ADVANCING THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF OUR WORKFORCE

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE) Advancing the Recruitment and Retention of Our Workforce (ARROW), an initiative funded by the US Department of Education, is an opportunity for the District of Columbia to launch recruitment and retention activities that build knowledge, skills, professional opportunities and job satisfaction for school-based behavioral health professionals to enter and remain in the workforce through collaboration with local education agencies (LEAs), District colleges and universities and school behavioral health organizations and partners.

Description

The **First Year Cadre** is an opportunity for those school-based behavioral health providers, i.e., school social workers, school psychologists and counselors (school counselors and licensed counselors), in their early years of working in a school-based setting to build foundational skills necessary to be successful in the school environment.

This cohort will run from October 2026 to June 2027. Participants who successfully complete the cadre will be eligible for a $1000 stipend. Please see the Session Schedule and Participation Requirements below for more details.

The cadre was designed with input from DC's school behavioral health workforce about the skills, supports, trainings and tools that would be helpful to a first-year provider. Through the use of didactical and experiential learning, the cadre will build a foundational understanding of:

- How schools work, the importance of aligning academic and behavioral health supports to meet the needs of the whole child and the scope of school-based behavioral health services.
- Individualized treatment services, the types of assessments to use and when, use of data and observations to inform effective treatment plans, tracking and communicating progress and teaming strategies.
- Their role in the provision and support of prevention and early intervention programs aimed to build social and emotional competencies and address concerns or skill development needs amongst students.

Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must be:

- A school-based behavioral health provider, i.e., a school social worker, school psychologist, or counselor (school counselor or licensed counselor);
- Working in a school-based setting **with an employment start date of Nov. 1, 2024 or after** and maintain a full-time (on average at least 32 hours per week) employment as a school-based behavioral health provider.
- Employed by 1) a District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) school serving pre-K 3 through grade 12; 2) a DC public charter school serving pre-K 3 through grade 12; 3) the Department of

Behavioral Health (DBH) School Behavioral Health Program; OR 4) a community-based organization (CBO) that participates in the DBH Comprehensive School-Based Behavioral Health System and is placed with a DC public or public charter school serving pre-K 3 through grade 12.

Application Review and Participant Determination

To apply, eligible providers must complete the ARROW – First Year Cadre Application by Friday, Sept. 11, 2026. Applications will be reviewed and scored based on the quality of answers provided.

Decisions will be shared with applicants by Friday, Oct. 2, 2026.

Session Schedule and Participation Requirements

At the time of application, providers should ensure they are able to meet on the following dates and times:

- Cadre Session 1: Wednesday, Oct. 7, 3:30- 5 p.m. (in person)
- Cadre Session 2: Wednesday, Nov. 4, 3:30- 5 p.m. (virtual)
- Cadre Session 3: Wednesday, Dec. 2, 3:30-5 p.m. (virtual)
- Cadre Session 4: Wednesday, Jan. 6, 3:30- 5 p.m. (virtual)
- Cadre Session 5: Wednesday, Feb. 3, 3:30- 5 p.m. (in person)
- Cadre Sesson 6: Wednesday, March 3, 3:30- 5 p.m. (virtual)
- Cadre Session 7: Wednesday, April 7, 3:30- 5 p.m. (virtual)
- Cadre Session 8: Wednesday, May 5, 3:30- 5 p.m. (virtual)
- Cadre Session 9: Wednesday, June 2, 3:30- 5 p.m. (in person)

Full stipends are contingent on attendance at required meetings, active participation in program activities, and remaining at an eligible organization and in an eligible school-based role throughout the duration of the cadre.

Questions? Reach out to OSSE.HYDT@dc.gov.