

SDNB Earns \$150,000 Mental Health Grant from Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

New Berlin - The School District of New Berlin will receive the maximum \$75,000 in each of the next two years through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's Student Services/Prevention and Wellness statewide \$10.9 million grant distribution. The program is designed to support student mental health and alcohol and other drug abuse programs in schools.

Fourteen Milwaukee-area school districts earned grants; the SDNB was one of seven to be awarded the maximum amount. Funding is to be used to provide additional support and mental health resources to students, in collaboration with community health agencies. Specifically, the SDNB will use the grant money to help, along with the district's on-site mental health care provider Family Services, provide more global mental health and social emotional learning (SEL) for students, staff, and families.

For the 2021-22 school year, the SDNB will increase therapy support at each of the district's six schools to four days a week. Additionally, the SDNB will embed a comprehensive SEL curriculum for all students in grades K-10; will use resources to minimize the number of students who may require interventions; and provide just-in-time training learning for staff on how to support students who may be exhibiting severe mental health behaviors. Parent Universities may be provided quarterly on topics focused on social, emotional, mental, and physical wellness for children.

"We are overjoyed at being awarded this grant for this year and next," said Dr. Kellie Sanders, SDNB's Chief Academic Officer. "This grant allows us to provide our students, staff, families, and community support in the areas of social emotional learning and mental health needs. This grant aligns with our district mission, vision and goals to empower, inspire and support students in acquiring the knowledge, skills and dispositions to establish goals for their future and develop plans to achieve them."

This is the second time in three years the SDNB has earned a mental health grant. The SDNB was awarded this same mental health grant for the amount of \$53,000 for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.

The DPI awarded \$10,008,828 in school-based mental health services grants to 153 applicants, representing 144 individual public school districts, eight consortiums, and three charter schools. The program is a two-year grant aligned with Wisconsin's biennial budget.

"The mental health and wellness of our students and our school staff is paramount," State Superintendent Jill Underly said. "The pandemic exacerbated the existing challenges our schools and communities face when trying to address mental health needs. While these grants do not completely resolve that demand, they do provide help to schools attempting to offer additional support, resources, and services."

The DPI's SSPW team works to support Wisconsin schools by ensuring everyone is and feels healthy, safe, supported, engaged, and challenged. The team works to promote and support the development of equitable school communities through technical assistance, professional development, family engagement, and collaborations with national, state, and local resources.