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South Dakota Project AWARE Meeting Facilitation

Meeting 5 Summary

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Overview of Project

South Dakota Project AWARE is a grant program focused on building partnerships between education agencies and mental health agencies statewide to increase awareness of mental health issues and coordination of services for school-age children. In Year 1 of the grant, the South Dakota Department of Education (SD DOE) and the South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health (DSS-DBH), convened a statewide advisory group and created local implementation teams comprised of stakeholders from local education agencies and community mental health centers. As part of Year 1 implementation, SD DOE and DSS-DBH partnered with Marzano Research to develop a shared mission and vision for the project.

Marzano Research collaborated with SD DOE and DSS-DBH partners to plan and facilitate one virtual meeting with the local implementation teams in preparation for a second, in-person meeting with the statewide advisory group. The first meeting included implementation team leaders, representatives from SD DOE and DSS-DBH, and representatives from the four school districts associated with the initial implementation of services and their designated mental health service providers under the grant. Marzano Research conducted Meeting 1 virtually with the local implementation teams to begin building consensus on a shared mission and vision for the project. Prior to Meeting 1, we worked with SD DOE and DSS-DBH partners to establish specific outcomes and create a meeting agenda. We designed a process for discussion, collaboration, and decision-making that engages participants, surfaces their interests and needs, and results in higher levels of trust and ownership.

The second, in-person meeting was held on November 14, 2019, in Oacoma, South Dakota. Attendees were representatives from statewide advisory group partners, including SD DOE, DSS-DBH, school districts and mental health service providers, prevention providers, the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, the South Dakota School Superintendents Association, School Administrators of South Dakota, the South Dakota School Counselor Association, the South Dakota Association of School Psychologists, the Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment, South Dakota School Nurse Association, and South Dakota universities. During the meeting, the advisory group representatives provided input on the grant mission and vision. They also developed structures and shared resources to support future implementation. After this second meeting, SD DOE and DSS-DBH partners finalized the South Dakota Project AWARE mission and vision.

The third, virtual meeting included representatives from statewide advisory group partners. During the meeting, SD DOE provided insight into the work on the mission and vision statement that had been finalized. The external evaluator for South Dakota Project AWARE, Alan Stein-Seroussi from the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, provided data on the current state of the evaluation. Marzano Research then presented on the consultancy roles to clarify expectations that partners and attendees should have for their roles in the meeting. Lastly, DSS-DBH partners provided some information on behavioral health service providers in South Dakota as well as the

details on the Systems of Care initiative established to provide basic resources and support to individuals in need.

The fourth, virtual meeting included representatives from statewide advisory group partners as well as local implementation teams. During the meeting, SD DOE and DSS-DBH partners shared grant updates and celebrations. Then, Marzano Research shared information about telemental health implementation. Carrie Sanderson from the University of South Dakota's Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment shared strategies to prevent and respond to child maltreatment. DSS-DBH partners provided information about 605 Strong, a crisis counseling program. Marzano Research facilitated an activity to gather the various perspectives (e.g., teachers, parents, students) of a successful Project AWARE system. Lastly, Alan Stein-Seroussi, the external evaluator for South Dakota Project AWARE, provided data on the current state of the evaluation.

The fifth, virtual meeting included representatives from statewide advisory group partners and local implementation teams. The meeting summary is presented below.

Meeting 5 Summary

The virtual meeting took place on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT. Marzano Research staff members Anne Butterworth and Mike Siebersma facilitated the meeting.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants included members from the local implementation teams, staff from SD DOE and DSS-DBH, and representatives from education and mental health professional associations across South Dakota. Tables 1–3 list the participants from the statewide advisory group, local implementation teams, and state agencies, respectively.

Table 1. Project AWARE Advisory Group Participants

Participant	Organization	Position
Andrea Diehm	South Dakota Department of Education	School Counseling and Career Development Specialist
Wendy Giebink	National Alliance on Mental Illness	Executive Director
Dana Livermont	South Dakota Education Association	National Education Association Director
Lane Madsen	South Dakota Counseling Association	President
Michelle Majeres	Volunteers of America, Dakotas	Prevention Specialist
Elizabeth McPherson	South Dakota Association of School Psychologists	President
Rob Monson	School Administrators of South Dakota	Executive Director
Linda Poppens Boland	South Dakota School Nurse Association	Registered Nurse
Carrie Sanderson	Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment	Director
Michelle Vande Weerd	Brookings School District	Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Table 2. Local Implementation Team Participants

Participant	Organization	Position
Tami Ambrosion	Lewis & Clark Behavioral Health Services	Director
Lisa Boylan	Sioux Falls School District	Community Project AWARE Manager

Participant	Organization	Position
Lori Brunick	Lewis & Clark Behavioral Health Services	Systems of Care Coordinator
Jaycie Culbert	Lewis & Clark Behavioral Health Services	Community Project AWARE Manager
Joe Hauge	Black Hills Special Services Cooperative	Executive Director
Taylor Kevan	Southeastern Behavioral HealthCare	Systems of Care Coordinator
Ericka Kotab	South Central Educational Cooperative serving Wagner Community School District	School Psychologist
Christie Lueth	Southeastern Behavioral HealthCare	System of Care Supervisor
Deb Muilenburg-Wilson	Sioux Falls School District	Senior Director (Special Services)
Amber Roduner	Behavior Management Systems	Licensed Professional Counselor
Jenelle Sigler	Bridgewater-Emery School District	Community Project AWARE Manager
Shad Storley	Wagner Community School District	Superintendent
Tutush Woldemariam	Southeastern Behavioral HealthCare	Systems of Care Coordinator
Matt Yost	Wagner implementation team	Incoming Superintendent

Table 3. State Agency Participants

Participant	Organization	Position
Melanie Boetel	South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health	Assistant Director of the Division of Behavioral Health
Sean Hanley	Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation	Project AWARE External Evaluator
Tessia Johnston	South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health	Prevention Program Administrator
Carla Leingang	South Dakota Department of Education	Educator Certification Administrator

Participant	Organization	Position
Beverly Mentzer	South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health	Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Initiative Program Manager
Teresa Rowland	South Dakota Department of Education	Project AWARE Coordinator
Mary Stadick Smith	South Dakota Department of Education	Deputy Secretary
Alan Stein-Seroussi	Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation	Project AWARE External Evaluator

OBJECTIVES

The meeting objectives were as follows:

1. To increase awareness and engagement of statewide partners.
2. To develop networks and structures to support statewide, interconnected behavioral and mental health services.
3. To provide opportunities to share resources and collaboratively address challenges.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Marzano Research opened the meeting by welcoming the advisory group, local implementation teams, and state agency participants. Next, participants connected through small group conversations. After this activity, Marzano Research reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives.

Melanie Boetel DSS-DBH partner then relayed important grant updates and data related to youth mental health in South Dakota. She provided suicide rates from 2010–2019 for youth age 10–18 by gender and race (e.g., White, American Indian, and Other). She also shared South Dakota’s 2020–2025 suicide prevention plan, including goals related to prevention, intervention, and postvention. For 2021, South Dakota’s high-priority suicide prevention strategies are (1) collecting and sharing data on suicide attempts, (2) providing education and training opportunities to employers, (3) designing and executing culturally appropriate awareness campaigns, and (4) partnering with community organizations and coalitions to disseminate resources. Lastly, Boetel provided information on several suicide prevention awareness campaigns and trainings across the state and introduced Wendy Giebink, executive director of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

Giebink provided information about NAMI and the Ending the Silence program, which helps raise awareness about the warning signs of mental health conditions and what people can do if someone is showing those signs. The Ending the Silence program offers 50-minute presentations for middle and high school students, school staff, parents, and caregivers. The presentations are

facilitated by two presenters: a NAMI staff member who provides information on the topic and a young adult who shares their mental health recovery journey. For the 2020/21 school year, NAMI staff have presented to over 2,100 students, 250 teachers, and 75 parents. After the Ending the Silence presentations, teachers and parents typically request more information, and NAMI staff provide them with toolkits, referral sources, student wellness activity information, and family wellness and resource kits. Additionally, NAMI offers trainings such as the NAMI Basics education program for parents and Say It Out Loud for teachers.

Next, the local implementation team from Wagner Community School shared information about its Strengthening Our Community (SOC) group, formed in June 2018. The group's mission is "Mental health awareness. Reducing stigma. Building connections and hope." The group has monthly meetings as well as events such as "Mental Health May" during mental health awareness month in May and "SOC-tober" in October. The group also hosted a book study of *The Deepest Well* by Nadine Burke Harris, trainings from NAMI and events at Wagner High School basketball games and wrestling matches. The local implementation team offered advice on how to get started, such as determining what already exists in the community, partnering with community organizations, and building relationships with community leaders. After the local implementation team's presentation, Marzano Research facilitated a reflection activity for participants to think about where they are with their local advisory committees, where they would like to go with their local advisory committees, and what steps they might take to get there.

Following this activity, the external evaluator, Alan Stein-Seroussi from the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, presented evaluation results for Year 1, Year 2, and Quarter 1 of Year 3. In general, training activities in Year 2 had greatly increased compared to Year 1, most likely because Year 1 was primarily a planning year and there were duplicate counts of people who were trained in Years 1 and 2. However, Year 3 will not have duplicate counts due to a change in the federal reporting requirements. Stein-Seroussi also provided Year 3, Quarter 1 data showing 33 Tier 2 referrals and 36 Tier 2 services received as well as 29 Tier 3 referrals and 29 Tier 3 services received. In spring 2021, data collection activities include staff surveys examining training, awareness of services, mental health climate, general school climate, self-efficacy, and mental health stigma (the topics assessed in previous surveys). The spring survey also includes three new topics: school response to the COVID-19 pandemic, student response to the pandemic, and staff/personnel response to the pandemic. Stein-Seroussi will also interview staff to gather more detail related to implementation successes and barriers, capacity to address social-emotional learning and mental health, and sustainability of services after Project AWARE funding has ended. He finished the presentation by facilitating small-group discussions on how evaluation data can support sustainability as well as how data should be presented to support sustainability for Project AWARE.

Next, Marzano Research conducted an activity to identify program components that should be sustained after Project AWARE funding has ended. In small groups, participants added program components to a previously generated list. Additional components included staffing and explicit cross-field communication. We then discussed essential and optional program elements. In small

groups, participants categorized the program components into three groups: essential program components, optional program components, and program components needing further discussion. The groups identified the following items as essential components: school district and CMHC collaboration, care coordination, in-school care options, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and community partnerships. The groups also identified many other components as optional or needing further discussion, including telehealth, universal and targeted mental health screenings, and individual and group monitoring.

Finally, Marzano Research thanked participants for their engagement and shared a survey link for them to provide feedback on the meeting. The feedback survey results are described in the next section.

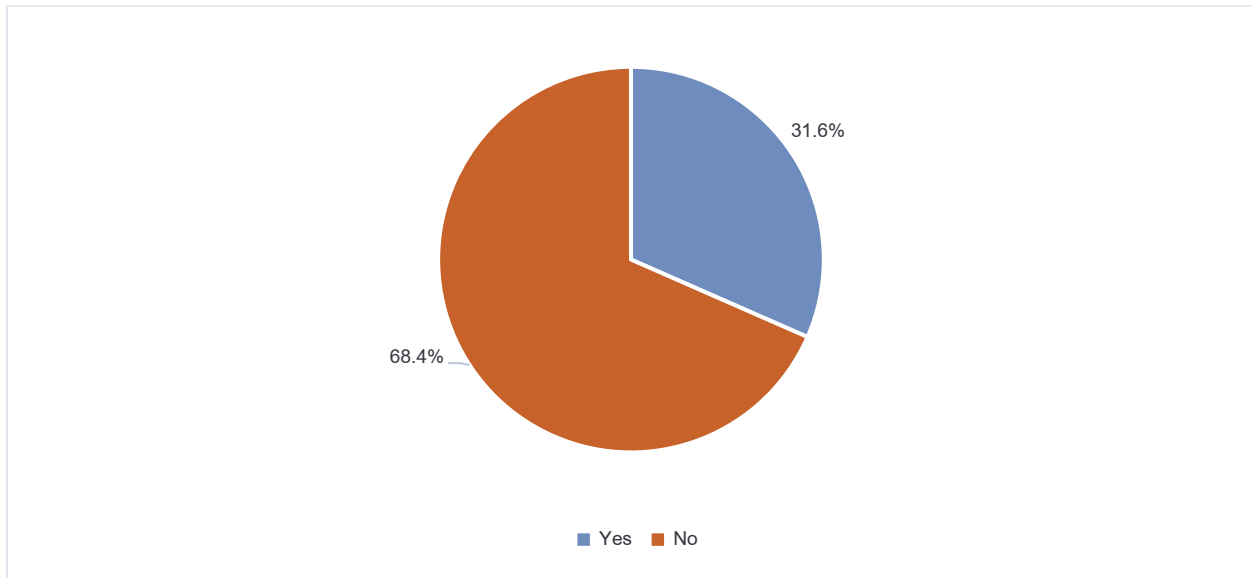
NEXT STEPS

Next steps include moving forward with implementing the grant activities as well as identifying priorities and agenda items for the next advisory group meeting in fall 2021.

Feedback Survey Results

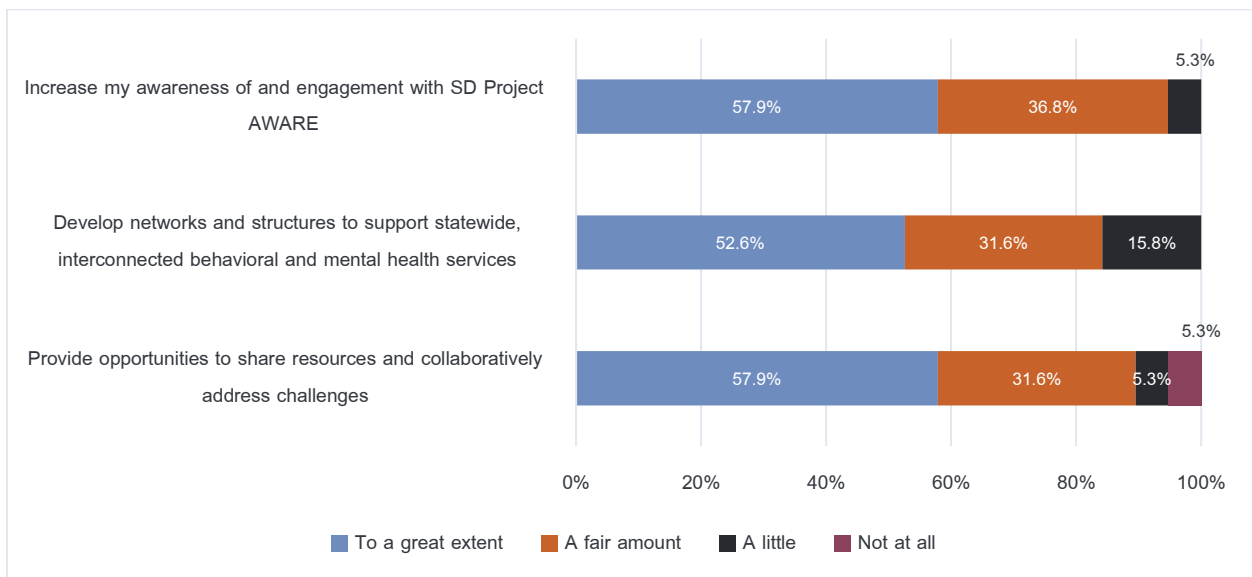
Nineteen of the 33 participants in Meeting 5 completed the feedback survey (a 57.6% response rate). Just over 68% of respondents indicated they were not part of a local implementation team, while the remaining respondents were members of a team (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Respondents' Membership in a Local Implementation Team



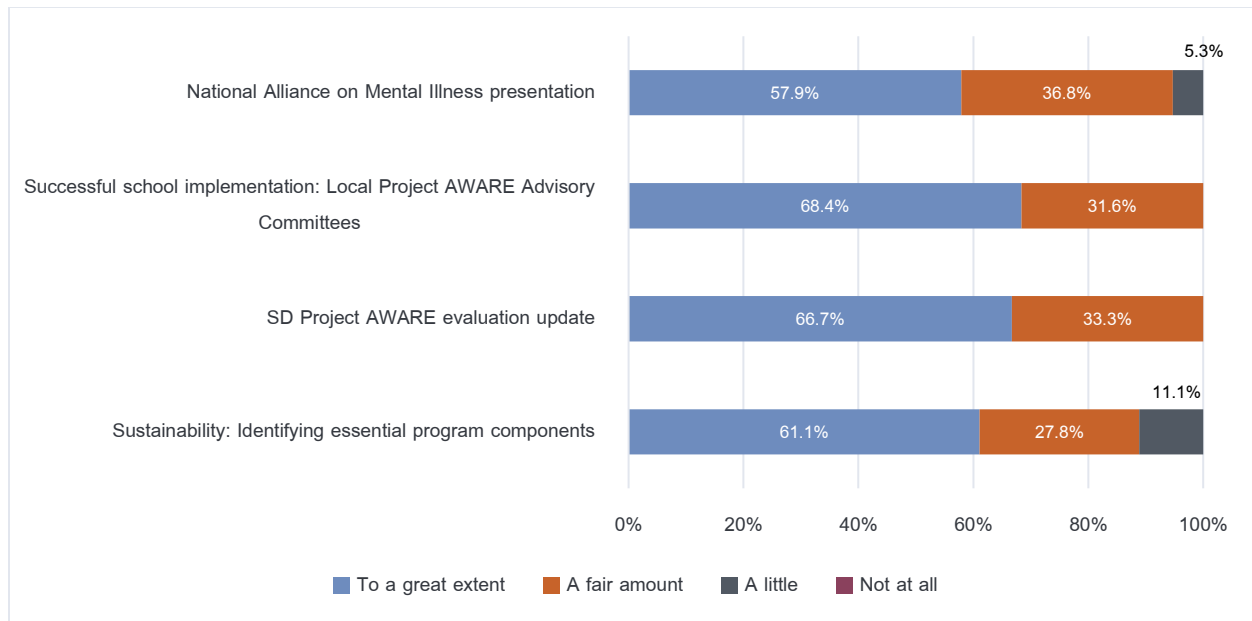
Overall, respondents indicated they had a positive experience with the meeting. Over 80% of respondents indicated that the meeting objectives were met a fair amount or to a great extent (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Respondents' Perspectives on the Extent to Which the Meeting Objectives Were Met



Additionally, respondents had positive perceptions of the extent to which meeting segments supported the meeting objectives (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Respondents’ Perspectives on the Extent to Which Meeting Segments Deepened Their Understanding of and Engagement With South Dakota Project AWARE



Respondents also indicated what they found to be most useful during the meeting. They perceived the breakout sessions and presentations by other local implementation teams as useful to learn how others had approached the program. Additionally, the information shared by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) executive director and the data shared by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) evaluator were well received. One respondent stated that the “PIRE data [were] awesome as always! Makes me feel like our implementation site is making progress!” Lastly, respondents appreciated the sustainability discussion during the meeting, specifically mentioning the essential program components of South Dakota Project AWARE and the focus on what the future holds for this work.

Respondents also suggested improvements for future meetings. Several respondents expressed that they would like to continue the sustainability conversation in future meetings and to “further break down . . . expectation in all tiers of the project.” One respondent would like to see the overlap of Project AWARE goals “with other large bodies of work occurring in South Dakota.” Respondents also reflected on which type of stakeholders may need to attend or should be attending the advisory group meetings. Lastly, two respondents wished for more flexible time to share what is happening at the programmatic level. As one respondent elaborated, “There are issues going on in the schools/CMHCs that are pressing and ‘real’ issues, but [we are] not always given the opportunity to talk about them.”



The research department at Marzano Research supports partners in improving education systems, practices, and outcomes for all learners.

Founded in 2008, Marzano Research began working with state and local education agencies and practitioners to understand the challenges they face and support them in defining the questions, conducting the research, and implementing the answers to enhance educational results.

Today, Marzano Research has grown to become one of the leading research organizations in the country, providing rigorous research, evaluation, and technical assistance to federal, state, local, and private partners. As part of that work, we serve as the lead for the Regional Educational Laboratory Central, working with state and local education agencies in seven states as thought partners and researchers to address some of the most challenging issues in education.

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