

Project AWARE 23:
CESA Regional Implementation of CSMH
FAQs

Many CESAs have been providing school mental health support to districts for many years. How will Project AWARE 23 impact the great work that is already being done?

We are aware that each of the CESAs may be at different points in their support for school mental health. The AWARE project is designed to enhance and leverage the great school mental health support that is already being offered through CESAs. This is not meant to supplant anything that is currently happening in your region, but will encourage more statewide alignment of high quality technical assistance for Comprehensive School Mental Health. We want to provide each CESA the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and broaden their skillset around best practices in school mental health technical assistance. This should not take the place of any of your current practices.

What is the time commitment for Year 1 of the Project vs. Years 2-5?

Project AWARE 23 is a 5-year grant program. Year 1 of Project AWARE 23 is 10/1/23 - 9/30/24. It is common for the first year of these large projects to be spent mostly on planning for the remainder of the project. We chose to take extra steps in Year 1 to ensure that we are developing a project that considers the needs of our partners, knowing it would delay our program start time. We were intentional about gathering CESA feedback, and we are pleased with the final design. Given that we are already halfway into Year 1, the Year 1 contract will be shorter in length than the Years 2-5 contracts. We also knew that Year 1 would look different than years 2-5, since this first contract will mostly focus on preparing CESAs for Years 2-5. For CESAs, the Year 1 deliverables will mainly focus on professional development and training, whereas Years 2-5 will focus on the service delivery to districts. The Year 1 contract will end on September 30, 2024, whereas Years 2-5 contracts will be year-long (October 1 through September 30). CESAs should continue to provide any school mental health support to districts that they already offer.

When would the Year 1 allocation be awarded?

Year 1 will begin July 1, 2024. CESAs can submit claims for the work as it is completed after that date.

Would we then expect future years to follow a process similar to other DPI contracts?

The contracts will be similar to other DPI contracts in that CESAs are required to meet specific deliverables in order to claim the funds.

Could more than one staff member collectively engage in this to complete the work?

While the project requires one team lead from each CESA, the goal of the project is to build capacity within each CESA to engage in this work in the long-term. It would be ideal that more than one team member participate in this project. This decision will be left up to each CESA to determine how they choose to meet deliverables, and how many staff they wish to participate.

With the Year 1 contract being the same amount of money as years 2-5, we are hoping this offers CESAs the ability to send multiple team members to the learning opportunities that are taking place before September 30, 2024. We want CESAs to have the autonomy to decide how they want to proceed with staffing this project.

Districts are seeking support that can be offered beyond a "year one" program, with a heavier focus on individualized coaching during the implementation and Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) process. Can we work with Project AWARE staff to begin developing "year two and beyond" programming, as soon as possible?

Yes, this is already in the works and once the contracts are established, CESAs can participate. This project is specifically designed to support ongoing coaching/consultation to districts at every level of engagement with CSMH work, from beginners to veterans. The DPI mental health team has been limited in its ability to support schools after their year one mental health academy participation. School teams have consistently requested ongoing support after year one. This project is meant to address this need. This Project will offer an opportunity for deeper collaboration among DPI, CESAs, and other partners to co-develop this programming.

We have offered a plethora of new mental health literacy events this year, but we are interested in vastly expanding these offerings next year. Is it possible to have a "bank" of literacy presentations available for Project AWARE teams?

Yes, DPI will offer a bank of presentation materials related to mental health literacy, as well as other topics. We also want to use this project to foster collaboration among CESAs. We know that many CESAs have been developing their own presentation and training materials on these topics already, and we hope to encourage the partnering and sharing of this great work so we can provide more equitable access to these resources for districts across the state.

If Year 1 funds are through September 30, 2024, will CESAs have access to these funds during the current fiscal year (through June 30, 2024) to start engaging in the work as soon as possible?
Year 1 of Project AWARE is 10/01/23 - 9/30/24. The CESA contracts for Year 1 will begin July 1, 2024 and will run through 9/30/24.

When do you expect contracts to be sent to CESAs? We are trying to schedule summer training and contracts for next year.

We are working to expedite these contracts in order to move forward as quickly as possible. Expect to receive the contracts by June, 2024.

Are there any known training dates or other statewide meeting dates that need to be held?
In-person training dates will be August 8-9 at the Tommy G. Thompson building in Madison.

Is there a way to structure this project so that CESAs could subsidize the cost of support for more districts instead of prioritizing one district with Project AWARE funds, and then doing fee-for-service for the rest of the districts?

Yes. A priority of Project AWARE is creating more equitable access to CSMH support for districts across Wisconsin. CESAs can choose to offer services to as many schools/districts free of charge or at a discounted rate as they choose. CESAs can determine how many districts can access the discount and what that discount is. It is up to each CESA how they choose to utilize their fee for service model after this minimum is met. CESAs will be asked to:

- Provide training, coaching, and consultation support to at least two school or district teams in:
 - completing the School Mental Health Quality Assessment and using the results for improvement planning
 - developing and measuring progress towards school mental health improvement goals
 - using continuous improvement tools as outlined in the Roadmap for School Mental Health Improvement
- Provide coaching and consultation support free of charge for one district team participating in the statewide Networked Improvement Community (NIC) that will be facilitated by the CSMH Statewide Coordinator