

FUSION

An Integration of Information for School-Based Mental Health Professionals

Dear School Support Professionals,

The Student Support Services office wishes you all the best for the New Year. You have worked effortlessly to provide support and guidance to the students and families of Florida by utilizing your expertise to ensure that barriers are reduced and/or removed to promote safe and healthy school environments.

We look forward to working with all mental health services providers and are planning trainings for the upcoming school year.

We are excited to continue collaborating with you for the 2023-2024 school year.



[Beverley Wilks, LCSW](#)
School Social Work Consultant
850-245-7837

Mental Health 988

988 is a three-digit number that provides free, 24/7 access to compassionate care and support for anyone struggling with emotional distress, a mental health or substance use crisis, or thoughts of suicide. Launched in July 2022, the 988 dialing code replaced the existing 10-digit National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline counselors will handle calls. These counselors are highly trained to assist people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis. In fact, based on data provided by Lifeline call centers, approximately 98 percent of answered Lifeline calls do not require an emergency response. Of the 2 percent of the calls that do require emergency response, over 60 percent of those calls are ones where the caller agrees that emergency services are needed and collaborates with the Lifeline counselor to receive those services.

Schools and their community partners play a vital role in promoting mental health among students and the school community as a whole. The [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) can strengthen and complement these efforts.

The Center Help Desk is at 1-855-781-REMS [7367] or info@remstacenter.org.



NCSSLE Webinar Series: Supporting Students and Schools Through a Human Trafficking Report

Produced by the National Center on
Safe Supportive Learning Environments

What should you do when you suspect a child is being trafficked? This webinar will help answer that question and more. It starts with an overview of what steps K-12 educators and personnel may take to report trafficking when they suspect or have been informed a student is being trafficked. Experts from the federal and state levels discuss the multiple mechanisms involved in reporting trafficking for states with mandated reporting and those without. Because this is a difficult process, practitioners working in schools will discuss best practices for both supporting those reporting trafficking and the student(s) involved. And, since educators see and speak with students day in and day out, an expert with lived experience will provide important context on how educators can become safe, approachable adults for students to feel comfortable in confiding what is happening in their lives and then able to report suspected trafficking.

To view the webinar recording and related resources, visit [NCSSLE Webinar Series: Supporting Students and Schools Through a Human Trafficking Report](#).



In Collaboration With...



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Foster Care Students

Our office plans to host small informal meetings with all districts for the new year, with a maximum of 10 school districts at each session.

The goal is for FDOE to reach out to foster care liaisons regarding the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and address the following:

- Identifying school-based supports and services available to meet foster care student's needs.
- Identifying barriers to attendance for foster care youth and identifying strategies to increase student attendance.
- Learning to involve school-based staff in ESSA and Multi-Disciplinary transition staffing and planning.

A total of nine meetings have been scheduled with foster care liaisons. The invitation for each district, providing the date/time has been sent. Please let me know if your foster care contact has been changed or has not received an invitation. I can be reached at 850-245-7837 or Beverley.Wilks@fldoe.org.

Attendance

Your district's student attendance report for the 2022-23 school year can be found at <https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/edu-info-accountability-services/pk-12-public-school-data-pubs-reports/students.stml>.

Using the Proving Ground approach, we will work with two districts on attendance for the upcoming school year.

Proving Ground's process focuses on a continuous improvement cycle to help each district rapidly find solutions that work for its students and families:

1. Understand the Challenge

Proving Ground begins its work with each district by analyzing its historical data and conducting interviews with district and school staff. Through this process, Proving Ground helps the district uncover key issues and trends that contribute to the challenge the network is addressing.

2. Identify Potential Solutions

Proving Ground then leads each district through a process of uncovering the root causes of its challenges. Proving Ground helps the district identify potential solutions and works with the district's leadership team to prioritize these solutions. Proving Ground then connects the district with others working on similar challenges, and these districts determine a common set of solutions to test.

3. Test the Solution(s)

Proving Ground helps each district design and implement the solution(s) in a measurable way. During the testing phase, Proving Ground provides reports on findings every six to eight weeks, depending on the solution being tested.

4. Examine Findings and Determine Next Steps

Proving Ground then works with each district to determine how to act on the findings. If the solution is producing the desired results, the district may decide to scale up. If the solution is under-performing, the district may decide to make adjustments and continue testing, or it may decide to stop implementation and try an entirely new solution.

Helpful Information

SAMHSA provides communities and responders with behavioral health resources that help them prepare, respond, and recover from disasters.

- [Disaster Distress Helpline](#): CALL or TEXT 1-800-985-5990 (press 2 for Spanish)

Upcoming Celebrations for School Support Professionals

- School Social Work Week – March 4-8
- School Nurse Week – May 6-12

Celebrated

The week of February 5-9, 2024, was recognized as Student Services Week and National School Counseling Week. During this week, we recognized all student services personnel because they are critical to the success of all students.

Thank you to those who shared celebrations and stories! We hope this week was filled with encouragement and appreciation for your part in making our students successful, resilient and healthy!

Find your elected officials in Florida

- [Florida House of Representatives](#)
- [Florida Senate](#)



In Collaboration With...



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION