Garside JHS

Request for Information Response

Nevada Department of Education as Provided by

SB 515, Section 23

Social worker or other licensed mental health professional

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To:

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SECTION II
NARRATIVE

Garside Junior High School

Garside JHS is a large urban middle school facing numerous academic challenges typically associated with large enrollment, lower socioeconomic status, and second language challenges. Garside JHS is a two-star school and is focused on improving the academic and social well-being of students. The school's enrollment for 2015-16 as of December 7, 2015, was 1,189 students with 0.4% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 3.1% Asian, 68.5% Hispanic, 11.7% Black/African American, 9.5% Caucasian, 1.9% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 4.8% Multi-Racial. Additionally, 86% of these students qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL), 29.6% students have been identified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and 12.9% have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Of note, the school's LEP and FRL population was significantly higher than that of the Clark County School District (CCSD) or state in 2014-2015. Additionally, this school's population is mobile, exhibiting a transiency rate of 27.9% in 2014-15. The Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for Garside JHS in 2014-2015 was higher than that of CCSD or state at 95.60%. However, the 8th grade retention rate for 2014-2015 was 2.9%, higher than that of CCSD or the sate percentage. The school currently has 30 homeless students enrolled at Garside JHS, four self-contained special education programs with high-needs students, and several students attending from a nearby state group facility. School events, trainings, and parent meetings are typically well attended, however, there is an ongoing struggle to get students to complete work and strive for higher achievement.

In recent years, Garside JHS has experienced an increasing need for school and community interventions for students expressing mental health concerns including suicidal thoughts, depression, and lack of social skills. In addition, students and families express increasing need for support with clothing, food, and health services. The social worker/mental health professional will provide support to students, staff, parents, and community members at Garside JHS. Specific services for students include assisting students in understanding and accepting self and others, developing intervention strategies to increase academic success, helping students develop appropriate social interaction skills, providing crisis intervention, and teaching conflict resolution and anger management. Specific services for parents/families include alleviating family stress to enable their child to function more effectively in school and community, assisting parents in accessing and utilizing school and community resources, providing parents access to programs available to children with special needs, and working with parents to facilitate their support in their

child's adjustment to school. Specific services for school personnel include assessing students with mental health concerns, assisting teachers with behavior management, developing staff training programs, educating staff with essential information to better understand factors (cultural, societal, economic, familial, health, etc.) affecting a student's performance and behavior, and providing direct support to staff. Specific services to promote community involvement include advocating for new and improved community/school services to meet the needs of students and families and assisting schools to receive adequate support from social and mental health agencies, helping the system respond effectively to each student's needs, and obtaining and coordinating community resources to meet students' needs. Specific services to promote district initiatives include assisting in development and implementation of programs for identified children with behavioral, social, and/or emotional needs; developing and training on alternative programs and strategies for drop-outs, truants, delinquents, and excessively disruptive students; identification and monitoring of students who are victims of child abuse and/or neglect; providing case management for students and families requiring multiple resources; and providing consultation regarding related Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), mental health standards, and district/school policies and procedures.

The proposed social worker/mental health professional at Garside JHS will assist with all aforementioned initiatives, as well as work alongside the counselor(s), attend and participate in staff meetings, professional development sessions and trainings. The person selected for this position will conduct home visits and meet with families regularly, contribute knowledge, skills, and techniques in the areas of mental health and human behavior to parents and school team members. This position will provide assistance to school administration with ensuring compliance with Senate Bill 504 by counseling students involved in bullying allegations, both the targets as well as the bullies, as well as providing guidance and training on positive school climate strategies. It will be expected that he/she will develop and facilitate weekly support groups and provide students with strategies to cope with and overcome difficulties impacting school performance, academic and behavioral. He/she will develop and implement parent support groups and activities that promote parent involvement/engagement. Identify challenges in a child's living situation (home, school, and community) that may affect the child's adjustment, performance, and attendance in the educational setting. Identify, mobilize, and coordinate school and community resources to enable students to learn as effectively as possible in the educational setting. Plan, conduct, and participate in educational workshops and presentations while serving as a member of school teams and provide information related to planning for the educational needs of children.