

# SUCCESS BEYOND SIX SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH AND COVID-19

Department of Mental Health

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# QUICK SB6 OVERVIEW

- Success Beyond Six (SB6) is the name for the Medicaid funding mechanism for school mental health services provided through Designated mental health Agencies in partnership with a Local Education Agency (LEA; school district)
- FY20: \$72M budget; 831 FTEs; over 3,000 students
- SB6 is ~26% of overall MH budget
- LEA/DA contracts for SB6 school mental health in nearly every school district in Vermont and 13 independent schools

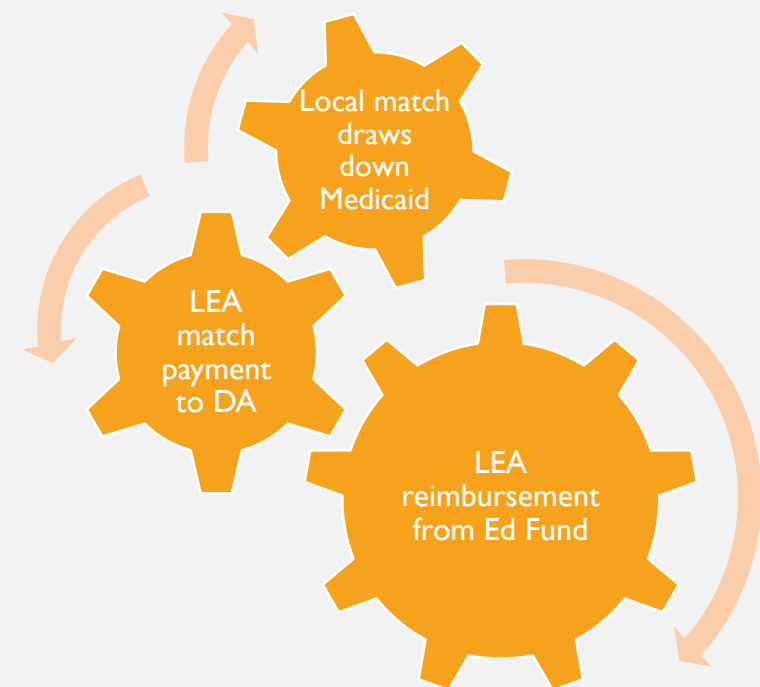
<b>SFY 2020</b>	<b>Total in VT</b>	<b>With any SB6 # (%)</b>
<b>Public Schools</b>	292	201 (69%)
<b>Supervisory Unions</b>	53	48 (91%)

School-Based Clinical Services	Monthly Case Rate
School-Based Behavioral services	Fee-For-Service
C.E.R.T. Therapeutic Schools	Daily Rate

Legislative Report:  
[Review of Success Beyond Six: School Mental Health Services Act 72 \(2019\), Section E.314.1. January 15, 2020](#)  
 Covid-19 Response:  
[School Based Mental Health During Covid-19](#)

# SB6 MECHANICS

- DA provides school mental health services (student- and population-level)
- DA bills LEA (local LEA-DA contract)
- LEA pays DA clean local/state funds
- LEA seeks reimbursement from AOE Education fund for eligible services under students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Distance Learning Plans (DLPs)
- AOE SPED regulations require FFS approach for reimbursement to LEA
- DAs sends local/state match to DMH (DMH-DA contract)
- AHS performs the Medicaid draw as the single state Medicaid agency



For every \$1 of SB6 Medicaid:

LEA pays DA \$.40 under contract

DA/DMH use \$.40 as local match to draw down \$.60 federal share

For Spec Ed services, LEA can apply for AOE reimbursement @ 60% or \$.24 of the \$.40 payment to DA for eligible services to students on IEP



DMH  
GUIDANCE  
FOR  
COVID-19

- DVHA, DMH leveraged COVID-19 related Medicaid flexibilities to alleviate restrictions on service delivery and payment mechanisms
  - Telehealth & telephonic service delivery
  - Prospective payment case rates for mental health services continued with option to adjust reconciliation and value-based payments
- CRF Phase I & II funding for the DA/SSAs did not include SB6 impacts

# SB6 GUIDANCE FOR COVID-19

## GOALS

- support students to be available for remote learning
- maintain services to the greatest extent possible for students & families
- safety for all
- staff retention
- flow of funding to DAs

## SB6-SPECIFIC CHANGES:

- All SB6 services may be provided through telehealth (video + audio) or phone (audio only) with the student and/or family in their home or chosen setting
- DMH lowered *minimum thresholds of service* to bill SB6 services under case rate/ daily rate
  - School-based clinicians monthly case rate: lowered from 2 hours of a qualifying service per month to 1 hour of a qualifying service per month
  - CERT (therapeutic schools) daily rate: lowered from 2 hours of a qualifying service to 15 minutes of a qualifying service per day
- DMH required DAs submit assurance for match payments from LEAs

## ISSUE

- Behavioral Intervention (BI) Programs were Fee-for-Service; experienced biggest impact of reduced service & billing with closure of schools and shift to remote learning
  - 566 BI FTEs; 42 BCBA FTEs
- DMH stood up a temporary emergency BI case rate (March – June 2020) to shore up fiscal risk and staff retention
- Based on AOE guidance, some LEA's are cancelling or reducing SB6 contracts, requiring DAs to invoice LEA in a fee-for-service approach retroactive to start of school closure period
  - not aligned with flexibility of mental health Medicaid
  - will result in inadequate match payments that will not cover the amount needed to draw down SB6 Medicaid case rates

# IMPACTS

School Districts	Designated Agencies	Students & Families
At risk for not getting same level of reimbursement from AOE as before remote learning	Without the contracted LEA funds, DAs cannot fully draw down Medicaid through SB6	Reduced school mental health programming available for 2020/2021 school year
Less Ed Fund reimbursement puts significant pressure on school budgets if they fulfill the DA contract	DAs must either find other match to cover gap or not bill Medicaid	Anticipate increased mental health needs among students and families due to impacts of COVID-19
Guidance is impacting LEA decisions about SB6 contracts for next school year	Either option will likely impact the DA's ability to retain staff and may have other fiscal repercussions across agency	YRBS data already indicates concerning trends of social & emotional needs of our young Vermonters

# POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

## SHORT-TERM FISCAL (FY20)

- DAs are identifying other sources of match based on current understanding of anticipated LEA payments
  - Use of other match will have fiscal impacts on DA as a whole

## NEAR- & LONG-TERM FISCAL & PROGRAMMATIC

- Identify how COVID-19 relief funds could be leveraged for SB6
- Convene workgroup to identify near-term structure for SB6 summer and fall programming & finances
  - DAs/VCP requesting continuation of temporary COVID-19 case rate for BI services
- Workgroup for long-term Case Rate option with DMH, DVHA, DA, AOE, LEA reps
- Ultimately, Act 173 will offer AOE increased flexibility in SPED reimbursement which will better align with MH Medicaid flexibility