



Request for Proposal
School-Based Mental Health Services
in
Wilson County Schools

Services will begin in August 2024 for K-12 Students

RFP: SBMH2024

May 10, 2024

All questions must be submitted via email no later than 2:00 pm on May 20, 2024, to Cheryl Baggett, Executive Director of Student Services (cheryl.baggett@wilsonschoolsnc.net)

NOTE:

Wilson County Schools (WCS) reserves the right to modify this RFP to correct errors or clarify requirements.

Electronic applications are due on May 31, 2024, by 2:00 pm to Cheryl Baggett, Executive Director of Student Services (cheryl.baggett@wilsonschoolsnc.net)

Purpose:

Wilson County Schools (WCS) recognizes the importance of addressing students' mental health needs to provide the best opportunities for success. To support families and youth's access to care, WCS requests proposals for school-based mental health services.

WCS has identified the following needs and seeks the following services:

Child and Adolescent service providers/agencies endorsed by Local Management Entities (LME) /Managed Care Organizations (MCO) to serve as school-based mental health providers. This Request for Proposal (RFP) is seeking highly qualified providers/agencies to provide the following mental and behavioral health services to WCS students:

- Comprehensive Clinical Assessments
- Individual therapy
- Group therapy
- Family/systemic therapy
- Medication management
- On-site training and consultation with school staff
- Collaboration with school staff to support student needs

Successful providers/agencies must have the capacity to establish in-school access to clinical outpatient treatment services, provide mental health services at varying levels of intensity based on the student's individualized needs, and adjust as rapidly as the student's needs change.

Participating WCS schools will provide a counseling-friendly space (confidential, non-stigmatizing, etc.). The provider and school administrator will determine the hours of space based on the school's operating hours and the needs of students. School-based mental health services will be available for **all students**, regardless of their ability to pay. **The provider will be responsible for all financial obligations related to the provision of mental and behavioral health services.**

Successful agencies/providers will be expected to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WCS outlining the terms and conditions under which WCS will allow the provider/agency to access WCS property to provide services to WCS students.

Goals for School-Based Mental Health Services:

- To increase access to mental health services for WCS students in need of these services in an easily accessible location.
- To provide mental health programs that address early intervention and prevention services for WCS students in need.
- To provide consultation and crisis support to administrators, teachers, and other school staff regarding mental health and related issues for students receiving services.

Minimum Qualifications:

Only organizations that meet the following minimum qualifications will be considered for this RFP:

- The organization must be an in-network provider with Trillium and all major private insurance providers.
- **Good Standing.** All providers or applicants must be in good standing with all applicable oversight entities and continuously meet Good Standing criteria while a member of Trillium's Closed Network. This means that the provider or applicant:
 - o is in compliance with the standards and requirements of all applicable oversight entities;
 - o has submitted all required documents, payments, and fees to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, N.C. Department of Revenue, N.C. Secretary of State, N.C. Department of Labor, and N.C. Department of Health and Human Services and its Departments and Divisions;
 - o has not filed for or is not currently in bankruptcy, and
 - o has not had any sanctions imposed against it, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - **Any LME/MCO:** Contract Termination or Suspension, Referral Freeze, non-compliance with a Plan of Correction, Past Due Overpayment, Prepayment Review, Payment Suspension
 - **N.C. Department of Health and Human Services**
 - **NC Medicaid/NC Division of Health Benefits:** Contract Termination or

Suspension, Payment Suspension, Prepayment Review, Outstanding Final Overpayment.

- **DMH/DD/SAS:** Revocation, Unresolved Plan of Correction.
- **DHSR:** Unresolved Type A or B penalty under Article 3, Active Suspension of Admissions, Active Summary Suspension, Active Notice of Revocation, or Revocation in Effect.
- **U.S. Internal Revenue Service:** Unresolved tax or payroll liabilities.
- **N.C. Department of Revenue:** Unresolved tax or payroll liabilities.
- **N.C. Department of Labor:** Unresolved payroll liabilities.
- **N.C. Secretary of State:** Administrative Dissolution, Revocation of Authority, Notice of Grounds for other reasons, Revenue Suspension; providers organized as a corporate entity must have a “Current – Active” registration with the NC Secretary of State.
- **Boards of Licensure or Certification for the applicable Scope of Practice Provider’s Selected Accrediting Body**

Providers and applicants must disclose any pending or final sanctions under the Medicare or Medicaid programs, including paybacks, lawsuits, insurance claims or payouts, and disciplinary actions of the applicable licensure boards or adverse actions by regulatory agencies within the past five years or now pending. The provider’s or applicant’s owner(s) and managing employee(s) may not previously have been the owners or managing employees of a provider that had its participation in any State’s Medicaid program or the Medicare program involuntarily terminated for any reason or owes an outstanding overpayment to an LME/MCO or an outstanding final overpayment to DHHS.

For purposes of this procedure, WCS considers an action of DHHS, including its divisions and LME/MCOs, to be final upon notification to the provider unless such action is under appeal. For actions by DHHS or LME/MCO under appeal, WCS may, at its discretion, suspend its award or enrollment for up to 90 days to allow for a final resolution or final decision by the NCOAH. The provider or applicant is deemed not in Good Standing if no final decision is rendered in that period.

Timeline:

Event	Date/Time
Public Notice of RFP	May 10, 2024
RFP Questions Due	May 20, 2024, by 2:00 p.m.
PROPOSALS DUE	May 31, 2024, by 2:00 p.m.

Scope of Proposal:

Mental and behavioral services provided to WCS students in school should be based on the following principles and guidelines:

- Services will be provided by licensed professionals (LCMHC/LCSW) who are supervised and capable of consulting other licensed professionals as needed.
- Family engagement and active involvement are critical in the initiation and treatment process. Services will only be provided to students younger than 18 years old following the receipt of parental/guardian consent. Students 18 years of age or older can provide consent to receive services without the consent of the parent/guardian. Providers/agencies agree to follow the process and protocol determined by WCS regarding referral for services and to work with WCS to develop appropriate consent forms and information materials about services offered.
- Services should be proactive and positive, building on the strengths of the students and families.
- Service providers should be willing to build effective collaborative processes with school administrators, student services, support staff, teachers, and other school staff.
- Services must follow the mandate to be least intrusive, least restrictive, and responsive to the child's needs within the school setting.
- Service providers will create Person-Centered Plans based on multiple pieces of data collected and share goals with school-building administrators, school counselors, and other staff who work with the child.
- All agency/provider employees shall agree to follow all WCS rules, regulations, procedures (including background checks and screening processes), and board policies when providing services to WCS students on school property.

- Providers/agencies will be responsible for billing, paperwork, necessary signatures to begin services, and for the release of information.
- Providers/agencies will see all referred students who have no payment source and preferably have a contract with Trillium to access IPRS (Integrated Payment & Reporting System) funding. Providers should be able to accept Medicaid/NC HealthChoice insurance and also be part of private insurance panels. **No interested student or family member will be denied service for inability to pay.**
- Services should be provided during regular school hours and after school hours on the school's campus to accommodate parents' and families' schedules.
- Providers/agencies will be responsible for remaining accessible and continuing services to students during periods when school is not in session (winter, spring, and summer breaks).
- **Service providers must work in close partnership with the Wilson County School System, the District Mental Health Coordinator, and school staff at the assigned location(s).**

Special Conditions:

- WCS anticipates the need for more than one provider with the opportunity for this need to grow as school staff and families gain awareness of this service.
- Selected applicants must meet all Trillium contract and credentialing requirements and must be verified as an actively enrolled Medicaid provider in NCTracks.

Submission Instructions:

- Indicate the Applicant's name and RFP number on the front of your proposal.
- Include the RFP # and page # at the bottom of each page of your proposal.
- Proposals must be submitted according to the Eligible Applicant Proposal Format described below.
- Proposals must address the questions and items set out on the following pages. They must be typewritten and signed in ink by the official authorized to bind the applicant to the provisions contained within the proposal.
- Trade secrets or similar proprietary data that the organization does not wish to disclose to personnel other than those involved in the evaluation will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by state law and rule if identified as follows: Each page shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL." Any section of the

proposal that is to remain confidential shall also be marked in boldface on the title page of that section.

- **Submit a complete proposal electronically to Cheryl Baggett no later than the date and time specified here.**
- WCS must receive all proposals on or before **May 31, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. Late proposals will not be accepted.**
- All proposals submitted by the deadline become the property of Wilson County Schools. **PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DUE DATE/TIME AND WILL BE RETURNED TO THE PROVIDER IF LATE.**

WCS reserves the right to:

- WCS may reject any and all offers and proposals and discontinue this RFP process at its sole discretion without obligation or liability.
- Award more than one agreement/MOU.

Eligible Applicant's Proposal Format

Proposals shall conform substantially to the following format using tabs to designate sections:

Section A. Introduction (3 pages max)

1. Describe why your organization should be awarded an agreement for the services requested from a business, professional, clinical, administrative, financial, and technical perspective. Also, provide any distinguishing features WCS should know about your services and company and provide an overview of your proposal.
2. Generally, describe what you are proposing to do under the scope of services.
3. If your organization used an outside consultant to assist with the RFP, please provide the consultant's name.

Section B. Organizational Background and Expertise (10 pages max)

Providers shall demonstrate experience and competency in the requested service(s). The stability of past operations is essential. This section is intended to assess the organization's previous record of services, compliance with applicable laws, standards, and regulations, the qualifications and competency of its staff, the satisfaction of consumers and family members

served, systems of oversight, adequacy of staffing infrastructure, use of best practices, and quality management systems as they relate to this RFP.

For this RFP, describe your organization's background and expertise in the following:

1. How long has your organization provided mental health services to children and adolescents?
2. Provide a detailed implementation plan and timeline for the services requested.
3. Describe your organization's referral process for mental health services and behavior supports.
4. Describe how consumers and families will be involved in treatment and services.
5. Describe your service philosophy and models of service delivery for adolescents with substance use and/or mental health challenges in the school setting.
6. Describe the clinical infrastructure to address challenges in meeting specific client needs (such as challenging behaviors or medical problems). Provide information about your staff training in addition to required state training. Describe your clinical supervision plan and case escalation process.
7. Please include an organizational chart of your current staffing.
8. Describe how you will address each of the required elements listed in the Scope of Proposal, including, but not limited to, what evidence-based model(s) your organization utilizes for this service.
 - a. Describe your agency's commitment to recovery and resiliency. Explain how you intend to ensure that the ongoing program focuses on these concepts as they apply to children and adolescents.
 - b. Please clearly indicate how the proposed programs will accommodate students with varying intellectual abilities (e.g., moderate/mild intellectual disability to academically gifted) or special communication needs (e.g., deaf, hard of hearing, blind).
 - c. Indicate how the proposed programs will accommodate language minorities.
 - d. Describe the staff's ability and experience to successfully work with students who may be undiagnosed/diagnosed with severe trauma, substance abuse/use, struggling with tobacco cessation, poverty, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and/or have a history of oppositional defiant and/or aggressive behaviors.
 - e. Describe your agency's approach to assisting students and school staff with de-escalation strategies.
 - f. Include unique approaches and/or treatment methodology to ensure continued treatment of difficult to severe youth.

- g. Describe the agency's commitment to obtaining relevant required training for outpatient clinic treatment staff and ensuring that future staff development and training opportunities are available.
 - h. Describe your program capacity regarding the number of consumers that could be served. Describe referral connections/processes your agency has established for children needing a higher care level.
 - i. Describe how your agency expects to conduct the intake and assessment process. Describe what assessment instruments will be utilized during this process and how long it will take to complete an assessment.
 - j. How will your agency ensure that the school staff, family, and other relevant agencies are included in the development of the treatment plan and ongoing treatment planning process?
 - k. What is the agency's discharge planning process? How will the agency ensure that discharge recommendations are understood? What assistance will be given to families to access necessary services upon discharge?
 - l. Explain how the agency will ensure ongoing internal monitoring and quality assurance within the outpatient clinic programs and services.
 - m. List the insurance companies you can bill and describe how you plan to handle clients who do not have insurance.
9. How do you work with school system staff to involve them in Child and Family Teams?
 10. Describe how you engage the families in meaningful participation in mental health supports and therapies.
 11. Describe your overall collaboration with the school system. How have you demonstrated a meaningful partnership with school systems? What were the key elements that proved successful or presented challenges?
 12. Do you currently have any MOU/MOA with a school system? If so, please attach it.
 13. Accurately describe how you will approach serving students in K-12.
 14. Provide information about your strategies for recruitment, retention, and support of qualified staffing.
 15. Please attach your policies and procedures for services that address crisis response and first responder coverage. The successful applicant is expected to have a quality improvement plan that includes expected outcomes, performance indicators (or related goals), and how individual and program progress will be measured following the applicable service definition.
 16. For this RFP, describe how your organization will utilize the data generated by performance indicators, outcomes, survey results, and stakeholder feedback to improve the quality of care. Please provide outcome data for the past two years for services.
 17. Describe how you evaluate consumer outcomes and determine whether your consumers benefit from your services. How will you provide regular updates, including types of

services rendered, frequency, duration, and all other pertinent details to determine the impact and effectiveness of services? How will your agency accommodate monthly meetings (virtual and/or face-to-face) with the district mental health coordinator?

18. Describe how you monitor your services and program for fidelity with the model you use. Include an example of fidelity monitoring.

Proposal Evaluation:

The award of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from this RFP will be based upon the proposals(s) best aligned with the service objectives and other factors specified herein. Providers shall demonstrate experience and competency in the requested service(s). The stability of past operations is essential.

RFP Proposals will be evaluated using a standardized evaluation sheet for the elements from the RFP outline. Proposals will be pre-screened with the support of Trillium to ensure the organization (i) meets the minimum qualifications, (ii) has completed all material sections of the RFP, and (iii) is responsive to the questions. Any proposals rejected for failing to meet the pre-screen criteria shall be notified in writing, along with why the application was dismissed.

Once a proposal passes the pre-screen process, it will be reviewed by a Selection Committee designated by WCS, which may include WCS staff, Trillium staff, and other stakeholders deemed needed. Reviewers will utilize an evaluation tool aligned with the components of this RFP, and scores will be calculated from all the reviewers. An interview and/or reference process may be utilized to gain additional information about providers. The evaluation will include the extent to which the proposal meets the stated requirements in this RFP, as well as the applicants' stability, experience, and record of past performance in delivering such services.

Partnership/MOU Award:

The successful applicant(s) chosen by WCS will be required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WCS. **The term of any agreement(s) awarded hereunder will be through June 30, 2027.**

When applicable, if the successful applicant is not a credentialed provider in Trillium's closed network or eligible to accept private insurance, the award of this MOU shall be subject to successful credentialing by Trillium or private insurance panels. The applicant will be required to complete an application to join the network, agreeing: (a) to comply with all network requirements for reporting, inspections, monitoring, and consumer choice requirements and (b) to participate in the corporate compliance process and the network's continuous quality improvement process.

Providers shall have a "no-reject policy" for referrals within the capacity and the parameters of their competencies. Providers shall agree to accept all referrals meeting the criteria for services they provide when there is available capacity; if the provider is not capable of providing the needed support, a referral to adequate services should be provided. This should only occur when the provider does not offer a service. No student should be denied service due to a lack of funds.

Neither WCS nor its employees will be responsible for paying the cost of school-based mental health services.

Cancellation of agreement: WCS reserves the right to cancel and terminate any resulting agreements or MOUs, in part or whole, without penalty, upon thirty (30) days of written notice to the Provider. Any agreement cancellation shall not relieve the Provider of the obligation to deliver and/or perform duties outstanding before the effective date of cancellation or to transition consumers' and consumers' records.

Other General Information:

The following outlines additional information related to the submission of proposals:

- WCS reserves the right to reject any proposal for any reason, including, but not limited to, false information in the proposal discovered by WCS.
- Any cost incurred by an organization in preparing or submitting a proposal is the bidder's sole responsibility. WCS will not reimburse any bidder for any pre-award costs incurred.
- All materials submitted to WCS will become WCS's property and will not be returned.

- All proposals are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein, which will control all responses. Attaching other terms and conditions by any organization may be grounds for rejecting that organization's proposal.
- In submitting the proposal, organizations agree not to use the results as part of any news release or commercial advertising without the prior written approval of WCS.
- When received, all responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or about the RFP and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the organization will become the property of WCS.
- The signer of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP certifies this proposal has not arrived at collusively or otherwise in violation of either Federal or North Carolina antitrust laws.



Authorization to Submit Proposal

My organization can meet the requirements to apply for the services solicited in RFP SBMH2024. I am submitting the attached proposal, which is an accurate and complete representation of the requested materials.

Authorized Signature

Printed Name

Title

Date