Los Angeles County
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
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DIRECTOR

February 15, 2019

TO: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Jonathan E. Sherin, M.D., Ph.D.
Director

SUBJECT: **REPORT RESPONSE ON SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (ITEM 22-B, AGENDA OF JANUARY 15, 2019)**

On January 15, 2019, your Board approved Motion 22-B. This motion instructed the Director of the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to identify potential funding sources of up to $10 million for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Funding for LAUSD would be used to enhance mental health and wellbeing services to prevent mental illness among students, staff, and others within LAUSD. Your Board approved a subsequent amendment to this motion. The succeeding amendment to Motion 22-B instructed the Director of DMH, in coordination with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office (CEO), and the Auditor-Controller (A-C), to develop a countywide plan for providing school based mental health services, including but not limited to, prevention and early intervention services, education, support, and outreach.

In response to both the original and amended motion, DMH, in collaboration with LAUSD, LACOE, CEO, and A-C, is proposing to enhance school based mental health services countywide by providing supportive services, training, and coordination at selected school sites. The proposed framework focuses on three key initiatives, including:

1. Developing trauma informed schools;
2. Implementing a Community Schools Initiative (CSI) approach focused on developing community partnerships that reinforce mental health supports; and
3. Infusing School Based Services Coordination Teams.

These efforts would be dedicated to building school capacity to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors for children and youth in jeopardy of developing serious emotional

mental disturbances. In addition, these initiatives will ensure optimal coordination of services and leveraging of available resources.

On January 31, 2019, DMH conducted a stakeholder meeting to present the proposed initiatives to over 100 stakeholders consisting of students, parents, teachers, psychiatric social workers, providers, and other community members and representatives. Stakeholders provided feedback and input to the proposed initiatives. Collection and detailed review of this input yielded common themes, including enhancing mental health services in schools, leveraging community resources, incorporating culturally and linguistically appropriate services, building formal and informal collaborative partnerships, and including community input. This input was incorporated into the following proposed framework and approaches.

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK AND APPROACHES

1. DEVELOPING TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOLS

Educating school staff and administrators on the impact of trauma and how to apply a trauma-informed lens in schools is essential to providing comprehensive school based services. To achieve this goal, DMH partnered with the UCLA Prevention Training Center of Excellence to begin hosting a series of regional trainings across the County for educators and school based administrative staff in all 80 school districts. Each regional training provides a workshop for subject matter experts, mental health professionals and school personnel to discuss and understand the impact of trauma on students, learn strategies to support mental wellbeing and resilience, and assess the trauma-informed readiness of participating school districts.

DMH currently has an existing contract with the Regents of California, which oversees the UCLA Center of Excellence. Under this contract, UCLA will develop trauma based curriculum to provide regional trauma trainings. Regional trainings commenced in September 2018 and will be provided on an ongoing basis as needed. The training plan also includes on-line trainings for educators and school mental health professional and paraprofessional staff to support implementation of CSI model, which integrates trauma-informed parent engagement, early childhood supports, tiered prevention curriculum, and cross services training.

2. IMPLEMENTING COMMUNITY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE (CSI)

Community Schools Initiative is an evidence-based school improvement framework that recognizes the role of family and community as key stakeholders who can collaborate with educators to address external factors that influence student achievement, such as family circumstances, traumatic events (including adverse

childhood experiences), poverty, and health concerns, while incorporating cultural differences, and student engagement. Additionally, Community Schools represents a site-based strategy of schools partnering with community agencies and allocating resources to provide an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement.

There are four pillars that appear in most Community Schools: (1) integrated student supports, (2) expanded learning time and opportunities, (3) family and community engagement, and (4) collaborative leadership and practice. Using public schools as hubs, Community Schools offer a range of supports and opportunities to achieve the following results:

- Students attending school consistently;
- Students actively involved in learning and participating in their communities;
- Families increasingly involved with their children's education;
- Students succeeding academically; and
- Healthy students - physically, socially, and emotionally.

DMH proposes funding the development and implementation of Community Schools across school sites within LAUSD and school districts/sites within the LACOE. For both LAUSD and LACOE schools, the overall goal of CSI programming is to improve the academic, emotional, and physical wellbeing of participating students so they improve their educational outcomes with our key goals in mind:

1. An increase in student graduation rates
2. Decrease dropout rates
3. Decrease chronic absenteeism
4. Reduce suspensions and expulsions
5. Increase family engagement
6. Increase social connectedness for children, their families and their surrounding communities

DMH, LAUSD, and LACOE will collaborate on identifying common data elements and developing data collection methods to monitor wellbeing and educational outcomes and evaluate the impact of the CSI implementation.

CSI for LAUSD

The implementation of successful community schools within LAUSD relies on the development and implementation of programming within six priority improvement areas across school sites and communities that are found to be most at-risk based on data gathered by LAUSD. The six CSI priority improvement areas include:

1. Integrated Student Supports – employing psychiatric social workers to remove barriers to school success by connecting students and families to service providers and/or holistic programs; stakeholders asserted the need to employ full-time psychiatric social workers to increase access to mental health services;
2. Expanded Learning Time and Opportunities – utilizing afterschool mental health consultants to coordinate before and after school and summer learning opportunities that augment traditional learning;
3. School, Family, and Community Engagement Efforts – utilizing early childhood mental health consultants that work to incorporate strategies that better support communication between schools and parents;
4. Partnerships - Organized by Facilitators – that are dedicated to improving student achievement, health and well-being
5. Wellbeing Activities – coordinated by social services aids-that target multiple emotional social and health needs of children and their families along a wellbeing continuum; and
6. Sustainability – through collaboration and the collection of data by mental health coordinators and specialist to actively seek out multiple partnerships and braided funding streams to continue CSI activities

LAUSD proposes to implement CSI over a six-month period to include:

Outreach, Recruitment & Hire	March-June 2019
Training and Development	July-September 2019

DMH proposes to enter into a specialized agreement with LAUSD for the provision of school based Prevention Services, which include the development and implementation of the CSI. The total amount of funding committed for CSI implementation for LAUSD pilot sites is $9,695,935. This total funding amount will be allocated over three fiscal years beginning Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19.

CSI for LACOE

Successful community schooling within LACOE school districts relies on Community School Coordinators and Parent Liaisons. As shared by stakeholders, Parent Liaisons/Advocates are crucial in helping parents traverse services to further support their children's needs. These school based positions will serve as a liaison with multiple Los Angeles County offices and agencies and assist the school community in understanding the community school framework, navigating the process of developing community schools, identifying resources, and fostering partnerships with County agencies and community-based organizations.

For LACOE, the CSI will focus on children, youth and families residing in the following 10 pilot school districts:

- Antelope Valley Union High
- Azusa Unified
- Bassett Unified
- Centinela Valley Union High
- Compton Unified
- Inglewood Unified
- Lynwood Unified
- Montebello Unified
- Paramount Unified
- Pomona Unified

The pilot school districts for LACOE were identified based on an analysis of data included in *Measure of America's Portrait of LA County and LACDPH's Education and Health in LA County Report*, such as education index, underrepresented students, high school graduation rates, student suspension rates, chronic absenteeism, and violent crimes. The CSI pilot project for LACOE will focus on three priority improvement areas, including:

- Development of trauma-informed schools;
- Developing community partnerships; and
- Supporting strong elementary literacy programs.

LACOE proposes to implement CSI over a five-month period within the above identified school districts. The implementation timeline will include:

Outreach and Recruitment	March-April 2019
Interview and Hire	May-June 2019
Training and Development	July-August 2019

In addition to school sites, LACOE will explore co-locating CSI resources within several County operated offices that will serve as access points to families and communities. County partners for service co-location include, but are not limited to:

- Child Support Services
- Children and Family Services
- Community Development Commission/Housing Authority
- Consumer and Business Affairs
- Health Services
- Mental Health
- Parks and Recreation
- Probation
- Public Health

- Public Library
- Public Social Services
- Sheriff Department
- Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services

DMH proposes to enter into a specialized agreement with LACOE for the provision of school based Prevention Services, which include the development and implementation of the CSI. The total amount of funding committed for CSI implementation at LACOE pilot school district sites is $7,720,348. This total funding amount will be allocated over three fiscal years beginning FY 2018-19.

3. COORDINATION WITH STUDENT WELLBEING CENTERS

To further support the overall goal of CSI, DMH has partnered with the Department of Public Health (DPH) to support DPH Student Wellbeing Centers (SWC). The SWCs will be located throughout Los Angeles County public high schools where under-served students can access coaching and support around:

- Social-emotional health
- Health promotion/risk reduction
- Substance use prevention and education
- Sexual health
- Health leadership

DMH will coordinate with DPH for the provision of school based Prevention Services at the SWCs, which include facilitating support groups for students with social-emotional concerns and facilitate linkage to a wide array of services for students as appropriate at select schools. Support groups will include curriculum designed to build skills and knowledge for healthy and successful relationships while strengthening protective factors and building assets.

4. SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH TEAMS

The Office of Child Protection (OCP), in their 2017 report and plan for prevention strategies to ensure the safety of children in Los Angeles County, the Office of Child Protection, identified a need for additional school and community supports due to an increased rate of suicides, school violence and exposure to community trauma. Currently, the types of services available, the frequency, intensity and duration in which they are provided depend largely on the school district's resources and staff expertise. Many schools in Los Angeles County lack resources and support necessary

to identify signs and symptoms of mental health related issues before they become an impairment.

DMH proposes the development of School Partnership Initiative (SPI) Regional Mental Health Teams to build capacity and coordination of services in schools. SPI Teams will provide an array of school based services, including community outreach, education, referral, screening, crisis response, triage and linkage for students and families in need, consultation, peer support and client engagement. In addition, SPI Teams will implement preventive school-based services promoting the elimination of socio-emotional barriers to learning, build mental health awareness, and ensure access to care for all students.

Successfully implementing the SPI will involve deploying Regional Mental Health Teams to school districts in multiples phases and ultimately positioning teams throughout all 80 Los Angeles County school districts.

Upon the approval of this report, DMH intends to request additional positions to hire the initial 10 Regional SPI Mental Health Teams. Initially, DMH will hire staff to implement 10 Teams as the first phase of implementing Regional SPI Mental Health Teams and support staff to service school sites by June 30, 2019. The second phase of requesting and hiring of new staff will be implemented by October 1, 2019. The annualized total cost for the initial 10 Regional Mental Health Teams is $4,270,487, including salaries and employee benefits and services and supplies.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at (213) 738-4601, or your staff may contact Darlesh Horn, Contracts Development and Administration Division at (213) 305-3253 or dhorn@dmh.lacounty.gov.

JES:GP:DKH

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Chairperson, Mental Health Commission