

State of California

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION

MHSSA Collaboration Teleconference Meeting Summary
March 1, 2023

MHSOAC
1812 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Staff Present:

Tom Orrock, Chief of Community
Engagement and Grants

Cheryl Ward, Health Program Specialist

Nai Saechao, Health Program Specialist

Michele Nottingham Health Program
Specialist

Melissa Martin-Mollard, Ph.D., Chief,
Research and Evaluation

Latonya Harris, Ph.D., Research Scientist

Lester Robancho, Health Program
Specialist

Welcome and Introductions

Tom Orrock, Chief of Community Engagement and Grants, called the Mental Health Student Services Act (MHSSA) Collaboration teleconference meeting of the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC or Commission) to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. A video titled "Mental Health in Schools; We're Doing it Wrong," with speaker Maya Dawson, was on the schedule but due to technical difficulties it did not play. It was noted that the link to the video would be posted on the Commission's MHSSA web page.

Cheryl Ward, Health Program Specialist, reviewed the meeting protocols and the purpose and structure of the meeting.

Announcements and Updates

1. MHSSA Grant Summaries and MHSSA Collaboration Contact List

Ms. Ward stated the Resource Section on the MHSSA web page includes updated grant summaries and contact lists.

2. MHSSA RFA-003/Contract Amendments/Budget Modifications

Ms. Ward asked Round 3 counties to sign and return the contract amendments as soon as possible. Staff is working on Round 1 Annual Fiscal Reports & Budget Modifications. Staff will begin working on Round 2 at the end of the Program Operations Grant Year, when Round 2 counties will submit with Annual Fiscal Report for their first grant year.

3. Site Visits

Ms. Ward stated site visits have been conducted in Marin, Yolo, and Calaveras Counties. A site visit to Imperial County is scheduled for later this month.

Research and Evaluation Update

1. Introducing the Commission's Evaluation Partner – WestEd

The WestEd team introduced themselves and discussed the expertise they bring to this work. Melissa Martin Mollard, Ph.D. Chief, Research and Evaluation, stated Commission staff is in the process of finalizing a contract to bring WestEd on board to collaborate and assist with the initial phase of the evaluation.

2. The Evaluation Planning Process

Natalie Romer, Senior Associate, WestEd, provided an overview of the background and work of WestEd and the approach to the MHSSA Evaluation, particularly Phase 1.

Nicole Tirado-Strayer, Senior Research Associate, WestEd, provided an overview of the evaluation planning process and goals that will guide the work.

Tom Hanson, Senior Managing Director, WestEd, stated the team is focused on Phase 1 of the multi-year, three-phase evaluation. Phase 1 involves evaluation planning that centers equity and prioritizes community engagement. WestEd will be designing and coordinating an iterative community engagement process and eliciting feedback, insight, and direction on key activities of the evaluation process to develop an evaluation framework, research questions and metrics, and a methodological and analytical approach. The approach will center on equity from the start and will be rooted in collaboration and flexibility to ensure the most comprehensive and meaningful evaluation for informing long-term change.

3. Q & A

Sheri Coburn, San Joaquin County asked: Is this different from the evaluation committee that we have provided feedback to? Dr. Martin-Mollard stated that the Data Committee was formed as part of this work to get grantee feedback to meet the minimum legislative requirements for reporting. The WestEd evaluation will take a broader view to include implementation status, how the MHSSA can be used to align with other initiatives, and how to identify and scale up best practices.

Erin Sapinoso, Los Angeles County, asked if grantees will be expected to add more information or create different categories of information for schools to collect.

Dr. Martin-Mollard stated care will be taken to not to put an additional data reporting burden on grantees. There currently is existing technical assistance (TA) that needs to happen on the basic data reporting tool and the quality of data being received. Staff is committed to providing TA so that some of the requested student- and aggregate-level data can be reported out. There is likely to be additional data collection such as key informant interviews, focus groups, and other formats to gather information from grantees.

Suzanna Juarez-Williamson, Riverside County asked: Will the goals WestEd outlined and the phases description information be available on the MHSOAC website? Is there a timeline for the evaluation plan?

Dr. Martin-Mollard stated they will be available, with the caveat WestEd was invited to join in Phase 1 to develop an overarching evaluation plan. The evaluation goals that WestEd mentioned today were the guiding questions put out to select an evaluation partner. A focused evaluation plan will eventually be shared and posted on the website. The timeline for Phase 1 of the evaluation is designed to be 12 to 18 months; the plan is to continue evaluating for years to capture the collective impact of the MHSSA.

Scott Lindstrom, Butte County asked: Seems like focus on data so far is demographics (access), whether students were or were not screened, and whether a referral and service followed screening. Any move toward measuring impact of services?

Dr. Martin-Mollard stated there will be. The initial data reporting tool was to ensure that information being requested was reported to the Legislature on the requirements laid out by the MHSSA. Part of the reporting requirements are to look at impact and lessons learned. The evaluation plan is designed to look at student-, system-, and statewide-level outcomes, which are still being defined.

Sheila Kruse asked: For focus groups and key informant surveys, would that be done locally or by WestEd folks? Dr. Martin-Mollard stated this is to be determined. Grantee input would be appreciated on the best approach for collecting information.

Technical Assistance (TA) Plan Update:

Tom Orrock, Chief of Community Engagement and Grants, provided an overview of the TA plan. Poll results of grantees on TA needs was that there are five areas that would benefit from TA: partnership development, sustainability, data collection, workforce wellness and development, and program implementation. He stated today's five-question poll will be on the approach to TA for the overall TA plan. Peer-to-peer TA coaching, grantee-to-grantee interaction and learning in those five areas could be the most effective way to not only provide TA but to look at TA efforts around the state to see if there is a way to streamline these efforts.

1. What are the advantages of a peer-to-peer TA strategy? In this case the peer would be an MHSSA county partnership representative. Consider TA for:
 - A. data collection
 - B. partnership development
 - C. program implementation
 - D. sustainability
 - E. workforce wellness and development
2. What are the potential challenges of a peer-to-peer TA strategy?
3. Other than peer-to-peer what TA models would you recommend?
4. What agencies or entities have you received TA from for your school-based MH program?

5. Why do you consider it important that a peer TA provider understand both rural and urban perspectives in providing TA?

Results of the Poll and Discussion:

Mr. Orrock reviewed the responses to the poll questions and asked for feedback.

- Poll Questions 1 and 2

Sheri Coburn, San Joaquin County, stated appreciation about learning other problem-solving strategies that counties have taken to address system barriers.

Jonathan Maddox, Berkeley City, asked about challenges that come up outside the expertise of the assigned peer.

Mayu Iwatani, Orange County, agreed. There may be different individuals with different models in this group that would match unique needs of a county, district, infrastructure, and system to assist better than one assigned peer. Counties collaborate with multiple counties, depending on the issue. The speaker suggested putting together a menu of services with projects being led and things that are working successfully in each county.

Lauren Fein stated knowing what is right or wrong for another county puts a lot of pressure on the assigned peer and there is a lot of money on the line. The speaker suggested a hybrid model with state support for the TA along with counties to be more like a collaboration. For example, counties with similar populations have TA sessions where counties can learn from each other with the support of the state.

Scott Lindstrom, Butte County, stated peer-to-peer relationships can learn to know each other and support each other better. The flip side is the information is two-way. He stated the hope that the peer-to-peer setup would facilitate gleaning information from the schools and sites that are doing these programs, which can then be used to advocate for further funding, additional training that might be universal, etc.

Heather Thomsen, Santa Cruz County, suggested matching counties by geographic similarity rather than just providing a list. The speaker suggested agreeing on one or two open-ended questions to help bring student and parent voice back to the state.

- Poll Question 3

No feedback was offered.

- Poll Question 4

Jennifer Logue, San Benito County, suggested Learning Communities for School Success (LCSSP) through Proposition 47.

- Poll Question 5

No feedback was offered.

County Report-Outs

Nai Saechao, Health Program Specialist, invited grantees to share an inspiring or instructive aspect of their MHSSA program.

Bianca Zitelli, Sutter-Yuba County, shared the story of a recent outing over the school break. Youth can be challenged with feeling isolated and missing out on social connections during the holidays. The team focused on an activity to help youth feel connected. They transported youth to a 3-D movie including snacks. Great feedback was received from families and the youth who were able to interact with their peers in a different setting and make social connections. It was also an opportunity for clinicians to see the students in a different setting.

Heather Nemour, San Diego COE, stated the first Evaluation Report was completed for the first year of this grant. The 33 LEA's use of the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS), an evidence-based suicide risk screening tool went from 33 percent to 85 percent of the districts, including training on how to use the tool. Also Calming Corner kits and therapeutic weighted bears were provided for all 468 MHSSA school sites. Having a common measurement with cross-sector partners is effective.

Suzanne Weist, Ventura COE, stated the county's Wellness Peers program hosted Summer and Winter Wellness Peer trainings, two-day intensive trainings for students to become Wellness Peers.

Terri Alford, Tuolumne County, stated the county held a Youth Forum in November and is in the process of planning a Youth Summit and Resource Fair in April.

Jo Sy, Nevada County, stated the grant funded two Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and eight Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) candidates across eight elementary schools to help with post-pandemic school readiness skills in partnership with the Nevada County Children's Behavioral Health Department, which offers in-home mental health services. The grant provides behavioral and mental health services that are both necessary to ensure student success.

Freda Rossi, Santa Clara COE, stated the county is focusing on continuing to collaborate and build partnership with schools and the different districts and leveraging community resources to meet the needs of students and their families.

Carla Truttman, Siskiyou County COE, stated the county worked to destigmatize mental health and raise awareness of mental health issues in the larger school communities. The county also sends out weekly calendars for educators and parents/family members with resources and success tips. Calendar interaction went from 55 people to 624 people interacting with the parent/family calendar. The county also put together a one-stop shop of resources for parents, families, and educators.

Ms. Ward stated there was a question in the chat about ways to connect with other MHSSA programs and the contact information. She stated that information is included on the two links on the on the agenda – a Grant Summaries List summarizes all MHSSA programs and a Collaboration Contact List. Grantees are encouraged to connect with one another.

Wrap-Up and Questions

Mr. Orrock thanked everyone for providing feedback and sharing stories.

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Adjourn

Ms. Ward stated the next meeting is June 7, 2023, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.