

Self-Evaluation: Key Mental Health and Well-being Benchmarks

Key Mental Health and Well-being Benchmarks for a Positive School Climate and Culture

This tool may be useful in addressing key benchmarks of a school climate that support mental health and well-being. This is not a school climate survey but is intended to be used as a guide toward assessing your school's current status as it relates to mental health and well-being as a starting point to determine next steps.

Criteria – Use this key to score your current school's status with regard to the benchmarks below.

1	School has not yet focused on this element
2	Initial actions have been taken
3	Several steps have been taken
4	Nearly integrated into practice
5	Comprehensively and sustainably integrated into practice

Universal Benchmarks

Considerations - Administrators will want to consider characteristics of the environment that promote the mental health and resilience of all members of the school community. The benchmarks are based on the principles of social emotional learning, fair and restorative disciplinary and behavioral management practices, school connectedness, and the recognition of trusted relationships.

See key for rating school progress

BENCHMARKS – Universal	1	2	3	4	5	Comments and next steps
A. Strategies exist to create a welcoming environment for new students.						
B. Data is used to evaluate equitable and fair treatment of students by teachers and staff. Students feel safe from verbal abuse, teasing, and exclusion related to mental health concerns.						
C. Educators support the development of social and emotional knowledge and skills including effective listening, social problem-solving, reflection, and emotional regulation, empathy, personal responsibility, and decision making.						
D. Students know where, when, and how to access emotional supports for themselves or a peer.						
E. All students have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the well-being of their school community.						
F. Parents feel welcome and know how to access mental health and social supports for their children at school and in the community.						
G. Mutual respect for individual differences is a norm, and diversity is celebrated.						
H. Relationships exist with community mental health providers toward improving communication and access to care for students in need.						
I. Other						

Selective Benchmarks

Considerations - These benchmarks focus on meeting the needs of the school staff that are working with students and their families related to behavioral and mental health concerns. Administrators may consider measures that promote timely identification, engagement, communication and intervention toward improved outcomes. Advanced skills training is important for school-based health and mental health professionals. Faculty, staff, administrators and parents should all have education in recognition of signs of psychological distress, and have knowledge about how, when and where to access mental health support in school and in the community. Efforts should be made to ensure supports are readily accessible and available.

See key for rating school progress.

BENCHMARKS – Selective	1	2	3	4	5	Comments and next steps
J. Strategies exist to promote school connectedness among students with excessive absences, and/tardiness or exhibiting other signs that they are at risk for becoming disconnected from school.						
K. Students with learning differences or mental health challenges that require special academic settings or services are made to feel welcome and strategies exist to include them in the social and academic life of school.						
L. Students experiencing behavioral challenges are assessed for delays in social emotional skills development.						
M. School-based mental health professionals provide consulting and coaching to teachers working with students exhibiting behavioral or mental health concerns.						
N. Strategies exist for educating parents about mental health resources and the recognition of psychological distress in their children.						
O. Grief support and trauma-informed interventions are available to students and staff experiencing losses and/or difficult life situations.						

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BENCHMARKS – Selective	1	2	3	4	5	Comments and next steps
P. Strategies are in place for the recognition and prevention of compassion fatigue and burnout among teaching and support staff.						
Q. Other						

Indicated Benchmarks

Considerations - These benchmarks are related to intervention when an individual student is experiencing a mental health crisis. Administrators may consider standardized procedures for assessment, safety planning, family engagement, therapeutic intervention, and referrals. Advanced skills training is important for school-based health and mental health professionals. Faculty, staff, administrators, students and parents/guardians should all receive education to recognize signs of psychological distress and knowledge about how, when and where to access mental health support in school and in the community. Efforts should be made to ensure that supports are readily accessible and available.

See key for rating school progress.

BENCHMARKS – Indicated	1	2	3	4	5	Comments and next steps
R. Standardized written procedures for intervening with a student is experiencing a mental health crisis.						
S. Communications with community mental health providers and clear pathways to care have been optimized through agreements and dialog.						
T. There are standardized written procedures for intervening when a student is exhibiting warning signs of psychological distress.						
U. Therapeutic supports are routinely put into place when a student with an identified emotional health challenge or is experiencing acute emotional distress is undergoing serious disciplinary action.						
V. All health and mental health professionals are receiving professional development and/or current training on: therapeutic crisis intervention, behavioral management, suicide risk assessment, safety planning, and behavioral management.						
W. Reentry meetings are in place for when a student has left the building for community mental health assessment or for inpatient care.						

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BENCHMARKS – Indicated	1	2	3	4	5	Comments and next steps
X. Reentry meetings are in place when a student has left the building for community suicide risk assessment or for inpatient care.						
Y. All mental health staff have training in Safety Planning Intervention and the safety plan is documented.						
Z. Debrief and support are provided to staff members that engaged in intervention.						
AA. Other						