



## **Report to the Legislature**

## **Blended Funding Report**

Chapter 219, Laws of 2000, Section 2

December 2005

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**Department of Social and Health Services  
Legislative Report on Blended Funding Projects**

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# **Department of Social and Health Services Legislative Report on Blended Funding Projects**

**March 2006**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This document has been prepared in accordance with the requirement of Chapter 219, Laws of 2000, Section 2, which states:

The department shall document the number of children who participate in blended funding projects, the total blended funding amounts per child, the amount charged to each appropriation by program, and services provided to each child through each blended funding project and report this information to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1st of each year, beginning in December 1, 2000.

This report is the fifth in a series of reports to the legislature on the development and implementation of blended funding projects.

Blended funding involves the co-mingling of funds into a single source from which case managers can provide services without regard to relative contributions of the multiple funding sources.

At this time, the Department participates in one program that blends funds to provide enhanced services to children and their families with multiple needs. The Clark County School-based Mental Health Services Project operates under a proviso to the Mental Health Division's biennial budget.

## **CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

In Washington State, public mental health services are provided through Regional Support Networks. These networks receive state and federal Medicaid funds from the Department's Mental Health Division. In Clark County, the Clark County Department of Community Services operates the Regional Support Network.

During the 1999-2000 state fiscal year, the Washington State Legislature and the federal government approved local school district classroom funds to be used as a match under the federal Medicaid program. A special condition of the proviso was that services funded through this initiative be unique and creative. As a result several programs were developed through a cooperative arrangement between the Clark County Regional Support Network, the school districts, and the mental health providers. The Clark County Regional Support Network used these

resources to develop and implement demonstration/pilot projects specific to school-based mental health services.

During the first year of implementation, there were four school-based mental health projects developed to serve Clark County. These projects were in Battleground, Vancouver and Evergreen School Districts

Each of these projects was designed to be family-centered, family-driven, and strength-based. In addition, the projects incorporated a strong parent support component and the wraparound approach to service provision. The approach was to provide services that were unique and creative, utilize formal and informal supports, and ultimately improve academic and social performance of the children involved. Each project developed a team. Each team had a minimum of a mental health clinician and a peer parent support with additional team members added based upon the model utilized.

The Clark County Regional Support Network contracted with Portland State University to conduct two evaluations of each of the four school-based mental health projects. The first evaluation occurred October, 2001 and the second evaluation was completed and documented in a final report dated September, 2002. The overarching goal of the final evaluation was to document the strengths and the areas for improvement for each of the projects.

### **Identified Challenges**

The primary need to re-evaluate school-based mental health services was a significant change in Medicaid funding rules which affected both eligibility and requirements for non-federal matching funds. These changes in Medicaid funding resulted in a significant reduction in the number of students eligible to be served.

In order to respond to the changes in Medicaid funding and the need to redesign how services were delivered, the Clark County Regional Support Network issued a Request for Proposal in April 2004. Full implementation of the selected projects was scheduled to begin at the start of the 2004 school year. The goals of the Request for Proposal process were to:

1. Continue with the implementation of a strength-based, family driven, child centered approach to the delivery of mental health services in the schools.
2. Provide more consistent and efficient procedures for the coordination between the schools and mental health providers to allow greater access for eligible children.
3. Improve the distribution of services across the various school districts.

The Request for Proposal selection process awarded a contract to Columbia River Mental Health Services for the provision of school-based mental health services with full implementation to begin in Fall 2004. Over the course of the 2004/2005 school year, implementation problems existed, primarily due to hiring challenges which resulted in a significant delay in being able to implement the programs as anticipated. These problems have been addressed and implementation is proceeding in the 2005//2006 school year.

### **Blended Funding**

The Regional Support Network funds the mental health services to this Medicaid population, using the match provided by the schools to obtain additional federal Medicaid resources. The match of educational time is calculated three times a year and certified to the County. The County has developed a sheet that is divided into 15 minute blocks of time across five school days. Each time that the educational staff deliver an intervention that is part of the student's Classroom based mental health plan they note this on the sheet. Match is calculated on the percent of time each day they deliver these interventions, and what percent of students in their classroom are receiving these services. Additional match includes calculations that the school districts make involving indirect costs such as space for therapists.

### **Project Data**

The following information responds to the specific data required by statute for the Clark County School-Based Mental Health Services Project for the 2004-2005 academic year:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Children Served  | 137                                       |
| Amount Charged to the Community<br>Mental Health - General Fund Federal<br>Appropriation | \$646,878                                 |
| Average Blended Funding per Child  | \$4722                                    |
| Services Provided  | School-based<br>Mental Health<br>Services |

## **CONCLUSION**

At this time, the Department participates in one program that blends funds to provide enhanced services to children and their families with multiple needs. The Clark County School-based Mental Health Services Project operates under a proviso to the Mental Health Division's biennial budget. This program was re-evaluated and re-contracted for the 2004-2005 academic year. Full implementation is occurring in the current, 2005-2006 academic year.