

Changes to the Minnetonka Family Collaborative Grant Process for 2021-2022

I am pleased to announce the 2021-2022 MFC Grant Cycle. There are a few significant changes to the grant program this year.

For background purposes, funding for the Minnetonka Family Collaborative comes from the Local Collaborative Time Study (LCTS), which is Minnesota's federally approved mechanism for Medicaid and Title IV E administrative reimbursement for the family service collaboratives. The MFC funding is received because staff in the Minnetonka Public School District earn reimbursement for eligible activities performed through a Random Moments questionnaire. The Department of Human Services (DHS) disperses these reimbursements through LCTS to the Hennepin County Social Services agency, which in turn transfers the funds to the Collaborative. The Minnetonka School District acts as fiscal agent for the Collaborative and provides in kind support of the MFC Coordinator position.

The relationship between the District and the Minnetonka Family Collaborative is mutually beneficial. If not for the time spent by the staff of the Minnetonka School District and their participation in the LCTS Random Moments program, the MFC would not have the funds to disperse in the grant program. Additionally, without the MFC, many of these programs might not exist *and the District would not be eligible for the funding*. This is a valuable partnership that benefits the community, children, and families within the Minnetonka School District.

Since the inception of the MFC, LCTS funds have been distributed through an annual grant program. Although there are new programs every year, the bulk of the District programming remains the same, some being funded for over 15 years.

In 2020, the Minnetonka School District hired Dr. William Dikel, author, and school mental health consultant, to perform an evaluation of student well-being in the Minnetonka School District (in line with school board goal #1) As part of his recommendation, Dr. Dikel specifically called out the LCTS funding from the Minnetonka Family Collaborative.

"LCTS funding:

Different collaboratives around the state have different philosophies regarding the best use of LCTS funding. Some disperse multiple small grants, whereas others find value in funding a few substantial grants. Given the severity and pervasiveness of the District's students' mental health problems, and the significant limitations in accessible on-site services at this time, I would recommend the latter approach. In my opinion, funding should go to supporting direct services for at-risk and high-risk students. I would recommend consideration of large grants going to increasing the availability of on-site, co-located diagnostic and treatment services. I would recommend that, in the process of analyzing the interest and availability of clinics including, but not limited to the Relate Clinic, that funding be made available through LCTS grants for expansion of services. This would help fill the need for tier 3 services and would result in increased well-being for vulnerable students. "

Dr. Dikel is correct in that each collaborative disperses their funds in different ways. Many collaboratives skip the grant program and instead choose to only fund three or four programs each year. Some hold an open grant cycle, while some opt for a hybrid program.

As a result of this recommendation, the District requested a larger portion of the LCTS funding be put toward *direct services* in the schools. At the January Executive Team meeting, the MFC Exec Board agreed to allocate \$250,000 of the \$350,000 budget to the Minnetonka School District under the title of “Well-Being/Children’s Mental Health.” This block sum will incorporate *all of the previously funded District grants** including the outside partners that operate *within the schools* (Relate, Tonka Cares and Growing Through Grief).

PROGRAM
Student Well Being
Children Family Support Program
Project Play (Primary Project)
Healthy Start for all Kids
Park Nicollet Growing Through Grief
Tonka Cares
Relate Counseling
<p>*Dr. Peterson agreed that three of the historically MFC funded programs should be included in the District budget moving forward: ADHD Elementary Mentorship, ADHD learning lab at MMW and the ADHD Learning lab at MME. These three programs have been funded by the Collaborative for over 15 years. The District will now be funding these programs. not LCTS.</p>

What does this mean?

The District will now allocate \$250,000 among the school programs listed above. Moving forward, ***any District programs as well as the “in school” community programs listed above will be funded through the Well-Being allocation and not be part of the annual MFC grant program.*** Every spring, the District will submit a proposal describing the programs it will fund with the “Well-Being” allocation for MFC Board approval. I will be reaching out to the previously funded District programs to talk discuss the process moving forward.

For the community programs, the grant program remains the same. This change allows \$100,000 for organizations, which are vital to the community and support the purpose for which family service collaboratives were created. In addition, there will no longer be a cap on the grant request amount. In previous years, the grant awards were limited to \$30,000. That cap is no longer in place. Grant requests can be made for any amount (up to \$100,000).