



Shared Agenda

INITIATIVE

Guiding Principles, Goals & Objectives

Published by

The Ohio Department of
Mental Health and the
Ohio Department of Education

in cooperation with

The Center for School-Based
Mental Health Programs,
Miami University and

The Center for Learning Excellence,
The Ohio State University

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The Ohio Mental Health Network for School
Success Action Agenda is available at
[http://www.units.muohio.edu/csbnhp/
sharedagenda.html](http://www.units.muohio.edu/csbnhp/sharedagenda.html) and at
<http://altdmh.osu.edu/omhn/omhn.html>

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INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Research is fast accumulating on the urgency of removing non-cognitive barriers to learning and on strategies that bring families, schools and mental health professionals together to improve behavioral and academic outcomes for children and youth. In our tight economic times, and in light of the federal educational mandate to “*leave no child behind*,” it is imperative that we adopt effective, collaborative strategies that promote the well-being of all children and youth.

Ohio has been recognized nationally as a leader in building and expanding collaboration across education, mental health and family-serving organizations in developing a *shared agenda for children’s mental health and school success*. This work has been funded in part by a grant awarded in October 2002 from the Policymaker Partnership (PMP) at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) and the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). In Ohio, the policy-making leadership of education, mental health and family serving organizations is engaging with

state and local partners to generate a commitment to addressing non-cognitive barriers to learning to support successful academic achievement for all children and youth.

In 2001, the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH), in partnership with The Ohio State University Center for Learning Excellence (CLEX), and with participation of the Governor’s office and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), convened a hearing that served as a “call to action” for Ohioans to improve mental health and school success for all children.

The Hearing Summary and Resource Guide, and a more recent follow-up publication, have been disseminated widely throughout the state. Concurrent with the 2001 hearing, the Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success was formed, consisting of action networks spearheaded by affiliate organizations in six regions of the state.

Currently the Network is funded by ODMH and ODE and is co-led by CLEX and the Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs (CSBMHP) at Miami University.

The mission of the Network is to help Ohio's school districts, community-based agencies and families work together to achieve improved academic and mental health outcomes for all children.

Ohio's Shared Agenda Initiative is being implemented within the collaborative infrastructure of the Network. The four phases of Ohio's shared agenda initiative have included:

- I. A statewide forum for leaders of mental health, education and family policymaking entities in March 2003;
- II. Six regional forums held for policy implementers and consumer stakeholders in April and May 2003;
- III. A legislative forum involving key leadership of relevant house and senate committees in October 2003; and
- IV. Ongoing policy/funding advocacy and technical assistance to develop and promote an action plan for implementation of the recommendations from Phases I through III derived from the forums, with coordination by a steering committee. An Appreciative Inquiry model for

promotion of systems-level change and transformation informed the process (Cooperider and Whitney, 1999).

Across the six regional forums in Phase II, various features included cross-stakeholder panel discussions, youth and parent testimony, showcasing of promising work and facilitated discussion structured to promote collaboration and explore implementation issues.

Recommendations were derived from the facilitated discussion of the forums, which provided the framework for the October 9, 2003 Legislative Forum.

The Legislative Forum was convened by a panel of legislators, chaired by State Senator John Carey and State Representative Merle Grace Kearns. Adult and student panelists shared personal testimonies, findings and recommendations from the Phase I and II forums.

Presentations were made by Michael Hogan, Director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Chair of the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, and by Jane Wiechel, Associate Superintendent of the Ohio Department of Education. The leg-

islative panel heard compelling testimony and exchanged ideas with students, parents, educators, mental health professionals and other interested parties from across the state.

In Phase IV, the Shared Agenda steering committee formed an ad hoc group consisting of strategi-

cally selected participants representing state-level and regional stakeholders.

The findings and recommendations from Phases I through III have been developed into Guiding Principles, Goals and Objectives, which will be promoted broadly throughout Ohio.

G U I D I N G P R I N C I P L E S

1

Mental health is crucial to school success.

2

There are shared opportunities for mental health, schools and families to work together more effectively.

GOAL

1

Rationale: A common understanding is needed as a precursor to stakeholder education and will help to focus the shared agenda on critical links. It is recommended that ODE and ODMH review existing resources to accelerate this process. These resources include: the Final Report of the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health; Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) resource materials; SAMHSA's Eliminating Barriers Initiative (EBI) toolkit materials; and Ohio's Positive Behavior Support (PBS) statewide training manual.

Develop a common understanding among education, mental health, families and other stakeholders of key shared agenda concepts related to the critical links between mental health and school success.

OBJECTIVES

1. Foster partnerships among families and students, educators and mental health professionals.
2. Reduce stigma surrounding children's mental health issues.
3. Promote a better understanding of the impact of mental health on academic performance and school success.
4. Encourage Ohio's schools to incorporate awareness of mental health across Ohio's content standards.
5. Include all shared agenda stakeholders in supporting and promoting the Ohio School Climate Guidelines.
6. Develop partnerships at the state and local level with school-based professionals, including school counselors, social workers, nurses and psychologists.

GOAL

2

Rationale: All shared agenda stakeholders support quality interventions. These interventions are increasingly available. Quality will be increased to the extent that these interventions can be catalogued, disseminated, and funded. Identification of schools demonstrating a strong commitment to a positive, supportive learning environment, through the implementation of best practices, can advance the shared agenda (e.g., by fostering peer learning, by using them as examples for the legislature, and by collecting and providing data on the outcomes).

Identify, expand and implement evidence-based practices that support the critical links between mental health and school success; identify “Star” schools demonstrating the essential elements of the critical link.

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify and disseminate information about the various evidence-based and promising expanded School-Based Mental Health models used in Ohio.
2. Educate school districts on how to effectively identify and evaluate school-based mental health programs through surveys, data collection, etc.
3. Identify and disseminate strategies and best practices for family engagement in addressing the critical links.
4. Determine a list of individuals and groups qualified to provide training and technical assistance and provide a directory to districts; Ensure that training is standardized, ongoing and makes use of evidence-based principles and practices.
5. Continue to promote the development/expansion of Positive Behavior Support (PBS).
6. Examine and consider promotion of effective school-based screenings for emotional and behavioral disorders, such as Columbia Teen Screen.

GOAL

3

Rationale: The Fiscal Year 2006-2007 budget process will determine the General Revenue Fund (GRF) appropriations for public education and other child-serving systems, and will provide policy guidance regarding utilization of the funds. Allocation processes at state and local levels will decide how these funds are spent. Allocations can be influenced through budget language and other approaches to strengthen attention and support for the critical links between mental health and school success.

Positively influence allocations for public education and mental health systems at the state and local levels.

OBJECTIVES

1. Explore how state and local authorities can promote evidence-based and promising practices through allocation processes.
2. Improve availability of and access to school-based mental health services for **all** students who need care and mental health supports.
3. Empower and support family involvement through consultation with the Ohio Federation for Children's Mental Health, The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill - Ohio, the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children and other family advocacy organizations.
4. Provide targeted technical assistance (through focused monitoring) to school districts to use existing funding resources to finance promising school mental health practices including Positive Behavior Support (PBS) and other evidence-based practices (e.g., through use of student intervention dollars).
5. Compile a comprehensive list of existing and potential funding streams relating to the shared agenda.

GOAL

4

Rationale: As state departments prepare for their systems' budget priorities, the shared agenda group should explore ways to strengthen attention to the critical links between mental health and school success via budget preparations.

Positively influence the State Budget for Fiscal Year 2006 - 2007.

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a shared agenda budget strategy.

Compile statewide data that supports the use of evidence-based and promising practices and positive school success (e.g., trend the report card performance of "Star" schools, including schools implementing PBS).

Develop and disseminate a fact sheet using data on mental health services and supports and positive school/academic outcomes.

Explore budget strategies to promote a school building's adoption of evidence-based and promising practices.

2. Explore development of a shared agenda budget and identify budget opportunities within existing and emerging initiatives and coalitions such as Access to Better Care (ABC) and the Coalition for Healthy Communities.

GOAL

5

Rationale: Educating school-based personnel about mental illness and the benefits of collaboration between the mental health and education communities will improve the learning environment for all children.

Expand Ohio's capacity to support mental health in schools through pre-service and in-service education, training and professional development.

OBJECTIVES

1. Promote cross-disciplinary and culturally competent pre-service learning standards and curricula for future teachers, mental health and other child-serving professionals, facilitating current research-based knowledge regarding mental health and the essential links between mental health and learning/academic achievement/school success.
2. Promote in-service and professional standards and curricula leading to licensure for teachers, mental health professionals, school nurses and other child-serving professionals that address mental health issues and the essential links between mental health and learning/academic achievement/school success.
3. Develop training curricula for families and other community stakeholders regarding essential links between mental health and academic achievement.
4. Promote continuous re-examination of academic content and operating standards to ensure that instruction surrounding mental health, mental illness and stigma is integrated within the broader scope of formal educational opportunities for every child.

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