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BPS Rolls Out K-12 Health Education Curriculum with Focus on Mental Health to Address New State Requirements

VIERA, FL – In response to the Florida State Board of Education’s recent adoption of three rules requiring health education instruction for all students in the areas of Mental and Emotional Education, Child Trafficking Prevention, and Substance Use and Abuse Education, Brevard Public Schools has begun implementation of new curriculum to meet these requirements in all of its K-12 public schools. Parents/families received notifications of this via letter from their school principal last month.

The mental health curriculum aligns with the state’s recent ruling and teaches students how to identify signs and symptoms of a mental health challenge by walking them through how to get help for themselves and their peers. BPS has created a series of supporting videos that serve as valuable resources for teachers and their students. The videos include scripted lessons developed by BPS teachers, as well as developmentally appropriate teacher facilitated activities for mandatory instruction.

To ensure all students participate in the lessons, BPS provided principals with flexibility of the implementation of the instruction based on the needs of the school and master schedule.

Lessons are developed by licensed mental health professionals and district staff certified in health education, physical education, school psychology, school counseling, and school social work, and consist of basic instruction aligned with Florida’s Health Education Standards.

“We are excited to introduce these new tools that we believe will help the social and emotional well-being of our students and reduce the stigmas surrounding mental health,” said Chris Moore, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services. “This initiative has great potential to positively impact school climate and culture and improve student achievement.”

The statistics are sobering:

- One in five youth between the aged of 9 and 17 currently have or will have a mental health disorder, but less than 20-percent (20%) receives treatment.
- Half of all chronic mental health illness begins before the age of 14.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death in young people ages 15-24.

“This is why BPS is being proactive now,” continued Moore. “We are committed to seeing children through the successes and challenges that come with growing up.”

Lessons are available for parents to view on Launchpad or the BPS website at <https://fl02201431.schoolwires.net/Page/16150>. Additional curriculum-specific information is available by contacting each individual school directly.

The district will collect implementation information by May to report to the state by June 30, 2019.

