

**STUDENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES CORPORATION**  
**INTENT/ REQUEST FOR STUDENT ASSISTANCE COUNSELOR SERVICES**  
**2020-2021 School Year**

Please FAX to (914) 366-8826 or email to [diane.murgalo@sascorp.org](mailto:diane.murgalo@sascorp.org)

**By March 31<sup>st</sup>**

(For questions call (914) 332-1300)

**Yonkers Public Schools**

I am selecting:

**Option 1 – Maintaining the same level of services:**

4

<input type="checkbox"/>	Roosevelt High School ECS	3 days per week	At a cost of \$45,290
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gorton HS	2.5 days per week	At a cost of 37,742
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yonkers HS	2.5 days per week	At a cost of 37,742
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lincoln HS	2 days per week	At a cost of 30,195
<input type="checkbox"/>	Palisade Preparatory School	2 days per week	At a cost of 30,195
<input type="checkbox"/>	Riverside HS	3 days per week	At a cost of 45,290
<input type="checkbox"/>	Saunders Trade & Technical HS	3 days per week	At a cost of 45290
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yonkers Montessori Academy	2 days per week	At a cost of 30,195
<b>Total cost</b>			<b>\$ 301,939</b>

**Option 2 – Increasing Services**

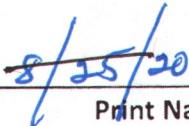
- The district would like to increase the level of services from SAS. Please indicate the requested number of days of coverage \_\_\_\_\_

**Option 3 - Decreasing Services**

- The district needs to decrease the level of services from SAS.

**Note:** If services are decreased, the subsidy from the NYS OASAS will be used for other school districts and may not be available to the district in the future.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Print Name

**Dr. Luis Rodriguez**  
**Assistant Superintendent**  
**Special Education and**  
**Pupil Support Services**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title/Position

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**STUDENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES CORPORATION**  
*Substance Abuse Prevention • Mental Health Treatment • Bullying Prevention*  
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February 27, 2020

Dr. Edwin Quezada  
Yonkers Public Schools  
One Larkin Center  
Yonkers, NY 10701

Dear Dr. Quezada:

Below is an **update** on youth substance use, the results from Student Assistance Services (SAS) programs for the 2018-2019 year, and the **costs** for 2020-2021 year.

**Trends in Westchester Student Substance Use**

Attached is the summary of Westchester student substance use. The data was collected from surveys of 6,100 students in 12 school districts during the 2018-19 school year and compared with data from previous years. The sample includes 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students in schools with and without Student Assistance Counselors. The key findings for Westchester students are:

- Monthly use of **alcohol** has decreased significantly since 2008 among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders but is still significantly above the national average.
- **Binge drinking** for all three grades is above national rates and the difference increases as students age. Approximately half of students reporting monthly alcohol use are binge drinking.
- Monthly **marijuana** use has decreased among 8th graders but increased among 10th and 12th graders since 2008.
- Monthly **cigarette** use fell by half since 2008 for 8th, 10th, and 12th graders.
- Monthly rates of **E-cigarettes** are lower than national averages for 8th and 10th graders but higher for 12th graders.
- Monthly misuse of **prescription drugs** has decreased since 2013.
- Perception of peer disapproval for marijuana use has decreased among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders since last year.

Mirroring the country, surveys conducted this school year and mid-year data from our Student Assistance Counselors indicate that many students are vaping products containing THC and nicotine with many using both substances. Perhaps the most troubling trend is the increase in vaping and marijuana use among female students. The news about proposed legalization of non-medical marijuana in NYS has

Westchester  
gov.com

SAS is a contract agency of the Westchester County Dept  
of Community Mental Health Office of Drug Abuse  
Prevention & STOP-DWI, and Youth Bureau



lead more students and parents to believe that marijuana is not harmful. However, the latest data from Colorado document that marijuana is the most common substance present in suicides among youth 10-19 (Western Jo of ER Med., 2019) and marijuana related ER visits for adolescents increased significantly since legalization. (Jo of Adol Health, 2018). While monthly use has not increased among CO adolescents, heavy use has increased, is higher than the national average, and is causing an increase in serious mental health issues. Therefore, it is necessary to educate parents, students, staff, and policy makers about the consequences of legalization of non-medical marijuana use and the dangers of use.

We are continuing to update our staff on the latest trends and train them on evidence based prevention strategies and responses to adolescent use. We are hopeful that all of these efforts will prevent and reduce vaping and the use of other harmful substances.

**SAS Program highlights from the 2018-2019 school year**

- 96% of students seen four or more times increased or maintained their perception of risk of harm of substance use
- 95% of students seen four or more times reduced the frequency of their alcohol or marijuana use or remained a non-user
- 97% of students seen four or more times increased their bonding to school or maintained bonding to school
- 97% of students seen in a group did not receive detention, suspension, or expulsion
- among students seen in the eight session prevention education series, there were increases in perception of risk for alcohol, marijuana, and prescription drug use, and binge drinking.

**Costs for the 2020-2021 school year**

The regular cost for SAS Counselors in the Yonkers Public Schools will be:

School	# of Days at school	Cost
Roosevelt High School Early College Studies	3	\$45,290
Gorton HS	2.5	37,742
Yonkers HS	2.5	37,742
Lincoln HS	2	30,195
Palisade Preparatory School	2	30,195
Riverside HS	3	45,290
Saunders Trade & Technical HS	3	45,290
Yonkers Montessori Academy	2	30,195
<b>Total cost</b>		<b>\$301,939</b>

Please indicate on the attached form which is due by **March 31** if the district intends to include these amounts in your proposed budget. Student Assistance Services is in the process of exploring the option of running our programming through a possible CO-SER in partnership with Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES for the 2020-2021 school year. Until we know if this has been approved and the possible difference in costs for schools using a CO-SER, please include the amount listed above in your budget.

**Programs & Activities provided at no additional cost**

The following SAS programs and activities are provided by SAS counselors or administrative staff at no additional cost to participating schools:

- Alternatives to suspension for students involved in substance use or related behavior

- Bullying prevention training and consultation for school staff
- Grant and report writing assistance
- Professional development for staff
- Presentations for parents
- Descriptions of how existing SAS programming can meet some of the Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health Education SED requirements

### **Programs & Activities offered to all Westchester schools at no cost**

The ROADD (Reduce Our Adolescent Drinking/Drugging, and Driving) Program is a six session curriculum delivered by our masters level social workers in HS classes (usually health). Schools are invited in the spring to participate for the following year. Participation is determined by lottery in May. The program is funded by the Westchester County Office of Drug Prevention and STOP-DWI with the fines of convicted drivers. A program description is attached.

Students reported improvements in all measures of knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral intention. Among the most statistically significant results were:

- they were more likely to think about their options when making decisions that impact health and safety
- they increased their understanding of the risk of harm in using alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs while driving
- they would be less likely to drive after using marijuana
- they would be less likely to accept a ride from a driver who had been drinking alcohol

Project BRIGHT (Bridge, Grow, Help, Teens) is a new program for schools to prevent school violence. It will promote or enhance the use of Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG), and provide free multi-disciplinary threat assessment team training, training for school personnel and students, safety "coaching" for a school's threat assessment team, Mental Health First Aid Training, and training for student leaders. The program is funded by a three year grant to the Westchester County Department of Public Safety from the US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Administration. The program will be coordinated in partnership with Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES, Southern Westchester BOCES, and SAS. The next free all day CSTAG training will be on ~~Wednesday~~ <sup>Tuesday</sup> ~~March 4th~~ <sup>3rd</sup>. (The flyers are attached.)

### **Mental Health**

Our new Office of Mental Health licensed treatment program for adolescents is open at our Tarrytown location and providing services to self-pay patients and their families. We are in the process of becoming part of private insurance and Medicaid managed care networks. Our board certified adolescent psychiatrist has been helpful in training our staff and presented to the school nurses at the January conference.

### **Intervention for Adolescents with Substance Use Disorders**

Our Planned Intervention program continues to assist parents in "motivating" their substance abusing teen to enter treatment. This program continues to be funded by the Joseph Marinello Fund and is free to all parents of Westchester youth 19 and under.

To help us plan for next year please return the attached form by **March 31**. The form is an indication of intent. We do not need a letter of commitment or contract until your budget is approved. Please contact me if you would like additional information about any of the programs and services mentioned in this

letter. I am also available to discuss any issues we might be helpful with, or if you have ideas for how we can better work together to prevent and reduce student substance use.

Yours truly,



Ellen Morehouse

cc: Desmond Barnett  
Jade Sharp  
William Shaggura  
Ian Sherman  
Eileen Rivera  
Steven Mazzola  
Don Solimere  
Michelle Yazurlo  
Edward DeChent  
Luis Rodriguez  
Rosetta Barbieri