

# BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Lester Eggleston, Jr.  
Director of Counseling, PreK-12



Counseling Department  
97 McMahon Road  
Bedford, MA 01730  
(781)275-1700

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Philip Conrad, Superintendent  
Bedford Public School Committee

**From:** Lester Eggleston Jr., PK-12 Director of Counseling

**Re:** Request to accept grant for educational purposes from the federal government

**Date:** January 12, 2023

This past March 2022 we were informed that as part of the ten Community Project Funding projects Congressman Moulton requested for the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District the Essex County Community Foundation was slated to receive \$700,000 for its Mental Health Initiative. Roughly \$55,000 for the Bedford Public Schools Social, Emotional, Academic Development (SEAD) Community Project was included. The original grant application was submitted by Alica Linsey, former K-12 Director of Guidance in March of 2021. Final instructions regarding the distribution of funds were provided to Bedford Public Schools on January 6th, 2023 by the Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF).

As we commit to this work we need to build a strong foundation and consider ways to expand our sphere of influence throughout the Bedford community. To mitigate rising mental health concerns and ensure equity in access, the SEAD Community Project will use SEL data to identify needs and set priorities for strengthening social, emotional, and academic programs, practices, and services for students and staff. Students and staff who understand and effectively articulate their feelings promote stronger communication and therefore connection between children, teachers, and caregivers. Doing this with nationally normed data connects Bedford with a network of communities with similar concerns to establish baselines, norms, and goals to improve SEL for all students.

In 2019, a Pre-K-12 mental health team was formed that included members from the following departments: counseling, special education, wellness, and nursing. Through an internal review, the team identified an SEL survey and data collection gap. Also in 2019, Bedford Public Schools was a founding member of the West Suburban Mental Health Group, a consortium of five regional school districts focused on addressing the increased volume of students presenting with complex mental

health needs. The group conducted a comprehensive needs assessment across the five participating school districts. The themes that emerged from these two reviews form the foundation for the Social, Emotional, Academic Development (SEAD) Community Project. While the district has a developmental SEL approach it currently lacks systematic data collection and assessment to determine if the SEL programming is effective and how students are different as a result of the programming.

### Proposed Itemized Budget

Funding Item	Description	
<b>Panorama Partnership</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Panorama Student Social-Emotional Learning, Project Management and Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Unlimited Survey Administration (online for students)</li> <li>● Access to Panorama’s Playbook and library of SEL intervention strategies</li> <li>● Check-in surveys and reporting to receive quick feedback from students on well-being and SEL</li> <li>● Dedicated Panorama support team who will work with Bedford’s main point of contact to execute a successful project administration from start to finish</li> <li>● Two custom designed virtual PD sessions up to two hours in length for up to 50 participants (larger groups are supported for webinar-style facilitation)</li> <li>● Unlimited access to Panorama Academy, for on-demand tutorials and training</li> </ul>	
<b>School Support Stipend</b>	SEL Manager, Panorama Building Site Manager, and Summer SY 24 Professional Development work	
<b>Educator and Student-Centered Programming</b>	<p><b>Growth, Recovery, and Resilience: Youth Mental Health in the Time of COVID19 Programming</b></p> <p>One of the most effective ways to support children and adolescents is to equip the adults in their lives with information and skills to support and guide them. This mental health programming series is focused on supporting educators and in turn a direct service to students.</p> <p><b>Sample Student Program Support and Professional Development Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">RULER</a> is a systemic approach to SEL developed at the Center for Emotional Intelligence. RULER aims to infuse the principles of</li> </ul>	

	<p>emotional intelligence into the immune system of pre-K to 12 schools, informing how leaders lead, teachers teach, students learn, and families support students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Supporting Students' Well-being with a Focus on Mental Health and Equity</li> <li>● American School Counselor Association Resiliency Building Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ After attending this workshop, participants should be able to:</li> <li>○ Identify and discuss the common traits and skills associated with resiliency</li> <li>○ Examine the benefits of the traits and skills of resiliency</li> <li>○ Investigate methods of using school data to identify students for inclusion in resiliency groups</li> <li>○ Describe a variety of activities that enhance the traits and skills of resiliency</li> <li>○ Review a variety of best practices for effective small group counseling</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Youth Mental Health First Aid  YMHFA training helps teachers and other school staff to recognize and support students who may be experiencing mental health or substance use challenges and/or may be in crisis, and if needed, to refer them to mental health services.</li> </ul>	
<b>Parent Programming</b>	<b>Companion Parent Programming</b> as detailed above	
<b>Supplies</b>	<b>Professional Development &amp; Panorama Technical Support</b>	
<b>Funding Amount</b>		<b>\$55,000</b>

