



AGENDA ITEM 9

Action

Behavioral Health Student Services Act: Administrative and Evaluation Funds

Item Goals

- Review and consideration of the one-time administrative and evaluation funds for the Behavioral Health Student Services Act (BHSSA) that must be encumbered by June 30, 2026.

Behavioral Health Landscape

- The Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) fee schedule standardizes reimbursement rates for school-linked behavioral health services through private, commercial and Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans. As a result, CYBHI gives providers and local education agencies support in financial sustainability, billing consistency, and equitable access statewide to behavioral health services.
- The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) will roll out population-based prevention programs under the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) that includes schools as a key component, providing classroom or schoolwide supports to prevent serious emotional, mental health, and substance use disorders.
- BHSA early intervention funds support county programs that include outreach, early identification, and linkage to care in education settings to prevent severe mental health and substance use disorders and reduce disparities, with the goal of decreasing school suspension, expulsion, referral to alternative or community schools, and dropout.

Relevant Commission Work

- The BHSSA, authorized by Senate Bill 75 (Chapter 51, Statutes of 2019) as part of the State's 2019 Budget Act, provides grants for partnerships between county behavioral health departments and local education agencies (LEAs) to deliver school-based behavioral health services.
- The Commission awarded BHSSA grant funding in three phases (as funding became available) to 57 county behavioral health departments, including two city municipalities, and their LEA partners.

- Grant partners were allowed flexibility to tailor their grant programs (if they meet BHSSA goals) to the needs of students, families, and identified gaps in service delivery.
- In 2023, the Commission made available additional BHSSA funding to existing BHSSA grant partners through a Request for Application (RFA).
- In 2024, the Commission learned of specific needs and gaps that informed the targeted use of \$25 million BHSSA funds in four categories: (1) services for at-promise youth; (2) universal screening learning community; (3) quality improvement and sustainability; and (4) other areas to be identified by the grant applicant.
- To date, the Commission has awarded a total of \$280 million in BHSSA grant funding.
- Between 2023 and 2025, the Commission contracted with WestEd for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of an evaluation of the BHSSA.
- The Program Advisory Committee approved recommendation of this proposal on December 15, 2025. The Legislative and External Affairs Advisory Committee approved recommendation of sponsored legislation which would support the suicide prevention training component on December 15, 2025.

Proposed Motions

- That the Commission approve the procurement of grant management software for an estimated amount of \$200,000 in BHSSA administrative funds.
- That the Commission approve amending the BHSSA TA provider (Center for Applied Research Solutions) contract (contract #24MHSOAC061) to provide an additional \$1.5 million in BHSSA administrative funds for technical assistance for suicide prevention training.
- That the Commission approve the disbursement of \$3.6 million in BHSSA administrative funds for substance use disorder services integration pilots through grant amendments based on grantee capacity and interest.
- That the Commission approves the BHSSA procurement outline plan for school behavioral health performance management systems not to exceed \$9 million in evaluation funds, and authorizes the Executive Director to conduct the competitive solicitation, issue a Notice of Intent to Award to the highest-ranked proposer(s), and execute all resulting contract agreements in accordance with the approved outline plan and applicable procurement laws.