

EDUCATIONAL



THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Report to the Education Interim
Committee

School-Based Mental Health Screening Programs Report

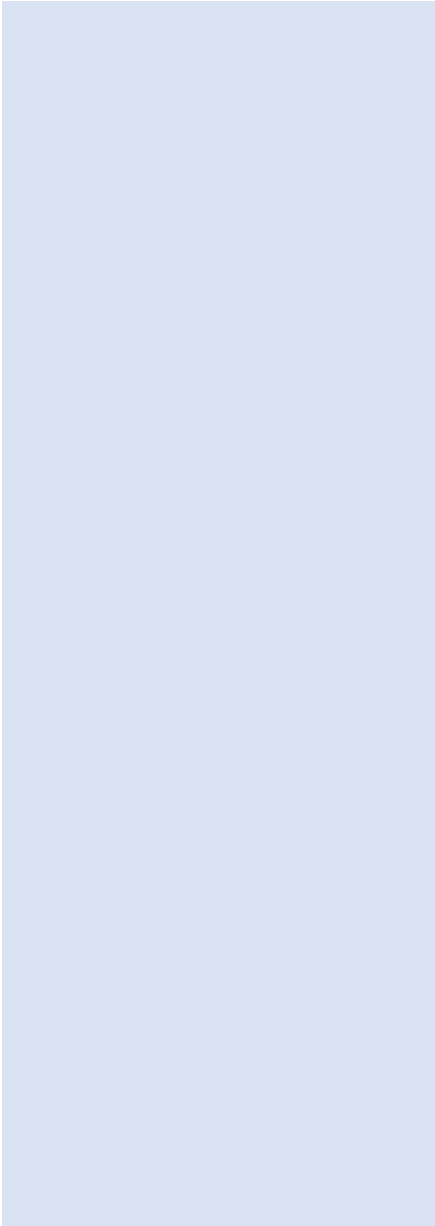
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School-Based Mental Health Screening Programs Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 2020 General Session, the Legislature passed House Bill 323, *School Mental Health Funding Amendments*, which set standards for participating local education agencies (LEAs) to implement approved mental health screening programs for students. In accordance with the bill, the Board passed R277-625, *Mental Health Screeners*, in February 2021, with the purpose of providing the process for an LEA to choose a mental health screener. The rule also established the distribution of funds for a qualifying parent to receive financial assistance for related mental health services.

During the 2021-2022 school year, 20 of the 156 LEAs statewide participated in the school-based mental health screening program. These 20 LEAs account for 46% of the student population in the state (311,891 out of 675,965 students). Those 20 LEAs screened approximately 3,114 students for the possible presence of symptoms related to anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. As a result of the screenings, approximately 1,292 students (or 42%) were then connected to services either within the LEA or as a referral to community resources. Charts within the report provide a comparison of the 2020-2021 school year to the 2021-2022 school year.

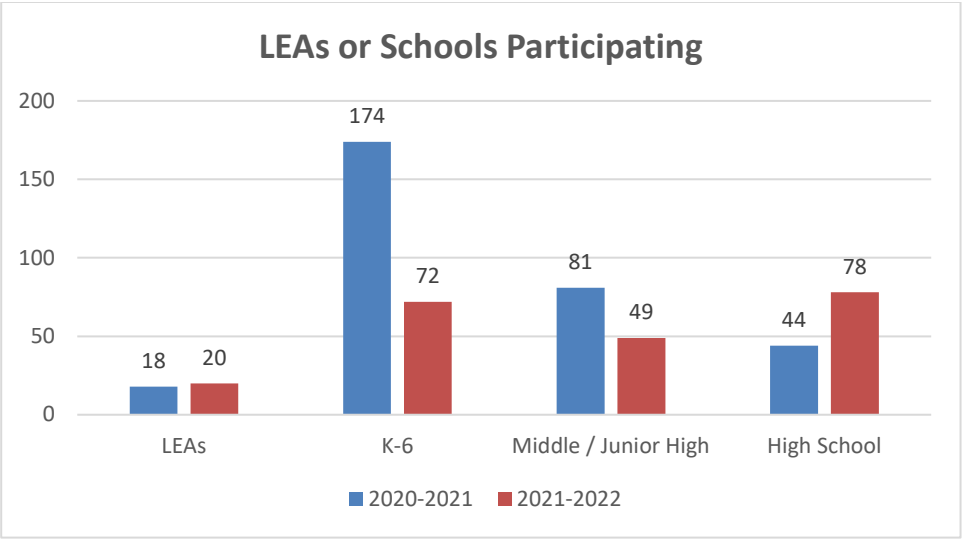
MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING PROGRAM

The creation of the list of screeners was approved in February 2021 by the full Board. The goal with the compiled list was to identify the most comprehensive set of evidence-based tools that specifically targeted mental health conditions. Doing so provide LEAs the best possible menu to choose from allowing for a wide range of choices and thus more control at the local level. Along with the list of screening tools, the Board approved of three mental health conditions for which schools could screen: anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. This list captures the leading mental health conditions that currently affect our LEAs.

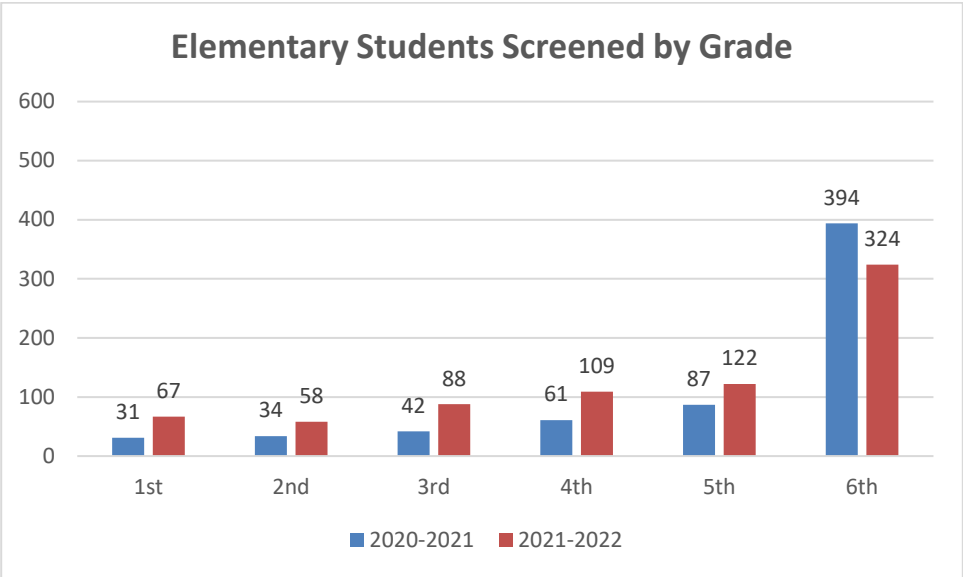
The data presented compares the first end of year report (2020-2021) for the school-based mental health screening program to this past year (2021-2022). Results from the first iteration should be interpreted with caution due to discrepancies in the way the data was reported by respondents of the School-based Mental Health (SBMH) Screening Program Survey.

This report focuses on:

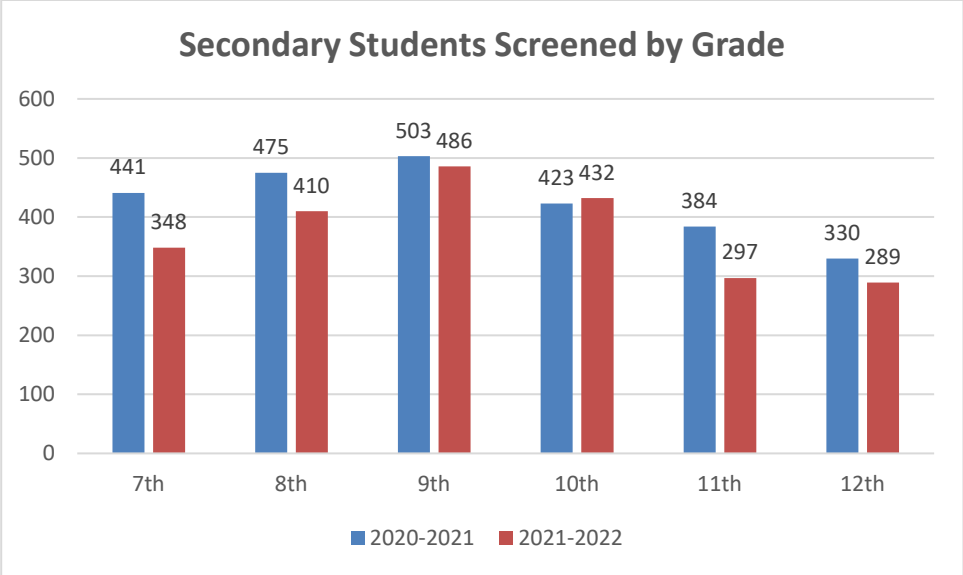
- Number of participating LEAs
- Number of participating schools by types
- Number of students served after initial screening within the LEA and referrals to community resources
- Types of services provided within the LEA as a result of screening



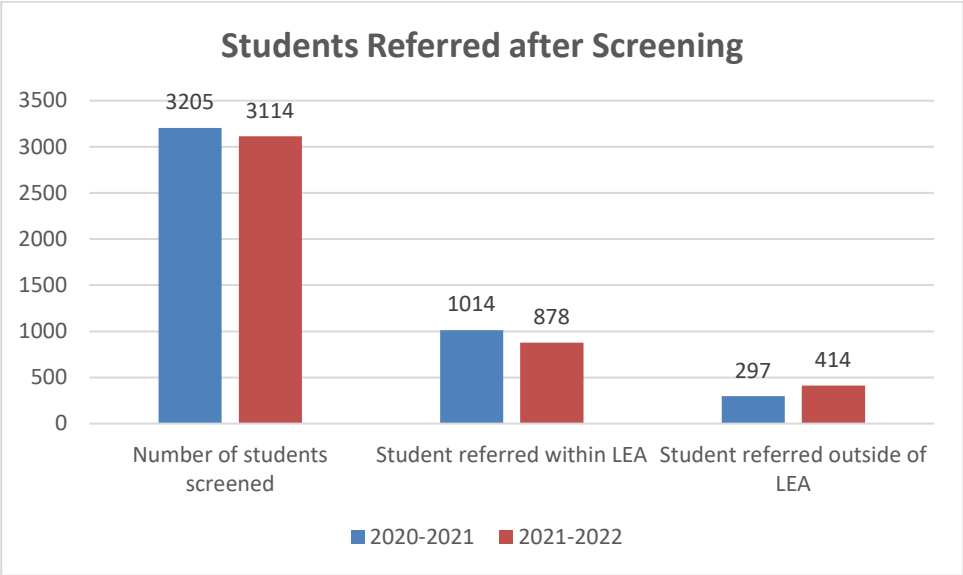
Of the 20 LEAs who participated in the screening program in the 2021-2022 school year, 72 K-6 schools, 49 middle/junior high schools, and 78 high schools conducted screenings. Compared to the 2020-2021 data, more high school students were screened.



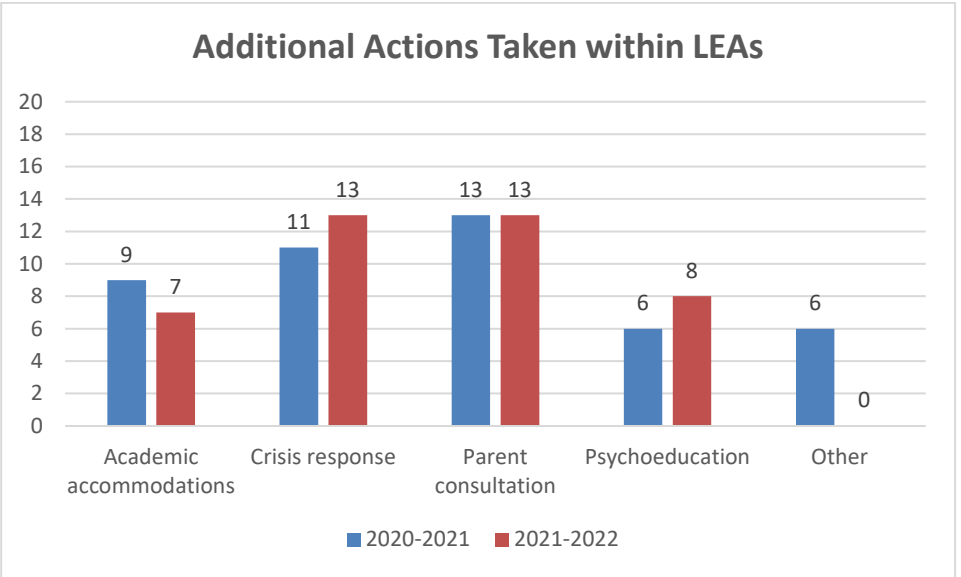
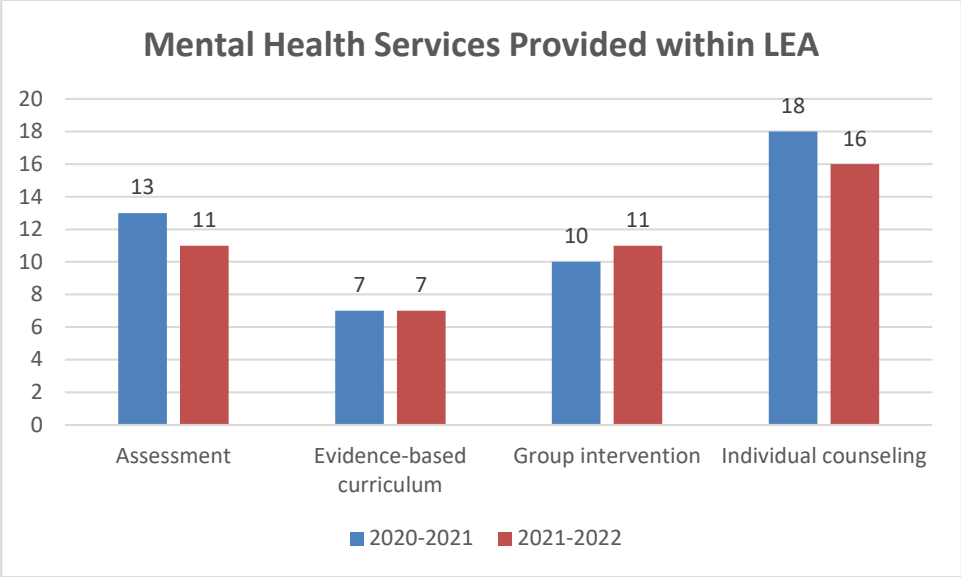
In the 2021-2022, the number of students screened increased within all grade levels except 6th grade.



In the 2021-2022, the number of students screened decreased within all grade levels except 10th grade.



In 2021-2022, fewer students were referred to services within the LEA while more students were referred to outside services than previously.



As a result of the mental health screenings, additional interventions were taken within the 20 LEAs to support their students. The numbers presented in the two graphs above are the number of LEAs providing these additional services.

Statute required the Board to make Rules to establish a requirement and a process for appropriate LEA or school personnel to attend annual training related to administering the screening program. In October 2021, USBE staff hosted a virtual training to assist LEAs in understanding the requirements of the program. The 2020-2021 program implementation revealed the need for additional training on screening in schools, particularly

around behavior and risk screening. Subsequently, in October 2022, USBE released an online interactive Canvas course to further train and support LEAs and their staff with the program. The new training includes a competency mastery quiz, discussion forums, audio/visual presentations, and the availability of program staff for technical assistance. It is accessible to all school personnel administering mental health screenings.

MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING GRANT

Within H.B. 323, the Legislature also appropriated \$500,000 in ongoing funds for the Mental Health Screening Grant. The rule created a process for an LEA to receive reimbursement for a qualifying parent to receive mental health treatment for the parent's student based on the results of the mental health screening. The rule also clarified which parents constituted as a qualifying parent and allowed an LEA to seek funding for procuring a mental health screening tool.

In 2022-2023, USBE awarded 11 LEAs (6 school districts and 5 charters) grant funding for their respective School-based Mental Health Screening Programs. The number of LEAs applying for the grant increased from 2020-2021.

NEXT STEPS

With very few LEAs reporting that they are conducting school-based mental health screenings, additional outreach is needed to inform LEAs of the requirements outlined in Statute and Board Rule. Technical assistance will continue to be provided to LEAs wanting information on how to implement mental health screenings in their schools. Training will continue to be updated through the online Canvas course.