



John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 300 | Washington, DC 20004

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Local Education Agency Leaders

**FROM:** Ahnna Smith, Interim Deputy Mayor for Education  
HyeSook Chung, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services

**CC:** Hanseul Kang, State Superintendent of Education  
Dr. Amanda Alexander, Interim Chancellor for DC Public Schools  
Scott Pearson, Executive Director, DC Public Charter School Board

**DATE:** June 13, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Expansion of School-Based Behavioral Health Update and Next Steps

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We are excited to announce the District will begin expansion of a multi-tiered, school-based behavioral health system for all DC Public Schools and Public Charter Schools in the 2018-19 school year. We know that student mental health and well-being are directly linked to academic achievement. [We appreciate your current efforts and ask for your continued support as we move forward together and in partnership with our community providers to help ensure all our students have the behavioral health tools to succeed.](#)

Last year, Mayor Bowser convened a Task Force on School Mental Health to review and recommend any changes to the Comprehensive Plan to Expand School-Based Behavioral Health Services released in the spring of 2017. [In their March 2018 Report, the Task Force endorsed the Plan's core program design. This model ties together school, agency and community-based provider resources around a common vision to provide access to prevention, screening, early intervention, and intensive mental health services for all public school students.](#)

Based on the Task Force's recommendations, the clinicians from Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) School Mental Health Program will continue to perform their same functions for the next year. At the same time, we will begin expansion of the coordinated behavioral health model in the approximately 50 schools that have been identified as within the top 25 percent of need based on behavioral health indicators. The expansion is expected to reach all schools over the next three years.

[To fund Year 1, the Mayor is investing an additional \\$3 million for three key activities:](#)

- (1) Developing effective school/provider partnerships, teaming, and coordination of school-based behavioral health resources;
- (2) Growing the pool of available, high-quality community-based partners; and
- (3) Support for school-based non-billable activities of community-based mental health providers partnering with the first set of schools.

A Coordinating Council on School Mental Health comprised of school leaders, agencies, community providers, parents and school behavioral health experts will guide this expansion. You are invited to learn more about the Coordinating Council's work and see the list of schools by behavioral health





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indicators at <https://dbh.dc.gov/node/1321801>. To read the full Task Force Report, you can visit: <https://dmhhs.dc.gov/service/task-force-school-mental-health>.

