

# **Notice of Funding Availability and Request for Proposals**

## **School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program**

**RELEASE DATE:  
September 13, 2023, 12:00 PM**

**THIS IS AN ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION**

**APPLICATION DUE:  
October 20, 2023, 5:00 PM**

**For Questions Contact:  
[schoolwellness@vhfca.org](mailto:schoolwellness@vhfca.org)**



**The School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program is funded by the County of Santa Clara through the Federal Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the State of California Mental Health Services Act, and the State of California Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act-Youthful Offender Block Grant.**

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# **School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program**

## **Section 1 - Introductory Information**

### **Background**

In April 2022, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors received a report related to a COVID-19 pandemic recovery roadmap for children. The report recommended an assessment for the expansion of school-based behavioral health services, including the development of an operational plan for creating additional on-campus wellness centers. A wellness center study was conducted to inform a proposed operational plan.

On May 2, 2023, the County of Santa Clara Behavioral Health Services Department (BHSD) presented a report on the wellness center study's recommended operational plan that included the implementation of a grant program for the expansion of school-based behavioral health wellness centers across Santa Clara County public school districts.

On August 29, 2023, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved the Behavioral Health Services Department \$10.1 million allocation to support school-based wellness centers through the School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program (Grant Program) to be administered by Valley Health Foundation (VHF). An additional allocation of \$2,000,000 for the Grant Program will be presented at the October 3, 2023, County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors meeting, bringing the total program funds to \$12,100,000.

The Grant Program is part of the County's strategic vision to address inequity and improve public health, provide safety net services for the community, and support the County's continued COVID-19 response. The Grant Program will help establish sustainable efforts to address the mental health and well-being of students in K-12 school districts.

The Grant Program is funded by one-time funding from the Federal Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI)

funds, and Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act funds under the Youthful Offender Block Grant (JJCPA-YOBG).

The ARPA, MHSA, and JJCPA funds shall be used to support middle and high schools that were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, to further enhance existing wellness centers and/or open new wellness centers that provide needed support to improve the student's educational experience. These services shall include middle school grade levels that are located at elementary school site locations (inclusive).

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Grant Program is to help schools/school districts develop, enhance, and/or expand school-based behavioral health wellness centers. Guided by the School-Based Behavioral Health Wellness Centers Expansion Operational Plan, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), public schools, and school districts within Santa Clara County may be eligible to apply for funds to open a new wellness center, enhance an existing wellness center, and/or strengthen and build operational infrastructure. Eligible schools include K-6, K-7, K-8, middle schools, and high schools.

With a focus on racial equity, these grant funds will be used to address a broad continuum of prevention, early intervention, and service needs and the necessary infrastructure, technology, and training that effectively supports the public behavior health system.

## **Funding Sources**

### ARPA Purpose

In March 2021, under ARPA, the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) was established to provide resources to state, local, and Tribal governments to respond to the economic and public health impacts of COVID-19. The SLFRF ensures that governments have the resources necessary to help their communities, including residents, businesses, and nonprofits, to:

- Fight the pandemic and support families and businesses struggling with its public health and economic impacts,

- Maintain vital public services, even amid declines in revenue resulting from the crisis, and
- Build a strong, resilient, and equitable recovery by making investments that support long-term growth and opportunity.

School Districts that are awarded contracts under this funding opportunity will be required to follow the federal SLFRF eligibility and program requirements as articulated in the Final Rule released by the United States Department of Treasury, effective April 1, 2022. Applicants are strongly encouraged to be familiar with SLFRF program requirements.

#### MHSA Purpose

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) was approved by California voters in 2004 to expand and transform the public mental health system. MHSA intends to serve individuals who are historically unserved or underserved by the public mental health care system. By focusing resources on serving underserved and unserved individuals, MHSA endeavors to reduce historical disparities in access and quality of care that some populations have experienced. Additionally, individuals experiencing poverty or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation may be more likely to face mental health issues or difficulty navigating the system of care.

School Districts and Schools awarded shall implement their program in accordance with the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 9, Division 1, Chapter 14, Article 6. Applicants are strongly encouraged to be familiar with the above referenced CCR.

#### JJCPA-YOBG Purpose

As described by the California Board of State and Community Corrections ([Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act and the Youthful Offender Block Grant Program – BSCC \(ca.gov\)](https://www.bscscc.ca.gov/)), the JJCPA program provides state funding for counties to implement programs that have proven effective in reducing crime and delinquency among at-risk youth and youthful offenders.

School Districts and Schools awarded JJCPA funds shall implement their program in accordance with the JJCPA requirements found at Government Code (GC) Section

30061(b)(4)(C). YOBG requirements can be found at Welfare & Institutions Code Section (WIC) 1961(c).

### **Equity Considerations**

Priority will be given to schools that serve communities in greatest need and reflect the geographic and cultural diversity of Santa Clara County. School communities in greatest need are defined as those located in: 1) Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs); 2) Moderate or High-Risk Zip Codes; and/or 3) are a Title 1 school for the 2023-2024 school year.

- QCTs are defined as low-income, underserved communities, where pre-existing disparities were amplified by the pandemic and faced more severe health and economic outcomes due to COVID-19. School districts and schools that were disproportionately impacted are identified as those operating or serving communities in Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs).
- Moderate or High-Risk Zip Codes - per SCC MHSA Prevention and Early Intervention Risk Level table by zip code, a Moderate-Risk Zip Code holds a risk rating of 3.00 to 3.99, and a High-Risk Zip Code holds a risk rating of 4.00 and above.
- Title 1 school - as designated for the 2023-2024 school year. A Title 1 designation is provided to schools consisting of an underserved and underprivileged student population. The U.S. Department of Education provides funding to Title 1-designated schools to guarantee these students obtain a just, yet high-quality education by bridging gaps in educational achievement.

The Grant Program is expected to support schools and school districts in ensuring easily accessible, timely services for students with behavioral and emotional needs.

## Section 2 - Calendar and Funding Categories

### NOFA Calendar

Wednesday, September 13, 12:00 pm	Release NOFA and School-Based Wellness Center Grant Application	<a href="#">School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program: How We Help : Valley Health Foundation</a>
Wednesday, September 20 9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Virtual NOFA Information and Submittable Access Training	Zoom Webinar
Friday, September 29, 5:00 pm	FAQ1 Questions Due Response posted October 6 by 5:00 pm	FAQs posted at <a href="#">School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program: How We Help : Valley Health Foundation</a>
Monday, October 9, 5:00 pm	FAQ2 Questions Due Response posted October 13 by 5:00 pm	FAQs posted at <a href="#">School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program: How We Help : Valley Health Foundation</a>
Friday, October 20, 5:00 pm	Applications Due	Submittable
October 23 - November 28	Review and Rank Applications	VHF Staff
Anticipated December 1	Panel Presentation	VHF Staff
Anticipated December 8	Notice of Intent to Award (NOI)	Submittable
Anticipated December 15	NOI Additional Documentation Due	Submittable
December - January	Contract Negotiations, Preparation, and Execution	Submittable, DocuSign
Beginning January 2024	Award Disbursements	VHF
Ongoing Work with School Districts	Contract Negotiations, Preparation, and Execution	Submittable, DocuSign

## School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program Budget

On May 2, 2023, the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors approved a \$100,000 Service Agreement with VHF for the development, design administration, and contract monitoring of the School-Based Wellness Grant Program. A First Amendment was approved on August 29, 2023, increasing the maximum contract amount by \$10,000,000 for a total of \$10,100,000. Approval of a Second Amendment for \$2,000,000 will be heard at the October 3, 2023, County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors meeting, bringing the total program funds to \$12,100,000.

The Grant Program will fund three (3) unique categories:

- New Wellness Centers: 75% of grant funds will be allocated to the establishment of new wellness centers.
- Enhancements to Existing Wellness Centers: 10% of grant funds will be allocated to fund supplemental services for existing wellness centers.
- Operational Infrastructure: 15% of grant funds will be allocated for minor repair/renovation and equipment to support a wellness center.

The table below details the fund distribution, including administration.

**Program Budget**

<b>Program Funds</b>	<b>\$12,100,000</b>
Less Administration	-\$1,099,534
<b>Total Grant Funds</b>	<b>\$11,000,466</b>
75% New Wellness Centers	\$8,250,349
10% Enhancements to Existing Wellness Centers	\$1,100,047
15% Operational Infrastructure	\$1,650,070



## **Funding Categories and Eligible Uses**

### **1. New School-Based Behavioral Health Wellness Centers**

\$180,000 annually for two years for a maximum of \$360,000.

Eligible uses of funds under this funding category are costs necessary to open and establish a new school-based behavioral health wellness center. Examples of allowable uses include, but not limited to:

- Wellness center core staffing that includes a center coordinator/liaison
- Credentialed behavioral health professionals (e.g., therapist, counselor, or licensed clinical social worker)
- Contract services to fulfill a multi-tiered system of youth support
- Supplies, books, and activities to support the students' wellness and well-being

### **2. Enhancements to Existing Wellness Centers**

\$75,000 annually for two years for a maximum of \$150,000.

Eligible uses of funds under this funding category are costs that enhance existing services. Examples of allowable uses include, but not limited to:

- Supplemental services such as contracted services from external organizations that fulfill a multi-tiered system of youth support
- Additional wellness center staff
- Supplies, books, and activities to support the students' wellness and well-being

### **3. Operational Infrastructure**

One-time allocation of \$75,000 for minor construction and equipment to support a new or existing wellness center. Eligible uses of funds under this funding category are costs that support facility improvements. Examples of allowable uses include, but not limited to:

- Technology

- Equipment
- Furnishings
- Minor facility repair and renovation
- Removal of barriers to access

### Construction Projects

If your proposal includes minor facility repair and/or renovation, provide the School District Facilities Manager contact information and a detailed construction plan that demonstrates compliance with applicable jurisdiction's building codes and permits.

### **Ineligible Uses**

Ineligible uses include activities that do not contribute to the opening of new wellness centers, enhance existing centers and services, or operational infrastructure improvements. Ineligible uses include:

- ☐ Issuance of debt or payment of debt service
- ☐ Replenishing financial reserves
- ☐ Satisfaction of Settlements or Judgements
- ☐ Projects that undermine the purpose of ARPA and the COVID-19 mitigation practices

### **Contract Terms**

Maximum contract term is two years for each funding category beginning as of the executed date of the grant agreement. For example, a grant agreement executed February 1, 2024, will expire on January 31, 2026.

All awarded funds must be expended by October 31, 2026. Any unused funds at the deadline must be returned to VHF.

## Section 3 - General Guidelines

1. Grants are subject to availability of funds, eligibility of applicants, eligibility of use, and other relevant factors. Not all eligible applications may be awarded a grant.
2. Two applications must be completed: 1) School District Application, and 2) Individual School Application for each school seeking funding. The Individual School Application must be submitted by the respective School District.  
**School-only applications will not be accepted.**
3. Applicants must demonstrate and attest to the negative economic impacts or disproportionate impacts of the pandemic sustained by the schools/school districts and the student community they serve due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. VHF program staff will review and score the applications, and then present the applicant rankings and recommendations to a panel of subject matter experts including youth representation. Staff will recommend projects that demonstrate qualifying impacts. Grant awards shall be issued on a competitive basis, evaluated with clearly established criteria and not on a first-come, first-served basis.
5. By submitting an application, the school district and school agree to maintain records for a specified period, provide records to VHF, and fully cooperate with any audit by VHF, the County of Santa Clara, U.S. Department of the Treasury, or any other relevant governmental entity or their designees.
6. By accepting grant funds, the school district agrees to return all grant funds to VHF if it is determined at any time that the use of grant funds is not an allowable expense.
7. Priority will be given to schools that demonstrate the greatest need, have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, reflect the geographic and cultural diversity of Santa Clara County, and operate in and/or serve populations and communities located in Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs).

8. Schools must demonstrate how this funding will strengthen the provision of student wellness support services in a racially equitable, diverse, and inclusive way.

9. Incomplete or inadequately documented applications will not be accepted.

**10. Funding shall not be used to supplant other committed revenue sources.**

## **Section 4 - Eligibility Requirements**

### **Minimum Threshold Requirements**

- Applicant must be a Local Education Agency (LEA), public school, and/or school district in Santa Clara County.
- The application must be complete and with applicable attachments in the appropriate section of the application.
- Applicant School District and Schools must operate and serve students within Santa Clara County.
- Only one School District Application will be accepted per School District.
- Individual School Applications must be submitted by their respective School District. A SCHOOL APPLICATION SUBMITTED WITHOUT A SCHOOL DISTRICT APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.
- Both the School District Application and associated Individual School Applications must be submitted by the deadline of Friday, October 20, 2023, 5:00 pm. Late applications will not be accepted.
- Funding requests must be within the maximum range by funding category.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

- Each School District Application must have at least one (1) associated Individual School Application to be eligible.
- Charter schools seeking to apply must provide a Letter of Support from their Oversight School District.

- Have a registered Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number through Sam.gov.
- Applicants must be in compliance with 2 CFR 200.214 Suspension and Debarment. Applicant has not been debarred or suspended or otherwise excluded from participating in Federal assistance programs.
- School Districts must demonstrate a negative public health impact or disproportionate impact due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Disproportionate impact will be presumed for schools operating in QCTs.
- School Districts must demonstrate their commitment to advancing racial equity, diversity, and inclusion within their organization and programming.
- School districts must demonstrate intent to serve individuals who are historically underserved or unserved.
- Projects must offer services to all students of Santa Clara County, regardless of age, sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, political or religious opinions or affiliations.

## **Section 5 - Application Submission**

### **How to Apply**

- Grant applications, including all applicable documents, should be submitted in the online application portal, [Submittable](#).
- School District and Individual School Applications must be submitted by the School District. It is recommended that ONE authorized individual coordinate and submit the School District Application and the School Application(s). Only the Submitter will receive email communications via Submittable.
- Submit a cover letter on the School District's letterhead to include the Project Name and a brief description of the use of funds and anticipated outcomes. The cover letter must be signed by the District Superintendent or other authorized signatory.

- Completed applications with proper supporting documentation must be received no later than Friday, October 20, 5:00 PM (PST).
- Only online applications will be accepted.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted or considered.

## **Application Submittal Requirements**

Important documents and information required when filling out an application are listed below. Details and specifics will be located in the application.

- A. Cover Letter
- B. Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- C. Systems for Awards Management number ([SAM.gov](https://sam.gov))
- D. School District Overall Project Narrative
- E. School District Overall Project Budget
- F. School District Project Budget Narrative
- G. Individual School Project Narrative
- H. Individual School Project Budget
- I. Individual School Project Budget Narrative
- J. Adopted district policy or statement on racial equity, diversity, and inclusion

An application draft can be saved by clicking on the “Save Draft” button at the bottom of the application. The completed application with applicable supporting documentation can be submitted by clicking on the “Submit Form” button at the bottom of the application. Once the application is submitted, no further changes can be made. We strongly recommend that the application be submitted before the October 20, 2023, 5:00PM (PST) deadline. Submittable will not accept applications after 5:00PM (PST).

## **How to Submit a Question**

All questions after the September 13, 2023, publication of the NOFA and request for proposals must be submitted via email to [schoolwellness@vhfca.org](mailto:schoolwellness@vhfca.org).

FAQs and responses to questions will be posted on the School-Based Wellness Center webpage at [School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program : How We Help](#).

The Final FAQ responses will be posted on Friday, October 13, 2023.

#### **FAQ Schedule**

Questions Due by 5:00 pm	FAQ Responses Posted by 5:00 pm
Friday, September 29	Friday, October 6
Monday, October 9	Friday, October 13

## **Section 6 - School District Evaluation Criteria**

This section is specific to the School District application. School District Maximum Points = 25.

### **1. Project Narrative:**

Describe the needs the School-Based Wellness Center Grant funding will address if awarded. Maximum 16 points.

Response should address the following:

- a) Identify strategies to promote the wellness center(s) to your school district's communities.
- b) Describe your plan to utilize student peer to peer interactions.
- c) Summarize the type and frequency of support which will be provided to students, including how your school district will address behavioral health needs, including but not limited to substance use, behavioral health, etc.
- d) Share any data points from your current school climate survey(s) related to wellness and how this information will be utilized to create a positive impact on your student population.
- e) Identify plans to utilize student, parent, and community input into wellness center design and operations.

2. Describe the district's plan to strengthen prevention, intervention, and referral services through wellness center hubs using a Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports

model (MTSS). Maximum 5 points.

3. Using the Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time, Inclusive, and Equitable (SMARTIE) model, describe 3-5 district goals for the proposed student wellness center. Listed goals will be rated on quality of goals, not quantity. Maximum 3 points.

4. Identify current or planned service billing processes and/or procedures as they relate to your wellness center proposal. Select all that apply. Maximum 1 point total, 0 if “none of the above” or “other” does not sufficiently address billing process).

- Have participated in training through the SCCOE about billing
- Have participated in the SCCOE Professional Learning Partnership meetings
- Utilize(d) a billing coordinator or have existing contracts with a billing vendor
- Other
- None of the above

## 5. Project Budget

### a. Project Budget Proposal

School Districts must submit a detailed overall Project Budget that reflects the total of project costs for all Individual Schools the district is applying for. Include the aggregate costs for successful project implementation. Submit the overall Project Budget in both Excel and pdf formats. The Project Budget may include, but is not limited to:

- Direct Project Staffing Costs, including payroll tax. Provide listing of each staff position, % FTE, and hourly rate.
- Benefits costs including fringe benefits.
- Direct Project Costs, including professional service contractors, supplies, equipment, furniture, training, etc.
- Indirect Costs - Indicate percentage. Indirect costs are defined as the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and general administration and general expenses, such as the salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting. Indirect Costs that exceed the federal 10% de minimis must provide a cost allocation plan



or a federally approved Negotiated Rate. For more detail, see 2 CFR 200.414.

Provide detail for any contracted services, including name of contractor, type of service, contract amount, and percentage to overall budget.

Funding may be used for reasonable staffing costs associated with project implementation (e.g., Project Manager).

b. Budget Narrative

Provide a 2-page maximum Budget Narrative to accompany the submitted Project Budget. School Districts shall submit an overall Project Budget Narrative and one for each Individual School application. In sufficient detail, describe the proposed use of the grant funds. Describe how the grant funds will assist the district and the identified schools in the delivery of effective behavioral health services. If the project total is greater than the requested grant amount, list the other sources and indicate the status as committed or pending.

c. Project Co-Investment. Maximum 5 points.

Describe any co-investment by the School District in the overall School District Project Budget. This can include, but is not limited to, in-kind contributions, volunteer hours, general funds, Title I funds, other grant funds, etc. Maximum 5 points.

- 50% or greater = 5 points
- 25-49.9% = 3 points
- 5-24.9% = 1 point

The following are Informational Questions only and will not be scored.

6. Identify the strategy below which represents your district's regarding billing readiness.

- Our district has not discussed plans to start billing.
- Our district has discussed plans.
- Our district has discussed billing and we have a process to bill.

- Our district has started billing at least one option: LEA BOP, SMAA, I MCP/Commercial.

7. Does your school district currently contract with Santa Clara County Behavioral Health Services, School Linked Services for the 2023-2024 school year?

- Yes
- No
- Currently in the works

8. Does your school district complete school climate surveys?

- Yes
  - California Healthy Kids Survey
  - Panorama
  - Project Cornerstone Youth Asset Survey
  - Other
- No

9. DEI statement

Provide your adopted policy or statement on diversity, racial equity, and inclusion (DEI).

Acknowledgement Section - Acknowledgements must be completed prior to application submission.

## Section 7 - Individual School Evaluation Criteria

This section is specific to Individual School applications. Individual School application maximum points = 130.

To ensure that awarded grants are aligned with ARPA, MHSA, and JJCPA requirements, the individual school application evaluation and scoring will consider data such as Free and Reduced-Price Meal applications, chronic absenteeism rate, poverty level, suspension rates, unduplicated pupil count, percent of foster youth, behavioral health risk, juvenile arrests, and other factors.

1. Project Narrative

Describe the school's need and how this funding will contribute to the district's goals for enhancing student wellness. Maximum 30 points.

- Response should include what high-risk populations are prevalent at this school and how the wellness center will be used to support these students.
- Complete the Students Served Goals table below.

<b>Students Served Goal</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Total Goal</b>
<b>Year 1</b>				
<b>Year 2</b>				

2. Identify the project readiness to begin services as soon as funding is received. Maximum 15 points.

- Less than 2 months = 15 points
- 3-5 months = 10 points
- 6-9 months = 5 points

3. Identify the project timeline and milestones for proposed use of funds. Maximum 15 points.

Provide a realistic timeline based on the proposed uses of the funds. Provide project milestones within the contract term based on the funding category to ensure timely project implementation and expenditure of grant funds.

4. Identify the current or planned responsible staff to oversee the project. Maximum 5 points.

Describe the school's capacity to accomplish the work, including management and staffing that will ensure that the project moves forward and is implemented during the contract term. Identify who will track and analyze data to report measurable outcomes and fund usage on a quarterly basis.

5. Describe in sufficient detail your school's plan for wellness center sustainability after this funding sunsets in October 2026. Maximum 20 points.

Identify any funding sources - committed, pledged, or projected - to aid in sustainability. Describe other resources, such as parent involvement, School Linked Services, Children Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) School Linked Fee Schedule, or after-school programs, that will strengthen long-term sustainability.

6. What is the short-term impact (within the term of funding) on this school upon receiving grant funds? Maximum 10 points.
7. What is the long-term impact (after the term of the funding) on this school after utilizing the grant funds? Maximum 5 points.
8. Project Budget

- a. Project Budget Proposal

Schools must submit a detailed Project Budget that reflects the costs for the proposed school project. Submit the Project Budget in both Excel and pdf formats. The Project Budget may include, but is not limited to:

- Direct Project Staffing Costs, including payroll tax. Provide listing of each staff position, % FTE, and hourly rate.
- Benefits costs including fringe benefits.
- Direct Project Costs, including professional service contractors, supplies, equipment, furniture, training, etc.
- Indirect Costs - Indicate percentage. Indirect costs are defined as the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and general administration and general expenses, such as the salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting. Indirect Costs that exceed the federal 10% de minimis must provide a cost allocation plan or a federally approved Negotiated Rate. For more detail, see 2 CFR 200.414.

Provide detail for any contracted services, including name of contractor, type of service, contract amount, and percentage to overall budget.

Funding may be used for reasonable staffing costs associated with project implementation (e.g., Project Manager).

b. Budget Narrative

Provide a 2-page maximum Project Budget Narrative to accompany the submitted Project Budget. In sufficient detail, describe the proposed use of the grant funds. Describe how the grant funds will assist the school in the delivery of effective behavioral health services. If the project total is greater than the requested grant amount, list the other sources and indicate the status as committed or pending.

### **Preference Points**

- Applications submitted by a 2023-2024 Title 1 school will receive 10 Preference Points.
- Schools located in a Qualified Census Tract (QCT) will receive 10 Preference Points.
- Schools located in a high-risk zip code will receive 10 Preference Points. Schools located in a moderate-risk zip code will receive 5 Preference Points. A Santa Clara County MHSA Prevention and Early Intervention risk rating of 4.0 and above is High Risk. A risk rating of 3.0 to 3.99 is Moderate Risk.

## **Section 8 - Review and Funding Process**

### **Review Process**

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria above, applications will be reviewed, scored, and prioritized based on the school and school district's demonstration of the following:

- Clarity of Proposal: the project plan is clear, feasible, reasonable, and achievable within the grant timeframe.
- Quality of Proposal: the approach is an effective solution to the challenges identified by the school or school district.
- Impact on Wellness Center Operations: the funding will have a meaningful positive impact on the school's wellness center operations.

- Impact on the Student Community: the proposed project will positively impact the school's ability to effectively serve students with behavioral health and other support services.
- Projects with demonstrated early readiness will be prioritized.

### Initial Review

Applications will be reviewed by VHF staff for completeness and meeting of eligibility requirements. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Staff may ask clarifying questions of the applicant and include this information in the review process. Applications that do not meet the minimum eligibility requirements may be rejected, may not be rated, and may not be considered for selection.

### Review and Evaluation Process

Each complete School District Application that has met the minimum eligibility requirements (Qualified School District) will be reviewed and scored by VHF staff based on School District Evaluation Criteria outlined in Section 6 above.

Each complete Individual School application that has met the minimum eligibility requirements (Qualified Individual School) will be reviewed and scored by VHF staff based on Individual School Evaluation Criteria outlined in Section 7 above.

The Final Score (the Total of Qualified School District score plus Qualified Individual School score) will be the basis for ranking.

### Tie Breakers

VHF staff will apply a tie breaker protocol as outlined below. Tie breaker protocol will be applied when two or more schools' scores are equal and fall at the end of the available funding for the specific funding category.

1st Tie Breaker: School with the highest score prevails.

2nd Tie Breaker: Wellness Center Desert - a student wellness center is not within ½ mile walking distance or an easy access transit line.

3rd Tie Breaker: Readiness - projects that demonstrate the provision of proposed project services no later than 3 months for Enhancements and Infrastructure projects, and 6 months for New Wellness Center projects.

### Review Panel

The Review Panel will be composed of five panel members, including three subject matter experts, one lived-experience parent, and one lived-experience youth.

Following the completion of the review process, VHF staff will prepare a report for presentation to the Review Panel, with recommendations for approval. Recommendations will be based on the Total Score and availability of funds.

### **Notice of Intent to Award**

The ranked Final Scores will be posted by Submittable Submission ID #. Grants are subject to availability of funds and not all eligible applications may be awarded a grant.

VHF staff will issue a Notice of Intent to Award (NOI) to each Applicant receiving a score at or above the level of available funds. Note that the NOI is not a final approval. It is an intent to award and is pending final review and completion of additional documentation, including but not limited to:

1. Complete and dated W-9 form
2. Complete ACH Form
3. Certificate of Insurance meeting VHF Insurance Requirements
4. Resolution delegating authority to the authorized signer to negotiate and execute the Grant Agreement with VHF
5. School's Climate Survey
6. Updated Project Budgets and Narratives, if applicable
7. Updated Student Served Goals, if applicable
8. Subcontracts for the provision of services
9. Building designs and permits for minor renovations, if applicable

### Insufficient Funds and Ineligible Applications

Applicants with a Final Score below the level of available funds will receive an Insufficient Grant Funds letter. Applicants submitting an Ineligible application (including but not limited to those not meeting the minimum thresholds, not meeting eligibility requirements, and/or missing necessary documentation) will receive an Application Not Eligible letter.

After completion of the Appeal Process, VHF staff will prepare a report for presentation to the VHF President and Executive Director and the VHF Board of Directors with recommendations for approval and funding.

### **Appeal Process**

Applicants that wish to appeal points awarded on their proposal may do so by submitting a written appeal to the School-Based Wellness Center Grant Program Manager at [schoolwellness@vhfca.org](mailto:schoolwellness@vhfca.org).

Appeals shall be submitted no later than five (5) business days after receipt of the decision letter. Responses to Appeals will be determined within five (5) business days after receipt of request.

The Appeal decision by the VHF President and Executive Director will be final.

Appeals must be based on the content of the applicant's original submission and must be based on the points awarded under the rating criteria. Applicants may not submit new information to be considered. Applicants may not appeal points awarded to or ranking of another applicant's submission.

### **Funding Process**

At the conclusion of the evaluation process, VHF staff will work with the NOI recipients to complete the documentation process. Upon receipt of complete documentation, VHF will deliver the grant agreement for signature via DocuSign.

Funding will be disbursed in two tranches. Within ten (10) business days after receipt of the fully executed grant agreement, VHF will advance payment of funds through ACH for Tranche One funding. To request Tranche Two funding, the School District must submit a request for additional funds accompanied by the Expenditure Report,



with supporting documentation showing a balance of Tranche One funding of 25% or less. Once reviewed and approved by VHF, payment will be made through ACH.

## **Section 9 - Compliance and Reporting**

### **Compliance**

Awardees must comply with eligible uses for funding under the Coronavirus SLFRE Final Rule, MHSA, and JJCPA-YOBG program requirements.

- Awardees must comply with all applicable federal, State and local statutes, regulations, and executive orders.
- Awardees must submit to VHF quarterly and annual reporting required by the County of Santa Clara.

### **Reporting**

Awardees will be required to submit quarterly performance and expenditure reports. Performance reports will include data collection necessary to evaluate progress of the funded wellness centers and evaluate targeted outcomes. Expenditure reports along with supporting documentation will track timely expenditures on the awarded project. Reporting will be completed through Submittable. A final report will be required at project completion.

### **Data Collection**

Awarded school districts and schools will be required to collect and report data and information, including but not limited to:

- Direct services
  - Number of students served
  - Number of visits to wellness center
  - Number of service units by type of service
- Outreach activities and number of individuals reached.
- Timeliness of access to wellness center services and/or linkage through care coordination.
- Clinical data captured at screening, baseline, subsequent, and transition.

- Data and outcomes related to treatment goals and progress.
- Feedback on quality of service from school staff, students and their family.
- Information on students served including:
  - Student demographics
  - School attendance
  - Rate of suspension
  - Rate of graduation
- Other relevant information such as identified systems to support care coordination and collaboration, feedback about challenges and accomplishments, and surveys from staff and/or parents/caregivers.

### **Targeted Outcomes**

The outcomes listed below will be evaluated to determine the success and effectiveness of the wellness center.

- Increase in timely access to mental health, substance use, and other support services such as family resources, crisis intervention, and physical health services.
- Increase in knowledge and mental health awareness to reduce the stigma associated with seeking mental health services, to promote an inclusive school culture, and to bring awareness and support to staff, students and families.
- Improvement in student's mental health and well-being.
- Improvement in school and daily functioning.
- Improvement in school climate that ensures all students feel that they belong and are welcomed.

### **Timeline**

The Notice of Funds Available will be released on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 12:00 PM. Applications will be accepted until Friday, October 20, 2023, at 5:00 PM (PST).

### **Section 10 - References**

1. Qualified Census Tract Table
2. American Rescue Plan Act March 2021 Final Rule

3. County of Santa Clara MHSA Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan
4. Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act and the Youthful Offender Block Grant Program
5. Santa Clara County Income Limits
6. 2 CFR 200.414 Uniform Guidance
7. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
8. Davis-Bacon and Labor Standards