

ACCELERATING THE EXPANSION OF QUALITY SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH:

*A Primer on Available State Resources for Local Education
Agencies (LEAs) and Health Partners*

April 2023

Overview

Over the last several years the State of California has made a series of substantial investments in the education and health sectors to build high-quality, reliable, and effective ways to deliver school-based health services to children. Meaningfully, many of these children are on school campuses in California with substantive opportunities to create service delivery that improves the existing network of support.

The available funds for integrating school-based health are accessible from two categories:

- » **Ongoing Funding:** These are resources that currently exist in either the health or education sectors that already support school-based health activities in California. Examples of this include the LEA Billing Option Program (LEA-BOP), Title I, and the SAMSHA grant.
- » **One-time Funding:** Created primarily to support LEAs and health partners, these dollars administered are short-term and targeted to build specific and sustainable elements of the integrated care ecosystem for children and families. Examples of this include the School-Based Health Incentive Program (SBHIP), Mental Health Student Services Act grants, and the School Health Demonstration Program.

Access to Resources: More Than Direct Funding

The experience of most LEAs in California is that their resources come from direct allocations or grants from the state, i.e., California Department of Education. There are some resources that school districts access that is not provided in this way but accounts for a small portion of overall funding for the school district, e.g., <2% annually. As the state continues investing in the expansion of school-based health services across California several additional doors are opening to access resources for school health activities. We can classify these into four ways in which to access funding, including:

- » **Direct Grants:** This is funding that is sent directly to the LEA for their use. Some of the resources have expected expenditures or rules on how to use the funds. Examples of funding streams include Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), community schools, and expanded learning opportunity grant (ELOP).
- » **Reimbursement:** This is funding that comes back to the LEA once an expenditure has been made that meets the requirements of the program. Examples of funding streams include the LEA Billing Option Program.
- » **In-Kind Supports:** This is funding that comes in the form of staff and services to school campuses through partnerships with various health partners including managed care plans, Medi-Cal-authorized community-based organizations, county behavioral health agencies, and similar entities.
- » **Program Improvement:** This is funding that is not sent directly to LEAs to fund service delivery or expansion but to organizations or agencies to provide technical assistance and training to improve the LEA's utilization of existing school-health resources.

Distinguishing Between Funding Opportunities

With the influx of multiple one-time funding opportunities, LEAs may struggle to understand the differences between these funding sources, especially given the influx of new initiatives to support schools and students recovering from the pandemic. While there are many ways to differentiate the one-time funding available, we offer the following characteristics to distinguish between funding:

- » **Timing:** one-time funding all has time limits for accessing. While each investment may be for a certain amount of time, the windows of opportunity for LEAs may be even more limited. An example is investments that designate a specific planning stage or those with competitive grant cycles, as noted in Table 1.
- » **Access to funding:** various funding opportunities exist for the benefit of LEA's which is described in more detail above.
- » **Sustainability strategy:** based on required partners and the mechanisms for distributing one-time funding, many of these sources suggest an ongoing source of funding to sustain investments. Figure 1 illustrates how one-time funding can be leveraged to "boost" access to, or increase the utilization of, ongoing funding sources to sustain school-based health services. More information is provided about ongoing funding sources in Table 3, in particular those that may be leveraged to sustain activities and investments launched with one-time funding.
- » **Key investments:** one-time funding sources may also be used to invest in different services, programs, and strategies that support student physical, mental, and behavioral health. Table 2 provides a sampling of different investments that may be supported through one-time funding.

Figure 1. Sustainability strategies for one-time funding

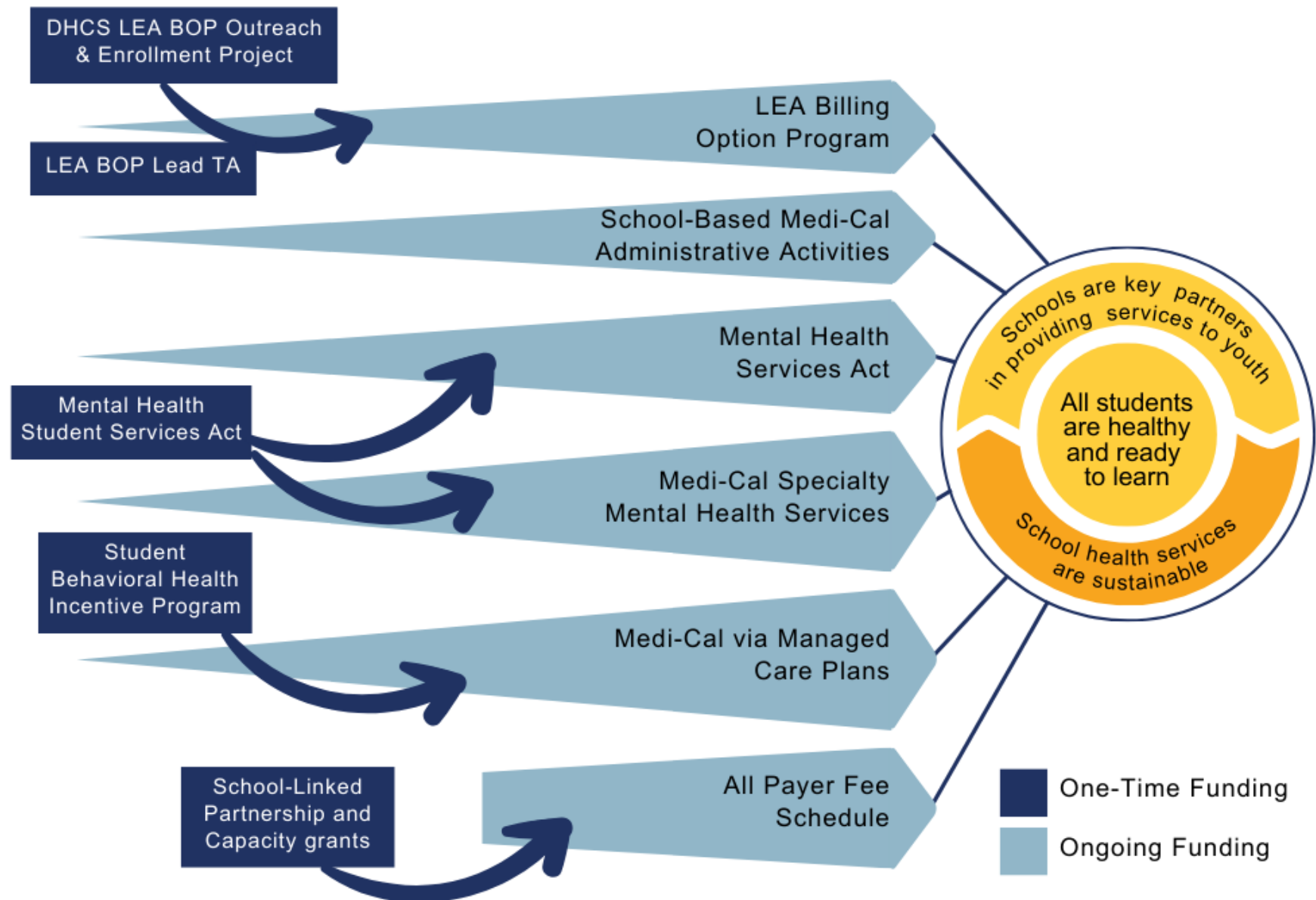


Table 1. One-time funding streams

Funding Stream	Lead Agency	Amount of Funding	Timeline	Access to Funding	Sustainability strategy	Purpose	Links
DHCS LEA BOP Outreach and Enrollment Program	Department of Health Care Services, through contract with WestEd	\$2 million	April 2022: June 2024	Program improvement	LEA Billing Option Program	To design an outreach and engagement strategic plan and methodology that increases participation in LEA BOP.	Budget Change Proposal
CDE LEA BOP Lead Technical Assistance	Department of Education, through contract with Santa Clara COE	\$250,000 annually for up to 5 years	2022-2023, possibly until 2027	Program improvement	LEA Billing Option Program	To provide TA on school-based Medi-Cal programs in coordination with CDE, DHCS, and the state system of support leads.	Funding Profile
Mental Health Student Services Act (MHSSA)	Mental Health Service Oversight and Accountability Commission, through county mental health plans	\$200 million	Three grant cycles: 2022-2026 <i>Funding allocated to county mental health plans</i>	In-Kind Supports	Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Medi-Cal specialty mental health services	To fund an array of student mental health support services and to incentive partnerships between behavioral health agencies and LEAs to expand the accessibility of services.	MHSSA webpage
Student Behavioral Health Incentive Program (SBHIP)	Department of Health Care Services, through Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCPs)	\$389 million	2022-2024 <i>Planning and partnerships stage: March-December 2023</i>	In-Kind Supports	Medi-Cal non-specialty mental health services	To encourage partnerships between LEAs and MCPs to provide behavioral health services to students.	SBHIP webpage
School-Linked Partnership and Capacity Grants	Department of Health Care Services	\$400 million (for K-12)	Beginning 2023	Direct grants/ In-Kind Supports	All Payer Fee Schedule	To support the provision of new behavioral health services to students.	<i>Webpage pending</i>

Table 2. Key investments using one-time funding

Funding Stream	Student mental and behavioral health	Student physical health	Start or expand school-based health/ wellness centers	Build partnerships	Expand prevention programming/ services	Increase billing capacity & infrastructure	Build other physical infrastructure (i.e. telehealth kiosks)	Increase workforce: hire staff, increase staff capacity via trainings
DHCS LEA BOP Outreach and Enrollment Program	✓	✓				✓		✓
CDE LEA BOP Lead Technical Assistance	✓	✓				✓		✓
Mental Health Student Services Act (MHSSA)	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓
Student Behavioral Health Incentive Program (SBHIP)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
School-Linked Partnership and Capacity Grants	✓			✓ ₁		✓ ₁		

Note: this table is not meant to be an exhaustive list of possible investments. LEAs and their partners should read program guidelines and applications for funding carefully.

¹ Other possible investments pending release of RFP for school-based grants, expected Spring 2023

Table 3. Ongoing Funding

Funding	Lead Agency	Distribution of Funds: Who Can Access?	Amount of Funding	Purpose	More information
LEA Billing Option Program (LEA BOP)	Department of Health Care Services	LEAs	\$99.6 million annually	Reimbursement program to LEAs for delivering eligible health-related direct services to Medi-Cal enrolled students.	LEA BOP Website
School-Based Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (SMAA)	Department of Health Care Services	LEAs	About \$130 million annually	Reimbursement to LEAs for Medi-Cal eligible administrative activities performed.	SMAA website
Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS)	Department of Health Care Services	County Mental Health Plans	\$3.8 billion annually	To provide or arrange for the provision of SMHS to adult and children members in their counties who meet SMHS criteria.	Medi-Cal SMHS website
Medi-Cal Non-Specialty Mental Health Services	Department of Health Care Services	Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans		To provide Medi-Cal enrollees with Medi-Cal eligible medically necessary health services and mild/moderate mental health services.	Managed Care Website
Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)	Department of Health Care Services	Allocation to County Mental Health Plans	About \$500 million	To fund community services, prevention and intervention services, workforce development programs, and innovation projects.	MHSA Website
All Payer Fee Schedule	Department of Health Care Services, in collaboration with the Department of Managed Health Care	N/A	TBD-launching in 2024	To develop and maintain a school-linked statewide fee schedule for outpatient mental health and substance use disorder services provided for students at or near school-sites.	<i>Webpage pending</i>