

Annual Notification Regarding School Provided or Sponsored Mental Health Services

Mental Health Services

The school system provides or sponsors the following mental health services:

1. **Large group guidance** - includes school counselor or professional visiting the classroom to discuss topics such as bullying, class scheduling, stress management, test anxiety or guest speakers to discuss good choices, substance abuse prevention, etc.
2. **Small group guidance** - includes a small group of students with a school counselor or professional to discuss topics such as test anxiety, grief, healthy coping skills, etc.
3. **Mentoring** - School social workers and/or social work interns work with students in school on topics such as friendships, healthy relationships, decision making, anger management, and anxiety. Social work staff also engage in Report Card Conferencing with students in selected grades of selected schools. These conferences are reviews of their end of the 9 weeks report cards to provide encouragement on their grades and positive affirmations to do well and/or improve upon their academic work.
4. **Assessments or Surveys** - Rhithm app on students' chromebooks provide evidenced-based assessments to assess students social and emotional well being while also providing immediate feedback via short videos related to self regulation, character education, coping skills, and overall mental well-being.
5. **Crisis intervention** - short-term, immediate assistance by school counselor, school nurse or school social worker related, but not limited to: suicidal or homicidal ideation, panic attacks or extreme emotional distress, or extreme interpersonal conflict.
6. **School-Based Mental Health** - Lauderdale County Schools contracts with Riverbend Center for Mental Health to provide SBMHS in our school system. These services are provided by Riverbend Center on the school campus, during school hours and are referred by the schools guidance counselor. Any further treatment (i.e. more intensive counseling, case management, and/or psychiatry) are provided at Riverbend Center for Mental Health, on-site at 635 West College St, Florence, AL. A signed, parental consent for any student ***under*** 14 is required by Riverbend Center at the time of enrollment. Students over the age of 14 do not need parental permission to engage in services. Guardians are contacted regarding suicidal or homicidal ideation regardless of consent.

Review of Materials

You may request to review any materials used in the guidance and counseling programs available to students by contacting the student's principal [**Note:** You may choose another person for the parent to contact or another method for parents to obtain information.]

Information Regarding How to Allow, Limit, or Prevent Your Child's Participation in Mental Health Services

Under Alabama law, no student under the age of fourteen may participate in ongoing school counseling services including, but not limited to, mental health services, unless (1) the student's

parent or legal guardian has submitted a written opt-in granting permission for the student to participate or (2) there is an imminent threat to the health of the student or others.

Therefore, if your child is under fourteen, they will only be allowed to participate in mental health services if you opt-in. **If you would like the school system to be able to offer and/or provide mental health services to your child, you must opt-in for each service listed for them to participate in that service.**

Even if you do not opt-in to mental health services, your child may be provided mental health services if there is an imminent threat to their health or others. School employees may determine in their discretion whether such an imminent threat exists and provide any mental health services they deem necessary under the circumstances.

Parent of students with disabilities: Please note that the opt-in process is not applicable to any school counseling services or “mental health services” contained in a student’s IEP or §504 plan. Consent for those services will be obtained and information regarding your child’s mental health services will be provided through the usual special education process.

OPT-IN FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

As of the date of my signature below, my child, _____, is under the age of 14 years old:

€ Yes

€ No

If No, stop here.

If Yes, continue below.

I hereby give my permission for my child to participate in the following mental health services:

[Check the box for each mental health service you want to be available to your child]

- € **Large group guidance** - includes school counselor or professional visiting the classroom to discuss topics such as bullying, class scheduling, stress management, test anxiety or guest speakers to discuss good choices, substance abuse prevention, etc.
- € **Small group guidance** - includes small group of students with school counselor or professional to discuss topics such as test anxiety, grief, healthy coping skills, etc.
- € **Mentoring** - School social workers and/or social work interns work with students in school on topics such as friendships, healthy relationships, decision making, anger management, and anxiety. Social work staff also engage in Report Card Conferencing with students in selected grades of selected schools. These conferences are reviews of their end of the 9 weeks report cards to provide encouragement on their grades and positive affirmations to do well and/or improve upon their academic work.
- € **Assessments/Surveys** – Rhithm app on students' chromebooks provide evidenced-based assessments to assess students social and emotional well being while also providing immediate feedback via short videos related to self regulation, character education, coping skills, and overall mental well-being.
- € **Crisis intervention** - short-term, immediate assistance by school counselor, school nurse or school social worker related, but not limited to: suicidal or homicidal ideation, panic attacks or extreme emotional distress, or extreme interpersonal conflict.
- € **School-Based Mental Health** - On-going counseling services by school professionals or private practitioners in the school setting. Lauderdale County Schools contract with Riverbend Center for Mental Health to provide SBMHS in our school system. These services are provided by Riverbend Center on the school campus, during school hours. Any further treatment (i.e. more intensive counseling, case management, and/or psychiatry) are provided at Riverbend Center for Mental Health 635 West College St. A written consent for any student under 14 is required by Riverbend Center at the time of enrollment. Students over the age of 14 do not have to have parental permission to engage in services, however the Riverbend therapist will contact guardian(s) to consult in treatment decisions unless the student refuses to sign a consent for them to do so.

Guardians are also contacted regarding suicidal or homicidal ideation regardless of consent.

- € You may rescind permission for a student to participate in mental health services at any time by providing written notice to school administration [**Note:** School systems who want parents to submit this notice to a particular person should simply insert the person's title in place of "school administration" (i.e., principal, school counselor, etc.)].

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Signature)