



News Release

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Federal Grant to Help Schools Provide Integrated Mental Health Services

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LANSING – The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has received a \$376,343 federal grant to help integrate schools and mental health services for students. MDE is one of only three state education agencies to receive this grant.

The grant, awarded by the federal Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, will work to enhance and develop collaborative efforts between schools and community mental health services, and enhance the availability of crisis intervention services.

“There are many students who struggle with sadness and depression with nowhere to turn for professional help,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Flanagan.

“This grant will help us build a stronger relationship with schools and community mental health organizations to provide that assistance.”

The Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey taken in 2005 showed that 26 percent of the Michigan high school students surveyed felt sad and hopeless in the previous two weeks before the survey, to the point that they stopped their usual activities; 16 percent considered suicide in the previous year; and 12 percent actually had planned their suicide.

Under the federal grant, three school-based pilot sites will work directly with their local community mental health offices to increase access to mental health services for their students. These three sites, Alcona Community Schools, Beecher Community Schools, and the Waterford School District, each will receive \$25,000 grants to accomplish their goals.

With the remainder of the grant, the Michigan Department of Education will partner with the Michigan Department of Community Health, Michigan Department of Human Services, and the non-profit School Community Health Alliance of Michigan to develop statewide policy to overcome barriers to mental health services for students.

“This is a continuous learning and evaluation process,” Flanagan said. “This project will assist schools in addressing non-academic challenges that interfere with successful learning, and Michigan’s students will reap the benefits of both.”

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