



**Student Mental Health Support Grants to  
School Districts**

**Request for Proposals  
March 2022**

**Table of Contents**

- 1. Introduction and Background .....3**
  - 1.1 Purpose of the Request for Proposal..... 3
  - 1.2 Target Population ..... 3
- 2 Proposal Submissions .....3**
  - 2.1 Designated Contact/Issuing Officer ..... 3
  - 2.2 Letter of Intent ..... 4
  - 2.3 Key Events/Timeline ..... 4
  - 2.4 Disposition of Proposals..... 4
  - 2.5 Eligible Agencies..... 5
  - 2.6 RFP Questions and Clarifications..... 5
  - 2.7 Addenda to Request for Proposals..... 5
  - 2.8 Disqualification Factors ..... 5
  - 2.9 Instructions for Bid Submission and Required Format..... 6
  - 2.10 Instructions for Completing the Workplan and Objectives in Gateway ..... 7
- 3 Administrative Information .....8**
  - 3.1 Reserved Rights ..... 8
  - 3.2 Debriefing ..... 9
  - 3.3 Protests Related to the Solicitation Process ..... 9
  - 3.4 Term of Contracts..... 10
  - 3.5 Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises..... 10
  - 3.6 Participation Opportunities for New York State Certified Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Businesses ..... 12
  - 3.7 Equal Opportunity Employment ..... 12
  - 3.8 Sexual Harrassment Prevention Certification ..... 13
  - 3.9 Bid Response..... 13
  - 3.10 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions ..... 14
  - 3.11 Freedom of Information Requirements..... 14
  - 3.12 NYS and OMH Policies ..... 14
- 4 Evaluation Factors for Awards.....15**
  - 4.1 Evaluation Criteria ..... 15
  - 4.2 Method for Evaluating Proposals..... 15
  - 4.3 Process for Awarding Contracts..... 16
    - 4.3.1 Initial Awards and Allocations ..... 16
    - 4.3.2 Contract Termination and Reassignment..... 17
  - 4.4 Award Notification..... 17
- 5 Scope of Work .....17**
  - 5.1 Introduction..... 17
  - 5.2 Objectives and Responsibilities ..... 17
  - 5.3 Reporting Requirements ..... 23
  - 5.4 Operating Funding..... 23
- 6 Proposal Narrative.....24**
  - 6.1 Enhance Access to Mental Health Supports ..... 24
  - 6.2 Implementation of Integrated Support..... 25
  - 6.3 Strengthening Partnerships ..... 26
  - 6.4 Reporting ..... 26
  - 6.5 Financial Accountability..... 26
  - 6.6 Gun Violence Focal School Districts..... 27
  - 6.7 NYC School Districes Designation..... 27

**Appendix A: List of Eligible School Districts**

**Appendix B: List of Eligible** School districts located in a Gun Involved Violence Elimination (G.I.V.E.) focal area with a 2019-20 economically disadvantaged student rate above the State average (55.6% and above)

## **1. Introduction and Background**

### **1.1 Purpose of the Request for Proposals**

These grants are intended to improve student access to mental health resources and assist students who have experienced trauma that negatively affects their educational experience. This program will be administered by the Office of Mental Health and developed in consultation with the State Education Department.

According to a national survey described in a recent publication of *Pediatrics: An Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics*, the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted both parent's and children's mental health. The need to address the emotional and psychological wellbeing of children has never been more important. Good mental health is critical to children's success in both school and life. According to the *National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)*, research demonstrates that students who receive social-emotional and mental health support perform better academically.

In light of the pandemic and its lasting impact, The Office of Mental Health (OMH) announces the availability of awards to school districts for student mental health support grants. The purpose of these grants is to: improve student access to mental health resources, support students who have experienced stress, anxiety and/or trauma, and to support the adults that surround them.

The expectation is that this enhancement will be utilized to address inequities and provide additional availability and access to the continuum of strategies and supports that address the mental health of students. The objectives of this grant include enhancing access to mental health services, implementing integrated mental health supports, and strengthening community partnerships (refer to section 5.2 Scope of Work Objectives and Responsibilities for details).

### **1.2 Target Population**

New York State P-12 public school students, families, faculty, and staff.

## **2. Proposal Submissions**

### **2.1 Designated Contact/Issuing Officer**

OMH has assigned an Issuing Officer for this project. The Issuing Officer or a designee shall be the sole point of contact regarding the RFP from the date of issuance of the RFP until the issuance of the Notice of Conditional Award. To avoid being deemed non-responsive, an applicant is restricted from contacting any other personnel of OMH regarding the RFP. Certain findings of non-responsibility can result in rejection for a contract award. The Issuing Officer for this RFP is:

Carol Swiderski  
Contract Management Specialist 2  
New York State Office of Mental Health  
Contracts and Claims  
44 Holland Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Albany, NY 12229  
[carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov](mailto:carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov)

## 2.2 Letter of Intent

New York School Districts interested in responding to this Request for Proposal **must** submit a Letter of Intent to Bid to the OMH Issuing Officer by 05/18/2022. The Letter of Intent to Bid shall be non-binding.

Please **e-mail** the letter of intent to the Issuing Officer:

Subject Line: Letter of Intent  
Carol Swiderski  
Contract Management Specialist 2  
New York State Office of Mental Health  
Contracts and Claim  
44 Holland Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Albany, NY 12229  
[carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov](mailto:carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov)

## 2.3 Key Events/Timeline

RFP Release Date	03/29/2022
Questions Due	04/19/2022
Questions and Answers Posted on Website	05/10/2022
Letter of Intent to Bid Due	05/18/2022
Proposals Due by 3:00 PM EST	05/25/2022
Anticipated Award Notification	06/22/2022
Anticipated Contract Start Date	07/01/2022

## 2.4 Disposition of Proposals

All proposals received by the due date become the property of OMH and shall not be returned. Any proposals received after the due date will be returned to the applicant unopened.

## **2.5 Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants are New York State P-12 Public School **districts**. (Charter schools are not eligible). **To be eligible, districts must have a 2019-20 economically disadvantaged student rate above the State average (55.6%)** (note this criterion is measured at the district level).

Each eligible school district may submit only one application. In NYC, each eligible Geographic School District may submit only one application. The applicant can address a single school site or multiple school sites within a school district.

Please be advised that all questions regarding Eligibility will be responded to through the official posting of the Questions and Answers. No questions about Eligibility will be responded to either individually or prior to the posting of the Q&As.

A list of eligible school districts is provided in Appendix A of this document, and will be available as a reference document in the Pre-Submission Upload Page of the Grants Gateway.

## **2.6 RFP Questions and Clarifications**

All questions or requests for clarification concerning the RFP shall be submitted in writing by emailing the Issuing Officer at [carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov](mailto:carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov) by 4:00 PM EST on the “Questions Due” date indicated in section 2.3 and will be limited to addressing only those questions submitted by the deadline. No questions can be submitted or will be answered after this date. No questions will be answered by telephone or in person.

The questions and official answers will be posted on the OMH website by 05/10/2022.

## **2.7 Addenda to Request for Proposals**

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of the RFP during the application submission period, an addendum will be posted on the OMH website, the Grants Gateway and the NYS Contract Reporter.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to periodically review the OMH website, the NYS Contract Reporter and Grants Gateway to learn of revisions or addendums to this RFP. No other notification will be given.

## **2.8 Disqualification Factors**

Following the opening of bids, a preliminary review of all proposals will be conducted by the Issuing Officer or a designee to review each proposal’s submission for completeness and verify that all eligibility

criteria have been met. Additionally, during the proposal evaluation process, evaluators will also be reviewing eligibility criteria and confirming that they have been met. During either of these review processes, proposals that do not meet basic participation standards will be disqualified, specifically:

- Proposals from applicants that do not meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in 2.5; or
- Proposals that do not comply with bid submission and/or required format instructions as specified in 2.9.

## **2.9 Instructions for Bid Submission and Required Format**

### **All applicants must be registered with the New York State Grants Gateway System (GGS)**

#### **If you are not already registered:**

Registration forms are available at the GGS website:

<https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/register-your-organization>

Include your SFS Vendor ID on the form; if you are a new vendor and do not have a SFS Vendor ID, include a Substitute for W-9 with your signed, notarized registration (also available from the website).

All registration must include an Organization Chart to be processed.

When you receive your login information, log in and change your password.

If you are an applicant, and have problems complying with this provision, please contact the GGS help desk via email: [Grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:Grantsgateway@its.ny.gov) -- OR -- by telephone: 1-518-474-5595.

#### **How to Submit a Proposal**

Proposals must be submitted online via the Grants Gateway by the date and time posted on the cover of this RFP. Tutorials (training videos) for use of the Grants Gateway (and upon user log in):

To apply, log into the Grants Gateway as a Grantee, Grantee Contract Signatory or Grantee System Administrator and click on the View Opportunities button under View Available Opportunities. To get started, in the Search Criteria, enter the Grant Opportunity name provided on the cover page of this RFP, select the Office of Mental Health as the Funding Agency, and hit the Search button. Click on the name of the Grant Opportunity from the search results grid and then click on the "APPLY FOR GRANT OPPORTUNITY" button located at the bottom left of the Main page of the Grant Opportunity.

To access the online proposal and other required documents such as the attachments, you MUST be registered and logged into the NYS

Grants Gateway system in the user role of either a “Grantee” or a “Grantee Contract Signatory” or a “Grantee System Administrator”.

The ‘Grantee’ role may ONLY Initiate and Save changes to the application such as add/update information to forms, upload documents while the user logged in as a ‘Grantee Contract Signatory’ or a ‘Grantee System Administrator’ role can perform all the tasks of Grantee role and in addition, can SUBMIT the application to the State. When the application is ready for submission, click the ‘Status Changes’ tab, then click the ‘Apply Status’ button under “APPLICATION SUBMITTED” before the due date and time.

For further information on how to apply, and other information, please refer to the Vendor User Manual document.

Reference materials and videos are available for Grantees applying to funding opportunities on the NYS Grants Gateway. Please visit the Grantee Documents section on Grants Management website.

Late proposals will not be accepted. Proposals will not be accepted via fax, e-mail, hard copy, or hand delivery.

### **Helpful Links**

Some helpful links for questions of a technical nature are below.

Grants Reform Videos (includes a document vault tutorial and an application tutorial) on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYnWskVc7B3ajjOVfOHL6UA>

(Technical questions)

Grants Team Email (Proposal Completion, Policy and Registration questions): [grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov) or by phone at 518-474-5595.

## **2.10 Instructions for completing the Workplan and Objectives in NYS Grants Gateway**

The Workplan Overview Form will be used to create the Work Plan portion of the contract. Some of the information requested will be duplicative of information provided earlier in the application. Be sure to follow the guidance provided below.

The Work Plan Period should reflect the anticipated contract period. Contracts will be approved for a five-year term of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2027.

The Project Summary section should include a high-level overview of the project as instructed.



The Objectives and Responsibilities section should identify grantee-defined objectives and responsibilities that are relevant to the completion of the proposed project. To get started, add your first Objective Name and Description, and then click the [SAVE] button at the top of the page. After hitting Save, a field for the Task Name and Task Description will show under the Objective box. Complete both fields and hit the [SAVE] button at the top of the page. After entering the Task information and clicking Save, you will now see a box for the Performance Measure information and a box to enter a second Task. Enter a Performance Measure Name and select the Performance Measure Data Capture Type from the dropdown box. The type you choose from the dropdown will show on the screen for you to complete. Once you've entered the name, data capture type and the text/integer/or date as applicable, click the [SAVE] button at the top of the page.

For Performance Measure Name restate the Objective then enter the narrative requested in the box below. Performance Measures are also grantee-defined and should reflect some measurable benchmark(s) to demonstrate adequate progress as required by the RFP. Once entered, click Save. You may continue to add Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures up to and including the max amount allowed by the state.

The online Workplan is essentially an outline/summary of the work associated with the Project(s) described in the sections above. Please note that if an application is selected for award, the Workplan will be subject to change and can be updated during the contract development/negotiation process.

Applicants should refer to Section 5.2.4 Grantee Defined Workplan of the 'Grantee User Guide' ([Click here for Grants Gateway: Vendor User Guide](#)) for detailed instructions on how to complete the Workplan.

### **3. Administrative Information**

#### **3.1 Reserved Rights**

OMH reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received in response to the RFP that are deemed non-responsive or do not meet the minimum requirements or are determined to be otherwise unacceptable, in the agency's sole discretion;
- Withdraw the RFP at any time, at the agency's sole discretion;
- Make an award under the RFP in whole or in part;
- Disqualify any applicant whose conduct and/or proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP;
- Seek clarifications and revisions of proposals for the purposes of

assuring a full understanding of the responsiveness to this solicitation requirements;

- Use proposal information obtained through the state's investigation of an applicant's qualifications, experience, ability or financial standing, and any material or information submitted by the applicant in response to the agency's request for clarifying information in the course of evaluation and/or selection under the RFP;
- Prior to the bid opening, direct applicants to submit proposal modifications addressing subsequent RFP amendments;
- Prior to the bid opening, amend the RFP specifications to correct errors or oversight, supply additional information, or extend any of the scheduled dates or requirements and provide notification to potential bidders via the OMH website, Grants Gateway and the New York State (NYS) Contract Reporter;
- Eliminate any non-material specifications that cannot be complied with by all of the prospective applicants;
- Waive any requirements that are not material;
- Negotiate any aspect of the proposal with the successful applicant in order to ensure that the final agreement meets OMH objectives and is in the best interests of the State;
- Conduct contract negotiations with the next responsible applicant, should the agency be unsuccessful in negotiating with the selected applicant;
- Require clarification at any time during the procurement process and/or require correction of arithmetic or other apparent errors for the purpose of assuring a full and complete understanding of an applicant's proposal and/or to determine a applicant's compliance with the requirements of the solicitation;
- Cancel or modify contracts due to insufficiency of appropriations, cause, convenience, mutual consent, non-responsibility, or a "force majeure".

### **3.2 Debriefing**

OMH will issue award and non-award notifications to all applicants. Non-awarded applicants may request a debriefing in writing requesting feedback on their own proposal, within 15 business days of the OMH dated letter. OMH will not offer debriefing to providers who are awarded a team. OMH will not offer ranking, statistical, or cost information of other proposals until after the NYS Office of the State Comptroller has approved all awards under this RFP. Written debriefing requests may be sent to the Designated Contact, as defined in Section 2.1.

### **3.3 Protests Related to the Solicitation Process**

Protests based on errors or omissions in the solicitation process, which are or should have been apparent prior to the deadline for receipt of all written questions for this RFP, must be filed prior to the deadline for questions. In the event an applicant files a timely protest based on error

or omission in the solicitation process, the Commissioner of OMH or their designee will review such protest and may, as appropriate, issue a written response or addendum to the RFP to be posted on the OMH website in the RFP section. Protests of an award decision must be filed within fifteen (15) business days after the notice of conditional award or five (5) business days from the date of the debriefing. The Commissioner or their designee will review the matter and issue a written decision within twenty (20) business days of receipt of protest.

All protests must be in writing and must clearly and fully state the legal and factual grounds for the protest and include all relevant documentation. The written documentation should clearly state reference to the RFP title and due date. Such protests must be submitted to:

New York State Office of Mental Health  
Commissioner Ann Marie T. Sullivan, M.D.  
44 Holland Ave  
Albany, NY 12229

### **3.4 Term of Contracts**

The contracts awarded in response to this RFP will be for a five-year term. Selected applicants awarded a contract under this RFP will be required to adhere to all terms and conditions in OMH's Master Grant Contract.

### **3.5 Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises**

OMH recognizes its obligation to promote opportunities for maximum feasible participation of certified minority and women-owned business enterprises (MWBs) and the employment of minority group members and women in the performance of OMH contracts. In accordance with New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, OMH hereby establishes a 16% goal for Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE) participation, a 14% goal for Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) participation, based on the current availability of qualified MWBs, on any award resulting from this solicitation in excess of \$25,000 for commodities and services or \$100,000 for construction.

With respect to MWBs, each award recipient must document its good faith efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for participation by MWBs as subcontractors and suppliers in the performance of the project to be described in each grant disbursement agreement, and must agree that OMH may withhold payment pending receipt of the required MWBE documentation. The directory of MWBs can be viewed at <https://ny.newnycontracts.com>. For guidance on how OMH will determine a contractor's "good faith efforts", refer to 5 NYCRR §142.8.

In accordance with 5 NYCRR § 142.13, each award recipient acknowledges that if it is found to have willfully and intentionally failed to comply with the MWBE participation goals set forth herein and in its grant disbursement agreements, such finding constitutes a breach of

contract and OMH may withhold payment from the award recipient as liquidated damages.

Such liquidated damages shall be calculated as an amount equaling the difference between: (1) all sums identified for payment to MWBEs had the award recipient achieved the contractual MWBE goals; and (2) all sums paid to MWBEs for work performed or material supplied under the grant disbursement agreement.

By applying, an Applicant agrees to demonstrate its good faith efforts to achieve its goals for the utilization of MWBEs by submitting evidence thereof in such form as OMH shall require. Additionally, an Applicant may be required to submit the following documents and information as evidence of compliance with the foregoing:

A. An MWBE Utilization Plan, which shall be submitted in conjunction with the execution of the grant disbursement agreement except as otherwise authorized by OMH. Any modifications or changes to the MWBE Utilization Plan after the execution of the grant disbursement agreement must be reported on a revised MWBE Utilization Plan and submitted to OMH.

OMH will review the submitted MWBE Utilization Plan and advise the award recipient of OMH acceptance or issue a notice of deficiency within 30 days of receipt.

B. If a notice of deficiency is issued, the award recipient will be required to respond to the notice of deficiency within seven (7) business days of receipt by submitting to OMH, a written remedy in response to the notice of deficiency. If the written remedy that is submitted is not timely or is found by OMH to be inadequate, OMH shall notify the award recipient and direct the award recipient to submit within five (5) business days, a request for a partial or total waiver of MWBE participation goals. Failure to file the waiver form in a timely manner may be grounds for disqualification of the bid or proposal.

OMH may refuse to enter into a grant disbursement agreement, or terminate an existing grant disbursement agreement resulting from this solicitation, under the following circumstances:

- a. If an award recipient fails to submit a MWBE Utilization Plan;
- b. If an award recipient fails to submit a written remedy to a notice of deficiency;
- c. If an award recipient fails to submit a request for waiver; or,
- d. If OMH determines that the award recipient has failed to document good faith efforts

The award recipient will be required to attempt to utilize, in good faith, any MBE or WBE identified within its MWBE Utilization Plan, during the performance of the project. Requests for a partial or total waiver of established goal requirements may be made at any time during the term of the project, but must be made no later than prior to the submission of a request for final payment under the grant disbursement agreement.

Each award recipient will be required to submit a Quarterly MWBE Contractor Compliance & Payment Report to OMH over the term of the project, in such form and at such time as OMH shall require, documenting the progress made toward achievement of the MWBE goals established for the project.

### **3.6 Participation Opportunities for New York State Certified Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Business**

Article 17-B of the New York State Executive Law provides for more meaningful participation in public procurement by certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB), thereby further integrating such businesses into New York State's economy. OMH recognizes the need to promote the employment of service-disabled veterans and to ensure that certified service-disabled veteran-owned businesses have opportunities for maximum feasible participation in the performance of OMH contracts.

In recognition of the service and sacrifices made by service-disabled veterans and in recognition of their economic activity in doing business in New York State, applicants are expected to consider SDVOBs in the fulfillment of the requirements of the Contract. Such participation may be as subcontractors or suppliers, as proteges, or in other partnering or supporting roles.

For purposes of providing meaningful participation by SDVOBs, the Applicant/Contractor would reference the directory of New York State Certified SDVOBs found at <https://ogs.ny.gov/Veterans>. Additionally, following any resulting Contract execution, Contractor would be encouraged to contact the Office of General Services' Division of Service-Disabled Veterans' Business Development to discuss additional methods of maximizing participation by SDVOBs on the Contract.

It would be required that "good faith efforts" to provide meaningful participation by SDVOBs as subcontractors or suppliers in the performance of a resulting awarded Contract as documented.

### **3.7 Equal Opportunity Employment**

By submission of a bid or proposal in response to this solicitation, the Applicant/Contractor agrees with all terms and conditions of Master Contract for Grants, Section IV(J) – Standard Clauses for All New York State Contracts including Clause 12 – Equal Employment Opportunities for Minorities and Women. The Contractor is required to ensure that it and any subcontractors awarded a subcontract over \$25,000 for the construction, demolition, replacement, major repair, renovation, planning or design of real property and improvements thereon (the "Work"), except where the Work is for the beneficial use of the Contractor, undertake or continue programs to ensure that minority group members and women are afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or marital status. For these purposes, equal opportunity shall

apply in the areas of recruitment, employment, job assignment, promotion, upgrading, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, and rates of pay or other forms of compensation. This requirement does not apply to (i) work, goods, or services unrelated to the Contract; or (ii) employment outside New York State.

The Applicant will be required to submit a Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises and Equal Opportunity Policy Statement, to the State Contracting Agency with their bid or proposal. To ensure compliance with this Section, the Applicant will be required to submit with the bid or proposal an Equal Opportunity Staffing Plan (Form # to be supplied during contracting process) identifying the anticipated work force to be utilized on the Contract. If awarded a Contract, Contractor shall submit a Workforce Utilization Report, in such format as shall be required by the Contracting State Agency on a monthly or quarterly basis during the term of the contract. Further, pursuant to Article 15 of the Executive Law (the "Human Rights Law"), all other State and Federal statutory and constitutional and non-discrimination provisions, the Contractor and sub-contractors will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment status because of race, creed (religion), color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, age, disability, predisposing genetic characteristic, marital status, or domestic violence victim status, and shall also follow the requirements of the Human Rights Law with regard to non-discrimination on the basis of prior criminal conviction and prior arrest. Please Note: Failure to comply with the foregoing requirements may result in a finding of non-responsiveness, non-responsibility and/or a breach of the Contract, leading to the withholding of funds, suspension or termination of the Contract or such other actions or enforcement proceedings as allowed by the Contract.

### **3.8 Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification**

State Finance Law §139-I requires applicants on state procurements to certify that they have a written policy addressing sexual harassment prevention in the workplace and provide annual sexual harassment training (that meets the Department of Labor's model policy and training standards) to all its employees. Bids that do not contain the certification may not be considered for award; provided however, that if the applicant cannot make the certification, the applicant may provide a statement with their bid detailing the reasons why the certification cannot be made. A template certification document is being provided as part of this RFP. Applicants must complete and return the certification with their bid, or provide a statement detailing why the certification cannot be made.

### **3.9 Bid Response**

Neither the State of New York or OMH shall be responsible for the costs or expenses incurred by the applicant in preparation or presentation of the bid proposal.

### **3.10 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions**

A bid, in order to be responsive to this solicitation, must satisfy the specifications set forth in this RFP. A detailed description of this format and content requirements is presented in Section 2.11 of this RFP.

### **3.11 Freedom of Information Requirements**

All proposals submitted for OMH's consideration will be held in confidence. However, the resulting contract is subject to New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). Therefore, if an applicant believes that any information in its bid constitutes a trade secret or should otherwise be treated as confidential and wishes such information not be disclosed if requested, pursuant to FOIL (Article 6 of Public Officer's Law), the applicant must submit with its bid, a separate letter specifically identifying the page number(s), line(s), or other appropriate designation(s) containing such information explaining in detail why such information is a trade secret and formally requesting that such information be kept confidential. Failure by an applicant to submit such a letter with its bid identifying trade secrets will constitute a waiver by the applicant of any rights it may have under Section 89(5) of the Public Officers Law relating to the protection of trade secrets. The proprietary nature of the information designated confidential by the applicant may be subject to disclosure if ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction. A request that an entire bid be kept confidential is not advisable since a bid cannot reasonably consist of all data subject to a FOIL proprietary status.

### **3.12 NYS and OMH Policies**

The applicant/contractor must agree to comply with all applicable New York State and OMH policies, procedures, regulations and directives throughout the Term of the contract.

## 4. Evaluation Factors and Awards

### 4.1 Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be rated and ranked in order of highest score based on an evaluation of each applicant's written submission.

The Evaluation will apply points in the following categories as defined in Section 6:

<b>Technical Evaluation</b>	<b>Points</b>
Enhance access to Mental Health services (6.1)	20
Implement integrated supports (6.2)	20
Strengthen Partnerships (6.3)	20
Reporting (6.4)	15
Financial accountability (6.5)	20
Gun violence focal school districts (6.6)	5
<b>Total Proposal Points</b>	100 Points

Please refer to Section 6. Proposal Narrative.

For Objective specific scoring rubrics, please refer to the Pre-submission Upload page in the Grants Gateway.

For a detailed description of evaluation criteria for the Technical Evaluation and the Financial Assessment components, see Section 6 Proposal Narrative.

### 4.2 Method for Evaluating Proposals

Designated staff will review each proposal for completeness and verify that all eligibility criteria are met. A complete proposal shall include all required components as described in Section 2.11. If a proposal is not complete or does not meet the basic eligibility and participation standards as outlined in Section 2.5, the proposal will be eliminated from further review. The applicant will be notified of the rejection of its proposal within 10 working days of the proposal due date.

Review of proposals will be conducted in two parts: Technical Evaluation and Financial Assessment. The technical evaluation committee, consisting of a minimum of three technical evaluators and one fiscal evaluator, will review the technical portion of each proposal and compute a technical score. A financial score will be computed separately based on the operating budget and budget narrative submitted.



Evaluators of the Technical Evaluation component may then meet to discuss the basis of those ratings. Following the discussion, evaluators may independently revise their original score in any section. Once completed, final Technical Evaluation scores will then be recalculated, averaged, and added to the final Financial Assessment score to arrive at final scores.

Any proposal not receiving a final minimum average score of 65 will be eliminated from consideration.

In case of a tie in the scoring process, the proposal with the highest combined score on the Enhance Access to Mental Health Services (Section 6.1), Implementation of Integrated Supports (Section 6.2), and Strengthen Partnerships (Section 6.3) sections of the Proposal Narrative will be ranked higher.

In the event there is still a tie in the process described in the paragraph above, the applicant with the highest score in the Enhance Access to Mental Health Services (Section 6.1) will be ranked higher.

### **4.3 Process for Awarding Contracts**

#### **4.3.1 Initial Awards and Allocations**

Proposals will be scored, and awards will be made to the highest scoring applications that meet the minimum scoring threshold until funds are exhausted or until there are no fundable applications remaining. Awards shall not exceed \$500,000 per applicant annually.

A total of up to \$10,000,000 each year over five years will be available and distributed to eligible school districts. Continued funding past the first year will be contingent on timely reporting, satisfactory progress in meeting chosen grant objectives, and the availability of funds.

For purposes of this RFP, no school district shall receive an award of more than forty percent (40%) of the total grant funds. For New York City, separate applications must be submitted for each New York City geographic district. However, the combination of all New York City geographic districts will be considered one school district for the purposes of the 40% RFP funding limit.

#### **4.3.2 Contract Termination and Reassignment**

There are several factors that may result in the contract being reassigned and/or terminated such as poor performance, failure to achieve any established milestones, etc. A contractor will be provided notification if there is need for reassignment and/or termination.

To reassign the contract, OMH will go to the next highest ranked proposal.

#### **4.4 Award Notification**

At the conclusion of the procurement, notification will be sent to successful and non-successful applicants.

All awards resulting in a contract are subject to approval by the NYS Attorney General and the Office of the State Comptroller before a contract can be finalized.

### **5. Scope of Work**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

COVID-19 has disrupted learning and presented barriers to achievement impacting students. These conditions have led to mental health challenges unseen in modern times. A commitment to comprehensive transformation in schools is needed to support students as they maneuver through these difficult and unprecedented times. To combat inequities and provide opportunities to address academic loss, social-emotional learning, and strengthen education attainment and mental health wellness, these funds will be used to fulfill each of the three objectives outlined in Section 5.2.

#### **5.2 Objectives and Responsibilities**

##### **Overview/Objective categories**

Integrated supports are a school-based approach to promoting students' academic success by developing or securing and coordinating supports that target academic and non-academic barriers to achievement, with a primary focus being to support mental health. Consistent with this child-centered, holistic approach, the successful applicant will meet each of the following objectives:

- **Enhance access to mental health services**
- **Implement integrated mental health supports**
- **Strengthen partnerships with existing supports within the mental health system as well as the larger child-serving system**

Applicants must choose to implement one option in each objective.

**Objective 1. Enhance access to mental health services**

Enhancement of mental health staffing resources and the utilization of a standardized tool for needs identification are both proven interventions that enhance access to the continuum of strategies/supports that address the mental health of students.

Given the variability across school districts, the following options allow the district to select the specific intervention that best meets their identified needs.

***Applicants should choose from one of the following options:***

1. Utilize an existing or new partnership with an OMH licensed, designated, or authorized Community Based Organization (CBO) with experience serving children and families with mental health needs. This partnership must be utilized to establish, expand, or enhance school mental health services.

School districts will identify a new community partner or build upon an existing partnership. Applicants are required to include in their proposal a summary or outline of how this partnership will serve to support the mental health needs of their students:

- If identifying a new partnership, it must be an **OMH** licensed, designated, or authorized Community Based Organization (CBO) with experience serving children and families with mental health needs; or,
- If building upon an existing partnership, it must be an OMH licensed, designated, or authorized CBO. The partnership should create new or strengthen existing Mental Health supports and focus on identifying, creating, and supporting school-community partnerships which serve to connect students with mental health and additional supportive services.

The school district and the CBO will identify ways they will work in coordination and close partnership, to support the school community.

Upon award, the school district and CBO will develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish the roles and responsibilities of each party. It is expected that this partnership will develop and implement a comprehensive school plan that utilizes the strengths and expertise of school and community partners to improve student access to mental health resources and support students.

The CBO is not to replace or supplant any existing student support staff (i.e., school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, school nurses), who have a critical role to play in terms of being a liaison to the CBO and triaging students to the services which the school itself is not equipped to address.

If responding to option 1, applicants should describe the identified CBO and their experience providing mental health services to children and families (including if this is a new partnership or an existing partnership), provide a mandatory letter of support to partner with the identified CBO, and provide a summary or outline of how this partnership will serve to support the mental health needs of the students.

2. Apply a standardized tool to identify children who may be at risk for a mental health concern. This can be accomplished with a systematic tool or process such as a standardized screening tool which may include: student-report, parent-report, and/or teacher-report, and the examination of relevant data. This may include aggregate mental health surveillance data or individual level data (e.g., attendance records, office discipline referrals, and/or academic data), and a universal understanding of indicators and expectation of when to refer for supports (e.g. faculty, staff, teacher, family).

If responding to option 2, applicants should provide a description of indicators and enhanced efforts that will be utilized to identify children who may be at risk for a mental health concern. Applicants will describe how they will promote a universal understanding of those indicators among the school community and describe how they will promote the expectation to refer for supports.

3. Apply a standardized tool (e. g. the **SHAPE** System) to assist your district in identifying areas for improvement in your mental health system and prioritizing areas of mental health need to create and execute a plan to meet the identified needs

If responding to option 3, applicants should provide the name and description of the tool they will use, provide a detailed plan for implementing the tool, and describe how this tool will enhance desired outcomes.

4. Designate or employ a school staff person as liaison to the local mental health system and empower and equip that person to triage students and be the single point of referral for the school. This liaison will also provide professional development resources to ensure that school personnel are trained and equipped to provide necessary support.

If responding to option 4, applicants should provide a description of the plan to designate or employ a specific individual school staff person as liaison to the local mental health system. Describe how they will serve as a single point of referral for the school, and describe how they will ensure professional development training and resources are available for all school personnel.

## **Objective 2. Implement integrated mental health supports**

Promoting wellness and resilience within the school environment is crucial in supporting the mental health of students and families, particularly in the wake of the global pandemic. Findings from a meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions has shown that students benefit from developing social and emotional competencies which can lead to positive outcomes in school and successful adjustment to life stressors.

Additionally, by creating conditions where the wellbeing of the entire school community is valued, the ability to identify and prioritize students' mental health needs are enhanced. Supporting school staff to manage the increased stress associated with new demands (e.g., remote learning, addressing health and safety in the classroom, managing personal stressors), may allow for an enhanced capacity to identify mental health concerns that arise among their students.

Universal prevention activities and supportive activities for staff and families will contribute to environments of wellness and resilience. These may include, but are not limited to:

- i. school-wide activities (Tier 1 universal prevention activities) that build social emotional competencies/resilience skills;
- ii. psychoeducation/awareness raising opportunities for staff and families regarding trauma related stress and grief, anxiety, depression and/or self-care;
- iii. direct support for school staff's wellness including support groups, coaching/consultation for staff.

Access and engagement in mental health services for children is a shared responsibility among mental health providers, school staff, parents and caregivers. It includes the availability and readiness of children/families to

meaningfully participate in services. Currently the ability to identify/refer students in need of services has been compromised. Many changes and demands faced by school staff have interrupted the usual means of informal identification of student needs.

**Applicants should choose from one of the following options:**

1. Implement a school-wide multi-tiered system of supports.

If choosing option 1, applicants should identify and describe Tier 1 universal resources that will be implemented or enhanced which contribute to promoting wellness and resilience for all.

Identify Tier 2 resources (targeted supports) that will be implemented or enhanced for students who have been identified as at risk for developing a mental health concern or who are experiencing mild disruption due to a mental health concern.

Identify Tier 3 resources (intensive supports) that are individualized to meet the needs of students who are already experiencing significant disruption or distress as a result of a mental health concern.

This may also include the establishment of a school based mental health satellite clinic.

2. Implement a comprehensive engagement approach for both students and families which provides opportunities for meaningful participation in mental health supports.

If choosing option 2, applicants should identify and describe strategies for facilitating student and family engagement and describe the desired outcomes.

3. Have key staff trained as trainers in a manualized mental health awareness model that addresses their own needs and helps them identify needs of others (e.g., Youth Mental Health First Aid), and make those trainers responsible to train students, school staff, and families and/or have key staff trained as trainers in trauma-responsive or trauma informed practices and make those trainers responsible for training school staff.

If choosing option 3, applicants should identify and provide a description of the training model they plan to implement detail an implementation plan for the chosen training and describe desired outcomes.

4. Provide school-wide programming which helps prepare students to effectively cope with stress, such as mindfulness practices and/or programming to reduce bullying and cyberbullying.

If choosing option 4, applicants should describe the school-wide programming they plan to implement, detail an implementation plan for the chosen programming and describe desired outcomes.

**Objective 3. Strengthen partnerships with existing supports within the mental health system as well as the larger child-serving system**

Schools often collaborate with multiple agencies and programs. Thus, compiling and disseminating information about existing services/supports, their eligibility criteria, and other details related to access can help reduce duplication of services or inappropriate use of services and improve coordination of care for students.

The Systems of Care (SOC) Framework is a coordinated network of services and supports that are organized to meet the physical, mental, social, emotional, educational, and developmental needs of children and their families.

The identification and alignment of resources within and outside the school allows educators/staff to understand the full range of services/resources and supports that are available to students and their families. Community resource mapping is particularly important as a strategy for promoting interagency collaboration and strengthening system linkages to ensure students and their families have access to the full array of supports/services they need.

**Applicants should choose from one of the following options:**

1. Enhance coordination between school staff and community providers (System of Care) to increase access to services.

Applicants who choose option 1 should identify a process of how they will identify cross-systems partners (which may include, but are not limited to outpatient mental health providers, primary care, community organizations, social clubs, county providers, child serving agencies, and peer networks) and describe how they will engage and coordinate school staff and community providers to strengthen partnerships and describe the desired outcomes.

2. Develop a new or update an existing community resource guide/directory

Applicants who choose option 2 should develop or identify and update as needed, a community resource directory/guide of school-based and community mental health supports available for students and families. Develop a plan to familiarize and disseminate information regarding available resources to the school community and outline a plan to enhance and/or coordinate linkages to the support/services identified in the resource directory.

### **5.3 Reporting Requirements**

School districts will be required to provide a project narrative summarizing the grant progress, costs to date, and implementation plan for the following fiscal year. The plan must include each option selected in section 5.2. This will be due annually by August 31<sup>st</sup> for each year of the contract. Districts may also be required to participate in surveys and questionnaires as determined by the Office of Mental Health.

### **5.4 Operating Funding**

A total of up to \$10,000,000 each year over five years will be available and distributed to eligible school districts contingent upon the availability of funds. Awards will be made to the highest scoring applications that meet the minimum scoring threshold until funds are exhausted or until there are no fundable applications remaining. Awards shall not exceed \$500,000 per applicant annually.

For purposes of this RFP, no school district shall receive an award of more than forty percent (40%) of the total grant funds. For New York City, separate applications must be submitted for each eligible New York City geographic district. However, the combination of all New York City geographic districts will be considered one school district for the purposes of the 40% RFP funding limit. Contingent upon contract execution, an initial payment of 90% of the annual value will be made. Upon receipt and reconciliation of final claim reported per Section 5.3, the remaining 10% will be distributed. Instructions will be provided when contract packages are sent out.

Expenditures must be expressly used to support the objectives as stated in the RFP and outlined in responses to Section 6. Expenditures may include the following:

- Payment to a CBO for enhanced service options
- Start-up costs associated with the establishment, expansion, or enhancement of a school-based satellite clinic
  - Therapeutic materials and supplies
  - Supplies or services necessary to support delivery of telemental health
  - Internet/telephone access
- Outreach and engagement activities



- Costs associated with substitute teacher coverage to allow teachers to participate in training opportunities
- Support/delivery of wellness activities
- Marketing materials
- Social Media
- Transportation for families/students to support activities such as workshops, trainings, or supportive groups for parents
- Conferences and meetings
- Food to support activities such as workshops, trainings or supportive groups for parents and students. (This does not include food that a school district is required to provide i.e. breakfast and lunch.)
- Printing for written materials
- Hardware/software
- Supplies/postage
- Training and consultation in an evidenced-based practice (e.g. Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid)
- Training of trainers in an evidence-based practice or manualized approach
- Cost associated with validated screening tools and training
- Embedding tools in EHR/IT costs
- Data Collection IT costs
- Costs associated with school staff participation in self-paced trainings on Mental Health and Wellness or Suicide Safety in Schools

## 6. Proposal Narrative

When submitting proposals for funding under this RFP, applicants must choose and respond to **one** option in **each** of the following objectives.

**Applicants that respond to more than one option in each objective may be deemed ineligible.**

The narrative must address all components under the chosen option.

### 6.1 Objective 1 Enhance Access to Mental Health Services.

Applicants are to describe planned activities that support one of the following options as outlined in Section 5.2 Objective 1.

If responding to Option 1, the applicant should:

- Describe the identified CBO and their experience providing mental health services to children and families. Include if this is a new partnership or an existing partnership.
- Provide a mandatory letter of support from the identified CBO you will partner with.
- Provide a summary or outline of how this partnership will serve to support the mental health needs of their students.

If responding to Option 2, the applicant should:

- Provide a description of indicators and enhanced efforts that will be utilized to identify children who may be at risk for a mental health concern.
- Describe how you will promote a universal understanding of those indicators among the school community.
- Describe how you will promote the expectation to refer students for supports.

If responding to Option 3, the applicant should:

- Provide the name and description of the tool you will use to identify areas for improvement in your mental health system.
- Detail the plan for implementing the tool in your district.
- Describe how this tool will enhance desired outcomes.

If responding to Option 4, the applicant should:

- Describe a plan to designate or employ a specific individual school staff person as liaison to the local mental health system.
- Describe how the individual will serve as a single point of referral for the school.
- Describe how the individual will ensure professional development training and resources are available for all school personnel.

## **6.2 Objective 2 Implementation of integrated supports**

Applicants are to describe planned activities that support one of the following options as outlined in Section 5.2 Objective 2.

If responding to Option 1, applicants should:

- Identify and describe Tier 1 universal resources that will be implemented or enhanced which contribute to promoting wellness and resilience for all.
- Identify Tier 2 resources (targeted supports) that will be implemented or enhanced for students who have been identified as at risk for developing a mental health concern or who are experiencing mild disruption due to a mental health concern.
- Identify Tier 3 resources (intensive supports) that are individualized to meet the needs of students who are already experiencing significant disruption or distress as a result of a mental health concern.

If responding to Option 2, the applicant should:

- Identify and describe strategies for facilitating student engagement.
- Identify and describe strategies for facilitating family engagement.
- Describe the desired outcomes.

If responding to Option 3, applicants should:

- Identify and provide a description of the training model you plan to implement.
- Detail your implementation plan for the chosen training.



reimbursement. Applicants should list staff by position, full-time equivalent (FTE), and salary.

- b. Describe how your school district manages its operating budget. Also, applicants must complete a Budget Narrative which should include the following:
1. detailed expense components that make up the total operating expenses;
  2. the calculation or logic that supports the budgeted value of each category; and,
  3. description of how the budget will support the chosen objective, deliverables and level of activity.

## **6.6 Gun Violence Focal School Districts**

School district applicants located in a Gun Involved Violence Elimination (G.I.V.E.) focal area with a 2019-20 economically disadvantaged student rate above the State average (55.6%) will receive 5-points (the list of school districts will be provided as a Pre- Submission Upload page in the Grants Gateway).

## **6.7 NYC School District Designation (No Points Value Question)**

If the applicant is the NYC School District, applicant must indicate which Geographic School District the application is for.

**Note:** there may be only one application submitted for each Geographic School District.

If applicant is a School District other than NYC, in the Grants Gateway, provide the response “Not Applicable” in the response box.

## REFERENCES

State of New York Division of the Budget. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/press/2020/fy-2021-state-budget-highlights.html>

Pediatrics Office Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics  
*COVID-19 and Parent-Child Psychological Well-being*: Retrieved from  
<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/146/4/e2020007294>

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). School-Based Mental Health Services: Improving Student Learning and Well-Being. Retrieved from  
<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/mental-health/school-psychology-and-mental-health/school-based-mental-health-services>

Durlak JA, Weissberg RP, Dymnicki AB, Taylor RD, Schellinger KB. The impact of

enhancing students' social and emotional learning: a meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Dev.* 2011 Jan-Feb;82(1):405-32. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x. PMID: 21291449. Retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21291449/>

New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH). Find a Mental Health Program. Mental Health Program Directory. Retrieved from <https://my.omh.ny.gov/bi/pd/saw.dll?PortalPages>

NYS SOC. What are Systems of Care <https://nysoc.com/what-are-systems-of-care/>

SHAPE. School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation. Retrieved from <https://www.theshapesystem.com/>