



Austin Independent School District

Select Committee on Mental Health

Testimony of

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Austin Independent School District

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Austin ISD, which has an enrollment of 83, 634 students, focuses on the whole child, including student physical and mental health. Healthier children learn better, attend school more frequently, are present, and productive. We know based on student health data that there is a need to intently focus on the mental well-being of children. The “AISD Campus Counseling Service Summary” (*Attachment 1*) indicates that from August 2014 to June 2015, there were 1,455 cases of suicide ideation/thoughts. During the same time period, 1,257 students reported to their counselor self-injurious behaviors, there were 111 suicide attempts, 373 referrals to the “Mobile Crisis Outreach Team and/or Mental Health Officer”, and 2,862 intensive cases involving students and family members. Additionally, our mental health-related calls to our Austin ISD Police Department have increased from 307 calls in 2013 to 664 calls in 2015 (*Attachment 2*).

We recognize that children experience life stressors, trauma, violence, and peer pressure at alarming rates. Thus, the district began a pilot in Spring 2011 at Crockett High School in which we placed a full-time licensed psychologist on campus to provide mental health services through a “Campus Based Counseling Referral Center (CBCRC).” Students and families can

receive mental health services provided by a full-time licensed therapist—a clinical social worker, professional counselor or psychologist—at the CBCRC conveniently located at school. CBCRC therapists use evidence-based practices to help students and families identify and treat behavioral issues and mental health concerns. Working with the family, therapists complete a thorough clinical assessment, create therapeutic goals with the student, and provide on-going therapy throughout the year. The treatment approach is strengths-based, rooted in therapeutic models such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Trauma Informed Care and Motivational Interviewing. All services are confidential and student health information is protected under the law. CBCRC therapists work collaboratively with other school based programs, such as Communities in Schools, Council on At-Risk Youth, Safe Place, etc., to create a wraparound model for the child. Students can be referred for CBCRC services through the campus Child Study Team, the parent/guardian, or community referrals. Parent/ guardian consent is required in order for a student to receive services. CBCRC's offer a variety of payment options for both insured and uninsured, which help meet the range of needs of AISD families.

Currently, Austin ISD is a member of the Regional Health Partnership (RHP-7) to enhance medical care for the community through the Texas Healthcare Transformation and Quality Improvement Program 1115 Waiver program. Through participation in the 1115 Waiver, the district receives \$2.4 million in valued services at the 15 Campus Based Counseling Referral Centers. From August 2015 to date, 943 students have received behavioral health services through our partnership with Austin Travis County Integral Care (ATCIC) (*Attachment 3*). ATCIC is our Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment sub-contractor through Seton Healthcare Family, our performing provider. The 1115 Waiver does not include all campuses

and student populations. Therefore, beginning in August 2015, the district committed local funds (\$480,000) to contract with a private provider, Vida Clinic, to provide services at three additional campuses, serving an additional 141 students, bringing the total to 18 campuses in which we actively and intentionally provide mental health therapy (*Attachment 4*).

We believe that providing mental health and behavioral health services early is crucial to getting students the help they need to get and stay on the right track and be successful in life. Investing in them early saves money in the long run, as the cost of incarceration and inpatient mental or behavioral care is far more costly.

In order to continue support for our students and families, we believe that we must continue and/or take the following actions:

- Make it easy for students to get help for themselves and others. Campus based services such as the AISD model of mental and behavioral wellness, provides on-site therapy and treatment for students and families.
- Intervene early through small group interventions that build social support and skills for healthy coping for vulnerable students.
- Increase responsiveness to students who have been exposed to violence or abuse and are at increased risk for mental/behavioral health issues. Students in these situations sometimes hurt themselves and other people.
- Provide positive, supportive relationships to increase health and safety for individuals and for the entire school community.
- Appropriate funding to support campus based mental health services.

We are happy to provide the Committee with any additional information.

AISD Campus Counseling Service Summary

August 2014- June 2015

This report summarizes the estimated amount and type of support provided by campus counseling staff to students in AISD. **The data is self-reported via an electronic survey by a member of the school's counseling staff each month.** The data in this report reflects estimated cumulative data submitted by elementary, middle and high school counselors.

CASES	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Suicidal thoughts / ideation (n=1,455)	383	486	586
Self-injurious behaviors (n=1,257)	254	676	327
Suicide attempts (that staff are aware of) (n=111)	24	41	46
Completed suicide (n=*)	0	*	0
Psychiatric crisis other than those mentioned (n=671)	261	122	288
Transitions back to school following symptoms of psychiatric crisis (n=453)	105	141	207
Referrals to MCOT Mobil Crisis Outreach Team and/or Mental Health Officer (n=373)	142	112	119
Eating Disorders (n=258)	57	82	119
Filed Child Abuse/Neglect reports (n=1,048)	679	243	126
Intensive cases involving students and family members (n=2,862)	1851	482	529
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Note: ALC (Alternative Learning Center) data is not included in this figure.</i></p> <p>*=redacted due to less than 5</p>			

Austin ISD Police Department Calls by Sub-Type, per Year (2013-2016)

• August 2012-July 2013	
• MENTAL HEALTH CALLS	307
• OUT OF CONTROL STUDENTS CALLS	491
• August 2013-July 2014	
• MENTAL HEALTH CALLS	482
• OUT OF CONTROL STUDENTS CALLS	516
• August 2014-July 2015	
• MENTAL HEALTH CALLS	664
• OUT OF CONTROL STUDENTS CALLS	510
• August 2015-January 2016 (as of 01/08/2016)	
• MENTAL HEALTH CALLS	348
• OUT OF CONTROL STUDENTS CALLS	236

ATCIC AISD School-Based Services
Services Overview Report
January 19, 2016



For the current academic year, which began August 24, 2015, **943** youth enrolled in Austin ISD have received behavioral health services through ATCIC AISD School-Based Services – Seton in Schools. Services include individual psychotherapy, skills training, case management, crisis support, in addition to family services, and behavioral health psychoeducation. Students may also receive psychiatric services from psychiatrists based at the Riverside or Dove Springs clinic. As of the date of this report, the average caseload is **26** with **61** students served also receiving psychiatric care at either the Riverside or Dove Springs clinic locations. This semester, Behavioral Health Mini-Lessons have reached **536** students. Common diagnoses include: Adjustment Disorder with Anxiety and/ or Depression, Depressive Disorder, Mood Disorder, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Caseloads per campus as of 1/19/2016

CAMPUS	ESTABLISHED	CASELOAD
Austin HS	Dec. 2014	31
Bedichek MS	Aug. 2015	30
Burnet MS	Dec. 2014	34
Dobie MS	Dec. 2014	27
Eastside Memorial & International HS	Jan. 2015	28
Fulmore MS & Fulmore Magnet	Jan. 2015	30
Gus Garcia YMLA	Oct. 2015	13
Lanier HS & Lanier GPA	Feb. 2015	30
LBJ & LASA HS	Jan. 2015	26
Martin MS	Nov. 2015	23
McCallum HS	Aug. 2015	24
Reagan HS	Dec. 2014	33
Sadler Means YWLA	Dec. 2015	9
Travis HS and Travis GPA	Dec. 2014	29

Five of the fourteen school-based therapists are bilingual in English and Spanish, and have passed the agency-required Language Competency Exam to confirm their ability to use Spanish in a therapeutic setting. For staff that are not bilingual, or for clients who speak a language other than Spanish, the Language Line is a helpful resource. Therapists have commented on the ease of using this service for intakes and family sessions, as appropriate.

With regard to DSRIP metrics, the program is currently ahead of target for both projects. Validated data as of November 2015 indicates that the 3-year project is at 44% of meeting the DY5 metric of 306

Attachment 3

individuals served, while the 4-year project is at 23% of meeting the DY5 metric of 2,000 individuals served.

For questions, contact Program Manager, Melissa Acosta, at Melissa.Acosta@ATCIC.org or 512-804-3045.

**Vida Clinic AISD School-Based Services
Overview Report
January, 2016**



Overview: For the current academic year, which began August 24, 2015, **332** individuals in Austin ISD have received behavioral health services through one of the three Vida Clinic AISD School-Based Centers. Vida Clinic provides therapeutic services to **students and staff**. Services include diagnostic evaluation, individual group and family psychotherapy, family and school consultation, skills training, case management including coordinating care with other providers, crisis support. This year, over 93% of **staff** at Crockett High School have participated in consultation or training experiences as part of the Trauma Informed Approaches to Behavior in Schools project. The most common issues requiring services for youth include: Depression and anxiety (includes history of suicidal ideation and self injury and panic attacks), trauma history, family disruption, school related problems. While students may initially be referred due to behavioral problems such as anger outbursts, underlying those behaviors are struggles with prolonged stress, mood problems, history of psychological maltreatment.

Caseloads per campus : January, 2016

CAMPUS	ESTABLISHED	CASELOAD
Crockett HS	March 2012	71
Anderson HS	Oct. 2015	29
Bowie HS	Nov. 2015	13

Language Priority: One of the three school-based therapists is bilingual in English and Spanish, with two additional bilingual staff (one fluent in Spanish and one fluent in Arabic) joining the clinician team to accommodate the linguistic needs of the treatment population. These additional bilingual clinicians will provide translation support at the three campuses.

Multiple, Complementary School-Based Mental Health Initiatives: Vida Clinic is also involved with initiatives that promote system-level change in campus climate towards being more Whole-Child oriented. An example is the Trauma Informed Approaches to Behaviors in Schools pilot program taking place at Crockett High School this year. Our systemic and clinical programs work in tandem with each other, and are driven by the overarching goal of turning schools into ideal places for student learning.

Emphasis on Research and Outcomes: This year, Vida Clinic has thus far developed an academic journal article publication and three presentations of outcomes at professional conferences.

Clinical Training: Vida Clinic serves as a training site for 5 doctoral students in psychology. These students assist with provision of clinical services under supervision of a licensed psychologist.

Contact Executive Director, Elizabeth Portman Minne, Ph.D. at liz@vidaclinic.org, 512-461-7358.