



*Education Development Center, Inc.*

Building  
Collaboration for  
Mental Health Services  
in California Schools

Dear Superintendent:

With approval of Proposition 63, now known as the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), California voters created opportunities for new funding and enhanced collaboration between public schools and the California State Department of Mental Health (DMH.) At this writing, the DMH and the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) are finalizing guidelines for the Prevention and Early Implementation (PEI) component of the MHSA. This presents an immediate opportunity for schools and mental health services in your county to expand interagency collaboration and fund sharing to provide mental health services to the age group served by schools (0 to 22.)

In each county, the Director of Mental Health Services is charged to develop a local plan to utilize new funds for PEI for children and youth. In counties with more than 200,000 residents, the plans must designate 51% of the budget for the priority age group (0 through 25.) Regardless of the size of counties, the plans must be the result of community collaboration. School failure and dropout are two of the negative outcomes of untreated mental illness specifically named in new legislation.

This planning process has already begun in counties throughout the State. If you are not already involved in local plans for the new funding, please contact our office so we may assist you in connecting with mental health administrators in your region.

In May 2007 Education Development Center (EDC) was awarded a contract from the California Department of Education (CDE) to work on enhancing collaboration between the schools and departments of mental health. The activities of the contract, "Building Collaboration for Mental Health Services in California Schools," are timed to coincide with the implementation of the PEI planning processes for the MHSA.

Look for future communication about meetings facilitated by EDC staff that will occur in your area. The primary purpose of the meetings is to enhance collaboration by bringing together local representatives of school systems and mental health departments. Your input and participation in the meetings will be valued and are essential to success.

If you have questions, please contact me at the number below or by email at [bbradley@edc.org](mailto:bbradley@edc.org). We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Beverly Bradley, PhD  
Associate Project Director

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