

Case Studies on School Based Mental Health Interventions

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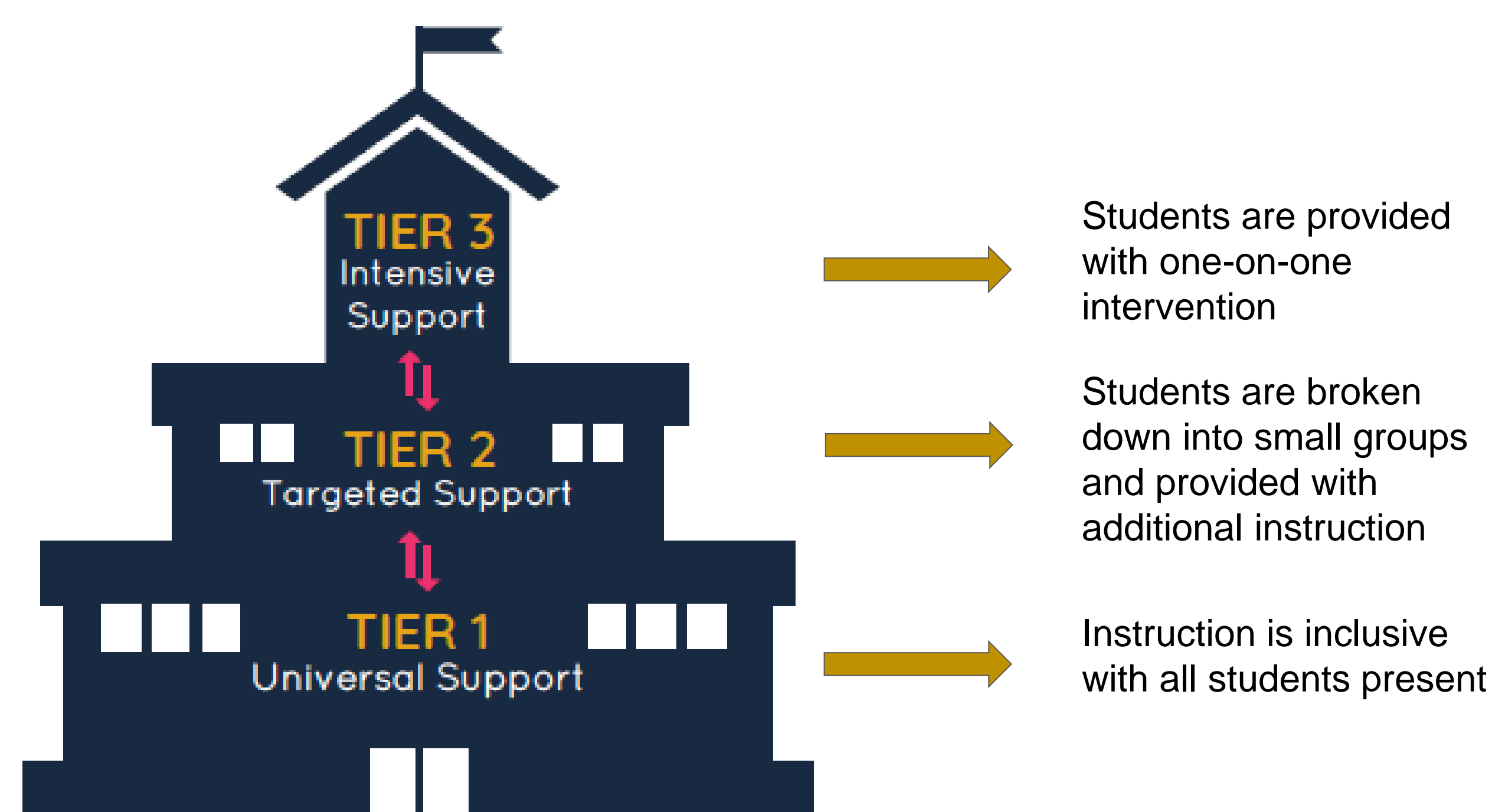
Background

- Children spend 1/3 of their time in school
- 1 in 5 children will have a depressive episode prior to the completion of High School
- 3/4 of children who receive mental health services access them in schools ¹
- Children are 6x more likely to complete mental health treatments in schools than in other community settings ¹

School Based Mental Health Basics

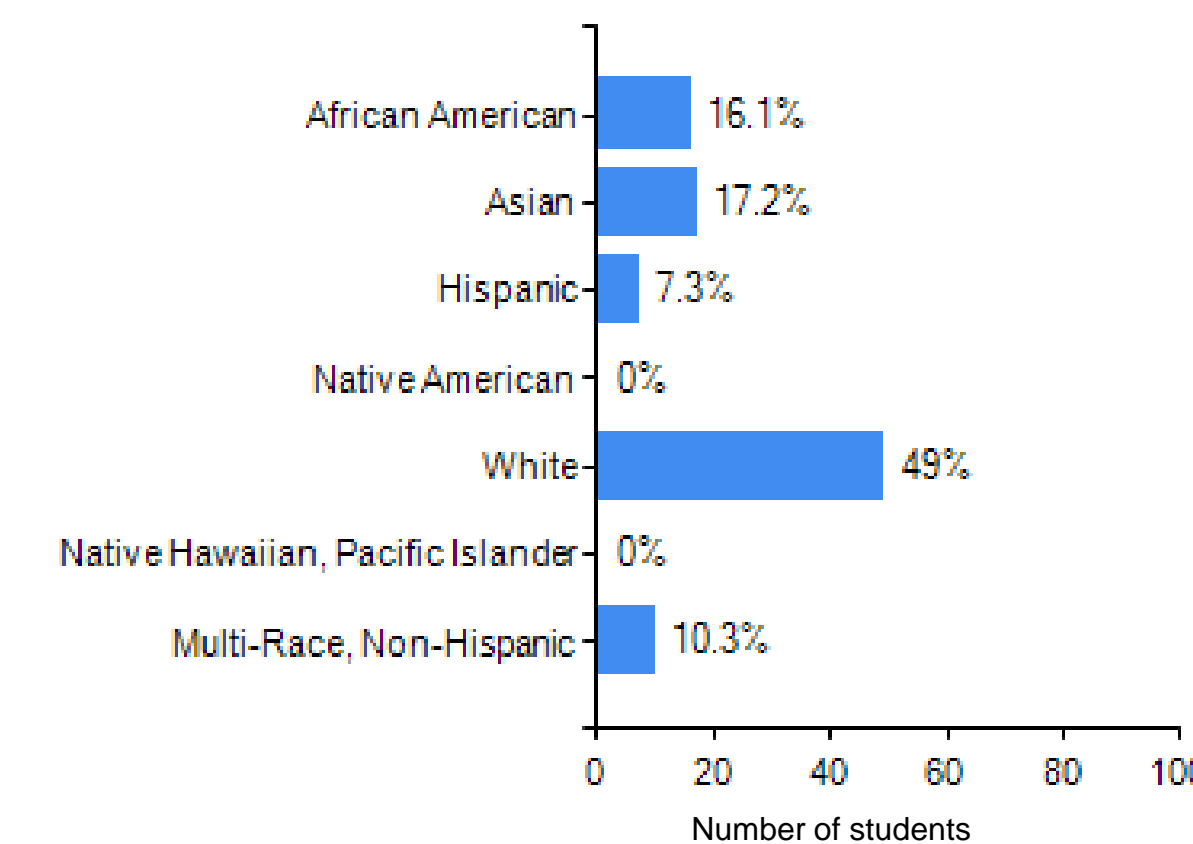
- Mental health services in schools are provided by the Department of Special Education
- There are certain Federal requirements for all Public Schools including legislation for IEPs and 504 plans
- Implementation of Mental Health Services varies widely between states and school districts
- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has created a Multi-tiered System of Support Blueprint in collaboration with Novak Education Consulting and Rodriguez Education Consulting Agency (RECA) to help meet the needs of all learners
- The Multi-tiered system of support describes 3 levels of interventions ranging from generalized to individualized
- Child psychiatrists traditionally consult with schools at a Tier 3 level

Multi-tiered Systems of Support ²

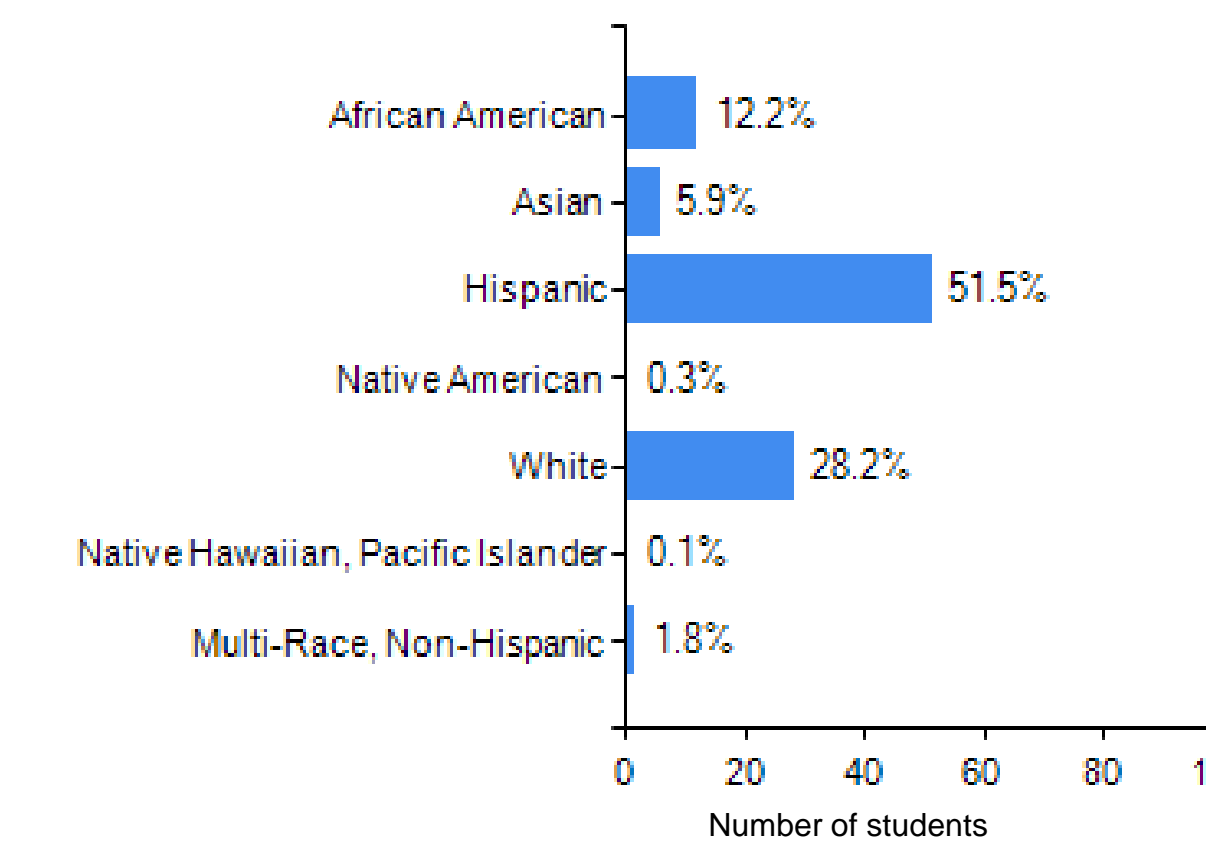


School Demographics:³

Haggerty Elementary School
Cambridge Public School
(non Title 1)

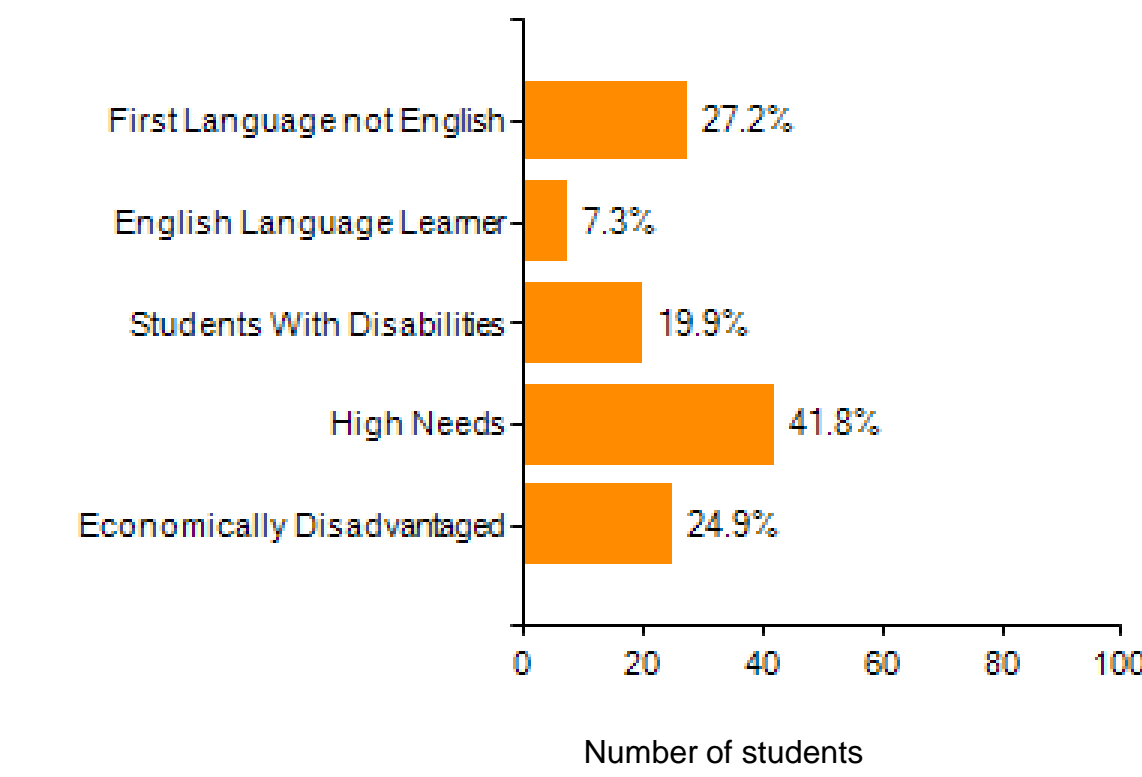


Madeline English School
Everett Public School
(Title 1)

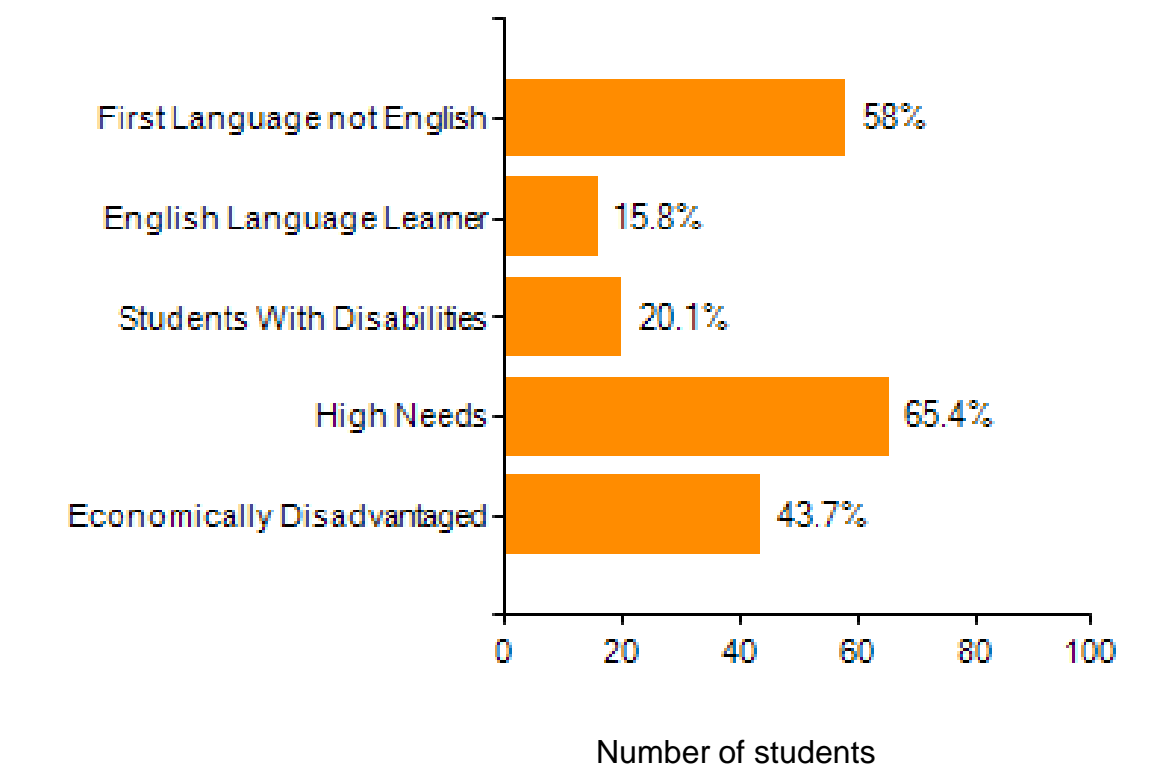


School Population:³

Haggerty Elementary School
Cambridge Public School
(non Title 1)



Madeline English School
Everett Public School
(Title 1)



Results

	Haggerty Public School (Cambridge Public School)	Madeline English School (Everett Public School)
Clinical Staff	District requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 full time psychologist 1 full time adjustment counselor 4 social workers share time between all elementary schools School initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal and Assistant principal with prior clinical experience 	District requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 adjustment counselors employed by district Social Workers are contracted through third party agencies who bill for service
Tier 3 interventions	Federal Requirement: Accomodation Team (504 team); IEP teams School initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social and Emotional Support Team (SEST) - allows teachers to get consultation, recommendations and support regarding challenging students 	Federal Requirement: Accomodation Team (504 team); IEP teams Federal Requirement: Student Support Team
Tier 2 interventions	Federal Requirement: Instructional Support Team	Federal Requirement: Student Support Team
Tier 1 interventions	District initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Emotional Learning Curriculum - Second Step in 1st grade Zones of Regulation education by SW for identified classrooms Optional professional Development Course for teachers about Trauma 	District initiative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Emotional Learning Curriculum – Open Circle

Conclusions

- Structure of Mental Health Services implementation is driven by the Director of Special Education for each district. These decisions are often guided by budget.
- Budgets of school district reflect socioeconomic status of their community
- Additionally, schools with a higher need population (like Madeline English School) allocate more resources for academic supports
- Both schools have students with similar mental health needs (hx of trauma, socioeconomic stress, behavioral difficulties). Differences exist in the percentage of these students at each school.
- The primary focus of mental health interventions in these two schools is at the Tier 3 level
- Few Tier 1 interventions exist for teacher or parent education on mental health issues
- Implementation of novel mental health services and initiatives in these schools is primarily left to the discretion of individual school administration with vague guidelines set by the district
- Mental health awareness and education of school administrators can drive creation of specialized mental health services as seen with the SEST team at Haggarty Public School

Ongoing Questions:

- How can schools optimize existing systems like the School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) System to bolster mental health interventions?
- How can child psychiatrists, community health centers and academic institutions collaborate with school systems to provide Tier 1 interventions?

Methods

- Semi structured interviews with administrators and clinical staff at 2 elementary schools in 2 different school districts in the Cambridge Health Alliance catchment area
- Questions focus on district requirements for mental health interventions along the different tiers and school based initiatives

References

- 1) School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System. Accessed on September 19, 2019 <https://www.theshapesystem.com/>
- 2) Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Accessed September 2, 2019 <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sfss/mtss-blueprint.pdf>
- 3)Massachusetts DESE School and District Profiles. Accessed September 2, 2019 <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu>