A. Bucks County Profile

Bucks County, Pennsylvania, with its 628,195 residents as of July 2018, is north of Philadelphia and bounded by the Delaware River to the southeast. Doylestown is the county seat. Governed by a three-member Board of Commissioners, the County of Bucks government is a large diverse organization with multiple divisions. Under the County of Bucks Housing & Human Services Division falls the following departments and services: Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Children & Youth Social Services (C&Y), Behavioral Health (BH), Mental Health & Developmental Programs (MH/DP), Housing Services, and the Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc. (BCDAC, Inc.), also known as the Single County Authority (SCA). The Bucks County Housing & Human Services’ mission is to offer a community where all individuals and families thrive by supporting and strengthening individual and family wellness through community connections, collaboration, integration, innovation, and responsible stewardship of resources.

B. Introduction

The Bucks County SCA is responsible for planning, coordinating and oversight of all publicly funded drug and alcohol prevention, intervention, treatment and case management services for Bucks County residents.

The Department of Mental Health/Developmental Programs is responsible for the administration of services to Bucks County residents with a mental illness, intellectual disability, or developmental delay/disability and their families. The purpose of services is to support individuals to live in the community and to actively participate in community life. Examples of children’s supports and services include: Student Assistance Program (SAP), Outpatient Therapy, Respite Services, High Fidelity Wraparound, Blended Case Management, Family Based Mental Health Services, School Based services, and the Bucks L.I.F.E. Program offering various support services for youth and parents.

Collectively, Behavioral Health, Mental Health/Developmental Programs, and the SCA are committed to the provision of services and supports for all residents of Bucks County which will:

- Provide awareness and knowledge on the nature and extent of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, abuse and education, and the effects on individuals, families and communities along with depression and suicide awareness
- Provide technical assistance and aid communities in building capacity to enhance their ability to prevent alcohol, tobacco and other drug use
- Provide support for community and school-based activities that promote mental wellness, healthy and drug free lifestyles
- Provide opportunities to assist youth and families through times of high risk and/or to ease the transition into a higher level of treatment when needed
- Provide opportunities through the Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP) to foster collaboration and partnership between the Child-Serving Systems
C. SCOPE

The Bucks County Single County Authority (SCA), in partnership with the Bucks County Department of Mental Health/Developmental Programs, is issuing this request for proposals (RFP) to meet the SAP Co-occurring Mental Health (MH)/Drug & Alcohol (D&A) needs of Bucks County students. This RFP is being issued to stimulate the development and growth of new ideas and ways to provide an integrated approach that is fully coordinated into the community and school systems. The goal of this integration is to promote wellness and resiliency by engaging youth through a coordinated, holistic model and to increase partnership and efficiencies with schools by creating a more streamlined approach to maximize SAP resources. Therefore, all SAP services delivered in Bucks County will be integrated in such a way that will combine all SAP funding, currently under separate administration through the Bucks County MH/DP and the Bucks County Drug & Alcohol departments. Under this restructure, funding and oversight for SAP liaison services will be managed through combined departmental efforts supporting what will now be referred to as Behavioral Health Liaisons.

Support for a co-occurring approach to SAP liaison delivery comes from youth data gathered across Bucks County school districts highlighting both substance use and mental health needs. As is done every other year, participating school districts administer the Pennsylvania Youth Survey to their students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12. In Bucks County for the 2017 survey, 49 out of 78 schools in 12 out 13 public school districts participated in the survey. 19,420 valid surveys were submitted by Bucks County students from the 49 schools in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 for a participation rate of 77.6% (19,420 out of a possible 20,035). Overall it was a 68.2% participation rate (28,491 possible in all 78 schools).

This survey provides a benchmark for measuring change in behaviors and perceptions over time. It is important to identify County-wide needs regarding substance use, alcohol, other drug prevention as well as mental health related trends within the County. Based on the results of this process, the 2017 PAYS survey results found the following as high need areas for Bucks County students:

- The most common early initiation/higher prevalence substance used was alcohol (42.2% of students in this county, compared to 43.3% at the state level). The next most frequent drug used was marijuana, with 18.3% indicating lifetime use (compared to 17.7% at the state level).
- The most common depressed thought was “at times I think I am no good at all,” reported by 32.4% of students in this county. 33.5% of students reported they felt sad or depressed MOST days in the past 12 months. Overall, 14.3% of students had seriously considered attempting suicide, compared to 16.5% of students at the state level.
- Students in Bucks County reported the three highest overall (all grades combined) scores for the following risk factor scales: Perceived Risk of Drug Use (48.9% of students
D. PURPOSE

The SCA and Bucks County Department of Mental Health/Developmental Programs (MH/DP) is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) to purchase the following services:

STUDENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES (SAP)

Pennsylvania requires all school districts to have SAP Programs, in every elementary and secondary school building, as well as charter and cyber schools. Act 211 of 1990 requires each school district to “establish and maintain a program to provide appropriate counseling and support services to students who experience problems related to the use of drugs, alcohol and dangerous controlled substances.” Further, through the direction of the 1991 Secretary’s Plan to the General Assembly...“All students, kindergarten through twelfth grades, shall have access to the services of a core team trained to offer developmentally appropriate services within the Student Assistance Program.” In addition, Chapter 12 of the PA School Code was amended in December 2005 to include for the planning and provision of Student Assistance Programs for all school entities.

The Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program is overseen by the PA Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS) Interagency, Statewide Staff and Regional Coordinators’ team, which is comprised of representation from the PA Departments of Education (Safe Schools Office), Drug and Alcohol Programs (Division of Prevention and Intervention) and Human Services (Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services). SAP is based upon State guidelines, professional standards, and policies and procedures adopted by the local school board of directors. Professional training conducted by a PA Approved SAP Training Provider (PASTP) is required for team members to ensure the appropriateness of the recommended services, effective interagency collaboration and compliance with state and federal laws protecting the privacy rights of parents and students.

SAP delivery involves the provision of services aimed at assisting a student in a school district with eliminating barriers to academic success. SAP is the first line of response and intervention when emerging problems and concerns are noted with students at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Through the SAP model, school staff are trained to identify mental health concerns, tobacco or other drugs that may be a barrier to student success. The primary goal of SAP is to help students overcome barriers, remain in school, and experience success. Services
may include: consultation, referrals to school SAP teams and SAP liaisons (currently Mental Health or D&A liaisons), risk assessments, in-school support, and referrals for additional supports in the community.

The process for referral should follow the 4-phase model as outlined below, taken from the PA Network for Student Assistance Services Interagency Committee (www.pnsas.org):

**Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program Four Phase Model**

**Phase One - Referral:** Anyone can refer a student to SAP when they are concerned -- any school staff, a student’s friend, a family member or community member. The students themselves can even go directly to the SAP team to ask for help. The SAP team contacts the parent for permission to proceed with the SAP process.

- Identify at-risk behaviors
- Referral to Core team
- Initial fact-finding
- Parent contact and participation

**Phase Two - Team Planning:** The SAP team gathers objective information about the student’s performance in school from all school personnel who have contact with the student. Information is also collected from the parent. The team meets with the parent to discuss the data collected and also meets with the student. Together, a plan is developed that includes strategies for removing the learning barriers and promoting the student’s academic and personal success to include in-school and/or community-based services and activities.

- Information gathering
- Student conference
- Team planning
- Parent conference

**Phase Three - Team Interventions and Recommendations:** The plan is put into action. The team assists in linking the student to in-school and/or community-based services and activities. The team might recommend a drug and alcohol or mental health screening or assessment.

- Intervention – in-school or community resource
- Recommendation for services

**Phase Four - Support and Follow-up:** The SAP team continues to work with and support the student and his/her family. Follow-up includes monitoring, mentoring, and motivating for academic success.

- Support services for students/identify problem behaviors
- Referral to core team
- Parent contact and participation
School Based Dual Liaison Mental Health/Drug & Alcohol SAP Supports

(Henceforth referred to as Behavioral Health Liaisons)

As representatives of County Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health systems, professionally trained liaisons provide consultation to teams and families regarding community and/or school-based screenings/assessments, and other services for drug and alcohol and mental health related concerns.

PRIMARY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH LIAISONS:

1. In-school support to Core teams including Core team meeting attendance by the Behavioral Health Liaison as a SAP provider representative

2. Co-occurring screenings and formal SAP assessments (defined below), utilizing identified screening and assessment tools, assessing for both MH and D&A needs regardless of referral drivers;
   - A screening or pre-assessment is intended to gather enough information to determine if the situation warrants further evaluation and/or the severity of the student’s needs to determine the timeline of need for services.
   - An assessment is done by an agency staff member from a drug and alcohol or mental health provider. Typically, this assessment occurs in an agency but may take place in the school setting. An assessment is much more detailed and clinical in nature. It delves deeper into the specifics of mental health and/or drug and alcohol need areas.

3. Consultations with school personnel regarding a student referral

4. Consultations with families regarding a student referral and recommendations

5. Follow up on concerns outlined through the assessment process, e.g. Behavioral Health-Works (BH-Works); Brief individualized follow-up engagement meetings for SAP identified Youth (up to 2 sessions) that involves helping the youth and family connect to providers, supports and services as recommended.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Please refer to the “Student Assistance Program Best Practice Guidelines” documents (APPENDIX 1) as a guide for essential elements of effective SAP implementation as well as the Student Assistance Program process workflow chart (APPENDIX 2). Bucks County has also developed County specific service delivery standards to serve as a guide for liaison provider agencies (APPENDIX 3).
Additional information regarding “SAP Best Practice Guidelines for Drug & Alcohol/Mental Health Liaison Services” may be found at the following website: http://pnsas.org/Portals/1/Uploaded%20Files/Joint%20SAP%20Liasion%20Best%20Practice%20Guidelines%208.1.18.pdf.

Partnerships with the schools are essential to the success and effectiveness of the Student Assistance Program. This partnership should be inclusive and reflective of activities outlined below:

Requirements:

- Annual Letters of Agreement with School Districts with identified topic areas
- At a minimum, Supervisor attendance is expected at Safe & Drug Free School Meetings, Quarterly Prevention SAP Meetings, any County and/or State SAP Meetings, e.g. SAP Liaison Networking. If unable to attend, notification must be sent in advance to County contacts.
- Behavioral Health Liaisons are expected to attend all mandatory trainings and receive supervisory support
- Establishment of a regular communication system with the schools before the start of the school year and throughout the school year that includes:
  - Provider information and points of contact
  - Staffing updates and staff coverage plans
  - Evaluation process with effectiveness/satisfaction surveys and debrief meetings
  - Collaborative planning tied to the needs reflected in the available data sets (internal provider, SAP, PAYS, etc.)
- Notification of County related to any staff vacancies
- Notification of County related to results of the annual collaborative needs planning process with the schools

Additional considerations:

- Partnership with each School’s PA safe2say initiative and any other relevant school initiatives
- Facilitation of depression, suicide, and/or other screenings in addition to assessments based on the needs of the students
- Work alongside school personnel to follow the SAP model with fidelity and provide program education to support a strong referral base

Additional collaborative partnerships should be fostered through County and provider school-based efforts, such as NAMI’s Ending the Silence program, Minding your Mind, Question
Persuade Refer (QPR) trainings, Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) trainings, School-Based Mental Health programs, etc.

Regular implementation oversight meetings will be held with County Offices through the launch of the newly integrated Behavioral Health Liaison model. Additionally, SAP delivery and implementation will be monitored annually through reviews by the County Offices for adherence to best practices.

**DATA & REPORTING**

The selected provider will be required, at a minimum, to utilize the BH-Works, a web-based tool that provides standardized behavioral health risk screening to students ([https://drexel.edu/familyintervention/behavioral-health-screening/mdlogix/](https://drexel.edu/familyintervention/behavioral-health-screening/mdlogix/)). This data collection effort was launched statewide and continues to be managed and reported through Drexel University, from funds made available through the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant. Additional assessment tools can be considered as part of the proposal.

All required reports must be submitted to the appropriate provider. Selected provider will be required to enter all Drug and Alcohol Prevention services into PA Web Infrastructure for Treatment Services (PA WiTS), a data collection system for the State Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, which will be monitored by the County SCA Prevention Coordinator, along with quarterly SAP reporting into the State SAP data collection system at SAPJQRS.org (Joint Quarterly Reporting System). Selected provider will also be required to attend quarterly meetings as well as provide supporting documentation to the SAP related activities provided. This could include but is not limited to: a tracking and summary of the SAP liaison services provided, the number and demographics of students served, aggregate data on the primary issues identified via screenings conducted, and reasons for referral. Selected provider will be asked to ensure that there is a consistent understanding of the data elements among liaison agencies and staff, and that the data is used for continuous quality improvement.

There will be ongoing coordinated oversight efforts by the County departments. Selected provider will be subject to an annual, on-site monitoring process conducted by the County Offices and as mandated by the State Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.

**TRAININGS**

Provider Behavioral Health Liaisons will be trained and receive certification through a Pennsylvania Approved SAP Training Provider for mandatory K-12 SAP Training and attend professional development webinars as offered. Training requirements are reviewed at annual Quality Assurance reviews by County Offices.

Selected provider will be required to have Behavioral Health liaisons receive additional training support in areas, such as:
Cross systems/co-occurring competencies – understanding of both MH and D&A service systems, matching needs with services and resources, assessing for both need areas regardless of the referral drivers. Also includes other co-occurring issues, such as developmental disorders.

Engagement strategies- providers, school staff, parents, and youth, including providing training and education to all entities above regarding the SAP process to encourage a strong referral base

Meaningful Meetings – how to facilitate or participate in effective team planning

Act 53 through the BCDAC, Inc.

Recognizing trauma and trauma-informed practices

Crisis response as well as suicide prevention and intervention techniques

Trends related to MH or D&A based on referrals and available data sets

SAP PA state and County system structure at hire and as a refresher when needed

E. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILL AND EXPERIENCE
Any provider with experience in delivering needs-based services within a community and/or school based system may apply. All communities in Bucks County are eligible for services; however, in the fiscal year 2018-2019, there were 11 school districts, 2 charter schools and 1 school of technology receiving SCA funded SAP services. There were 9 school districts receiving Mental Health funded SAP services. Under this proposed redesign, Behavioral Health Liaisons would be available for all 13 school districts. The delivery of services and resources will be most effective when provided based on needs planning with the 13 school districts on an annual basis.

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

Masters level staff preferred. Selected provider agrees to attend all DDAP, SCA, MH, and SAP state mandated trainings as well as any recommended trainings, as appropriate to enhance service delivery.

QUESTIONS FOR RESPONDENTS:

1. Discuss your organization’s experience in providing services to school age youth and adolescents. Please describe the Student Assistance services your organization provides and where (list of School Districts and buildings).
   OR if not applicable, any other school-related services you provide and where.
2. How do you envision provision of this integrated service delivery? How will you provide these services in a co-occurring way (Mental Health/Drug & Alcohol)? Please include your plan to address other co-occurring issues which may impact behavioral health, such as other development disorders and Intellectual Disabilities/Autism (ID/A). *Your creativity on this question is encouraged.*

3. Does your organization screen and assess for both Mental Health needs and Drug & Alcohol needs? Please describe. If not applicable, please include your plan to address.

4. Please describe your relationships with community-based behavioral health treatment providers and how do you, or plan to, coordinate care and referrals with them in order to support a timely and coordinated transition to services? This may include your own agency processes for internal referrals and ways to minimize additional intake or assessment appointments.

5. How does your agency incorporate recovery and resiliency, Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP), and System of Care (SOC) philosophy and principles within the organization’s culture and work?

6. Please discuss the outcome measures that your organization currently or plans to use to monitor the quality of the services/programs you would deliver for SAP services.

7. Provide a brief history/overview of your organization, including ownership, current officers, board members, philosophy, and goals as well as an organizational chart. Please submit an organization chart for your agency that includes SAP staffing, if applicable. Indicate your agency’s status as either non-profit or for profit.

8. What staff training is required by your agency? Please describe your current training mechanisms and topics covered.

9. Please indicate what *specific* drug and alcohol and mental health training is, or will be, required for staff/supervisors. Taking a holistic approach to assessing students, how will you ensure there is co-occurring training, which includes other co-occurring issues which may impact behavioral health, such as developmental disorders, learning disabilities, ID/A, etc.?

10. If a current SAP provider, are all Staff SAP trained K – 12th grade?

11. If a current SAP provider, what is the educational level requirement for SAP Staff employed by your organization?

12. Please describe your ability to support all grade levels, K - 12th grade, through this integrated SAP model.

13. How will you monitor staff training for the DDAP 12-hour requirement (1st year and annually thereafter?)


14. For current SAP providers, what is the supervisory structure for support and oversight of SAP staff? If not a SAP provider, please describe the plan for your proposed supervisory structure and oversight.

15. Indicate your County and school notification plan for coverage of staff vacancies.

16. Describe your capacity to address and meet the standard for suicide prevention and intervention as part of the school team.
17. Include your plan for ongoing education, awareness, and promotion of the SAP process for students, family and school personnel, beginning at the start of each school year.

18. How will you assess and plan for school-based needs across the County? What is your experience with needs planning and data analysis?

F. COST PROPOSAL

Funding will depend on the availability of State and Federal funds from both the Bucks County SCA and MH/DP departments. Funds for this contract are based on the estimate of State and Federal funds for the applicable year. Should funding be reduced below the estimated level, the amount of funds available for the contract may be reduced or terminated per notice by the Bucks County SCA.

Please utilize the budget forms found as Budget, Personnel and Equipment tabs of spreadsheet. Instructions for the Budget forms are also included. Indicate the projected cost and revenues to operate these projects for one year.

Funding will be granted on a fee-for-service basis, utilizing a proposed rate. Funds will be allocated for assessment, consultation, and administrative services, such as student screening, assessment prep work, family meetings and debriefing, core team meetings, student referral reviews, student consultation with school personnel, referral services, and SAP groups for psychoeducational purposes.

For each line item please provide a brief narrative as to what is included in the cost and any formula or percentages used to calculate that cost and the proposed unit rate.

In addition to completing the budget forms and narrative please specifically address the following additional questions:

1. If your organization’s building/staff costs are pro-rated to more than one program, please describe the method or formula used for pro-ration of rent, utilities, staff, supplies and other shared expenses. See Budget Workbook attachment.

2. If applicable, describe the procedure used by your parent organization to allocate indirect costs to the applicant agency and the percentage used.

Maximum SCA and MH combined total financial participation for FY 2020-2021 is $339,000.00.

G. CRITERIA FOR PROPOSAL EVALUATION
All proposals received by the specified date shall be subject to evaluation by a review committee comprised of Bucks County SCA, MH/DP and Behavioral Health staff, as well as other stakeholders. The County will select the offer that represents the best value to the County, based on a comparative analysis and an integrated assessment of proposals against all source selection criteria in the solicitation. Special consideration will be given to responses from providers who have an office located within Bucks County and can respond to the SAP needs county-wide.

**CONTRACT PERIOD WITH OPTION TO EXTEND**

The period of the contract shall be for one year commencing on July 1, 2020. Annual contracts will be executed, with one-year amendment extensions for each additional year, if the SCA and County decide to exercise that option.

**H. FORMAT OF PROPOSAL**

Include agency name on the cover and on all attachments. Number all pages, including attachments. Include a Table of Contents. Proposal content should follow the requested sequence and text should be thorough but succinct.

Proposal should be arranged as follows:

- **Title Page:** showing RFP number, due date and time, proposer name, address, telephone number, contact person, and EIN number.
- **Letter of Introduction:** one page, introducing the company and signed by the person authorized to sign on behalf of, and bind the company to, statements made in response to this RFP.
- **Company Profile and Provider Information,** addressing the Company Profile and Vendor Information points specified.
  - Brief (one or two paragraphs) description of the provider’s business, its history and future plans.
  - Vendor size
  - Vendor stability
  - Number of years in business
  - Board of Directors membership list
  - Current Organizational charts
  - Copies of PA certifications/licenses and/or accreditations for proposed services
  - List of organizations or counties with whom the bidder holds contracts. Include names of Executive Directors and phone numbers. These organizations may be contacted for references
  - Responses to the specific questions outlined under Section E, Questions for Respondents
- Attachment of a brochure (or other document) with your service location(s), hours of operation, and services offered
- A copy of the organization’s screening/assessment tool(s) currently utilized for Student Assistance Programming (SAP)
- Inclusion of all Letters of Agreement (executed or in draft) or Memorandum of Understanding with other providers, agencies or community entities and school districts to demonstrate efforts toward integrated care or community partnerships.
- Copy of your most recent Financial Audit, if not already on file
- Budget documents as per the Cost Proposal section (see attachment)
- Inclusion of copies of required insurance coverage (see attachment)

I. PROPOSED TIMELINE
   - 1/6/20 Release of RFP
   - 1/28/20 9:00 – 10:00 AM Mandatory Bidder’s Conference (snow date Thursday, January 30, 2020).
     - Location: Bucks County Administration Building, First Floor, R112. 55 E. Court Street, Doylestown, PA 18901
   - 3/6/20 Proposals Due
   - 4/24/20 Selection Made by Committee
   - May 2020 Notification of Awardee
   - 7/1/20 Implementation of integrated SAP Behavioral Health Liaison model
“SAMPLE”

PLEASE USE YOUR LETTERHEAD

TAX CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

“This is to certify that ______________________________________________________ has paid Corporate, Federal, and State income taxes (if applicable); paid the employer’s share of and has withheld the correct amount of income taxes, F.I.C.A. taxes, and unemployment compensation and workmen’s compensation taxes or premiums from employee’s salaries as required by law, and has remitted such amounts to the appropriate Federal, State, and Local level government for the period of July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.”

ACT 33 STATEMENT

“This is to certify that ______________________________________________________ is aware of and is in compliance with the obligations of Act 33 of 1985 (Child Protective Services Law).”

____________________ ______________________________
Date Signature

_______________________________________________
Title

***This form is to be submitted at the end of the Fiscal Year.
BHS DNA: TaxCertificateStatementAct33 4/09
Appendix 1

PENNSYLVANIA STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR NEW TEAMS

The intent of this document is to provide an overview of the essential components needed to insure the longevity and efficacy of the Student Assistance Program. These guidelines are considered best practice for the functioning of Student Assistance and are intended to provide direction and support to new teams in the school districts.

1. The school will develop a core team including a central office representative (i.e. superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of curriculum and instruction, director of pupil services, etc.) and a building administrator (i.e. principal, assistant/vice principal) from each building where the SAP will be instituted. These two team slots are nonnegotiable, and the administrators must attend the entire training. Past experience has demonstrated that training and leadership has served to produce more successful teams.
   - Administrators who are lost through attrition must be replaced on the SAP teams. New administrators serving on SAP teams must be SAP trained.
   - There should be a minimum of 4 members of the SAP team, representative of all the groups that comprise school staff. Remaining team members (at least four per building) may be representatives from any or all of the following groups: teacher, counselor, psychologist, nurse, or other related professional staff.
   - SAP Teams are to have connections to and set up linkages with services within the community. Representatives from the county behavioral health and drug and alcohol systems will be appointed as liaisons to core teams and will attend training with their teams. Should the school have difficulty in securing this service, the chief school administrator should contact the county drug and alcohol and/or behavioral health administrator.

2. SAP Teams should have a minimum of 80 minutes per week/cycle available for team work.
   - SAP teams should be provided a common meeting time of at least 40 minutes per week or cycle.
   - Included in the 80 minutes is the planning time used for case management/intervention activities.
   - It is strongly recommended that this meeting time occur during the contract day, and not be assigned during the teacher preparation periods.

3. All team members must attend the entire training provided by a Commonwealth Approved Training Provider. Successful completion of the requirements of the professional training of the SAP Core Team delivered by a Commonwealth Approved Trainer is required.
   - Participants must attend all sessions at the training to be eligible for SAP certification.
   - Participants must complete all required assignments in the allotted time to be eligible for SAP certification.

4. The process for accessing SAP services and the steps utilized by the SAP team when a referral is received should be published and distributed to school staff, board members, students, parents, and the community.
5. The school will allocate at least seven hours of in-service/faculty meeting time throughout the first calendar year of program implementation.
   - The in-service would be to inform faculty/support staff about the components of the Student Assistance Program and explain the procedures for making referrals to the core team.
   - After the first year, topics related to SAP should become a part of yearly in-services.
   - All new faculty/staff should receive, through the school’s orientation program, an overview of SAP and an explanation of the procedures for making referrals to the core team.
   - Information on SAP should be made available to all students and parents on a yearly basis.

6. The school will orient the school board on SAP prior to training and update them on SAP activities yearly.

7. The school will develop/revise their drug/alcohol and suicide/behavioral health policies to incorporate SAP.
   The CAT trainer will review district policies prior to training of new SAP teams. Both policies should be reviewed by administration at least once every two years and, if necessary, have revisions adopted by the board.

8. The school will develop guidelines on how parents will become involved in the SAP process.

9. The SAP Team will develop ways to work closely with other initiatives in the building to address the needs of students. (i.e. RTII, PBIS, Olweus, etc.)

10. The SAP Team, working with parents and agencies, is to provide supports for students receiving, or who have received, services from any child-serving agency. The school will establish educational support groups* for students dealing with a variety of issues that interfere with the academic mission of the school within one calendar year of completion of the initial SAP training.
    - Students in out-patient services or those returning from treatment should receive school-based educational support services.
    - Group facilitators must attend a group facilitator’s training with an emphasis on child and adolescent issues prior to conducting groups.
    - Group facilitator training must assist those running groups to separate educational support groups from therapy groups.
    - All groups conducted in the school should be co-facilitated by at least one school person. A plan for coordinating services with drug/alcohol and behavioral health providers should be developed.

11. The school will provide time for team maintenance activities at least twice a year.
    - Drug/alcohol and behavioral health agency liaisons should be included in maintenance activities.

12. The agency service provider and school will negotiate a written cooperative agreement with the local drug and alcohol and behavioral health agency service system that outlines the following: central referral procedures, consultation/education services, designated liaisons from the drug and alcohol and behavioral health systems, assessment services, emergency crisis assistance,
and provisions for treatment, including aftercare. Detailed Letters of Agreement between the schools and the county MH/ID and D&A offices should be written, outlining respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

- This letter of agreement will be written and signed by agency administrators/directors and school administrators.
- The agreement and/or any changes will be negotiated at a minimum of once per year.
- A copy of the letter of agreement must be sent to the school's County Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Administrator and Single County Authority.
- A copy of the letter of agreement will be shared with the SAP Team.

13. The school will utilize the conflict resolution process if problems occur between service provider agencies and the school.

14. Each school should submit anonymous on-line referral data through the On-Line Reporting System (PDE 4092) at www.safeschools.state.pa.us and other information as requested by the Commonwealth.

15. Agency service providers may provide Educational Support Groups in the school, which are defined as follows: The primary purpose of an educational support group is to provide a safe environment for members of the group to sharpen life-skills, discover new and appropriate behaviors and to increase self-awareness.

*Definition - Educational Support Group*: The primary purpose of an educational support group is to provide a safe environment for group members to sharpen life-skills, discover new and appropriate behaviors, and to increase self-awareness.

Updated 8/17/12
STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR FIDELITY

This list of these "critical elements" highlight those elements of the SAP system that are considered absolutely essential to the effectiveness and integrity of SAP as it has existed in Pennsylvania for over 28 years.

Directions: Please rate your Student Assistance Program for fidelity using the following scale. Please place a check in the correct box.  
"0" – not currently in place  
"1" – we currently have this in place but it needs some work  
"2" – we currently have this in place and feel it is working well  
"3" – this is an exemplary element in our program

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<th>SAP GUIDELINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SAP is the designated vehicle that requires and assists each school district to establish and maintain a program to provide appropriate counseling and support services (for students who experience problems related to the use of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and health endangering substances).</td>
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<td>2. SAP is used by school personnel to assist in identifying issues that pose a barrier to a student’s learning and school success.</td>
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<td>3. SAP is clear that it is not a treatment program but a systematic process, mobilizing school resources and community linkages.</td>
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<td>4. The processes used by the SAP Team in a school are determined by a collaborative integration of state guidelines, professional standards, and procedures adopted by the local school board of directors.</td>
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<td>5. Parents are an integral part of the SAP process.</td>
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<td>6. Informed written parental consent is obtained for the SAP process.</td>
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<td>7. The SAP team has developed guidelines on how parents will become involved in the SAP process.</td>
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<td>8. The SAP is a professionally trained team, consisting of school staff from multiple disciplines and county or community agency liaisons.</td>
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<td>9. Liaisons from Mental Health and/or Drug &amp; Alcohol Providers attend approved SAP Core Team Training by a Commonwealth Approved Trainer.</td>
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<td>10. Detailed Letters of Agreement between the schools and the county MH/ID and D&amp;A offices are written, outlining respective roles, responsibilities and expectations.</td>
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<td>11. There is a minimum of 4 members of the SAP team, representative of all the groups that comprise school staff.</td>
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<td>12. A Central Office Representative and a Building Administrator are on the SAP Team and regularly attend SAP team meetings.</td>
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<td>13. Each member of the team has successfully completed the requirements of the professional training of the SAP Core Team delivered by a Commonwealth Approved Trainer is required.</td>
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<td>14. SAP Teams have connections to and set up linkages with services within the community.</td>
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<td>15. The SAP team has input and receives information from the County Coordination Teams.</td>
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<td>16. SAP Teams have identified issues affecting the health, safety and welfare of students and determine if those issues are within the scope of the school.</td>
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<td>17. The SAP Team, working with parents and agencies, provides supports for students receiving, or who have received, services from any child-serving agency.</td>
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<td>SAP GUIDELINE</td>
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<td>18. The Regional Coordinators of the PNSAS are to: provide support and technical assistance to our individual teams and schools; monitor the team’s implementation of the SAP process; and, provide support and technical assistance when requested.</td>
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<td>19. SAP Teams annually in-services school staff, board members, students, parents and the community about the role, responsibilities and limitations of SAP in helping with problems affecting a child’s performance in school.</td>
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<td>20. Teams work closely with other initiatives in the building to address the needs of students. (i.e. RTII, PBIS, Oweus, etc.)</td>
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<td>21. All students, K-12, (including students in Special Education) have access to the services of a SAP Core team.</td>
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<td>22. The process for accessing SAP services and the steps utilizing the SAP team when a referral is received is published and distributed to school staff, board members, students, parents and the community.</td>
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<td>23. SAP Team Maintenance Sessions are held at least twice a year.</td>
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<td>25. Only those persons who have completed a Student Assistance Program training conducted by a Commonwealth Approved Trainer and who have received a certificate may sit on the team.</td>
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<td>26. SAP Team members are regularly attending updates, information sessions and other related in-service trainings in order to stay current on issues pertaining to SAP.</td>
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<td>27. SAP Teams meets for a minimum of 40 minutes per week/cycle and are provided 40 minutes for case management and intervention activities.</td>
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<td>28. SAP Coordinator is designated for each building.</td>
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<td>29. Consequences for policy violations for alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, bullying and other forms of violence are clearly stated and include SAP as the resource for assistance.</td>
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<td>30. Teams have an adequate budget for training.</td>
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<td>31. SAP structures and organization are clearly outlined. (Members, roles and responsibilities, process etc.)</td>
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<td>32. Referral process includes clear and consistent student data collection and review process.</td>
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<td>33. Teams have support from the school board.</td>
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<td>34. Confidentiality guidelines are clearly stated.</td>
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Appendix 2

Student Assistance Process in Pennsylvania

1. Concerns observed by referral source
2. Referral is made to the team
3. Assign a case manager

4. OPTIONAL STEP - If district Student Assistance Program policy requires a written parent/guardian permission prior to sending out Student Information Forms, then contact parent/guardian to explain the SAP process.

5. Send out and gather Student information Forms from school staff (teachers, administration, nurse, counselor, etc.) and parent/guardian.

6. Review data at team meeting Determine if the referral is appropriate and behavior causes barriers to education.

7. Contact parent/guardian to explain the SAP process, resources, and if possible set time for parent/guardian to meet with SAP team (send SAP parent/guardian consent form).

8. Was written parent/guardian permission for SAP process/student interview obtained? (Written parent/guardian permission at this point is mandatory).

   YES
   No The SAP team decides the referral is not warranted.

   NO
   Provide ongoing support to student and family

   SAP team or SAP team member (case manager) meets with the student

   SAP team meeting to discuss concerns and possible consult with liaison

   Develop an intervention plan with parent/guardian involvement

   Written parent/guardian permission obtained for referral to DA or MH screening or assessment

   YES

   Liaison completes screening or assessment

   Liaison shares recommendations with SAP team and parent/guardian

   SAP team or SAP team member (case manager) monitors and communicates with parent/guardian and liaison and/or provider agency if warranted

   Review the intervention plan. Provide ongoing follow-up and support to student and family.

   NO

   School based services

   Review the intervention plan. Provide ongoing follow-up and support to student and family.

* Student consent to share recommendations should be obtained when 42 CFR Part 2 and 4 Pa. Code §355.5 apply.


Updated 1/1/2018
Appendix 3

Bucks County Student Assistance Program Standards for Provider Liaisons

Provider Liaison Role: As representatives of the Bucks County Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health systems, provider liaisons will provide on-site consultation to SAP teams as well as provide support to families and students with substance use and/or mental health related concerns.

1) Provider liaisons will be trained and receive certification through a Pennsylvania Approved SAP Training Provider for mandatory K-12 SAP Training and attend professional development webinars as offered. Provider liaisons will be knowledgeable about the Student Assistance Program model and best practices.

2) Letters of Agreement (LOA or MOU) should be executed annually at the start of the school year, and need to be signed by the D&A and MH providers and school district representative(s). A copy of this LOA should be on file with the SCA and County MH offices.

   At a minimum, the letter of agreement should include the following:
   ➢ a designated contact person for the school and agency
   ➢ the anticipated frequency of attendance for liaisons at SAP team meetings
   ➢ the role of the liaisons in the school SAP process
   ➢ referral procedures
   ➢ school and agency responsibilities and expectations
   ➢ a list of services to be provided within the scope of the role
   ➢ record-keeping requirements
   ➢ a procedure for conflict resolution
   ➢ applicable confidentiality requirements

3) Establish a system of regular communication with all stakeholders. This should include a plan of coverage during times of staff change or vacancy that is clearly communicated to the schools and the County Offices as appropriate. This may also include attending Safe & Drug Free meetings and/or Quarterly Bucks County Provider Collaborative Meetings, or other County meetings as requested.

4) Ensure staff are knowledgeable about available Drug & Alcohol and Mental Health resources, services and supports within Bucks County. This could include needed trainings offered through the County Offices by provider request, as scheduled, or as requested by the County Office(s).

5) Utilize provider SAP and other relevant data available, such as PAYS data, for annual planning and program improvement purposes. Consider surveys for evaluation of impact and effectiveness of SAP liaison services.

6) Submit all required reports to the appropriate agencies. This could include but is not limited to: a tracking and summary of the SAP liaison services provided, the number and demographics of students served, aggregate data on the primary issues identified via screenings conducted, completion of Joint Quarterly Reporting System and Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs prevention data system reporting. Ensure there is a consistent understanding of the data elements among liaison agencies and staff.

7) SAP delivery and implementation will be monitored annually through reviews by the County Office(s) for adherence to best practices. Documentation for the annual reviews may include referral information, tracking of the provider liaison activities (including meetings with the SAP Core team, with students, and with parents), signed consents to participate in SAP liaison services, SAP students served, related support activities, and recommendations and referrals to services and supports.

Created 2019, with excerpts taken from the 2018 Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS) Joint SAP Liaison Best Practice Guidelines document
8) Liaison's responsibilities may include the following:

- attending team meetings and providing other support services as outlined in the letter of agreement
- all Drug and Alcohol SAP liaisons shall attend the 6-hour DDAP-approved Confidentiality Training
- providing consultation and technical assistance services as requested (e.g., attends meetings with parents and school officials)
- participating in team maintenance sessions with SAP teams
- facilitating or co-facilitating school-based support groups as planned
- maintaining data for required reporting as determined by the local SCA and/or Mental Health Administration
- providing relevant training to students, parents, faculty and staff, including the promoting of SAP and SAP services
- assisting the school with stakeholder in-service (i.e., school board, parents, school staff, community members, etc.)
- providing student screenings and/or conducting assessments to identify a student's needs when recommended by the SAP team following the initial data gathering process
- providing follow up on recommendations by assisting students and their parents in the referral to and access of appropriate services recommended as part of the assessment process
- collaborating and working with families, students, school personnel, and agency providers/personnel
- conflict resolution and problem solving, consulting with school personnel and families
- understanding cultural diversity and its role in working with students and families
- understanding procedures for accessing local resources for students and families
- facilitating access to local resources
- team facilitation and group facilitation
- awareness of suicide prevention and intervention techniques
- knowledge of local child-serving systems and services, and the process for school crisis intervention and support services
- knowledge of current trends (i.e., Drug & Alcohol/ MH), risk and protective factors, evidence based prevention programs, typical/atypical child and adolescent behavior, and trauma informed approaches
- knowledge of applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, school policies and procedures, and current best practices related to SAP, including ethics, SAP standards and competencies
- understanding of school-safety issues (e.g., bullying, hazing, harassment, discrimination, violence, morals offenses, etc.)
- Awareness of district protocol including how it relates to intervention, support, and postvention.