



Georgia Department of Behavioral Health &
Developmental Disabilities

Kevin Tanner, Commissioner

Office of the Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) Announces Funding to Increase the Number of Mental Health Professionals in Clayton County Schools

Georgia's DBHDD was recently awarded almost \$500,000 in grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education to help meet the mental health needs of students in Clayton County. The funding will be used by DBHDD to partner with several universities to increase the number and diversity of mental health service providers to students in Clayton County. Over the next five years, this funding will help Georgia boost the pipeline of school-based mental health service providers including mental health clinicians, social workers, and counselors.

In November of 2022, DBHDD partnered with Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University, Clark Atlanta University, and Clayton County Schools, to submit a proposal to the United States Department of Education for a Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration (MHSP) grant. We are pleased to receive the funding, anchored to the Apex Program. The Georgia Apex Program (Apex), funded by DBHDD, strives to build capacity, and increase access to mental health services for school-aged youth, Pre-Kindergarten to 12th grade, throughout the state.

Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University and Clark Atlanta University will recruit student interns and cover stipends, tuition, and transportation costs in exchange for service commitments. Funds will also be paid to Apex providers serving Clayton County schools to provide full-time supervision to the emerging practitioners. In addition, the funds will also provide DBHDD with a position to manage the project.

The Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration (MHSP) grants support school districts in hiring additional school-based mental health service providers in high-need districts by boosting the mental health profession pipeline. This includes investing in innovative partnerships between school districts and institutions of higher education to prepare qualified school-based mental health service providers for employment in schools. These programs will increase the number of mental health service providers from diverse backgrounds or from the communities they serve, to facilitate access to culturally responsive services for children and youth.

For additional information please contact:

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If anyone you know needs help related to mental health, substance use, or intellectual and developmental disabilities immediate assistance is available 24/7/365. Please call the Georgia Crisis and Access Line at **1-800-715-4225**.

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The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) is the state agency, which supports people with mental health needs, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Department's vision is easy access to high-quality care that leads to a life of recovery and independence for the people it serves

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