William G. Bennett ES

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

William G. Bennett ES

William G. Bennett Elementary School is the only elementary school in Laughlin, NV; Bennett ES is a small, rural school located approximately 90-miles south of Las Vegas and serves students in grades PK-5. While the school is considered rural based on location, and small based on enrollment (353 students in grades PK-5), the school faces numerous academic challenges typically associated with larger, urban schools with transient population and low socioeconomic status.

Bennett ES is a two-star school and enrollment as of December 7, 2015 is 353 students with 0% American Indian, 2% Asian, 39% Hispanic, 7% Black, 47% White, 9% Multi-racial. The school receives Title I funding with over 75% of students qualifying for Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL), 10% have Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and 18% have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Additionally, this school's population is highly mobile, exhibiting a transiency rate of 32.4% during 2014-15. The school is also experiencing a rapid enrollment growth; enrollment on first day of school was 301 students (August 24, 2015) and current enrollment trends show an increase of 52 students (as of December 7, 2015, the school has gained 77 students and lost 24). Additionally, 28% of the student population lives within two subsidized apartment complexes.

The social worker/mental health professional will provide students, staff, parents, and community members at Bennett ES. 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 Bennett ES 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.