

*Requirements to be officially designated as a “School Based Mental Health Collaboration Partner” include:*

1. Participate in an **Initial Orientation** meeting with representatives from ADMH and ALSDE.
2. Formalize the relationship between the Community Mental Health Center and the local school system(s) participating in the School Based Mental Health Collaboration with a written **Memorandum of Agreement** (MOA), contract, or similar instrument that is reviewed and renewed on a regular basis.
3. Participate in **Data Collection and Reporting** as required.
4. Use and maintain **Standardized Referral Process/Documentation**.
5. Utilize a **“Gatekeeper”** at each school, who is preferably the School counselor.
6. Conduct **Regular Executive Meetings** to share billing/services provided and to solve problems and discuss difficult cases as required.
7. Schools provide private space and internet access: CMHCs provide master’s-level therapists with own computer or other record-keeping capability.
8. Staff with maintain **Separation of School Records and Mental Health Records** for legal and confidentiality purposes.

## **Contact Information**

**Gayla Caddell** --- MI Children ‘s Services Coordinator; Alabama Department of Mental Health  
(334) 353-7832  
[gayla.caddell@mh.alabama.gov](mailto:gayla.caddell@mh.alabama.gov)

**Tina Sanders** --- Alabama Department of Education Special Education Services  
(334) 694-4805  
[tsanders1@alsde.edu](mailto:tsanders1@alsde.edu)

# *School Based Mental Health Collaboration*



Alabama Department of Mental  
Health  
and  
Alabama Department of Education



## *School Based Mental Health Collaboration*

The Alabama Department of Mental Health and Alabama Department of Education have identified the need for a deliberate strategy aimed at improving service quality within and continuity between the two departments. The aim is to achieve greater integration of mental health services between the community mental health centers and the public schools and to increase the utilization of evidence-based practices. The integration of these services will foster continuity of care and ensure sustained gains in academic and developmental domains for children, youth, and their families.

## The Goal of SBMH

The goal of the School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH) collaboration between Alabama Department of Mental Health and its providers and the Alabama Department of Education and Alabama's local education agencies is to ensure that children and adolescents, both general and special education, enrolled in local school systems have access to high quality mental health prevention, early intervention, and treatment services. To be effective, comprehensive mental health services in schools must be provided by an on-site master's level mental health professional in collaboration with teachers, administrators, and families.

The SBMH programs are designed to ensure that mental health needs of children and adolescents in the public schools are identified early on and addressed in a competent manner through a school, family, and community mental health partnership.

With the ultimate goal of optimal social-emotional health for school-aged children and adolescents who are appropriate for these services, SBMH provides:

- High quality services that build on existing school programs, services, and strategies;
- A continuum of care in a school setting-mental health education and promotion through intensive intervention;
- Authentic parent/family engagement;
- Meaningful children and youth involvement;
- Culturally and linguistically competent service provision; and
- Data-driven planning, evaluation, and quality improvement.

## SBMH Expected Outcomes and Performance Indicators

### *Provided by Alabama Department of Education:*

#### Rates of school attendance improved

- Number of students with unexcused absences > than 7 days reduced
- Number of unexcused absences > than 7 days reduced

#### School behavior improved

- Number of students with out-of-control suspension > than 10 days reduced
- Number of out-of-school suspensions > than 10 days reduced

#### Student graduation rate improved

- Number of students receiving the Alabama High School Diploma increases

### *Provided by local Mental Health Authorities:*

#### Student/Family engagement improved

- Number of students receiving mental health services increased
- Number of services provided/hours of services provided increased

### *Provided by Alabama State Mental Health Department based on Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS):*

#### Total level of life domain functioning improved

- Number of students whose level of life domain functioning improve

#### Delinquent behavior improved

- Number of students with arrests decreases

#### Family/Youth perception of care improved

- Number of students/families whose perception of care improves

#### Social Connectedness

- Number of students/families whose social connectedness improves.