Whitney 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

Whitney ES

Whitney ES is an elementary school in what the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police calls "the most violent part of town." Whitney is facing numerous academic challenges typically associated with and a transient and crisis-ridden population that is predominately of low socioeconomic status.

The school's enrollment for 2015-16 school year is 677 students with 55% Hispanic, 20% Black/African American, 17% Caucasian, and 3% Multi-Racial. Additionally, all students receive free breakfast and lunch, 32% have Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and 19% have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Additionally, this school's population is highly mobile, exhibiting a transiency rate of 50% in 2014-15. Most notably is our homeless student population. Most, if not all of Whitney's students have been, are, or on the fringe of being homeless. Most of the students live in hotels/motels, "couch surf" or multi-family dwellings.

The social worker/mental health professional will provide support to students, staff, parents, and community members at Whitney ES. Specific services for students include assisting students in understanding and accepting self and others, 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 a 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 Whitney 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.