

**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**K-12 Prevention Education Funding**  
**November 27, 2019**  
**Updated May 2020\*\***

**These questions were submitted by ADAMH Boards and community members from around the state, and the answers have been written with the assumption that the ADAMH Boards are the opted-in conveners of the community collaboration. If an ADAMH Board declines the role of convener, then a competitive process will be initiated to identify another convener for that specific community.**

**\*\*The first portion of this document contains the updated questions for May 2020. We will continue to update this document, placing the most recent questions at the beginning of the document for easy reference.**

**Additions to FAQ - May 2020**

1. Several schools would prefer funding to be directed toward staff time to work with students who have mental health needs. Given the potential climate when these children return to school, we would advocate for flexibility to do targeted work with those that need it most.
  - a. Student Wellness and Success Funds are well suited for this need along with Medicaid funding for treatment services for youth diagnosed with mental, emotional or behavioral disorders; these best practices are listed on the [ODE website](#).
  - b. The K-12 Prevention funds can target resiliency strategies for universal, selective and indicated populations of students; stress management; coping mechanisms; linkages to positive adults; support groups in the fall to acclimate and build resiliency, for example. Prevention providers already do these types of activities and can be tapped to assist.
  
2. Schools are concerned over the push to implement additional prevention programming when they are happy with the current programming they are offering. They report not having time during the school day for additional programming.
  - a. We are not advocating for additional programming; schools may want to continue the same strategies they are doing; prevention programming is not all about providers coming into the classroom to work with a small number of students. Other strategy examples include expansion of student surveys; developing policy to support prevention practices and safe school climates; training and staff development; parent engagement, PBIS teamwork; positive youth development activities, implementing the whole child framework, etc.
  
3. Each county and schools are different and have a different set of circumstances. Many schools have implemented prevention strategies and we understand that some would like to use this funding towards what is actually needed, such as direct mental health services.
  - a. Again, direct mental health services treatments can be funded with Student Wellness and Success funding, Medicaid and other Board funding sources; however, mental health promotion and suicide prevention are examples of prevention services that can be supported by these funds to support mental health.

4. One other thing would be for the state to consider the flexibility of these funds by allowing Boards to use some of the funds to provide technical assistance to the schools. Hearing other boards say it is taking a part time position to get assessments completed with 15-20 schools sounds about right. The equivalent for us would be 2 full time positions, which we don't have. We have 16 traditional school districts and about 72 community schools to work with. Some Boards internal capacity to manage and facilitate this would be significantly strengthened if we could hire an agency to do this work.
  - a. Early on we suggested that Boards could use their EBP dollars for this exact purpose. We appreciate that the Board role is the convener to bring together partners to figure out the best way to accomplish the work. Prevention providers would be included as those essential partners at the table. In lieu of many prevention strategies that have been impacted by the COVID crisis, perhaps current strategies could be retooled to support contracts with providers to assist with this work.
5. Considering the unmet needs prior to the pandemic, we are assuming even more demand for services for school-aged youth, and not for specific prevention programs.
  - a. Mental health promotion (develops skill-based positive attributes, such as self-regulation, self-efficacy, goal setting and positive relationships) and suicide prevention are examples of prevention services that can be supported by these funds to support mental health strategies. You may find other ideas on our new [evidence-based strategies document](#) listed on the website.

## **Beginning of original FAQ's Funding**

1. Boards requested additional information regarding student enrollment and how it was used in the formula.
  - a. Funding is based on a formula that includes a \$25,000 base per county + the district's K-12 enrollment. The amount of funding for each board is listed on the updated [Allocation Spreadsheet](#) on the [Funding Opportunities Page](#). Detailed spreadsheets listing the total number of students per board area and the student enrollment per district were sent to all Board Directors on 11/26.
2. Are boards expected to pass the funds on to the school or enter into contracts to provide services within the school or both? Can the funds remain with the board for the board to contract with prevention agencies and/or other agreed upon prevention efforts or must the board allocate the funds to the districts for them to contract directly?
  - a. It is anticipated that the board and the district will decide how the funds should be disbursed based on the capacity of the community and the needs of the district. Sometimes it will be easier for the districts to have the board contract for services. In other cases, it may make more sense to allocate directly to the district.
3. Regarding the flow of funds, the school process of receiving funds requires school board approval each time. How will this impact the process and the timing of dispersing of funds.
  - a. This will most likely vary depending on the county. So, it is important for the community partners to discuss these issues and make decisions on how best to work through disbursement options.
4. Considering the timeline of distribution of these funds, will it be possible to carryover these funds into SFY 2021? This could be useful for a school that already has plans underway for this school year and would also help to engage a school that may be hesitant to participate considering the timelines.
  - a. It is anticipated that the funds will be spent this fiscal year, but carryover will be an option with required documentation following the OhioMHAS standard guidelines.

5. Is this funding supposed to be spent this school year? Or is this year the planning process, and we can use the funding for the 2020-2021 school year?
  - a. Yes, given the urgent need for prevention activities across the state, the intent is that these dollars will be used quickly and fully. If, however, a community collaborative decides that a district would best be served by planning this year and implementing in the next school year, that may occur. Carryover requests will be an option with required documentation following the OhioMHAS standard guidelines.
6. Will Boards be disbursing funds directly to school districts or the providers working within those districts?
  - a. It is anticipated that the local planning partners will determine how the funds are disbursed to the school or to the provider based on the best way to accomplish the goals in the Action Plans. There may be opportunities for multiple districts to partner together on a beneficial training that could be provided by a prevention provider. In other cases, it may be easiest for a district to receive the dollars to purchase curricula directly, for example.
7. If a Board already has a plan in place to implement a program (PAX Partners and GBG) in their community, can this funding be utilized to help with previously identified project costs, including training, one year's salary, and stipends for teachers and other staff to attend trainings?
  - a. If this activity would otherwise not be implemented, and the plan is agreeable to the community partners and the district, the activity should be written into the Action Plan and could be an allowable expenditure.
8. What are the anticipated auditing requirements for these funds?
  - a. Auditing will be no different than other auditing requirements for OhioMHAS allocations.
9. What obligation will the ADAMHS Boards have if the funding that is allocated is not spent or encumbered?
  - a. If Boards are unable to obligate the funds allocated by the end of the funding period, these funds may be eligible for a carryover request or they may be returned to the department.
10. Can the funds be spent to supplant what the schools and the ADAMHS Boards already have implemented?
  - a. These funds are intended to stimulate new activities, expansion of activities, or fill gaps so that every child in every classroom has access to evidence-based prevention strategies. If the Board and District are already providing prevention education in partnership, then the expansion of those services is allowable; direct supplanting of costs is not allowable.
11. Are we permitted to retain some of the dollars for universal strategies? What about marketing?
  - a. All funding should be directed in response to district Plans of Action. These funds are not intended for marketing.

### **Partners and Decision-Making Process**

12. As we're looking to approve Plans of Action, are partners required to be OhioMHAS certified?
  - a. Planning partners do not need to be certified, as they may have additional expertise needed for planning. It would be helpful to have some certified partners on the team, however.
13. Who determines how much funding should be invested in or for each school district? Are boards being asked to make decisions about how much of their allocation should be distributed to each school? Will it

be up to boards to decide how the funds are distributed for schools that “opt in”? Does the planning committee need to reach consensus?

- a. The planning committee is made up of community stakeholders that will work toward consensus in their decision making. It is anticipated that the local planning partners will determine how the funds are disbursed to the school or to the provider based on the best way to accomplish the goals in the Action Plans. There may be opportunities for multiple districts to partner together on a beneficial training or program that could be provided by a prevention provider. In other cases, it may be easiest for a district to receive the dollars to purchase curricula or services directly, for example.

14. If a school opts out, will the board still receive the full amount of funding allocated for their board area? If yes, are the boards able to determine how the funds should be utilized?

- a. Yes, the board will receive the same amount and through the community planning process, the community stakeholders can decide where the funds should be redistributed based upon the data and the needs examined in the planning process.

15. Who is approving the Plan of Action?

- a. ADAMH Boards will ultimately approve each Plan of Action based on input through a collaborative, consensus-building process with the planning partners. Boards will convene the planning partners to accomplish the following:
  - i. identify a process for completing district self-assessment and action plan surveys
  - ii. determine a plan for review and approval of district plans
  - iii. collaborate with Educational Service Centers to assist with the professional development needs of staff <https://www.oesca.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/ESCs%7CAbout%20ESCs>
- b. Boards and planning partners may also assist districts with review of data, completing the Self-Assessment Tool and the development of the Plan of Action.
- c. OhioMHAS and ODE staff are available for consultation and support in the development and final review of the Plan of Action.

16. I have some real concerns if we (the Boards) are being asked to simply be a pass-through for yet an additional \$8,375,000 to schools that are already receiving \$675 Million. Especially if we are being asked to police district cooperation after \$1 Million of the original allocation of \$19 Million has been distributed to the ESC, who should actually be policing school districts in completing their Plans of Action and online assessments.

- a. Ideally, prevention providers will be able to offer additional services to schools through these dollars. This is an opportunity to partner between schools and prevention providers using a simple set of tools that will assist with the conversation that is needed to work together. It is not meant to be a hoop to go through, but a way to help assess priorities and what programs and services are already working. Together, schools, boards, prevention providers and other community partners can decide how best to leverage all their dollars.

For example, the Student Wellness and Success Funds can pay for mentoring programs, and so could the K-12 Prevention dollars. If one school is using all its Wellness and Success dollars for interventions and does not have anything left for a much desired and high priority need of a mentoring program, then they would want to use the K-12 dollars for that. In another situation, the school could use their Wellness and Success dollars for the mentoring program and use the K-12 dollars for something else. The prevention and student wellness funds should be approached as

complementing one another and as an opportunity for local partners to pull together to advance the best interests of youth in their communities and schools.

17. I am concerned that putting us in charge of getting schools to jump hoops or putting them in a position to refuse to cooperate and thereby causing the county to receive reduced funding is not going to help strengthen those relationships.
  - a. The county will not receive reduced funding if some schools are unable to participate. We expect that the availability of these funds will help stimulate interest and opportunity for schools that previously have been unable to partner for the implementation of prevention services in their buildings and classrooms. We also expect that Boards that opt to be conveners will create a collaborative environment where all partners take responsibility for the wellness of the community's youth. Hopefully, this is an opportunity to bring partners to the table to see how you can assist them in leveraging these resources to meet their priority needs. The result will be decided by how well boards are able to facilitate a collaborative partnership. If you need assistance with that, OhioMHAS and ODE staff are happy to help.

### Letters of Intent

18. Boards are concerned about getting the LOI in by Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - a. The Letter of Intent target date has been moved to End of Business on Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> to allow for more time; many letters have been returned prior to the extended date.
19. I would like to confirm that the letter of intent and grant application must be submitted by a school district and not by a non-profit that is positioned to assist a school district in holistic wellness efforts designed to empower youth, prevent addiction, and identify/protect those at risk of suicide.
  - a. The initial Letter of Intent will be completed by each local ADAMH Board. If an ADAMH Board declines to convene the community partners, then OhioMHAS will reach out to those board areas with an open request for proposals from prevention services agencies or coalitions to convene community partners. Either way, community partners are urged to support the boards and schools in their self-assessment and planning for prevention.
20. Question regarding the LOI for the K-12 Prevention Funding. There is a separate sheet that asks for "Prevention Planning Partners." Does that sheet need to be included with the LOI and, if so, who do you want included on that sheet?
  - a. Yes, it should include the list of prevention planning partners on the planning committee that could be helpful to the effort. All participating schools do not need to be listed on the Letter of Intent, although if schools have committed at the time of submission, including them is appropriate. As they complete their self-assessment tools, boards will have access to a report that will list those districts.
  - b. Potential planning partners could include anyone that could be helpful with implementing the prevention work such as: prevention providers, community coalition leaders, county boards of health, community-based mental health and substance use disorder providers, county department of job and family services, county boards of developmental disabilities, nonprofit organizations with experience serving children, public hospital agencies, and Family and Children First Councils. It would also be important to include some school district representation or someone from the Educational Service Center that could assist with outreach to the districts and provide school perspectives for the planning process.

## School District Participation and Eligibility

21. Can OhioMHAS re-send the school districts by board area? I can't find on the department's website and I want to confirm what "community schools" are on the list.
  - a. These listings were sent out in individualized emails to ADAMH Board Executive Directors. Please contact Molly Stone at [molly.stone@mha.ohio.gov](mailto:molly.stone@mha.ohio.gov) for a specific board area's listing.
22. What have the schools heard about this program? Will school districts receive any communication from ODE regarding this process or is it entirely up to Boards?
  - a. ODE has sent a communication out to the school districts and done presentations at conferences with updates on the K-12 prevention funds. Plans are underway to share additional information with districts in early December.
23. Are there talking points or consistent messaging recommendations that can be used in conversations with schools regarding the overall funding, the assessment, the plan of action, etc.?
  - a. These are being developed and will be provided when they are completed.
24. Do schools have to opt-out in writing? This may be particularly difficult for a school that is not interested in engaging.
  - a. Yes, the schools need to notify the Boards in writing that they are not going to accept the funds along with their reason for nonparticipation. Please document that in writing, along with their reason for nonparticipation and any efforts the board provided to assist. The goal is for every district to participate. If help is needed in engaging schools, please reach out to OhioMHAS, who will work with ODE to encourage participation.
25. Are we allowed to engage with private schools? They aren't listed on the spreadsheet?
  - a. That is a local decision to be made with the planning partners. We do not have current access to the number of students in private schools or contacts for those entities. Some public schools may already partner with private schools on certain prevention strategies and may want to include them in the planning. Other strategies, such as training for school personnel, may be able to accommodate additional private school staff.
26. Are we expected to work with every district in the county? I believe the answer to this is yes but am wondering what happens if one doesn't want to participate.
  - a. We understand that even after your outreach and support, there may be some districts that choose not to participate. If help is needed in engaging schools, please reach out to OhioMHAS, who will work with ODE to encourage participation. If after these efforts occur, a district declines to participate, please document that in writing along with their reason for nonparticipation and any efforts you provided to assist. The [SAMPLE K-12 Prevention Education Partner Agreement](#) could be used for districts to document their decision to decline. Find it [HERE](#).
27. How is the \$1 million that the ESCs are receiving connected? Will the ESCs be expected to partner with boards to plan for and implement the professional development grants?
  - a. Five Regional ESC's will be funded to work with the districts and focus on professional development that furthers prevention education efforts. ESC's will be reaching out to community partners including, but not limited to, County ADAMH Boards, licensed and certified community-based behavioral health prevention providers, and local prevention coalitions to assist with efforts.

28. Will we be penalized if not all districts join this? We have prevention programming and MH and SUD counseling going on in almost of the districts already and some are saying they can't do one more thing.
  - a. If districts decline to participate, boards should document this in writing, and those funds may be redistributed to participating districts.
29. Prevention Education Partner Agreements: When are these due? This is marked as draft, so are we permitted to develop our own? If yes, are there certain requirements from the draft that need to be part of it?
  - a. This Agreement is a sample document to be used, if helpful, for the planning team and board planning process. Local communities may develop their own partner agreements. Please feel free to use whatever is helpful from the sample document to support your efforts.
30. Do all the districts that say "yes" need to be a part of the planning group?
  - a. The planning group should be similar to a steering committee to guide the planning efforts. This group should include representatives from the school districts that are willing to be a part of the process.
31. What is the technical assistance referenced in the Prevention-Education Partner Agreement, and who is expected to provide it?
  - a. This is only a suggestion for a school that may be having difficulty making the decision regarding their participation. Anyone on the planning team could reach out to the district to assist.
32. If districts say "yes," are we required to fund them?
  - a. Yes, as long as they complete their self-assessment and action plan requirements. Conveners agree to support districts in the completion of the assessment and plan, and therefore share some responsibility in the successful completion of these processes. Remember that the local planning partners will determine how the funds are disbursed to the school or to the provider based on the best way to accomplish the goals in the Action Plans.

### **Allowable Use of Funds/Rules for Service Delivery**

33. Would we be able to use these funds for mental health prevention and education that is provided by agencies that are not certified in prevention and mental health staff that are not Certified Prevention Specialists? I have been told several times that we should be able to use to funds for both prevention and education for both SUD and Mental Health issues. The document with the full program description under paragraph 1 of Allowable Uses of Funds States: "These funds may be used for the entire continuum of prevention services and supports: Universal (Tier 1 PBIS), targeting the general population, Selective (Tier II PBIS) targeting those higher risk populations and indicated (Tier III PBIS) targeting those with early signs and symptoms." My question is, if we are addressing the "entire continuum of prevention services" are we limited to just providers that are certified to provide prevention services and utilize Certified Prevention Specialists?
  - a. All prevention services in Ohio must be provided by certified prevention agencies with qualified staff working within their scope of practice.
  - b. (ORC <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/5119.36v1>). The definition of prevention promotes the health and safety of individuals and communities, and focuses on reducing the likelihood of, delaying the onset of, or slowing the progression of or decreasing the severity of Mental Emotional Behavioral (MEB) health disorders. MEB health disorders include but are not limited to: substance use disorders, mental illness, suicide, problem gambling, etc.

- c. OhioMHAS certification standards state Individuals are eligible to provide and supervise within their professional scope of practice those services certified by the Ohio department of mental health and addiction services and listed and described in Chapter 5122-29 of the Administrative Code (<https://mhohio.gov/Portals/0/assets/AboutUs/Regulation/Rules/10262019/5122-29-30.pdf?ver=2019-10-21-102502-140> ). In addition, here is the link to the Ohio Chemical Dependency and Professionals Board Scope of practice: <https://ocdp.ohio.gov/Laws-Rules/Laws-and-rules>.
34. Would contracting with an ESC for technical assistance services be an eligible use of these funds?
- a. The following lists examples of allowable use of funding:
    - i. Materials for expansion of existing evidence-based programs being implemented in schools and classrooms (i.e.: Life Skills, PAX Good Behavior Game, Project Alert, Keepin' It Real, NIDA's Brain Power, Be Present, I'm Here Crisis Text Line, Signs of Suicide, etc.)
    - ii. Purchase and training of evidence-based prevention curricula
    - iii. Locally developed evidenced-informed prevention programs (items in this category must be reviewed and approved for effectiveness by community partners with prevention expertise)
    - iv. Stipends for teachers and other trusted adults to over-see/guide/facilitate youth led programming, after/before-school programs, mentoring programs, etc.
    - v. Youth-Led Programming
    - vi. Parenting programs and educational activities
    - vii. Environmental strategies such as social norms campaigns, awareness campaigns, policy change and development, etc.
    - viii. Campaign expansion for programs like National Red Ribbon Week, Alcohol Awareness Month (April), Mental Health Awareness (May) that must be done in conjunction with other programming
  - b. Please contact OhioMHAS staff directly if you have an idea in mind that is not included on this list and about which you have questions.

### **Self-Assessment Tools and Reporting**

35. The December 3rd timeline for the webinar about the online self-assessment may be a challenge for many schools, particularly considering the short notice.
- a. The webinar date has been changed to Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. to allow for additional time. The webinar will be recorded and posted on the website so that partners can review at a time that is convenient.
36. Do we need to reach out to all our school districts and ask if they want to be on the call or is the call just for the Boards/Conveners? Must each district view/attend the webinar?
- a. Schools would benefit from this webinar as it will describe how to complete the self-assessment, planning and reporting tools. The webinar will be recorded and available for review on the website for anyone after that date. Click [HERE](#) to register. The webinar ID is 105-040-515. The webinar will be recorded for later viewing.

37. To whom and how are the results of the Self Assessments going to be shared? The reason we are asking is because some schools might be hesitant to provide information that will be shared openly.
- a. The [Self-Assessment](#) is for the district to assess their current framework for prevention services. The [SAMPLE K-12 Prevention Education Partner Agreement](#) is a template for the boards and districts to assist with having that conversation about information sharing. A representative from each Board will have access to their school districts' [Self-Assessment Tool](#) information summary reports through the online portal. More on this in the upcoming webinar on Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>.
38. Will Boards be able to receive the schools' survey data results to assist boards and prevention providers to align this funding with local strategic plans?
- a. The board can only receive the school survey data (such as OHYES!) from the school district. Boards should certainly share with their school districts how survey data could be helpful to local planning efforts.
39. Will a board be able to assume administrative responsibility for data entry and/or other tasks if they become a barrier for a school's participation?
- a. The board cannot complete the Self-Assessment on behalf of the district but could assist with tasks. If reporting becomes an issue this can be decided in consultation with OhioMHAS staff on a case by case basis.
40. Is every school that participates required to complete the online self-assessment in December?
- a. Each school district is required to complete one [Self-Assessment](#) and the [Plan of Action](#) prior to receiving their funding. It is hoped that these will be completed prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>. Individual schools within the district may participate voluntarily in the Self-Assessment process at any time.
41. If boards are already working with schools and collaborating on EBPs, but the school doesn't want to fill out the survey or is unable to within the tight timeframe, does that mean the Board cannot expand their existing prevention programming within that school?
- a. The board and the district must both meet their roles and responsibilities identified to use this funding. Schools have up until June 30<sup>th</sup> to complete the Self-Assessment and Plan of Action.
42. Who will be required to do the final reporting? Boards or schools? This could cause administrative burdens if it is not clear.
- a. The districts should report in the online system. There are five questions for each district to complete. The [Sample K-12 Partner Agreement](#) could be used or modified to support the development of defined roles and responsibilities.
43. Will the ADAMHS Boards have prior access to the "On-line Self-Assessment" and the "Brief Implementation Report"?
- a. Yes, once the system goes live it can be viewed. We will also have a PDF version that can be accessed and printed through the system.
44. Is there a template or set of requirements for the Plan of Action?
- a. The template for the [Plan of Action](#) is included in the [Self-Assessment](#) online tool and webinar documents that will go live on Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>.
45. In the Partner Agreement Section III, what are the dates in the "date to date"?
- a. These dates were anticipated to describe an agreed upon time period for the beginning and end of the agreement.

46. What repercussions will there be if the districts fail to submit the reports or meet other obligations?

- a. There is one final report that districts are required to complete within the online tools that describes the results of what has been accomplished. If there are challenges with the report, please contact OhioMHAS staff to see how we can assist.