



## Mid-America School Mental Health Learning Community

### Request for Applications

#### Project Description

The Mid-America Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC), based at the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, invites district teams from our region to participate in a 6-month **School Mental Health Learning Community** focused on improving state and district capacity to implement effective multi-tiered systems of school mental health support.

**School Districts from the following states are eligible:** Iowa    Kansas    Missouri    Nebraska

#### What is School Mental Health?

This Learning Community will support the framework of Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems. The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) describes **Comprehensive school mental health systems (CSMHS)** as “providing a full array of tiered services, including universal mental health promotion activities, as well as selective prevention and indicated early intervention services, including clinical assessment and treatment. They are built on collaborative partnerships between school systems and community programs, so that the efforts of school-employed mental health professionals are augmented in a planned, purposeful way by community mental health programs, such as community mental health centers, hospitals, and universities, to improve student behavior, reduce barriers to learning, increase access to mental health care, and improve both student attendance and academic achievement. In addition, CSMHS use evidence-based practices to the greatest extent possible and attempt to address quality improvement.”

#### What is the role of the Mid-America MHTTC?

Funded in September 2018 by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of HHS, the Mid-America MHTTC is one of ten centers charged with supporting mental health technical assistance and training in their respective regions. All regional centers have also been charged with focusing specifically on School Mental Health. As part of this work, we are participating in a **national learning collaborative** focused on the fundamentals of school mental health and are sharing innovation and resources with our states. In addition, based on input from our region’s state leaders, we are offering this additional intensive learning opportunity uniquely focused on the school mental health needs and interests of our 4-state region.

#### Regional School Mental Health Learning Community Overview

The Learning Community will be co-facilitated by the Mid-America MHTTC and the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland School of Medicine ([www.schoolmentalhealth.org](http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org)). The *goals* of the Regional School Mental Health Learning Community are to support our region’s districts and states to implement best practices and policies that support comprehensive school mental health. The Learning Community will *consist*





of in-person and virtual learning sessions, technical assistance and coaching, and the development of strategic improvement plans tailored to your districts and states

### Learning Community Mission and Focus

All district teams selected to participate in the Learning Community will work toward the common mission of improving school mental health systems. Teams will engage in strategic planning around building comprehensive school mental health programming and will develop implementation plans that can be used to guide their district efforts and inform the state as a result of the process. We will tailor learning sessions to the needs and interests of district teams, but anticipated focus areas include:

- Integrating mental health into school safety planning and budgeting
- Universal (Tier 1) mental health supports in schools
- Tiers 2/3 Mental Health Services, including partnering with community behavioral health providers
- Financing school mental health systems

### Benefits of Participation

- **Participate in one-day in-person technical assistance/training visit** from the NCSMH and MHTTC team to support your district's and state's unique school mental health priorities and quality improvement goals
- Learning community teams will receive **training, coaching and technical assistance by NCSMH and MHTTC team members** representing various content areas in and related to school mental health, and peer networking opportunities within the LC, including:
  - 4 virtual learning sessions focused on:
    - Special Topics in School Mental Health
    - Training and technical assistance on usage of The Shape System, a public-access, web-based platform that offers schools, districts, and states a workspace and targeted resources to support school mental health quality improvement. ([www.theshapesystem.com](http://www.theshapesystem.com)), SHAPE is designed to:
      - Allow users to map their school mental health services and supports
      - Self-assess your system's performance based on national school mental health performance measures
      - Receive custom reports and strategic planning guides and resources
      - Use additional SHAPE resources including Screening and Assessment Library and the Trauma-Responsive Schools Assessment and Resources
      - Use state and district dashboards to collaborate with schools in your region
  - Targeted technical assistance via phone/videoconference from national school mental health experts





- Participation in a Learning Community listserv to facilitate cross-team communication and resource sharing
- Opportunity for district/school sites to receive more targeted training and technical assistance through the MHTTC as part of a *demonstration project*. Demonstration projects are selected on an ongoing basis by MHTTC personnel based on district/state needs and the capacity of the MHTTC to meet those needs within the proposed workplan. Up to four demonstration projects may be selected each year.

### Expected Responsibilities

- Participate in the Learning Community orientation webinar (all team members)
- Participate in 4 virtual learning sessions with MHTTC and NCSMH leaders for shared learning progress reporting, consultation, and technical assistance
- Complete district and school level (as appropriate) quality measures
- Participate in a 1-day in-person technical assistance/training meeting by NCSMH and MHTTC team members
  - [All travel and training costs of the NCSMH and MHTTC team members will be covered by the MHTTC]
  - State leaders will support the MHTTC in arranging meeting logistics in their respective states (identifying and inviting participants, arranging meeting venue and materials)
- Engage in ongoing evaluation (including intermittent survey and interview formats) of impact of Learning Community participation

### Eligibility

- Applicants must be district teams from one of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Region 7 states: Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska.
- **To participate, your team must include at least two school district leaders.** District participants should have or be working toward **Comprehensive School Mental Health System (CSMHS) that have:**
  1. A full array of tiered services,
  2. Collaborative school-community partnerships to address barriers to learning,
  3. Evidence-based practices, and
  4. Ability to address quality improvement
- **Applicants must identify and obtain commitments from a core Learning Community team of 4-6 members.**
- Applicants must have internet and phone access to be able to participate in virtual learning experiences.

### Application Q&A Webinar

The MHTTC and NCSMH will host a webinar for potential applicants to the **Mid-America School Mental Health Learning Community** to review the application process and answer questions. Please join the webinar at **2:00 pm CST on October 8th, 2020**. This webinar will be recorded and archived online.





If you have questions, please send a detailed email with your question(s) and contact information (name, organization/school district, telephone number and email address) to Brandy Clarke, [MidAmerica@MHTTCnetwork.org](mailto:MidAmerica@MHTTCnetwork.org)

### APPLICATION

Review Criteria	Application
The capacity and commitment of the District team to coordinate Learning Community participation and change at the district level.	<b>Capacity and Commitment</b> Provide a <u>one-page</u> letter of intent from Team Leader describing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why the team wants to participate in the Learning Community</li><li>• The team's commitment to Learning Community involvement</li><li>• The team's school mental health experience and capacity to achieve Learning Community goals</li><li>• The knowledge and skillset of the Team Leader</li></ul>
Clear description of state-district school mental health characteristics.	<b>State and District Overview</b> Provide a brief description (no more than 500 words) of the district including number of participating schools, number and description of staff, types of programs and services, school-community partnerships, and demographic information on population served. Also describe any existing school mental health-related projects and initiatives at the district or school level level, including those related to school safety planning and implementation.
Clearly delineated challenges, opportunities, goals, and commitment to programmatic change.	<b>Brief Responses to Questions</b> (Each response should not exceed 500 words) <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What do you see as the top challenges and opportunities in your district(s) to implement and/or expand comprehensive school mental health systems?</li><li>2. What are 2-3 school mental health priorities or quality improvement goals you might consider pursuing as part of this learning community?</li></ol>

#### Application Materials to Complete and Submit Electronically:

- 1) Team Member Information
- 2) Letter of Intent from Team Leader
- 3) District and Schools (as appropriate) Overview
- 4) Brief Responses to Questions
- 5) Statements of Commitment from Each Team Member

The application must be saved as a pdf file and electronically submitted to: Brandy Clarke, PhD, at [MidAmerica@MHTTCnetwork.org](mailto:MidAmerica@MHTTCnetwork.org) no later than **Thursday, October 31<sup>th</sup> by 5pm CST**. Faxed or mailed submissions WILL NOT be accepted. The applicant organization will receive email notification of the receipt of the application.

#### LC Participation Decisions

Notification of LC participation decisions will be made no later than **Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup>**.





## Team Member Information

**Please provide the following information about your team members:**

1) Name (Team Leader)

Title, Organization/School District  
Email  
Phone

4) Name

Title, Organization/School District  
Email  
Phone

2) Name

Title, Organization/School District  
Email  
Phone

5) (optional) Name

Title, Organization/School District  
Email  
Phone

3) Name

Title, Organization/School District  
Email  
Phone

6) (optional) Name

Title, Organization/School District  
Email  
Phone



Mid-America (HHS Region 7)

**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

**Statement of Commitment**  
**(must be completed and signed individually by ALL team members)**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to full and active

(name)

(organization)

participation, if my team is selected to participate in the Mid-America Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) and National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) School Mental Health Learning Community. My prospective participation has been approved by my supervisor, and there are no foreseeable barriers to my active engagement in this project. I will make my best effort to participate in all project activities and fulfill my Learning Community team responsibilities.

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Name

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Signature

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Date

