

Higher Education Navigators (A Pilot Program with the Division of Child and Family Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, State Office of Education, and Local Mental Health Authorities)

As a result of a partnership with the Division of Child and Family Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, and the State Office of Education, a request for \$250,000 would be used to fund a Pilot Program to help older teens who are leaving foster care, or have already aged out, by helping them build community based supports as they transition into higher education. (See Handout)

If funded, para-professionals (Higher Education Navigators) employed with the local mental health authorities will work in conjunction with DCFS staff to offer support and mentoring to these teens, helping them to access formal and informal supports, mental health and other services unique to each student.

Funding will support 5 Navigators in the following areas:

Box Elder and Cache Counties

Weber County

Davis County

Price and the Uintah Basin

Utah County

When staffed, each Navigator will manage a caseload of between 10-15 older teens transitioning to college. (May or may not be receiving DCFS services)

When contracts are in place, between 50-75 teens will receive support in transitioning to college.

Performance Measures:

1. Increased success in enrolling in college or applied technology centers with the use of Navigators (We'll use current data to use as a baseline);
2. Improved access to formal and informal supports with the assistance of the Navigators. (Access to educational supports, connecting with informal family and non-family supports, mental health, etc.)

DCFS will work with local centers to collect data to measure improved outcomes for these teens and report back to the legislature during the 2015 legislative session.

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