Schools as Centers of Wellness: A Countywide Approach to School Wellness Centers
Partners

Santa Clara County Office of Education

Mountain View Whisman School District

Mariano Castro

Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission
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Agenda

1. Mental Health Student Services Act (MHSSA) Overview
2. Overview of Santa Clara County Youth Health & Wellness Division
3. Santa Clara County School Wellness Center Model
4. Dolphin Wellness Center - Mariano Castro Elementary School
5. Question & Answer Session
School Mental Health and the Mental Health Students Services Act (MHSSA)
School Mental Health and MHSSA Timeline

2016
Commission begins exploration of student mental health needs

2017
Allocated $21 million of Mental Health Wellness Act funds to School-County Collaborations

2019
MHSSA signed into law. Commission provides $75 million in grants to 18 partnerships

2020
Commission releases report: Every Young Heart and Mind: Schools as Centers of Wellness

2021
Commission provides additional $195 million to 39 additional partnerships, evaluation, and technical assistance
School Mental Health and MHSSA

• The report *Every Young Heart and Mind: Schools as Centers of Wellness* the Commission highlighted three broad recommendations:

  • Develop a statewide strategy for making schools into centers of wellness.

  • Make multi-year investments that increase services while also building necessary infrastructures, like data management systems and strong workforces.

  • Provide technical assistance.
MHSSA by the Numbers

- $300 million investment
- 57 counties participating
- 17 counties building wellness centers
- Nine learning collaborative meetings
## Accomplishments and Challenges

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Key accomplishments</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td>Elevated schools as centers for wellness</td>
<td>Fiscal sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Established BH/LEA partnerships in 57 counties</td>
<td>Technical assistance to counties with varied levels of partnership and service capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invested more than $300 million to support school mental health initiatives</td>
<td>Evaluate diverse and complex school mental health investments</td>
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<td>Technical Assistance Plan includes grantees as TA providers</td>
<td>Workforce</td>
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<td>Phase 1 evaluation partner identified</td>
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“One of our rural districts had several student deaths over the summer and needed to augment their crisis and counseling services available during the first two weeks of school. The [MHSSA] partnership supported this district by allocating some staff from a service provider in a different catchment area to go to the affected school to provide on-site support to students and staff during the first two weeks of school.”

– Yolo August 2022 Monthly Check-In
MHSSA grants **build and strengthen partnerships** across behavioral health, education, and the community.

- **57** county behavioral health departments out of 58 counties
- **50** county offices of education/county superintendents of schools out of 58 counties
- **440** districts out of 1,021 districts statewide
- **2,161** K-12 schools out of 10,558 schools statewide
- **221** charter schools out of 2,164 schools statewide
- **39** community-based organizations and other partners
Creating Tailored Solutions

“The Wellness Center gives me a place to feel like I belong.”
– Ventura Student
Local MHSSA partnerships use their grant dollars for solutions tailored to the needs of their students through enhancing systems and services including:

- Infrastructure and capacity building
- Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) for mental health and wellness
- Outreach and training for students, parents, teachers, and staff
- Prevention and early intervention
- Social and emotional learning
- Suicide prevention, intervention, and postventions
- Crisis support services
- Assessment and screening
- Teletherapy
- Referrals, navigation, and linkage
- School-based behavioral health and wellness services
- The establishment or expansion of wellness centers
Hiring and Training Staff

“We are so grateful for your training that has helped us build capacity at our school sites to enable our teams to respond to crisis.”

– Orange County District Lead
MHSSA grant can be used to hire and train staff to provide services.

- **483** staff currently funded under MHSSA
- **353** staff providing direct mental health services and supports
- **130** staff providing administration, partnership development, and coordination

One figure represents five funded staff members.
Expanding Student Access

“The team has been supporting a student and mom with services … The Family has received a Section 8 voucher for housing and the student has been meeting with a clinician regularly and the family has currently been linked to Youth For Change for long-term services.”

– Sutter and Yuba County Grantee
MHSSA has significantly expanded the number of California students able to access mental health and wellness services.

- **2,161**
  - MHSSA partnership schools out of 10,558 schools statewide

- **1.2+ million**
  - Students enrolled in MHSSA partnership schools out of 5.8 million students statewide
Meeting Student and Parent Need

“I joined the Fear is Love Class which has changed my parenting skills drastically ... Please keep this program going ... I AM FOREVER GRATEFUL.”

– Humboldt County Parent
MHSSA partnerships reach **students who need support.**

- **60%**
  - Percentage of students eligible for **Free or Reduced Price Lunch** (FRPL) potentially reached by MHSSA

- **10,000+**
  - Number of **foster students** enrolled in schools engaged in MHSSA partnerships

FRPL eligibility ranged from 10% to 100% across all districts reached. Full county list available, as well as percentages for free lunch only, and free/FRPM for ages 5-17 only.
Next Steps

• Development of metrics and evaluation of outcomes

• Technical Assistance Plan (April 2023) to address:
  • Partnership development
  • Data collection
  • Implementation of mental health services
  • Workforce wellness and development
  • Fiscal sustainability

• Site visits

• Elevate the voice of youth in the school mental health space
Overview of Santa Clara County
Dashboard & Demographic Data

- **Child Population in County**: 441,591
- **Public School Enrollment**: 263,449
- **Kids Enrolled in Medi-Cal**: 22%
- **Medi-Cal Total Eligibles**: 402,540
- **Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Price School Meals**: 34.70%
- **High-Needs Students (Unduplicated Pupil Count)**: 44%
- **1-3 ACEs**: 42%
- **Children/Youth Ages 0-20 in Foster Care (Per 1000)**: 2.1 Santa Clara Vs. 5.3
- **Hospitalizations for Mental Health Issues Ages 5-19 (Per 1000)**: 4.4 Santa Clara Vs. 5.3
- **All Households with 1-3 ACEs**: 42% Santa Clara Vs. 45.1%
Student Wellness Advisory Group (SWAG)

Purpose: Students serve as advocates for policy and resources that combat stigmas around behavioral health while increasing mental health supports in school.

- Diverse group of Middle, High School & Undergraduate Students throughout Santa Clara County
- Meets Bi-Weekly (General & Committee Meetings)
  - General meeting facilitated by student Chairs
  - Committee Meetings facilitated by student committee leads
- Student led and facilitated:
  - 3 Adult Allies
    - Executive Director Youth Health & Wellness
    - Executive Director Government Relations (Policy Committee)
    - Director Media & Communications (M.A.C. Committee)
“Through the SWAG, I have the power to talk to the state and county, and have a voice ... We’re now more involved in school because of SWAG.”
– Stephanie, Schools Services Committee Co-Lead (2022)
Community schools with integrated school-based health and wellness program that meets children and youth right where they are.
Purpose

The Department of Youth Health & Wellness is dedicated to supporting the holistic health and well-being of all students. We provide technical assistance, education, and direct health and wellness services that:

- meet students, families, and educators where they are;
- promote partnership and collaboration between families, schools, and the community;
- increase awareness of factors that contribute to health outcomes; and
- affirm student, family, and community strengths to nurture growth so that students are able to thrive.
Youth Health & Wellness Teams

Youth Health & Wellness Administration
- Strategic Planning & Departmental Alignment
- Cross Systems Partnerships & Collaboration
- Funding

Community Schools & Engagement
- Community Schools Technical Assistance
- Family Engagement Technical Assistance
- Chronic Absenteeism Technical Assistance

Wellness Programs
- Wellness Center Direct Services
- Wellness Programs Technical Assistance

Physical Health & Wellness
- Child Health & Wellness
- Coordination & Liaisoning
- Pediatric Center Direct Support
- Substance Prevention

Health Systems & Billing
- Medicaid & Commercial Billing
- Infrastructure Technical Assistance
- Claims Submission & Reimbursement Support & Services
Countywide Studies

Assessments
- Feasibility Study (2020)
- Strength & Needs Assessment (2022)
- Wellness Center Study (2023)

Data Analysis
- Mixed Methods study (quantitative and qualitative data)
- 6 Focus Districts one in each of Santa Clara Counties
- Countywide opportunities for participation outside of those 6 districts

Educator Survey
- Received 1085 Responses
- Representing 29 school districts
- Management, Certificated and Classified Staff

Focus Groups/Focus Group Polls
- 297 Participants
- Focus groups with students, parents/caregivers, educators, community providers

Interviews
- 23 Interviews
- Focus groups with students, parents/caregivers, educators, community providers, BHSD

Data
- District Data including Attendance, Suspensions, Referrals, etc.
- BHSD Data referrals, crisis, services providers
- Managed Care Plan Data services provided, referrals
Workforce Pipeline
- Masters Social Work
- Pupil Personnel Services Credentials
- Board of Behavioral Sciences Licensing Program

Service Delivery Model (Wellness Centers)
- All Students (regardless of insurance)
- Aligned with MTSS (Interconnected Systems Framework)
- Identify Key Elements of the Service Delivery Model
- Common Metrics
- Iterative Continuous Improvement Processes

Key Elements of an Integrated School Health System that Centers Youth Voice

Sustainability
- Blending & Braiding of Cross Agency Funds
- Maximize Commercial & Medicaid Reimbursements
- Use one time dollars for infrastructure first

Technical Assistance (TA) Infrastructure
- Build TA Infrastructure in County Office of Education
- TA Support aligned with Community Schools strategies and MTSS (Educators, Providers, & CBOs)
Blending & Braiding of Funds

- Mental Health Services Student Act
  Wellness Centers
  Technical Assistance

- Community Schools
  Comprehensive Community Schools Strategy
  Technical Assistance
  Wellness Centers

- School Behavioral Health Incentive Program
  Wellness Centers
  Workforce
  Billing Infrastructure

- Philanthropic Funding
  Wellness Centers

- Cross County Agency Funding
  Billing Infrastructure

- District Co-investment
  Wellness Centers

- Federal Funds
  Workforce
  Wellness Centers

- Donations
  Student Wellness Advisory Group

- Technical Assistance

- Blending & Braiding of Funds
Lessons Learned

Challenges

01. Workforce & Staffing
02. Structure of grants & one-time funding
03. Evolving and unknown information related to sustainability

Accomplishments

01. Dedicated Division
02. Cross systems partnerships and approach
03. Wellness Centers
Wellness Centers

- Andrew Hill High School
  East Side Union High School District
- Aptitud Community Academy at Goss
  Alum Rock Union School District
- Anderson Elementary School
  Moreland School District
- Blue Ridge High School
  Santa Clara County Office of Education
- Cupertino High School
  Fremont Union High School District
- Eliot Elementary School
  Gilroy Unified School District
- Hyde Middle School
  Cupertino Union School District
- Lakewood Elementary School
  Sunnyvale School District
- LaiRon College Preparatory Academy
  Franklin McKinley School District
- LeyVa Middle School
  Evergreen School District
- Luther Burbank School
  Luther Burbank School District
- Mariano Castro Elementary School
  Mountain View Whisman School District
- Milpitas High School
  Milpitas Unified School District
- Monroe Middle School
  Campbell Union School District
- Oak Grove High School
  East Side Union High School District
- Ohlone Middle School
  San Jose Unified School District
- Santee Elementary School
  Franklin McKinley School District
- Sunnyvale Middle School
  Sunnyvale School District
SCCOE Wellness Center Model
Six Key Elements

**Holistic Support**
Increases access to supports that address physical, mental, emotional, and social support at school.

**Family Support Services**
Increases provision of outreach, psychoeducation workshops, and navigation services to students and their families.

**Staff Support**
Provides professional development and wellness support to school staff.

**Stress Reduction**
Decreases stress by providing a comfortable setting on campus that offers strategies to increase student resilience, regulation skills, and overall well-being.

**Reduction in Wait Time**
No Wrong Door: drop-in before/after school, during break and lunch. Unified care coordination in a centralized program and location.

**Reduction in Need for Intensive Care**
Provides screening to assess strengths and needs, and to identify type and level of care.
Partnership

- County Office (SCCOE)
- School District
- Campus Community
- Community Based Organizations
Wellness Center Team

- Supervised and supported by Wellness Program leadership.
- Work in partnership with school staff, county, and community-based agencies to provide just-in-time support and to increase coordination of integrated care.
# Site-based Wellness Center Staff

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Liaison</strong></th>
<th><strong>Specialist</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Wellness calming space guide</td>
<td>- Credentialed social worker, counselor, psychologist or licensed clinician</td>
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<td>- Day-to-day operations</td>
<td>- Psychoeducation</td>
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<td>- Check students in &amp; out</td>
<td>- Student screenings &amp; assessments</td>
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<td>- Support with selection of a wellness tool/activity</td>
<td>- Individual &amp; group counseling</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Triage screening</td>
<td>- Coordination of integrated care</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Navigation support &amp; services</td>
<td>- Crisis response</td>
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<td>- Community outreach</td>
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Implementation Approach

- Safe & Welcoming Environment - all students belong
- Drop In & Timely Services
- Screening & Assessment (when needed)
- Prevention & Early Intervention
- Coordination of Care
- Students are Holistically Well & Attend School Regularly
Wellness Center Data

Wellness Center Visitors

Number of Wellness Center student visits

Since Fall 2022, our Wellness Center drop-in spaces have supported over 10,750 student visits!

Number of visitors who would like to return to the Wellness Center

- Yes: 97.8%
- No: 1.0%
- Maybe: 1.2%
Key Elements of School-Based Wellness Centers
Strengths & Lessons Learned

We are stronger together!
• *Partnerships are essential & wellness does not happen in isolation.*

Recipe for success: consistent framework + tailoring

Workforce & staffing…
• *What are the possibilities in the meantime?*

What is best for our students? For our community?
• *Ask, listen, learn & do!*

Transforming systems takes *work.*
• *Pause, reflect & celebrate. Take care of yourselves & one another. Remain rooted in your why!*
Mariano Castro Elementary School

Mariano Castro Elementary is a K-5 school with 251 students.

- 77% English Learner students, with 11 languages represented
- 86% socio-economically disadvantaged students
- 80% Hispanic/Latino students
- 61 (24%) students unhoused or in non-permanent housing
- 13.7% students with IEPs
- 40 newcomer students from 11 countries
Mariano Castro Elementary School

Mariano Castro Elementary is a K-5 school with 251 students.

- 12.0 FTE grade-level classroom teachers
- 1.0 FTE STEAM teacher
- 2.0 FTE At Risk Intervention Supervisors
- 1.5 FTE Engagement Facilitators (SCCBH Partnership)
- 6.0 Instructional Assistants
- 6.5 FTE Classified (Site Operations)
- 1.0 FTE School-Based Counselor (CHAC partnership)
- 1.0 FTE Wellness Center Liaison (SCCOE partnership)
- 1.0 FTE Wellness Center Specialist (SCCOE partnership)
Castro Wellness Center
What does it look like at Castro?

Our student support team consists of:

• Principal
• MVWSD Health and Wellness Coordinator
• Wellness Liaison
• Wellness Specialist
• School/Community Engagement Facilitator
• At-Risk Intervention Supervisor
• School Psychologist
• Community Based Organizations
What does it look like at Castro?

Coordination of Services/Support Team (COST)
The COST process is utilized to examine student needs, progress monitor services & supports, and insure that students receive the supports they need.

Community Based Organization Partnerships
MVWSD partners with SCCOE, Community Health Awareness Council (CHAC), & Santa Clara Behavioral Health to provide the needed mental health supports to our children and families.
## What is available to our Castro students?

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<tr>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Designed for all students, with ongoing differentiation.</td>
<td>Small Group Problem Solving: Targeted interventions for students not meeting expectations, in addition to core instruction.</td>
<td>Individualized Problem Solving: Intensive and strategic interventions, in addition to core instruction. Focus on specific foundational skills.</td>
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<td>● Sown to Grow</td>
<td>● <strong>Wellness Center skill building groups</strong></td>
<td>● <strong>Individual counseling</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>● Parent-Teacher communication</td>
<td>● <strong>Group counseling</strong></td>
<td>● Safety planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Movement breaks</td>
<td>● <strong>Targeted mental health screening</strong></td>
<td>● Individual behavior plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Differentiated instruction</td>
<td>● <strong>Wellness Center check-ins</strong></td>
<td><strong>Specialist consultation support (observation)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>● Core SEL instruction</td>
<td>● Office/ARIS student check-ins</td>
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<td>● Peer buddy</td>
<td>● Structured school-family communication</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wellness Center lunchtime activities</strong></td>
<td>● <strong>CBO targeted groups</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>● CHAC Arts lessons</td>
<td>● PEI/SLS Counseling</td>
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<td>● Parent workshops</td>
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<td>● Calm Corners</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wellness Center drop-ins</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>● Food Services</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CBO Activities</strong></td>
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22-23 Wellness Center Data

**Drop-In:**
1087 total contacts
Average of 136 contacts per month

**Group Counseling:**
FUERTE Curriculum for Newcomers, Girls Group, Anxiety Group, & Art Therapy
42 students

**Individual Counseling:**
Average 6 per month
Family support/collateral
Strengths & Lessons Learned

Teaming:
- Preparation for implementation is equally important as implementation activities.
- Expect “2 steps forward, 1 step back”: Prepare for school staff turnover and re-teaching about the resources.
- Managing expectations is part of the implementation process.
- Mindful integration of education & clinical perspectives.

Strengths/Advantages to having a Wellness Center on campus:
- A licensed clinician on campus every day.
- Normalizes the process of social/emotional/behavioral regulation.
- Our partnership has provided the District support greater than the Wellness Center.
Impact of Partnership

**Students**
Youth voice used to uplift, co-create and expand existing services.

**Staff**
Increase staff awareness and capacity to support student wellness. Opportunities for staff to learn about wellness practices that will support themselves.

**Families**
Opportunities for families to learn more about wellness, receive linkages to services.

**Community**
Increase partnerships with county and community agencies to support students.
Q&A Panel (15 minutes)
THANK YOU