



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
SOCCSKSARGEN REGION

May 31, 2024

REGION MEMORANDUM
ESSD-2024-075

**IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES ON THE ALLOCATION, UTILIZATION,
DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING OF PROGRAM SUPPORT FUND
FOR SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM (SMHP) FY 2024**

To: Schools Division Superintendents

1. Pursuant to DepEd's mandate under the Mental Health Act and in line with the MATATAG agenda, the Bureau of Learner Support Services – School Health Division (BLSS-SHD) is strengthening its efforts for the School Mental Health Program. Among these efforts is the downloading of Program Support Funds (PSF) to Schools Division Offices (SDOs) to support the field's implementation of projects, activities and other initiatives related to the program.
2. To ensure the effective use of fiscal resources, BLSS-SHD issues the enclosed implementing guidelines on the allocation, utilization, documentation and reporting of the said PSF (Annex A).
3. For more information, questions or concerns, contact Jillian James A. Sarmiento, Technical Assistant II, BLSS-SHD through 02-8632-9935 or email at blss.shd@deped.gov.ph (cc: schoolmentalhealth@deped.gov.ph).
4. For immediate dissemination and compliance.


CARLITO D. ROCAFORT
Director IV

Enclosure: Annex A Guidelines

Reference: None

Allotment: None

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index under the following Subjects:
MENTAL HEALTH

MLAI/ESSD-SHS/RM IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES ON THE UTILIZATION, DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING OF PROGRAM SUPPORT FUND FOR SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM FY 2024 / 083/May 31, 2024



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Annex A

**IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES ON THE ALLOCATION, UTILIZATION,
DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING OF PROGRAM SUPPORT
FUND FOR SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM (SMHP) FY 2024**

I. Rationale

Republic Act No. 11036 or the Mental Health Act of 2018 mandates DepEd to provide guidelines to schools in the development and implementation of mental health policy/ program to:

1. promote mental health/ raise awareness on mental health issues;
2. identify and provide support and services for individuals at risk; and
3. facilitate access, including referral mechanisms of individuals with mental health conditions to treatment and psychosocial support.

Since passing of RA 11036, the **School Mental Health Program** has been added as one of the flagship programs *under Oplan Kalusugan sa DepEd (OK sa DepEd)*, the convergence of DepEd's school health and nutrition programs coordinated by the BLSS- School Health Division.

In addition, **Republic Act No. 11936** or the General Appropriations Act of 2023 includes the following **special provision for DepEd**: *“Pool of Registered Guidance Counselors and Other Mental Health Program (MHP) Administrators. The DepEd shall provide, implement and monitor a mental health policy for students and personnel in accordance with R.A. No 11036... A pool of registered guidance counselors, specialists and other MHP administrators shall be established and facilitated within a specific administrative division of DepEd offices and schools to gather and train guidance designates and peer facilitators in the schools or cluster of schools.”*

Further, Republic Act No. 11975 or the General Appropriations Act of 2024 includes the following special provision: *“Support for the School Mental Health Program. The amount of Two Hundred Ten Million Pesos (210,000.00) appropriated herein under the Learner Support Programs shall be used by the DepEd to fulfill its functions under Section 34 of R.A. No. 11036 (Mental Health Act) to support the schools in the development and implementation of a school-based mental health program, as well as ensuring mental health and psychosocial support services for learners...The said unit, division, or office shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the mental health program, conducting regular assessments and recommending improvement to the program.”*

Consistent with this, among the priorities laid down by the Secretary as part of the MATATAG Agenda is to *Take care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusive education and a positive learning environment*. This includes, among others, strengthening mechanisms against all forms of discrimination and dangers; improving learning environments; **seeking out mental wellness experts to from interventions**; and **ensuring all learners have access to relevant guidance and psychosocial services**.



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DepEd, being a member of the Philippine Council for Mental Health (PCMH) has also been actively participating in the development of the country's **strategic framework for mental health** as well as its corresponding operationalization plan, in order to ensure the alignment of the Department's efforts with the said plans. The strategic framework was launched on October 12, 2023.

DepED is also a signatory to **DOH-DSWD-DepEd-CHEd-LEB-TESDA-DILG Joint Administrative Order (JAO) 2022-0001** entitled "*Guidelines on Healthy Settings Framework in Learning Institutions*" where mental health is one of the priority areas being focused on. The JAO has particularly provided a Healthy Learning Institutions (HLI) Framework based on the WHO's health promoting schools. Based on the framework, health promotion in schools shall have the following pillars as its minimum components: (1) healthy school policy; (2) links with the community; (3) physical school environment; (4) social school environment; (5) health skills and education; and (6) access to health care.

Given the above-mentioned legal bases and policy frameworks, field offices, through the School Health and Nutrition Sections of the Regional Offices (ROs) and Schools Division Offices (SDOs), will require greater resource support in their implementation of their respective activities related to the program.

These guidelines are therefore issued with the goal of prescribing general policies for the implementation of the School Mental Health Program. This will ensure that all concerned offices are able to abide with the processes and responsibilities in the release, allocation, utilization and liquidation or reporting of the Program Support Funds. This will also provide the Central Office with an oversight mechanism for the program implementation.

II. Scope

2.1 These implementing guidelines shall cover all DepEd Regions commence in 2024 up to 2025. The projects which shall be funded by the Program are those which are contributory to increasing mental health literacy and awareness for learners, as well as both teaching and non teaching personnel. This will capacitate personnel to be more knowledgeable regarding appropriate interventions and handling of mental health concerns of learners, as well as directly provide learners with improved access to school mental health services.

2.2 The allocated funds being part of the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) funds under the FY 2023 GAA, shall be valid until December 31, 2024, pursuant to DBM National Budget Circular No. 590, dated January 3, 2023. Meanwhile, the allocated MOOE funds under FY 2024 GAA shall be valid until December 31, 2025 pursuant to DBM National Budget Circular No. 592 dated January 2, 2024.

2.3 SDOs that will receive PSF under FY 2023 LSP continuing funds are instructed to utilize the funds by December 31, 2024.



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- 2.4 SDOs that will receive PSF under FY 2024 LSP current funds shall ensure that remaining funds after December 31,2024 shall continue to be used for their intended purpose if and when “continuing funds” are determined in 2025.

III. Allocation of Fund Support

- 3.1 The budget allocation of each covered Region is determined by the following factors:
- Number of Schools Division Offices;
 - Number of Schools with Grades 10 and 11 learners; and
 - Number of Grades 10 and 11 learners
- 3.2 The funds are released through Sub-Allotment Release Order (Sub-ARO) from the CO to the Ros. Correspondingly, Ros shall issue Sub-AROs to their respective SDOs and then SDOs to their respective schools, where applicable. Coordination between Ros and SEDOs concerned is advised.
- 3.3 SDOs shall prepare an Expenditure Matrix (EM). The EM, approved by the Schools Division Superintendents, shall be uploaded to the Project Management Information System (PMIS) to generate the Work and Financial Plans (WFPs).

IV. Activities and Expenses

- 4.1 These guidelines shall apply to the funds provided to DepEd field offices for the implementation of activities related to the School Mental Health Program which include the following:

a. Allowable Activities

- Orientation and capacity-building activities organized by the RO or the SDOs, prioritizing regional or SDO School Mental Health Program Coordinators, Guidance Counselors and Guidance Advocates or Designates; these activities shall be geared towards strengthening overall mental health promotion and basic service delivery in schools for learners;
- Activities related to the monitoring and implementation of the School Mental Health Program and other related projects and initiatives at the regional or SDO level including but not limited to: workshops related to program reviews, development of tools or checklists for monitoring school activities, travel or transportation expenses for field monitoring, communication expenses;
- Establishment of partnerships and communication lines with local professional associations and mental health service providers, as available and practicable for the provision of basic mental health services to learners;
- Conduct of workshops, seminars, awareness campaigns, for a and other activities by Ros, SDOs and schools that promote the mental health of learners;



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- v. Conduct of activities related to providing basic mental health services such as mental health assessment, psychological first aid and other mental health and psychosocial support, among others;
- vi. Any other project or activity conducted by the Ros, SDOs and schools that strengthens the six pillars of HLI for the School Mental Health Program.

b. Allowable Expenses

- i. Reproduction of mental health assessment tools or materials, such as those for rapid psychosocial assessment for the purpose of screening red flags and for general assessment of mental health and well-being. Specific guidelines on the administration of the said tools/materials, including digital copies for printing/ reproduction, will be separately provided by the CO, through BLSS-SHD.
- ii. Dissemination of existing mental-health promoting resources, including the payment of shipping costs for the receipt (e.g. from partners) and/or distribution to SDOs and schools of the same;
- iii. Travel and miscellaneous expenses related to the activities mentioned above including mental health-related activities conducted by DepEd Central Office, pursuant to Executive Order No. 77 s. 2019 (*Prescribing rules and regulations and Rates of Expenses and Allowances for Official Local and Foreign Travels of Government Personnel*) and DepEd Order No. 22, 2019 (*Guidelines on Official Local Travels in the Department of Education*);
- iv. Board and lodging of participants and management team, use of function room/s and other equipment subject to DepEd Order No. 02, s. 2018 titled *Amendment to DepEd Order No. 15 s. 2017 (Guidelines on the Allocation of Funds for venue, meals and snacks and accommodation of official activities organized and conducted by the Department of Education)*;
- v. Contingency to cover the payment of miscellaneous expenses, incidental expenses to the conduct of the activities, such as communication expenses, gasoline and other maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE); and
- vi. Honorarium for resource speakers subject to Development Budget and Management (DBM) Budget Circular No. 2007-1, Guidelines on the Grant of Honoraria to Lecturers, Resource Persons, Coordinators and Facilitators;
- vii. Purchasing of supplies and materials necessary for the conduct of allowable activities;
- viii. Purchasing of supplies and materials essential to the operations of the School Health and Nutrition Section at the RO and SDO with regard to the implementation of the program.



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c. LSP funds are under the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) allotment class. This is an expenditure category/ expense class for support to the operations of government agencies such as expected for supplies and materials; transportation and travel; utilities (water, power, etc) and repairs etc. In addition, the acquisition of semi-expendable items such as items that meet the definition of Property Plant, Plant and Equipment (PPE) with a cost below fifty thousand pesos (Php 50,000.00) threshold approved by the Commission of Audit (COA) in the Government Accounting Manual (GAM) is also allowable.

Judicious utilization of the PSF funds is directed subject to standard budgeting, procurement, accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

V. Monitoring and Evaluation

5.1 For the effective monitoring of the utilization of the downloaded funds, ROs and SDOs shall submit to the CO through the Office of the Undersecretary for Operations, copy furnished the Office of the Undersecretary for Finance, the Office of the Undersecretary for Administration, the Education Programs Management Office (EPMO), and the Planning Service, quarterly accomplishment and budget utilization reports. A separate memorandum will be issued to provide further guidance on the accomplishment and submission of the quarterly reports.

5.2 The Office of the Undersecretary for Operations, through BLSS-SHD, in close coordination with the RO- Education Support Services Division (ESSD) and the involved SDO-Schools Governance and Operations Division (SGOD) will monitor and evaluate the implementation of these guidelines.

5.3 The flow of the submission of reports shall be as follows:

- a. The SDO shall submit quarterly reports to the RO every first week of the beginning of the quarter.
- b. The RO shall collate such reports and submit the consolidated reports to the CO, approved by the Regional Director and signed by the field coordinator on a quarterly basis (second week of the beginning of the quarter); and
- c. The Office of the Undersecretary for Operations shall copy furnish the BLSS-OD and BLSS-SHD on the submitted reports from the ROs.

VI. Effectivity

These guidelines shall take effect immediately upon issuance.