

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS KATHRYN BARGER AND
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SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

COMMUNITY SCHOOL INITIATIVE EXPANSION

In 2019, the Board of Supervisors approved two motions around designing, implementing, and expanding access to prevention, mental health and wellbeing services in schools across Los Angeles County. The first motion, passed in January, instructed the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) to enhance access to mental health and wellbeing services in schools. The second motion, approved on April 9th, 2019, instructed DMH, in coordination with LACOE, the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office (CEO), and the Los Angeles County Auditor Controller (A-C) to develop a countywide plan for providing prevention focused school mental health services across school campuses. The strategies, plan and services resulting from the two motions are known broadly as the School Based Community Access Platform (SBCAP). Two integral aspects of SBCAP included the establishment of 15 unique school-site HUBs, collectively known as the LACOE Community Schools Initiative (CSI), as well as DMH hiring of forty-five (45) positions to develop and deploy ten (10) regional teams countywide as a means of implementation and integration of services across the county. Due to the current climate in our school communities, sustaining and expanding the LACOE CSI is imperative to addressing the needs of the school community and meeting the four (4) pillars of CSI schools: (1) integrated student supports (2) expanded learning time and opportunities (3) family and community engagement (4) collaborative leadership and practice

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MOTION

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In the first year of the program, LACOE CSI experienced great progress in partnering with school districts, engaging an array of County Departments and Community Based Organizations (CBO) to develop a successful model. By January 2020, LACOE CSI had trained over 500 school staff from nine participating CSI sites on youth and teen mental health response and connecting with external supportive services, each targeted to the unique and specific needs of the community. In March 2020, due to COVID-19 closures, LACOE CSI pivoted their work to support their school communities' mental health needs as their students, families and staff entered remote learning and work. Staff shifted to train and provide materials for school employees to support the mental health crisis students and families faced. As students returned to campus this fall, the CSI team has been essential in developing plans and services to ensure the mental health of students and staff is effectively served through this transition. From April 2021- June 2021, CSI hosted dozens of outreach and engagement events resulting in over 600 referrals for services, including supporting basic needs, such as food and school supply distribution.

LACOE CSI has been a vital asset in equipping schools to provide on-campus services, and it is critical that CSI programming and supports continue and grow past the June 2022 expiration of existing funding. This pivotal point is also an opportunity to evaluate how we train and prepare schools, access state funding and partner with our managed care plans. The COVID-19 school closures highlighted the dire need for additional youth mental health services, and the essential partnership between DMH, LACOE and our school districts. In the last year, countless schools and districts came to LACOE and DMH requesting additional mental health support. This need can only be met if the County leverages all resources and partners to expand this capacity.

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WE, THEREFORE, move that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct DMH to work with LACOE and the CEO to explore the feasibility of sustaining and expanding the Community School Initiative and report back to the board in 90 days on:
 - a) Identification of communities and school districts with high need for additional mental health services for CSI expansion.
 - b) Explore funding streams to sustain and expand CSI, including, but not limited to, federal funds, managed care plans, the Mental Health Student Services Act and the Governor's annual budget;
 - c) Provide an update on DMH hiring directive from the April 9th BM; Item 7 directing DMH to ensure that the countywide plan for providing prevention focused school mental health services is coordinated and executed.

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