

MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS: SURVEY OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS



Prepared for the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee
February 8, 2019

DEMAND FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

- Safe UT
 - From July 2017 to December 2018
 - 1 chat to SafeUT for every 31 students
- Legislative Survey
 - FY 2018
 - Among responding districts, on average 1 notification of threat of suicide was sent to parents for every 128 students
 - Districts reported notification rates ranging from 1 per 22 students to 1 per 657 students



SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- Survey sent to local education agency (LEA) superintendents from legislative staff
- Completed January 7th - 28th, 2019
- Sent to 41 districts
- 27 responded – 65.9% response rate
- Data caveats:
 - Survey tool was tested but not validated
 - Not representative of districts that did not respond
 - Variable interpretation of questions



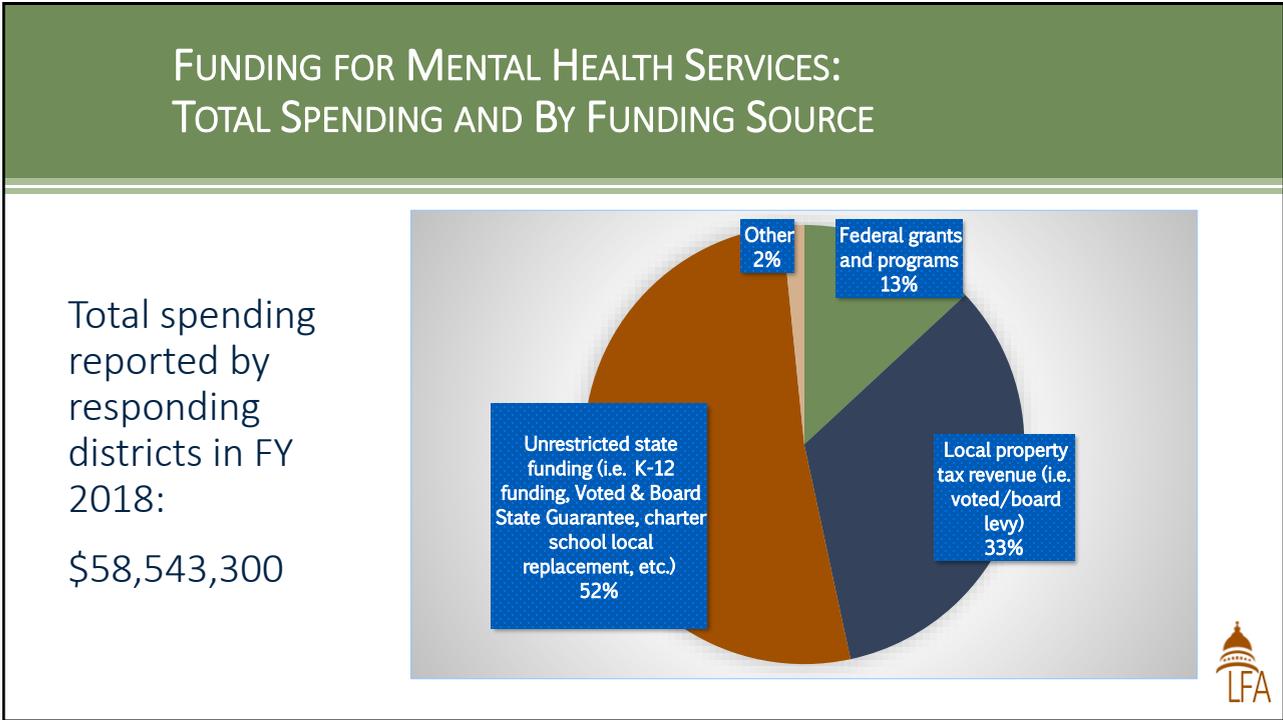
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For the purpose of this survey, “mental health services” included:

- Mental health assessments or screenings
- Individual, group, and/or family therapy or counseling
- Parent education
- Social skills and other skills development groups
- Facilitated peer support
- Family resource facilitation
- Case management
- Consultation services (including referrals)
- Medication management
- Crisis response protocol
- Telehealth services (providing any of the services listed above)
- Crisis hotlines or SafeUT app
- Respite/supported housing
- Residential care
- Inpatient care



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WHO PROVIDES SERVICES WITHIN THE LEA?

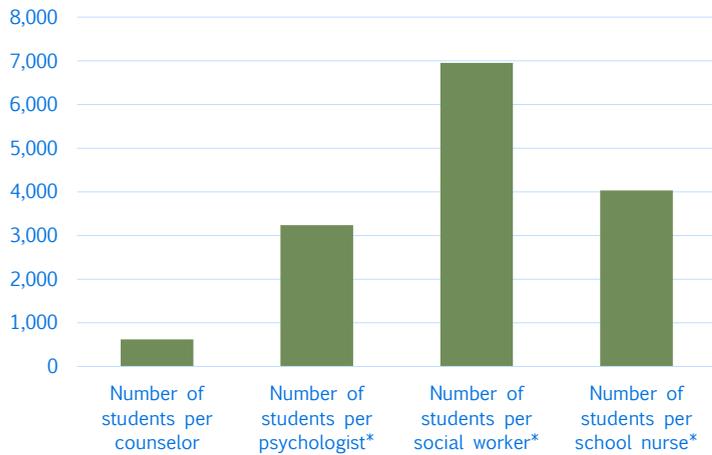
	School Counselor	School Psychologist	School Social Worker	School Nurse
School Improvement	1			
Attendance	1		1	1
Early Warning Systems	1	1	1	1
Student Engagement & Graduation	1			
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities	1	1	1	1
Bullying Prevention	1	1	1	1
Suicide & Drug Abuse Prevention	1	1	1	1
Student Intervention	1	1	1	1
Psychological & Academic Evaluation		1		
Service to ALL Students	1			
Foundational Skills Development	1		1	
Academic Support & Planning	1			
School/Home/Community Collaboration		1	1	
Student's Physical Health				1

Source: State Board of Education



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RATIOS OF LEA PROFESSIONALS TO STUDENTS: RANGE AND OVERALL



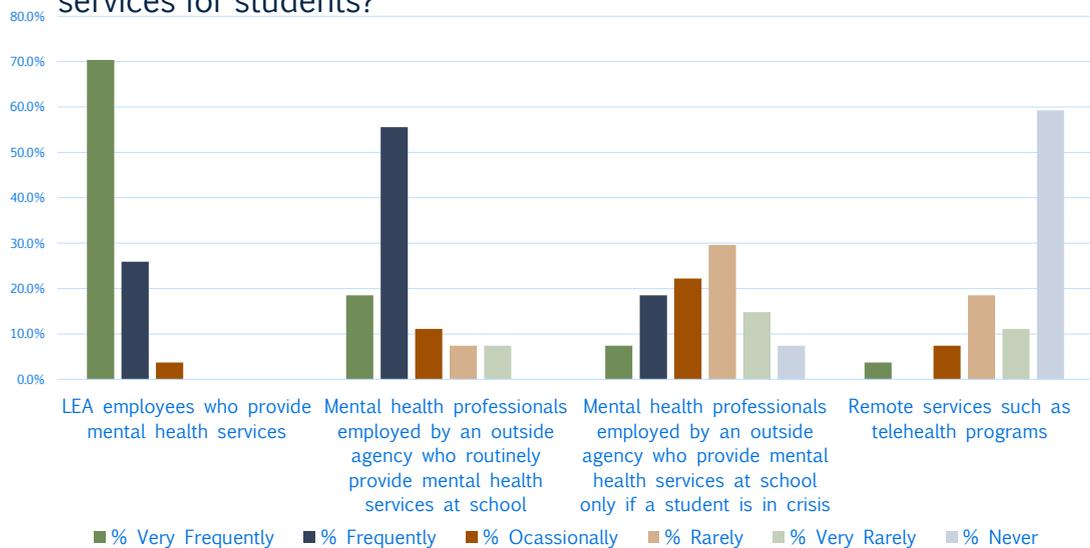
Range of professional to student ratios, for districts reporting at least 1		
Professional	Low	High
Counselor	1:299	1:862
Psychologist	1:1,067	1:1,532
Social Worker	1:479	1:28,905
School Nurse	1:774	1:16,165

*Note: Averages are for districts reporting at least one of a professional type. Several districts reported 0 FTEs for this professional.

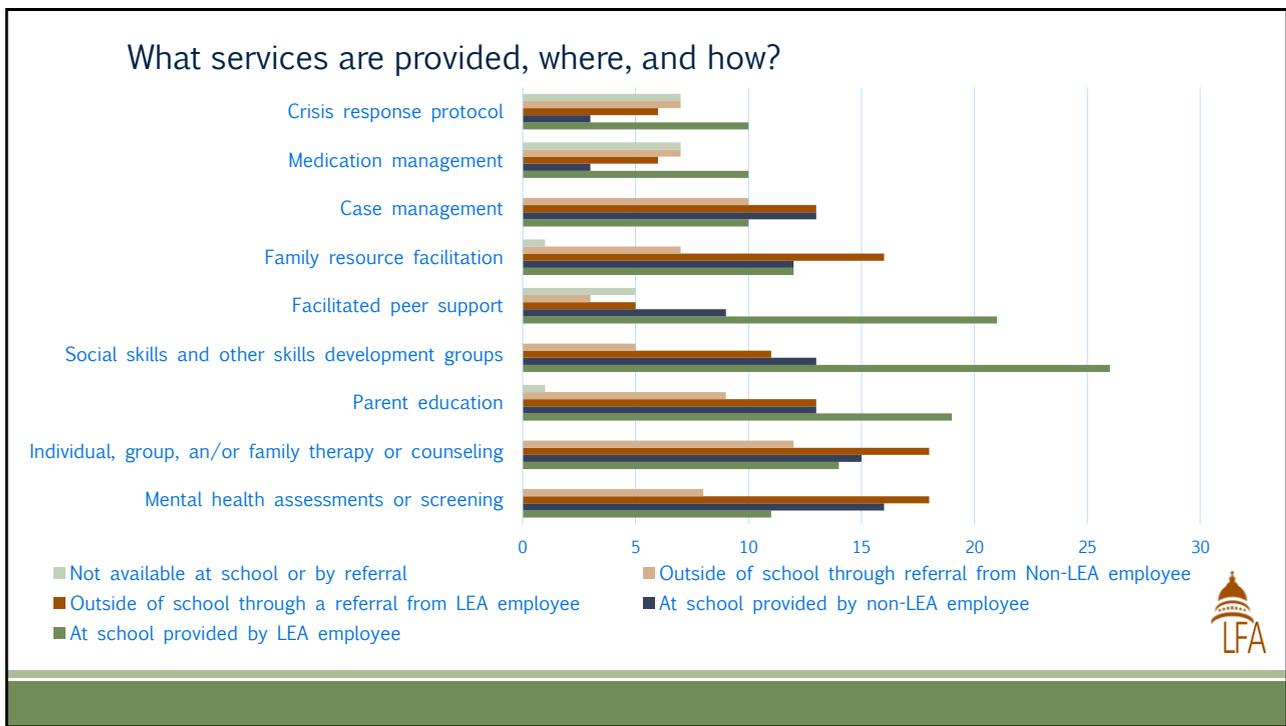


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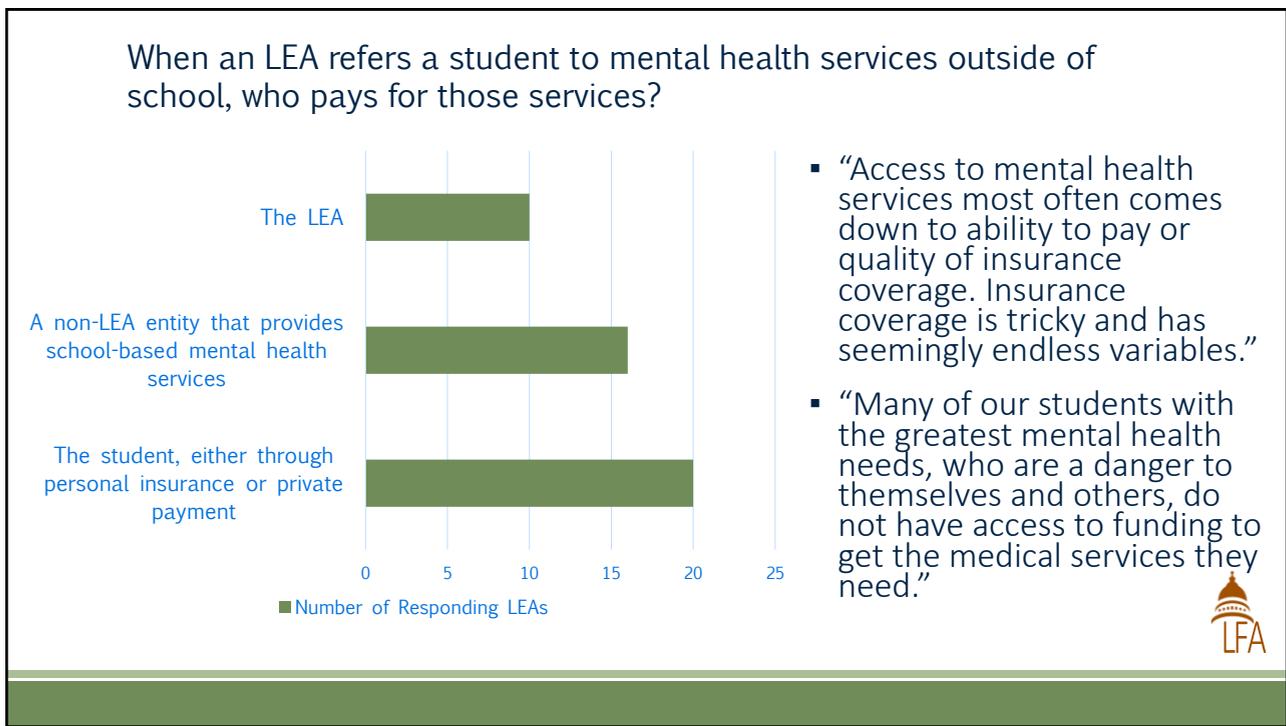
How often do LEAs use the following resources to provide mental health services for students?



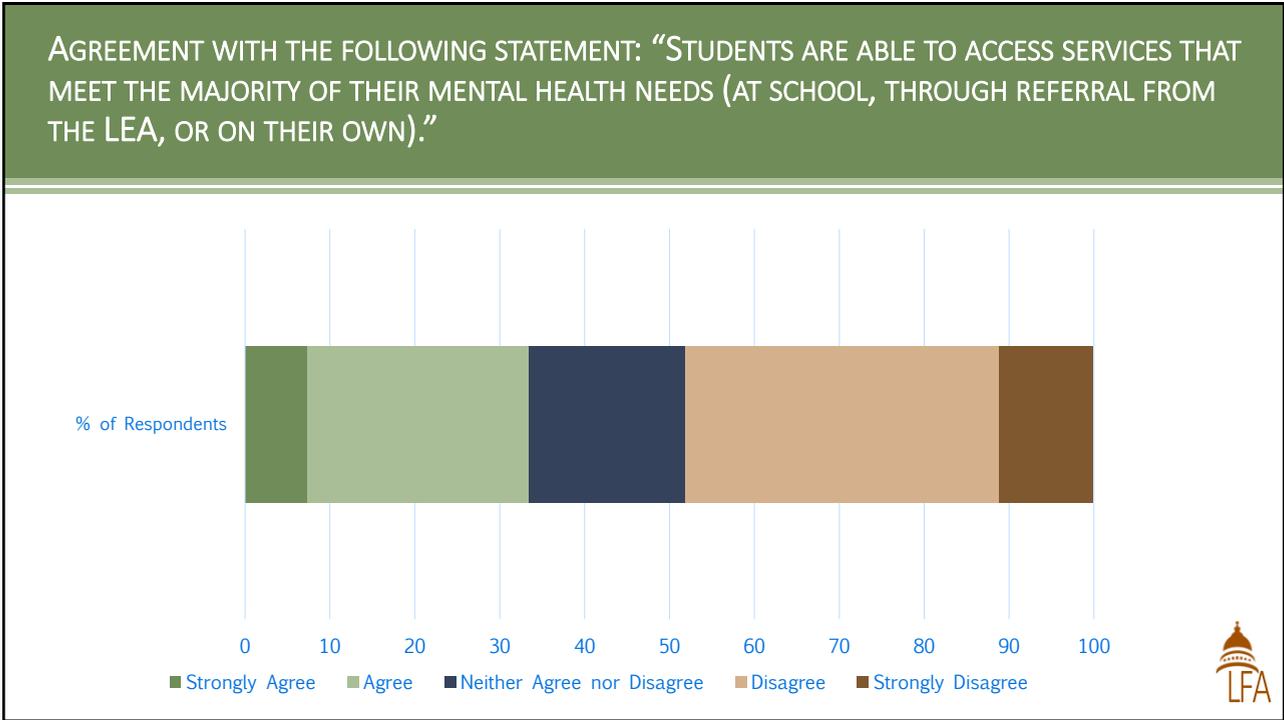
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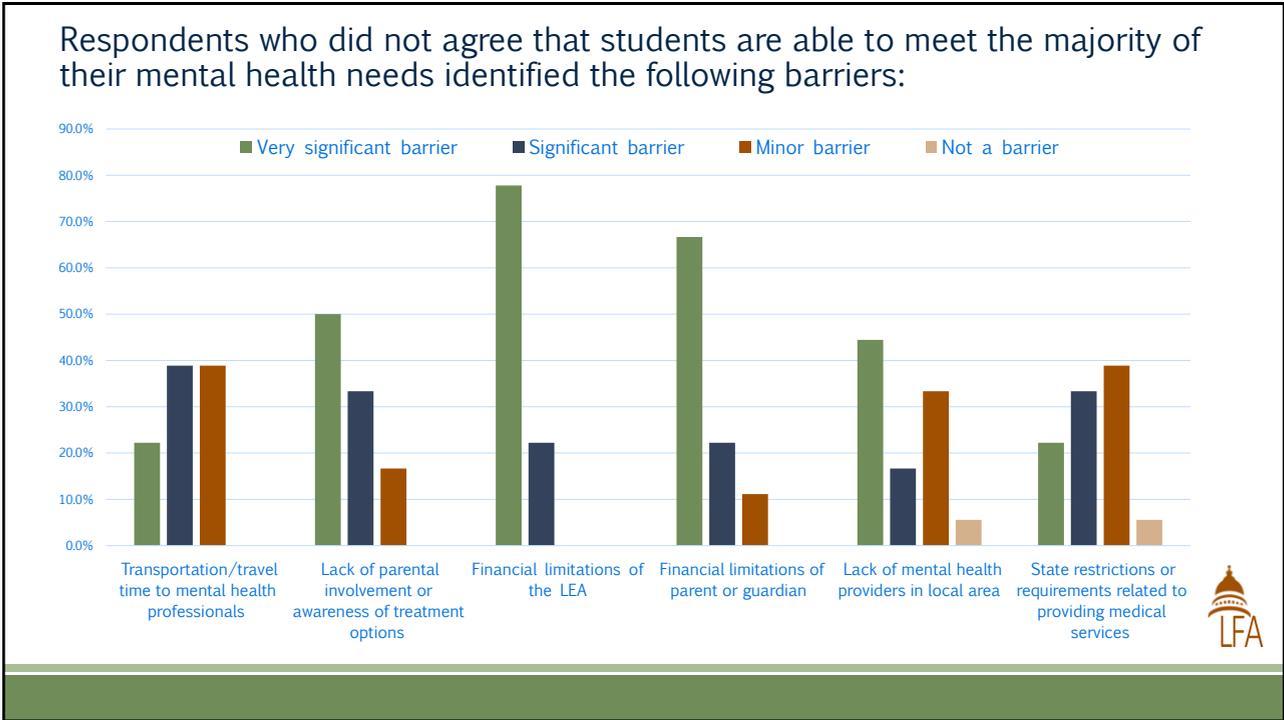
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5 LARGEST GAPS OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Responding districts reported the largest gaps in specific services related to their LEA:
 - Individual, Group and/or Family Therapy
 - Mental Health Assessments or screenings
 - Parent Education
 - Family Resource Facilitation
 - Social Skills and Other Skills Development Groups



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IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

SAMPLE COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS

- “Public Schools are the only agency that cannot refuse services or stop treatment based on the client maximizing a therapeutic threshold. We have seen students fail a treatment program and return to school still requiring extensive mental health services which we struggle to provide.”
- “The main problem for our district is a lack of preventative services rather than crisis services. [...] We also need additional evidence-based trauma-informed services to deal with youth offenders.”
- “With the significant rise in anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and self-harming behaviors in the student population (and in younger children), we need more resources to hire more mental health providers/supports. Licensed school counselors are not trained and/or legally able to provide the intensive mental health services needed in our schools to support struggling students.”
- “We have seen a significant INCREASE in mental health issues with our students including 3 student suicides in the last 6 months.”

LFA

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THANKS!

- For input on survey development:
 - Lillian Tsosie-Jensen, State Board of Education
 - Terry Shoemaker, Utah School Superintendents Association
 - Eric Tadehara and others, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
 - B.J. Weller, Canyons School District
 - Brad Christensen, Davis School District
- For LEA staff and superintendents who completed the survey

