

**National Coalition for the State Advancement of School Mental Health**  
**Template letter to districts**

[STATE LEA NAME]

Street

City, ST 01010

Dear [SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT OR ADMINISTRATOR],

[STATE NAME] is one of nine states selected to participate in the National Coalition for the State Advancement of School Mental Health (NCSA-SMH), a technical assistance opportunity hosted by the national Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland to improve statewide capacity to address student social and emotional needs and school climate. This opportunity is consistent with our [Insert state legislation/ x Initiative/ Governor's Commitment/ X Strategic Plan] and longstanding commitment in [STATE NAME] to supporting the physical, social, and emotional wellness of our students critical to their academic success.

Specifically, we have committed to a significant increase in school and district completion of the National School Mental Health Census and Performance Measures. School and district teams can complete the Census and Performance Measures on a free, web-based platform called The School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) System ([www.theshapesystem.com](http://www.theshapesystem.com)). SHAPE is funded in part by the US Department of Health and Human Services and is designed to improve school mental health accountability, excellence, and sustainability nationwide.

SHAPE has been closely reviewed by our office and is a powerful resource for districts to ensure consistent, high-quality, multi-tiered school mental health services and supports. SHAPE also offers districts a uniform quality improvement process to understand school mental health strengths and needs. SHAPE can help you standardize the process of school-community partnerships in your district and advance data-driven decision making not only for your district, but also your individual schools if you choose. Finally, SHAPE is not just a data "submission" portal, but instead provides numerous customized reports and resources to support your strategic action planning related to school mental health quality and sustainability.

We are looking to [SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME] to complete the following steps by [10/1/17 or 7/1/18]:

1. Delegate at least 1 person from your district join SHAPE by answering 12 brief questions online. Visit [www.theshapesystem.com](http://www.theshapesystem.com) and click "Join Now" in the upper right hand corner to complete this 5 minute step. Answer to the best of your ability. Your responses will not be shared with the state or other districts, and is only viewed by the CSMH for the purposes of aggregate information for the School Mental Health Census. This step also ensures you can stay up-to-date on SHAPE resources and supports for your district as soon as they are announced. There is no limit to the number of people who "join" from a district or school.

2. Assemble a team of 3-8 individuals in your district who work on student mental health and school climate and create **one** district SHAPE registration at <https://theshapesystem.com/register>. This creates an account that the entire team can use.
3. Have the team complete following online questionnaires about school mental health in your district:
  - a. School Mental Health Profile, and
  - b. School Mental Health Quality Assessment or Sustainability Assessment

After completing these steps, you will have access to free custom reports about your district's school mental health system and an entire repository of resources to support your school mental health efforts!

SHAPE is hosted by the Center for School Mental Health and their faculty are available to you directly to provide any technical assistance or support you might need (email: [csmh@som.umaryland.edu](mailto:csmh@som.umaryland.edu) or [insert assigned CSMH faculty specialist name and email here]). You may contact also our office directly with any questions or concerns, as we will be working with CSMH to most effectively support all districts in [STATE NAME] with this important initiative. [REFER TO MOU, IF USING, OR ANY SPECIFIC STATE LEVEL RECOGNITION HERE FOR DISTRICT COMPLETION, AS RELEVANT]

We are pleased to offer you SHAPE as a tool to engage in ongoing quality improvement school mental health system, and we thank you for your commitment to supporting student mental health!

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]