



# **COVID-19 Student Mental Health (SMH) Response Plan**

**Implementation of Mental Health Screening Services for Students and the  
Requirement of Certification in Psychological First Aid Relating to  
COVID-19 for Teachers within Fairfax County Public Schools**

The Greater Good Initiative  
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## POLICY BRIEF

During times of uncertainty and distress, mental health issues can become more apparent among various individuals. The COVID-19 global pandemic has raised concerns regarding citizen's mental health among leading health officials. Not only are people worried, but mandated social isolation and stay-at-home orders are contributing to mounting anxiety among Americans. Studies of the psychological impact of quarantine and isolation during previous disease outbreaks indicate that these measures can lead to negative mental health outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Students, especially teenagers, who are no longer attending school are highly susceptible to feeling the detrimental effects of social isolation and the loss of structure and routine. Research shows that those between the ages of 16-24 years old feel the emotional impact of social isolation more than any other age group.<sup>2</sup> Experts stress that COVID-19 may worsen existing mental health problems and lead to more cases among adolescents and children.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the National Survey of Drug and Health Use (NSDUH) found that 35% of adolescents from 2012 to 2015 received their sole mental health services from school.<sup>4</sup>

With risks regarding mental health during this pandemic, it is imperative that schools implement a comprehensive screening and aid process to support and help students. In response to these mental health risks, Fairfax County Public Schools are already providing students and families access to mental wellness phone consultations with a school psychologist or school

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<sup>1</sup>Chidambaram, P., Muñana, C., Hamel, L., Garfield, R., Cox, C., Orgera, K., . . .Panchal, N. (2020, April 21). The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Use. Retrieved from

<https://www.kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/>

<sup>2</sup>Dolgin, R. (2020, April 23). How to Survive Social Distancing. Retrieved May 1,

2020, from <https://www.psycom.net/coronavirus-social-distancing-mental-health/>

<sup>3</sup> Golberstein, E., Wen, H., & Miller, B. F. (2020). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and Mental Health for Children and Adolescents. *Jama Pediatrics*. Retrieved from

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2764730>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

social worker.<sup>5</sup> Requests to access this service can be found via a survey linked to the Fairfax County Public Schools' webpage addressing COVID-19 concerns.<sup>6</sup> While consultation services are a critically valuable component of addressing mental health services, providing students a thorough and accessible mental health screening to identify symptoms of mental health issues will clarify optimal resources, along with increasing their capacity to self-advocate when using consulting services. Fairfax County Public Schools already subscribe to MindWise Innovations' SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program, a youth prevention program aimed at educating students about how to seek help for themselves and their peers when experiencing poor mental health. One component of the SOS program is the Brief Screening for Adolescent Depression (BSAD), which the policy proposes be made available for students to access digitally throughout the period of social distancing.<sup>7</sup> The MindWise SOS Suicide Prevention screening provides individuals with the opportunity to identify their symptoms and receive useful resources, including additional education about a student's risk for suicide and depression, a response slip for students to seek help from their school counseling services and a recommendation to consult a health professional, if applicable, to address the mental health issues they are experiencing.<sup>8</sup> By complementing counseling services with an all-accessible mental health screening, Fairfax County Public Schools can equip their students with a clearer understanding of their mental health, allowing them to maximize the benefits of consulting services. MindWise Innovations has the mechanism to administer an online version of the SOS BSAD screening test to FCPS

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<sup>5</sup> Request for FCPS 2020 Mental Wellness Consultation. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLSeFLnv14CZ1Pga7OpeDpxXpKNVM4U8YvJdS08XL9yKEk7fItA/viewform>

<sup>6</sup> Coronavirus Update - Frequently Asked Questions and Answers. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.fcps.edu/news/coronavirus-update-faqs>

<sup>7</sup> A Preview of the SOS Signs of Suicide Student Program. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.mindwise.org/sos-sample/>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

high school students. FCPS can take advantage of this service by communicating with MindWise Innovations for the remainder of the distance learning and summer periods. To fully maximize the MindWise SOS Suicide Prevention program and ensure that students are supported once they return to school, this policy requires all Fairfax County Public Schools to administer this program and test to each student within the first three weeks of the return to school. Additionally, this policy requires all FCPS teachers, counselors and psychologists to take an American Red Cross Psychological First Aid Course relating to COVID-19.<sup>9</sup> This particular course is free and clearly outlines different psychological impacts that could be created or exacerbated by COVID-19 and offers various strategies for how to help others during this time. This training course will be given to teachers upon their return to school and will provide them with a greater awareness of the mental health risks among students due to social distancing, social isolation, loss of structure, and various other stressors correlated with the COVID-19 outbreak.

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<sup>9</sup> Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19. (2020, March). Retrieved from [https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/classes/psychological-first-aid%3A-supporting-yourself-and-others-during-covid-19/a6R3o0000014Zlg.html?utm\\_campaign=20200423\\_Mental\\_Health&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_term=image](https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/classes/psychological-first-aid%3A-supporting-yourself-and-others-during-covid-19/a6R3o0000014Zlg.html?utm_campaign=20200423_Mental_Health&utm_medium=email&utm_source=SFMC&utm_term=image)

## PRELIMINARY REPORT

### What is the problem that you're trying to fix?

In light of the stay-at-home orders enacted to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, one of the most prevalent concerns among Fairfax County youth is that the social distancing precautions taken to protect their communities' physical health are taking too great a toll on their mental health. In a recent Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) poll, 45% of the respondents reported that worry and stress related to the virus has negatively impacted their mental health.<sup>10</sup> A separate study found consistent evidence linking social isolation to worsened mental and cardiovascular health, affirming the holistic challenges of social distancing.<sup>11</sup> Additional research conducted by KFF reveals that adolescents have an increased propensity to experience new or worsened mental health afflictions resulting from social isolation, as they already face an increased risk for depression and suicidal ideation.<sup>12</sup>

The mental health of Fairfax County youth is made at an even greater risk due to the state-mandated school closures. The National Survey of Drug and Health Use (NSDUH) found that 13.2% of adolescents (equivalent to three million teenagers) received some kind of mental health services from their school; furthermore, from 2012-2015, NSDUH found that 35% of

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<sup>10</sup> Chidambaram, P., Muñana, C., Hamel, L., Garfield, R., Cox, C., Orgera, K., . . . Panchal, N. (2020, April 21). The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Use. Retrieved from <https://www.kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/>

<sup>11</sup> Leigh-Hunt, N. (2017). An overview of systematic reviews on the public health consequences of social isolation and loneliness. *Science Direct*, 152(2017), 157-171. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0033350617302731>

<sup>12</sup> Chidambaram, P., Muñana, C., Hamel, L., Garfield, R., Cox, C., Orgera, K., . . . Panchal, N. (2020, April 21). The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Use. Retrieved from <https://www.kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/>

adolescents received their mental health services exclusively from school settings.<sup>13</sup> With many teenagers currently unable to receive mental health services from their schools and social isolation measures still in place, it is imperative that Fairfax County Public Schools determines an effective, comprehensive, and accessible method of addressing the impacts COVID-19 imposes on FCPS youth.

### What is the solution proposed?

In order to mitigate the deteriorating mental health conditions youth are experiencing as a result of COVID-19, Fairfax County Public Schools should implement a system-wide online mental health screening process administered via MindWise Innovations. Fairfax County Public Schools currently subscribes to MindWise Innovations' SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program, which offers a 20 minute educational video, comprehensive discussion guides, a brief depression screening, resources for faculty and parents, as well as content to refresh students each year.<sup>14</sup> While it is beneficial for students to take the SOS screening upon their arrival back to school, it is also imperative that students receive opportunities to address their mental health concerns while practicing social distancing. Thus, the policy proposes that the SOS screening be made digitally available to students throughout the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year, throughout the summer, and until the resumption of classroom learning. MindWise Innovations currently has a mechanism to create a digital form of their SOS screening, as well as a method of

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<sup>13</sup> Golberstein, E., Wen, H., & Miller, B. F. (2020). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and Mental Health for Children and Adolescents. *Jama Pediatrics*. Retrieved from <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2764730>

<sup>14</sup> The SOS Signs of Suicide Program. (2020). Retrieved May 14, 2020, from <https://www.mindwise.org/suicide-prevention/>

sending the results of digital screenings to school psychologists. Several school districts across the nation have successfully used MindWise’s digital screening. Standardizing the use of MindWise Innovations’ mental health screening across Fairfax County Public Schools would provide students an opportunity to identify their mental health concerns and access subsequent resources to address them. As a result of FCPS allocating technology to each of its students, all students would be able to access MindWise Innovations’ digital screening while participating in distance learning. Students should be provided comprehensive instructions on how to take their screening and submit it to their school psychologists. In receiving students’ results, school psychologists will not only increase their capacity to identify and respond to specific student mental health needs, but they will also increase their ability to proactively plan to address student mental health concerns once classroom education resumes. MindWise Innovations’ SOS program is already in place in FCPS, but it is not being fully utilized. This policy requires FCPS to administer the MindWise SOS Suicide Prevention Program to each student within the first three weeks of the return to school. The deliverance of this program takes around 50 minutes to administer with the option of facilitators to offer optional supplemental lesson plans and refresher videos.<sup>15</sup> In order to equip FCPS with additional resources in preparation for a likely influx of students with worsened mental health upon re-entry into school, all Fairfax County Public Schools teachers, counselors, and psychologists should attend the Red Cross’s “Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19” training course focused on the impacts of COVID-19 on student health. This training will occur prior to widespread distribution of MindWise Innovations screenings so that school psychologists will be

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<sup>15</sup> High School Program. (2020). Retrieved May 14, 2020, from <https://www.mindwise.org/shop/sos-signs-of-suicide-high-school-program-1/>



best equipped to respond to students' screening results. This training will be given to all teachers, counselors, psychologists and administrators in the form of the "Red Cross Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19" course.<sup>16</sup> The Red Cross, a nationally recognized organization, describes this course as helping individuals build resilience and supporting oneself and others through this crisis by providing psychological first aid.<sup>17</sup> The course also contains instructions on how to lend support to others and recognize and manage stress during and after the COVID-19 outbreak.<sup>18</sup> Each FCPS public high school would be expected to administer this training to its faculty during the new staff training and all-faculty development week for teachers, which is set to occur the week before students return to school.<sup>19</sup> Each faculty member who does not have an existing account will create a Red Cross account and be expected to complete this course. Mandating teachers, counselors and school psychologists to take this course will expand the support system for students and create a better understanding among faculty members about the real effects COVID-19 will have on many students' mental health.

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<sup>16</sup> Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19. (2020, March). Retrieved May 14, 2020, from [https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/classes/psychological-first-aid%3A-supporting-yourself-and-others-during-covid-19/a6R3o0000014Zlg.html?utm\\_campaign=20200423\\_Mental\\_Health&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_term=image](https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/classes/psychological-first-aid%3A-supporting-yourself-and-others-during-covid-19/a6R3o0000014Zlg.html?utm_campaign=20200423_Mental_Health&utm_medium=email&utm_source=SFMC&utm_term=image)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Fairfax County. (2020). *Fairfax County Public Schools Standard School Calendar 2020-2021*.

Retrieved May 16, 2020, from <https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/pdf/2020-21-employee-calendar.pdf>

### Why was this specific issue chosen?

Along with the concerns of health professionals regarding worsening mental issues among adolescents and adults as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Fairfax County students have also expressed concerns about mental health issues. During this time, many efforts are being directed towards physical health and implementing preventive measures to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus. Efforts to also protect and aid the mental well being of individuals, specifically students in regards to this policy, should also be implemented due to the risks of worsening mental health for students. In a report on COVID-19 by the Suicide Prevention Lifeline, it was recognized that infectious disease outbreaks and public health events can cause emotional distress and anxiety.<sup>20</sup> 5.8% of FCPS students ranging from 8th grade to 12th grade have reported having attempted suicide in the past year.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, approximately 1/6 of female students and 1/9 of male students reported seriously considering attempting suicide in the 2018-2019 school year.<sup>22</sup> For these students, and those who may develop worsening issues under social isolation and quarantine, having access to mental health support could become a matter of life or death.

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<sup>20</sup> Suicide Prevention Lifeline. (2020). *Emotional wellbeing during the COVID-19 outbreak* [Fact sheet]. Retrieved May 9, 2020, from <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/current-events/supporting-your-emotional-well-being-during-the-covid-19-outbreak/>

<sup>21</sup> Fairfax County School Board. (2019, September). *2018 youth survey* (Fairfax County, Author). Retrieved from [https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health-humanservices/sites/health-humanservices/files/assets/documents/youth%20survey/2018%20fairfax%208\\_10\\_12%20final\\_08\\_06\\_19.pdf](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health-humanservices/sites/health-humanservices/files/assets/documents/youth%20survey/2018%20fairfax%208_10_12%20final_08_06_19.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

Why is this an issue that requires governmental response?

\_\_\_\_\_Local government is responsible for adhering to the needs of its residents and providing services to address those needs. The local government of Fairfax County, specifically the school board, is in charge of managing and making decisions regarding the public school system. Due to COVID-19 and the mandated stay-at-home order, students are not able to attend school nor can they utilize the support programs within the school system that FCPS provides. It is the responsibility of the county to continue to provide those services to students and support them, especially with the likelihood of worsening mental health conditions among adolescents. Fairfax County has the capacity and resources to continue to provide services to the thousands of high school students within the public school system. Mandating specific requirements within the public school system to aid students during this time of uncertainty would not only be beneficial for students, but also show the local government's support and care for its adolescents.

What is the basic form of your policy response?

\_\_\_\_\_This Fairfax County school board has the ability, outlined in the Virginia State Code, to “operate and maintain public schools”<sup>23</sup> in accordance with existing state statutes and regulations of the Board of Education. This policy would not require a code change because the existing code, code § 22.1-79, already gives power to the school board to administer mental health screenings. Due to the fact that the Fairfax County school board has control over requirements and operations within the public school system, it is feasible for the school board to require teachers to obtain a certification in Psychological First Aid and for high schools to administer

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<sup>23</sup> Beckham J. (2020, May 1). Responsibilities Duties Decision-Making and Legal Basis for School Board Powers. Retrieved May 8, 2020, from <https://education.stateuniversity.com/>

mental health screening programs to students. This policy outlines a strategic plan to aid students' mental health without requiring the Fairfax County school board to operate outside of its jurisdiction. FCPS has outlined the mission of its Psychology Services to “ positively impact the academic and social/emotional development of all students through provision of mental health services that build resiliency, life competencies, and good citizenship.”<sup>24</sup> This policy works well within the mission of FCPS school psychology programs by requiring the administration of the MindWise SOS Suicide Prevention program and training FCPS teacher, counselors and psychologists on how to better support high school students. The implementation of this policy would require the school board to add regulations within the county to mandate the administration of the MindWise SOS Suicide Prevention program for all high school students and the requirement of all counselors, teachers and psychologists to take the American “Red Cross Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19”<sup>25</sup> course.

What were the broad questions that guided research into this issue?

When considering the implementation of mental health screening, it is important to consider what services are already accessible to students in Fairfax County and how mental health screening can complement pre-existing services. What role do schools normally serve in regards to students' mental health, and to what extent should their role adapt in times of social

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<sup>24</sup> Fairfax County School Board. (2019, July). *FY 2020 program budget* (Fairfax County School Board, Author). Retrieved from [https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/pdf/FY\\_2020\\_Program\\_Budget.pdf](https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/pdf/FY_2020_Program_Budget.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19. (2020, March). Retrieved May 14, 2020, from [https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/classes/psychological-first-aid%3A-supporting-yourself-and-others-during-covid-19/a6R3o0000014Zlg.html?utm\\_campaign=20200423\\_Mental\\_Health&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_term=image](https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/classes/psychological-first-aid%3A-supporting-yourself-and-others-during-covid-19/a6R3o0000014Zlg.html?utm_campaign=20200423_Mental_Health&utm_medium=email&utm_source=SFMC&utm_term=image)

distancing? Given that internet access is not universal among students, how can we ensure equitable access to mental health screening? What can schools do to address students' mental health concerns during the pandemic and when school resumes? A number of factors were important to consider when choosing which mental health screening to utilize. Which test is easily navigable and understandable? How effectively does the test identify symptoms and provide students with useful resources?

What is the relevance of the issues to Fairfax County and its citizens?

In the time of a pandemic, it is critical to address the mental health consequences of social distancing. Studies indicate that “longer durations of quarantine were associated with poorer mental health specifically, post-traumatic stress symptoms, avoidance behaviours, and anger.”<sup>26</sup> Considering that 28% of surveyed 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students in Fairfax County reported depressive symptoms in 2018,<sup>27</sup> the prolonged period of social distancing could easily aggravate already existing mental health conditions. Schools, which normally serve an instrumental role in students' mental health, must continue providing services and resources to help families address any mental health concerns while state guidelines prevent students from convening in schools. Conducting mental health screening would help students identify any symptoms caused by prolonged social distancing and receive proper resources.

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<sup>26</sup> Brooks et al., “The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence,” *The Lancet*, <https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736%2820%2930460-8/fulltext>.

<sup>27</sup> “MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE in Fairfax County,” Fairfax County, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health-humanservices/sites/health-humanservices/files/assets/documents/youth%20survey/ys%20fact%20sheets/fcys%20fact%20sheet%20-%20mh%20and%20suicide%20-%202018.pdf>.

What are the arguments for the creation of the programmatic or policy response to issues that will be proposed?

The uncertainties associated with COVID-19 and the prolonged period of social distancing will likely generate anxiety or exacerbate any previously existing mental health conditions. Without the ability to attend in-person meetings with school counselors, students should be able to access mental health services remotely while social distancing guidelines remain in effect. MindWise Innovations' SOS Signs of Suicide program offers a depression screening that families with internet access can easily navigate and understand. By utilizing a screening process during the pandemic rather than waiting for school and in-person services to resume once the virus subsides, Fairfax County can provide families with a resource to proactively address mental health concerns and prevent conditions from worsening. The insight students receive from the screening should improve the efficacy of phone consultations with school psychologists already available to Fairfax County students.<sup>28</sup> Students can ask about symptoms identified by the screening, and school psychologists can use the results to refine recommendations to fit the needs of the student. Additionally, students will need increased support when they return to school. Requiring teachers to become certified in the Red Cross Psychological First Aid course specific to COVID-19 equips them with the necessary knowledge to support students who might return to school with psychological issues.

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<sup>28</sup>Coronavirus Update – Mental Health and Community Resources. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.fcps.edu/news-features-and-events/coronavirus-update/coronavirus-update-mental-health-resources>

What ongoing questions do you have?

What has FCPS's relationship with MindWise Innovations looked like in the past?

Historically, have there been any roadblocks encountered when implementing the SOS program across FCPS schools, and if so, what have those roadblocks been? How can The Greater Good Initiative utilize this policy to remove those roadblocks? How can The Greater Good Initiative's Public Health Policy Team assist with facilitating communication between FCPS and MindWise Innovations to ensure the SOS program is effectively implemented? How can FCPS best ensure that students with poor internet access are given equal opportunities to safely access digital resources? If social distancing measures persist past the fall of 2020 and students do not return to school, how can we ensure that all students are still receiving access to mental health resources?

## POLICY ANALYSIS

### What is the programmatic or policy response to the problem that was chosen?

This response is written with the goal of mitigating the exacerbated mental and physical health afflictions students are susceptible to experiencing while under stay at home orders, including post-traumatic stress symptoms, feelings of isolation and anger, and weakened cardiovascular health. To achieve this goal, the policy equips students with the knowledge to identify symptoms of mental health afflictions in themselves and their peers. To address these symptoms by connecting students with a school counselor, the policy proposes that each Fairfax County Public School implement MindWise Innovations' SOS Signs of Suicide screening in a digital form while students are practicing social distancing. Further, the policy proposes that the complete SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program, including the suicide prevention video, guided discussion, and depression screening are executed once classroom education resumes. Fairfax County Public Schools currently use SOS programming to promote mental wellness throughout their school communities, and due to the anticipated increase in students experiencing mental health concerns following the period of social distancing, it is imperative that the complete SOS programming be made available to students now as well as upon their return to school. The efficacy of SOS is further evidenced by the results of a clinical trial published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, which reported that students who received SOS training were 64% less likely to report a suicide attempt in the three months following the training compared to their peers who had not participated in the SOS program.<sup>29</sup> The SOS Brief Screening for Adolescent Depression (BSAD) allows students to identify their symptoms and

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<sup>29</sup> Aseltine, Robert H. Jr, PhD and Robert DeMartino, MD. (2004). "An Outcome Evaluation of the SOS Suicide Prevention Program." *American Journal of Public Health*. Vol. 94, No 3, 446-51.



behaviors, educates students about their risk for suicide and depression, and provides a response slip allowing students to opt in to receiving additional counseling services at their school. School psychologists would receive students' screening results, but students and parents will be provided an opt-out form to sign if they do not wish for their results to be sent. Similarly, if a student does not wish to utilize counseling services, the student and their family will be provided an opt-out form to sign. If the student's screening indicates that they could be at risk of committing suicide, they would be highly encouraged to seek help from counseling services.

MindWise Innovations uses clear and descriptive language that is both informative and comprehensible for users who do not have experience seeking information about their mental health. Because Fairfax County Public Schools issue laptops to each of their students, all students would be able to equitably access MindWise Innovations digital BSAD screening while practicing social distancing. The online screening would be identical to the in-person screening students take in school. School psychologists would also be provided access to students' screening results online, but just as with the in-person screening, students and parents would be provided an opt-out form to sign if a student does not wish for their results to be viewed. The accessible and comprehensive language of MindWise Innovations' screenings and the availability of MindWise Innovations' screening to each Fairfax County Public Schools student via their FCPS-issued laptop render MindWise Innovations' mental health screenings an optimal tool to assist students in identifying and aiding their mental health afflictions while living in social isolation. While it is essential that students receive access to sufficient mental health while practicing social distancing, Fairfax County Public Schools counselors and social workers must prepare to address the mental health of students once they return to school next academic year.

Each Fairfax County Public school is already assigned a school psychologist, who follows the expectations and guidelines of the FCPS school psychology program and is expected to provide effective mental health services.<sup>30</sup> School psychologists are mental health professionals with specialized training in education and psychology, they are mandated members of the Local Screening Committee, they are trained administrators of the suicide risk assessment tool, and they oversee the delivery of mental health consultations.<sup>31</sup> Within the first three weeks that students return to school for the 2020-2021 school year, each FCPS high school will be required to administer the MindWise Innovations SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program for all students. Each highschool will be expected to designate a sufficient amount of time, a minimum class period of 60 minutes, to administer this program. Schools could choose to organize their students in their home room classes when providing this program and screening test. The policy additionally proposes that each teacher, counselor, and school psychologist take the Red Cross “Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19” training course. It is important that teachers, along with school psychologists and counselors, have an understanding about mental health challenges that may arise among students due to COVID-19. Each teacher, counselor and school psychologist will take this course using their Red Cross account, which is free, during teacher orientation or within the first three weeks of the 2020-2021 school year. Providing students access to MindWise Mental Health Screenings while living in social isolation and preparing to provide them accessible resources and treatments with long-lasting benefits to aid their mental when transitioning back into a school environment is a

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<sup>30</sup>Fairfax County School Board. (2019, July). *FY 2020 program budget* (Fairfax County School Board, Author). Retrieved from FCPS website: [https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/pdf/FY\\_2020\\_Program\\_Budget.pdf](https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/pdf/FY_2020_Program_Budget.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

critical step Fairfax County Public Schools can take to protect students' mental health during this time of social isolation and beyond.

Outline the process your policy proposal will take once implemented. Explain any systems that will be in place, administrative changes, agency authority changes, etc.

Once implemented, this policy will mandate FCPS schools to administer the MindWise Innovations' SOS Signs of Suicide prevention program once students return to school. FCPS already has access to this program, however it is not being utilized to its full capacity by highschools. Not only will Fairfax county public high schools be required to administer this test, but this policy will require school psychologists, counselors, and teachers to obtain training in Psychological First Aid that is unique to COVID-19. The Red Cross "Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19" training course will better equip FCPS staff aid students with the psychological impacts of social isolation, the disruption in daily routines and the possible exacerbation of mental health issues. Students will have access to the screenings by MindWise Innovations throughout the end of the 2019-2020 school year and throughout the summer as well. If students are unable to access these screenings, MindWise Innovations as the capacity and mechanisms to ensure the availability of these resources. FCPS will be expected to communicate with MindWise Innovations to guarantee that students will have access to these screenings during the summer and until students physically return to school for the 2020-2021 school year. This will give students an additional resource to undergo screenings that will offer them therapeutic resources and options if they are in fact developing worsening mental issues. School psychologists will have access to the results provided by these

screenings. In order to respect the confidentiality of students, only school psychologists will have access to these results. Outlined in the FCPS Service Delivery Model for Fairfax Psychology are the clear roles of the counseling, assessment and consultation process that school psychologists take. School Psychologists are expected to implement evidence-based techniques to address mental health concerns, identify specific needs of the students, generate interventions, and collaborate with families, teachers, counselors, administrators, community agencies, private providers and others to create the most well rounded approach to help the student navigate specific social, emotional and academic needs.<sup>32</sup> In the 2018-2019 school year, School Psychology Services provided 14, 765 psychological evaluations, 1,945 suicide risk assessments, 11,021 individual counseling sessions and 4,230 group counseling sessions.<sup>33</sup> The FCPS Psychology Program has the capacity and infrastructure to help students, however, it is necessary that all of these students who received support from school continue to feel supported by the school system. While students are not physically in school, screening for mental health issues will stand in lieu of the thousands of psychological evaluations completed by school psychologists. In an effort to honor and protect the privacy of minors and families, there will be an opt-out option for parents to fill out if they do not wish for their child to engage in mental health screenings. MindWise screening services already have a mechanism that provides an opt-out form. These screenings will allow school psychologists to make the necessary recommendations for care and aid plans for students who may be struggling. In an effort to support students, FCPS has outlined current mental health resources available to students under

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<sup>32</sup>Fairfax County Public Schools. (2020). *School psychology services* [Fact sheet]. Retrieved May 9, 2020, from <https://www.fcps.edu/resources/student-safety-and-wellness/school-psychology-services>

<sup>33</sup>Fairfax County. (2020). *DSS program profiles*. Retrieved from <https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/forms/DSSProgramProfiles.pdf>

the “Coronavirus Update” section on the FCPS website.<sup>34</sup> Any FCPS parent may schedule a 30-minute phone consultation with a school psychologist or social worker or themselves or their middle or high school student. FCPS should continue to offer this resource and provide outside resources, such as the phone numbers for the emergency mental centers at Merrifield Center, Dominion Hospital, and INOVA emergency services, in the 2020 Mental Wellness Consultations Form.<sup>35</sup>

Upon the return to school, students will have to adjust to likely new norms and restrictions. Additionally, students may have developed possible new mental health disorders and have feelings of worsening mental health. For students who may have an unstable family life or who’s families were impacted economically by COVID-19, more help and attention may be necessary. It is imperative that Fairfax County Public Schools does all they can do within their capacity to address help students once they return to school. This policy requires Fairfax Public Highschools to administer the MindWise Innovations’ SOS Signs of Suicide prevention program to all students within the first three weeks that students return to school. An opt out form will be provided to the parents of each student if they do not wish for their child to undergo this screening program. Before the return to school and within the first three weeks that the administration returns to the school setting, each teacher, counselor, and psychologist will take the Red Cross “Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19”

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<sup>34</sup> Coronavirus Update – Mental Health and Community Resources. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.fcps.edu/news-features-and-events/coronavirus-update/coronavirus-update-mental-health-resources>

<sup>35</sup> Request for FCPS 2020 Mental Wellness Consultation. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLSeFLnv14CZ1Pga7OpeDpxXp\\_KNVM4U8YvJdS08XL9yKEk7fJtA/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLSeFLnv14CZ1Pga7OpeDpxXp_KNVM4U8YvJdS08XL9yKEk7fJtA/viewform)

course and become certified in Psychological First Aid. This will give students an even more knowledgeable and larger support system.

### Why is this something that should be addressed at the local level?

Ideally, a thorough screening process would be available for every student in Virginia. However, due to the varying capacities of counties and the differences in school systems, it is more practical to begin implementing this policy at the local level. Fairfax County is the 10th largest school division in the United States and has more than 188,000 students within its public school system.<sup>36</sup> Every high school student has access to an FCPS-issued laptop, unlike other Virginian counties where students either don't have adequate technology or are expected to provide their own technological devices. Because every FCPS high school student has a technological device, it is possible to connect with each individual at times of distance learning. In a 2018 youth survey in Fairfax County, 28.3% of students ranging from 8th grade to 12th grade reported feeling symptoms of depression.<sup>37</sup> 18.2% of female students and 11.2% of male students reported seriously considering attempting suicide and 5.8% of FCPS students reported having attempted suicide in the past year.<sup>38</sup> Many students in Fairfax County struggle with mental health issues and will be affected by social isolation, feelings of loneliness, and the loss of routine. Fairfax County has the capacity and resources to help these students during this time. In regards to the return to school, there is no cost burden associated with the Red Cross course. The county already also allocated funds to MindWise programs, so it should utilize this resource

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<sup>36</sup>Fairfax County Public Schools. (2020). *About us*. Retrieved May 9, 2020, from <https://www.fcps.edu/about-fcps>

<sup>37</sup> Fairfax County School Board. (2019, September). *2018 youth survey* (Fairfax County, Author). Retrieved from [https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health-humanservices/sites/health-humanservices/files/assets/documents/youth%20survey/2018%20fairfax%208\\_10\\_12%20final\\_08\\_06\\_19.pdf](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health-humanservices/sites/health-humanservices/files/assets/documents/youth%20survey/2018%20fairfax%208_10_12%20final_08_06_19.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

not only to help students mental health, but also to use programs that are already being allocated money.

Are there alternative responses that should be taken into account?

\_\_\_\_\_ In the case of protecting student's mental health and providing a thorough support system, there is always more that can be done. Feasible alternative responses that would further this policy include the adoption of MindWise screenings and Psychological First Aid pertaining to COVID-19 into the Health and Physical Education Curriculum within Fairfax County Public High Schools. This would ensure that schools are continuing to not only provide optimal support and resources for students, but to educate students on the risk factors associated with social isolation and how to best support oneself and others. This would provide students with a deeper understanding of their mental health and resources they can use to address these issues. An additional response that should be taken into consideration is the creation of an extensive mental health preparation plan in the event that FCPS reverts back to distance learning. Creating a thorough plan that includes access to extensive mental health screenings, open communication with counselors, connections with outside therapeutic resources, outreach strategies and additional safeguards in a timely manner after distance learning is enacted will prove to be vital.

Why is the policy you have proposed the appropriate/best response to the problem you have identified?

The policy proposed not only provides Fairfax County with a feasible way to support its students, but it also utilizes systems and programs that are already in place in Fairfax County. The utilization of MindWise Innovations' SOS Signs of Suicide prevention program as the

program for mental health screenings makes it so that a new program does not have to be introduced to Fairfax county nor do administrators or FCPS staff have to learn how to navigate a new system. Because each FCPS highschool student is designated a laptop, FCPS has the capacity to connect with students during times of distance learning. Additionally, providing a training course and certification in Psychological First Aid for teachers, administrators, counselors, and psychologists within Fairfax County public schools will further develop a stable support system for students. The school system implements counseling and psychology programs within schools to support students, this support should not stop just because students are not physically attending schools or because COVID-19 has changed or delayed learning. The implementation of a thorough plan upon the return to school, which includes students taking the MindWise Innovations' SOS Signs of Suicide prevention program and FCPS staff taking the Red Cross "Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19" training course within the first three weeks of the return to school, will ensure that each student will have access to productive care. It is also important to acknowledge that many families' assets and economic standings will be negatively impacted due to COVID-19, therefore providing care within the school system, without financially draining families, is even more crucial.

What are the resources that will be needed to carry out this programmatic or policy response?

Because Fairfax County Public Schools allocates technology to each of its students, MindWise Innovations BSAD mental health screening and subsequent online counseling resources provided by Fairfax County Public Schools should be available to all FCPS students.



In order to send their screening results to counseling services or their school counselor, each Fairfax County School should provide students access to the designated portal connecting students' screening results to counseling services. MindWise Innovations already has a mechanism to create a digital version of their BSAD screening and has connected several other school districts across the United States to this mechanism. Families should be made aware of the contents and benefits of MindWise's SOS BSAD screening and should be provided an opt-out form if requested.

As for resources pertaining to faculty and counselor mental health trainings, the policy proposes the implementation of the Red Cross's "Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19" training course to better equip faculty to address specific student mental health issues exacerbated by social isolation throughout the pandemic, certifying teachers in psychological first aid and therefore expanding support networks available to students. The educational resources provided by the Red Cross will not require Fairfax County Public Schools to allocate additional funds.

What criteria are you using to determine if your policy is successful?

Fairfax County Public Schools should utilize the Student Mental Health Program Evaluation Logic Model developed by the mental health and educational professional who co-authored the chapter titled "Interventions to Improve Student Mental Health: A Literature Review to Guide Evaluation of California's Mental Health Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative" in the report, *Interventions to Improve Student Mental Health*<sup>39</sup> to assess the efficacy of the

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<sup>39</sup> Stein, B., Sontag-Padilla, L., Osilla, K., Woodridge, M., Kase, C., Jaycox, L., . . . Golan, S. (2012). *Interventions to Improve Student Mental Health*. Retrieved from RAND Health website: [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical\\_reports/2012/RAND\\_TR1319.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2012/RAND_TR1319.pdf)

district-wide implementation of mental health screening services via MindWise Innovations and school counselor and psychologist trainings on mental health concerns exacerbated social distancing practices. The model divides the evaluation of inputs into two separate components: analysis of programming and analysis of cross-collaboration structure. Evaluation of this policy should focus on the former. Analysis of programming as it pertains to this policy should entail the assessment of mental health training programs and online mental health screening services offered. These criteria should be considered within three assessment frameworks: Short-Term Student Mental Health (SMH) Outcomes, Intermediate SMH Outcomes, and Long-Term SMH Outcomes.

### **Short-Term SMH Outcomes**

The model defines the criterion for determining an effective short-term SMH outcome to be “improved knowledge, skills, and attitudes of faculty staff and students”. Fairfax County Public Schools should offer students a survey to report whether or not they found MindWise Innovations’ screenings to be a conducive method of identifying potential health concerns, connecting users to immediate mental health resources, and a complementary aid in self-advocating when using online Fairfax County Public School counseling services while practicing social distancing.

### **Intermediate SMH Outcomes**

The criteria for determining effective intermediate SMH outcomes are as follows:

1. Increased referrals and student help-seeking
  2. Improved school/campus climate
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3. Increased student problem solving and stress management
4. Increased support for students
5. Increased in pro-mental health faculty/staff behaviors (e.g., adherence to mental health program fidelity)

The first criterion can be evaluated throughout the period of social distancing as well as throughout students' transition back to classroom education. The former can be evaluated on the basis of whether or not a significant number of students report the results of their MindWise Innovations screening to counseling services (counselors can report the number of screening results they receive, but they must keep students' identities anonymous). The latter can be evaluated based on the number of students who feel comfortable seeking counseling services once they return to school and the counselors' effectiveness and equity in addressing student mental health concerns as determined by a survey taken by students who utilized counseling (students can opt out of taking this survey if they wish).

The second criterion cannot be evaluated until classroom education resumes. Following the first three weeks after students and faculty gather in school buildings once again, students and faculty will be offered the option of reporting whether or not the anticipated anxieties of returning to classroom education following a period of social isolation were mitigated by the proactive assessment of student mental health concerns via MindWise's SOS BSAD screening, and the subsequent Red Cross trainings faculty underwent in order to promote mental wellness within their school community. If the campus climate experiences no improvements in mitigating mental health concerns, the policy will be modified based on the needs and concerns

expressed by students and faculty in the aforementioned survey, as well as the capacity of Fairfax County Public Schools to fund the requested modifications, if applicable.

The third criterion can be evaluated using the same methodology as the second criterion. Additionally, counseling services can report via a survey whether or not students have expressed a decrease in stress and an increased capacity to address their mental health as a result of identifying resources to address their symptoms via MindWise Innovations' screening service during the period of social isolation.

The fourth criterion can be evaluated using the same methodology as the third criterion. Additionally, counselors will be given the option to report whether or not receiving students' mental health screening results has expanded their capacity to address student mental health concerns both during the period of social isolation and once classroom education resumes, as well as whether or not receiving additional psychological first aid training to address student mental health issues exacerbated by social isolation has encouraged students to seek out the help of a trusted counselor.

The fifth criterion can be evaluated using the same methodology as the second criterion, as the primary need to evaluate this criterion will arise once classroom education resumes. Additionally, students can report via a survey whether or not their teachers have respected their mental health needs as determined by counseling services based on the results of the SOS BSAD screening, and teachers can report via an additional survey whether or not their students' capacity to complete work during distance learning has been exacerbated or inhibited by the implementation of mental health screening to complement online counseling services.

### **Long-Term SMH Outcomes**

The criteria for determining effective Long-Term SMH Outcomes are as follows:

1. Increased student service use
2. Increased school engagement
3. Decreased student drop out
4. Decreased student mental health problems

The fulfillment of each of these criteria can be determined throughout the duration of a year after the policy's implementation via frequent and relevant surveys that encompass any necessary modifications made following the policy's initial enactment. School communities should expect to see an increase in student service use and school engagement and a decrease in student dropout rates and student mental health problems following the implementation of the SOS program and the Red Cross's COVID-19-specific psychological first aid training. Should the implementation of policy stagnate or detract from the fulfillment of these criteria, the policy will be modified to address reported concerns.

What would happen with the problem if no action is taken and the problem were to continue on unchanged and undisturbed?

If no action is taken to solve this problem, worsening mental health issues among students may not be noticed and this could lead to catastrophic outcomes. According to the National Institute of Health, Isolation is the most intensive stress that a human can endure. <sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Baek, S.-B. (2014). Psychopathology of social isolation. *Journal of Exercise Rehabilitation*, 10(3), 143-147. <https://doi.org/10.12965/jer.140132>

Numerous studies reveal that longer durations of quarantine are associated with poorer mental health and specifically post traumatic stress symptoms, avoidance behaviors and anger.<sup>41</sup> Fairfax county students need support during this time. The National Survey of Drug and Health Use found that 35% of adolescents received their mental health services exclusively from school settings.<sup>42</sup> Students that rely on school psychologists for mental health support, and especially FCPS students who only receive mental health services exclusively from school, will need additional help and guidance during this time. Additionally, because it is likely that COVID-19 may worsen existing mental health problems and lead to more cases among adolescents<sup>43</sup>, more students will need to be screened for mental health issues. If nothing is done, many students may find themselves in hopeless situations. Fairfax County has the capacity to take action and address the worsening of mental health amongst its students.

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<sup>41</sup> Brooks, S. K., Webster, R. K., Smith, L. E., Woodland, L., Wessely, S., Prof,Greenberg, N., Prof, & Rubin, G. J. (2020). The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence. *The Lancet*, 395(10227). Retrieved from <https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/>

<sup>42</sup> Golberstein, E., Wen, H., & Miller, B. F. (2020). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and Mental Health for Children and Adolescents. *Jama Pediatrics*. Retrieved from <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2764730>

<sup>43</sup>Ibid

## BUDGET ANALYSIS

MindWise Innovations requires \$495 per high school program per year, and \$300 for a renewal every year.<sup>44</sup> The program's pricing is based on a one-program-per-school model and the initial purchase will give access for one year from the date of purchase; after that, the program can be renewed with the renewal price listed above.<sup>45</sup> This policy only implements MindWise mental health screenings at FCPS high schools. Therefore, to set up the program at all 25 public high schools in the county, it would cost FCPS \$7,500 per year to renew the program. Currently, FCPS is already paying for mental health screenings and is also included in the FY 2021 Proposed Budget. FCPS has allocated \$0.2 million to support required mental health interventions and suicide prevention practices training through online resources.<sup>46</sup> As FCPS is already spending \$0.2 million to obtain Mindwise and other mental health resources, this policy proposes for currently available resources to be utilized during the period of social distancing and when school returns. This policy advises school psychologists and counselors to use MindWise resources effectively and to increase efficacy of mental health screenings. The policy also proposes that each teacher, counselor, and school psychologist take the Red Cross "Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19" training course. This training is free of charge and can be used readily by teachers and school staff without an attached fee.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.mindwise.org/shop/sos-signs-of-suicide-high-school-program-1/>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.mindwise.org/shop/sos-signs-of-suicide-high-school-program-1/>

<sup>46</sup> [https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/BPDKX553C751/\\$file/FY%202021%20Budget%20Question%20Responses.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/BPDKX553C751/$file/FY%202021%20Budget%20Question%20Responses.pdf)

## CONCLUSION

If Fairfax County Public Schools require each public high school to administer the MindWise SOS Suicide Prevention Screening Program once students return to school while also making resources imminently available, school psychologists will better be able to aid students who have experienced worsening mental health conditions due to COVID-19. Additionally, all students, regardless of economic status, will have equitable access to opportunities that help identify newly developed mental health issues. Fairfax County already subscribes to this program, so it is plausible for the county to require that public high schools designate a class period, around one hour, for administering this test. Fairfax County Public Schools must also make it well known among its students that this resource is available to them during times of distance learning. The MindWise Innovations test is a resourceful program because it not only provides the user with an evaluation of their mental health, but it also produces a list of various therapeutic services and counseling resources that are locally accessible to the user. It is imperative that Fairfax County Public School not only consider implementing physical health precautions and changes regarding COVID-19 once students return to school, but that the county uses its resources to their full capacity to support students' mental health. As outlined previously, it is likely that COVID-19 and social isolation will worsen existing mental health problems and lead to more cases within adolescents and children. National concern over mental health issues across all age groups underscores why Fairfax County should take action in providing resources and support for its students.



The second part of this policy discusses the requirement for teachers, counselors, and psychologists to obtain a certification in the “Red Cross Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19” course. It is crucial that staff members within the FCPS community are made aware of the risks of worsening mental health and strategies for how to support others. Teachers will also be made aware of signs among students that may indicate worsening mental health or signs of suicide. Creating a supportive environment among FCPS faculty will not only provide more support for students but also facilitate a more productive dialogue between teachers and school psychologists because teachers will be more aware of how warning signs manifest. In addition to the currently approved Red Cross programs that allow teachers to become certified in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automated external defibrillators, the Red Cross program on Psychological First Aid should be included in the list of approved programs so that teachers in Virginia can become certified in Psychological First Aid. At the local level in Fairfax County, this requirement can be added on as a regulation to the code and guidelines provided by the Virginia Department of Education. Fairfax County has the capacity to implement new requirements and standards among its public high schools to help students who may develop worsening mental issues due to COVID-19. There are thousands of students within the county who rely on school as their main support system. The loss of this support system will inevitably be detrimental for many students. It is the duty of Fairfax County to continue providing aid to its students and creating a knowledgeable, unified, and developed support system within the public high schools to increase the level of care for students whose mental health may have been negatively impacted by COVID-19.

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## APPENDIX

### A. Code of Virginia Amendments

#### § 22.1-79

Since school boards in Fairfax County already have the authority to add regulations to existing codes and requirements established by the Virginia Department of Education, changing the state code to implement our policy is unnecessary.

Virginia state code already implicitly acknowledges the ability of school boards to administer mental health screenings and designates certain policies about how questionnaires should be conducted. It establishes that school boards can “operate and maintain the public schools”<sup>47</sup> as long as their actions are not inconsistent with state statutes and regulations of the Board of Education, justifying school boards’ authority to administer health screenings. No part of existing state code contradicts the school board’s ability to authorize remote mental health screenings, thus ensuring the school board’s ability to implement screenings while social distancing guidelines prevent students from convening at school.

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<sup>47</sup> Code of Virginia Legislative Information System (July 1, 2019). Title 22.1 Education Chapter 7 General Powers and Duties of School Boards. Retrieved May 8, 2020, from <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter7/section22.1-79/>

## **B. Press Release**

### **The Greater Good Initiative: Addressing Fairfax County Student Mental Health Concerns With Comprehensive Policy Solutions**

**FAIRFAX, VA (May 18th, 2020)** — In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, normalcy has become a foreign concept. Communities have acclimated to fundamental shifts in their day-to-day lives, from working remotely to being put out of work, and visiting sick loved ones to distancing themselves from the sick at all costs. The implementation of social distancing practices stems from the need to protect the public’s physical health, but the impact of social distancing practices on one’s mental health can be damaging. One particularly susceptible group is high school students, many of whom receive their sole mental health resources from temporarily closed schools. FCPS students are no exception.

Aiming to connect FCPS high school students with necessary mental health resources throughout the duration of social distancing and prepare educators to address student mental health concerns upon their return to the classroom, The Greater Good Initiative has released a policy that utilizes programming provided by MindWise Innovations and The Red Cross. The policy proposes the implementation of MindWise Innovations’ SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program, featuring an educational video, a comprehensive discussion guide, and a depression screening within the first three weeks of students’ return to school, along with the Red Cross’s “Psychological First Aid: Supporting Yourself and Others During COVID-19” training to equip teachers and school psychologists with critical tools to address the specific mental health concerns heightened by

COVID-19. Additionally, the policy proposes the implementation of a digital version of MindWise Innovations' depression screening throughout the duration of social distancing practices so that students can better understand and address their mental health concerns from home. This screening will be made available for students to utilize as soon as they wish. The results of students' depression screenings can be shared with their school psychologists to increase students' access to additional mental health resources, but all students who do not wish to share their results will be provided an opt-out form to be signed by their parents and themselves.

FCPS already subscribes to MindWise Innovations' SOS Signs of Suicide Prevention Program, and the Red Cross's training is free to all users, so Fairfax County will not need to expend additional resources on this policy.

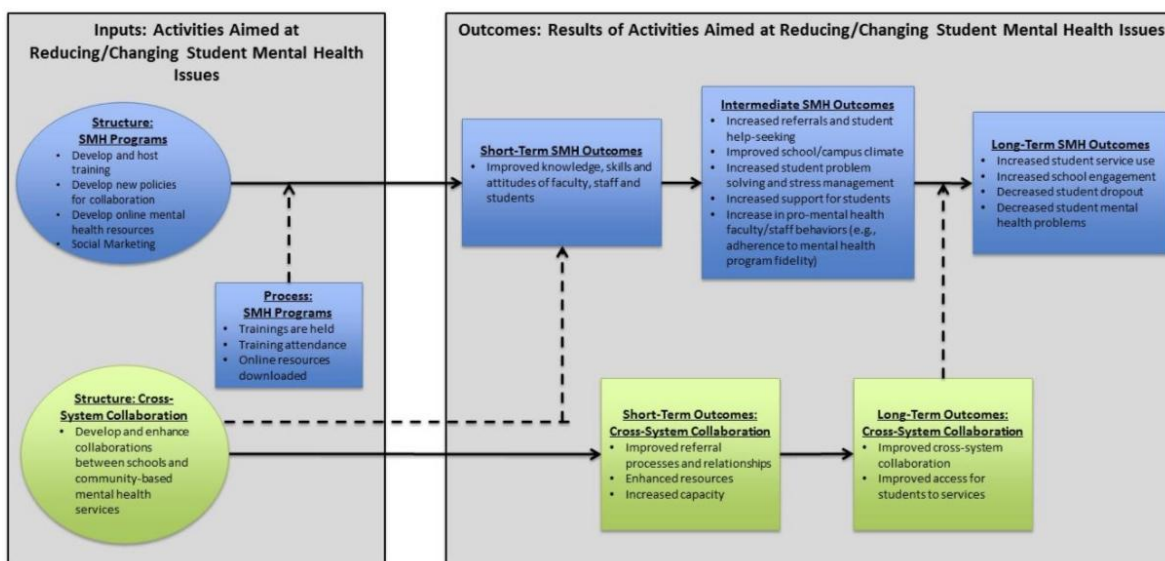
**About The Greater Good Initiative:** The Greater Good Initiative (GGI) is a youth-led, nonpartisan policy think tank working to create sustainable solutions to our nation's most pressing issues. Currently focusing on addressing issues related to COVID-19 in the realms of public health, education, and economy, GGI has coordinated with local, state, and federal legislators, policy professionals, and community leaders to craft realistic and effective policies that actively respond to the public's greatest concerns.



## C. Supplementary Materials

### Infographic 1: Student Mental Health Program Evaluation Logic Model

Figure 2. Student Mental Health Program Evaluation Logic Model



Source: *Interventions to Improve Student Mental Health*