides competitive grants to support and demonstrate innovative partnerships to train school-based mental health services providers for employment in schools and local educational agencies (LEAs).The goal of this program is to increase the number and diversity of high-quality, trained providers available to address the shortages of mental health services professionals in schools served by high-need LEAs.

Estimated $143M in funding available!

MHSP Absolute Priority

Eligible applicants must meet the Absolute Priority to expand the capacity of high-need LEAs in partnership with institutions of higher education (IHEs) to **train school-based mental health services providers**, with the goal of expanding the number of these professionals available to address the shortages of **school-based mental health services providers in high-need schools**.

The applicant must propose a school-based mental health partnership to place the IHE's graduate students in school-based mental health services fields into schools served by the participating high-need LEAs for the purpose of completing required training necessary to complete their degree or obtain a credential as a school-based mental health services provider.

Funding Available

The Department estimates making between 150-250 awards. The estimated range of awards is **$400,000 - $1,200,000** for each 12-month budget period for up to 5 years.

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Application Requirements

The MHSP application has **six overarching application requirements**, described below. Applications must address these requirements in their MHSP application.

Requirement	*Description*
Identification of schools to be served	❑ Identify or describe how the applicant will identify the high-need schools to be served in each high-need LEA that is part of the school-based mental health partnership.
Description of the nature and magnitude of the problem	❑ Describe how the lack of school-based mental health services providers is specifically affecting students in the high-need schools to be served by project activities. ❑ Describe the nature of the problem for the LEA, based on, but not limited to, the most recent available ratios of school-based mental health services providers to students enrolled in the schools in each high-need LEA that is part of the school-based mental health partnership.
Plan to enhance LEA capacity to provide mental health services to students	❑ Describe the specific activities they will conduct to expand and improve LEA capacity to provide mental health services to students in high-need LEAs and ensure that students receive appropriate, evidence-based, and culturally and linguistically inclusive mental health services. ❑ Propose a school-based mental health partnership established for the purpose of placing the IHE's graduate students in school-based mental health fields into high-need schools.
A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), or Letter of Agreement between the LEA or SEA, and the IHE	❑ Include with their application an MOU, MOA, or Letter of Agreement that is signed by the authorized representatives of the LEA or SEA, and the IHE. ❑ The MOU, MOA, or Letter of Agreement must provide details regarding the roles and responsibilities of each entity in the partnership, and include a description of how the partnership will place graduate students into high-need schools
Plan for collaboration and coordination with related Federal, State, and Local initiatives	Applicants must propose a plan that describes ***one or more*** of the following: ❑ How the applicant will collaborate with at least one national, State, or local professional organization (to include a regional professional organization, if appropriate) ❑ The activities to be carried out in coordination with the national, State, or local mental health, public health, child welfare, and other community agencies ❑ How the applicant will leverage other available Federal, State, and local resources to achieve project goals and objectives and sustain investments beyond the budget period ❑ How the applicant will use the MHSP Program funds to expand and enhance existing efforts or put in place new measures to increase the number of qualified school-based mental health services providers to be employed by eligible schools and LEAs qualified to provide school-based mental health services.
Description of the process to identify students for mental health services	❑ Describe the specific process and activities they will use to ensure students in high-need LEAs who need school-based mental health services are properly identified, assessed, and provided the appropriate school-based mental health services by qualified personnel in consultation with educators, including school leaders, and parents and families, as appropriate

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Competitive Priorities & Selection Criteria

MHSP funds will be awarded based on applicants responding to the absolute priority, three **optional** competitive preference priorities, and five selection criteria, described below.

Competitive Priorities

Increase the Number of Qualified School-Based Mental Health Services Providers in High-Need LEAs Who Are from Diverse Backgrounds or from Communities Served by the High-Need LEAs

(up to 5 points)

Projects that propose to increase the number of qualified school-based mental health services providers in high-need LEAs who are from diverse backgrounds or who are from communities served by the high-need LEAs

Promote Inclusive Practices

(up to 5 points)

Projects that propose to provide evidence-based pedagogical practices in mental health services provider preparation programs or professional development programs that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, disability, and for students who identify as LGBTQI+.

Partnerships with Minority-Serving Institutions

(0 or 2 points)

Applicants that propose to implement their projects by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

(1) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
(2) Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)
(3) Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs)

Selection Criteria

Need for Project & Significance: Extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses	**15 points**
Quality of Project Design: Extent to which the applicant: (1) includes thorough, high-quality review of relevant literature, high quality plan for implementation, and use of appropriate methodological tools (2) represents exceptional approach to priority or priorities (3) demonstrates a rationale.	**25 points**
Quality of Project Services: (1) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. (2) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are likely to alleviate the personnel shortages that have been identified.	**30 points**
Management Plan & Adequacy of Resources: The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project and the relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.	**20 points**
Quality of Project Evaluation: The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project and the extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.	**10 points**

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FAQs & Resources

Common Questions

How does the Department define "diverse backgrounds"?

The Department does not define "diverse backgrounds". However, we encourage applicants to consider the full range of diversity that reflects the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, abilities, and cultures of the students in the high-need LEAs, including underserved students.

What types of expenses can projects cover for participating graduate students?

Projects may pay, for example, for participants' tuition, provide a modest salary for internships, cover the cost of transportation to and from the high-need school where the participant is placed, and pay for childcare while the participant is working at the high-need school.

Must an IHE applicant have an MOU, MOA, or Letter of Agreement with each LEA it proposes to partner with?

Yes. There must be an MOU, MOA, or Letter of Agreement with each entity in the partnership.

Resources & Contact

Program Website

Notice Inviting Applications (NIA)

Point of Contact:

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202-987-1782

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