



Task Force on Student Mental Health Support

Senate Bill 231

May 4, 2023

Agenda

- Context of the problem
- Overview of results from needs assessment
- Mental Health Task Force Recommendations

“I feel like a lot of my mental health affected my grades...I feel like if I had somebody, I would have not failed so many classes.”

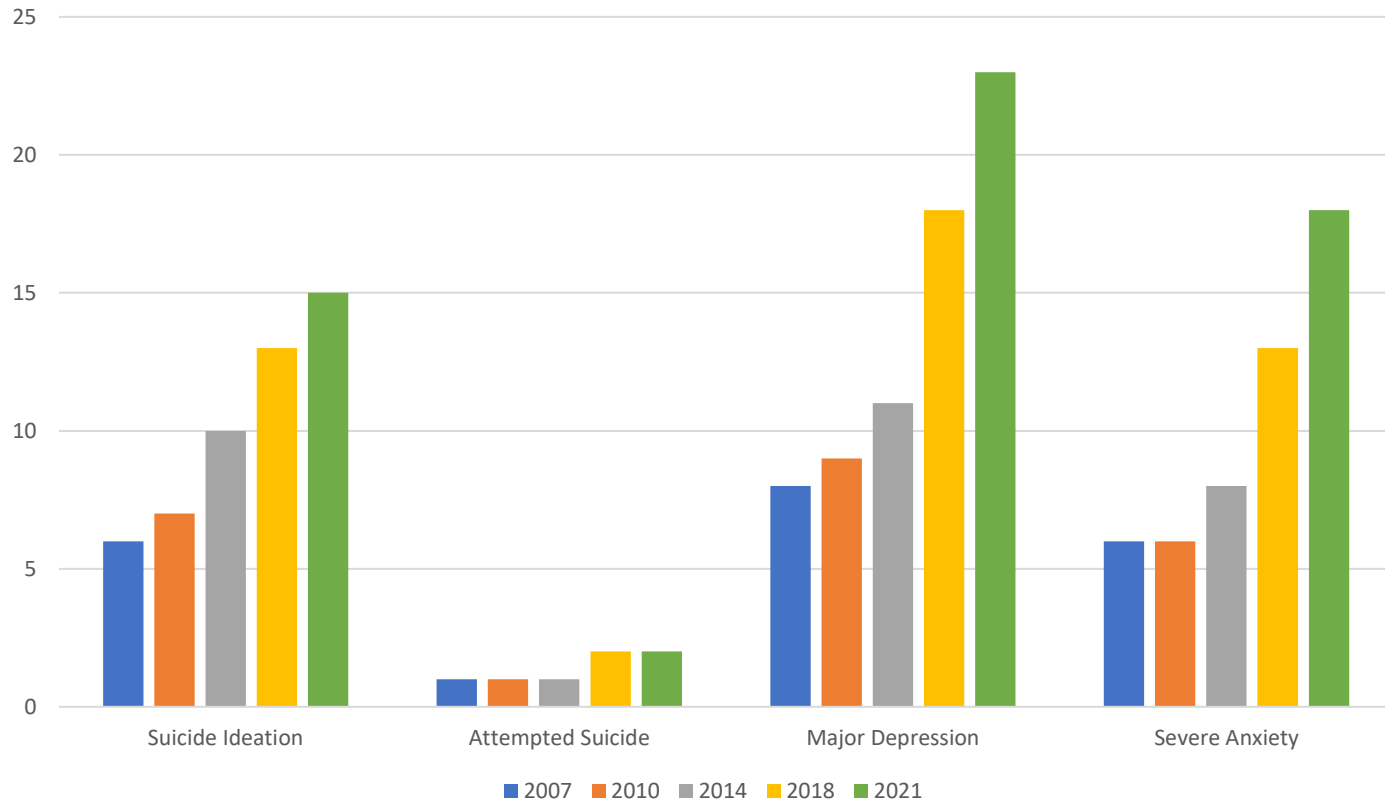
- Student, Oregon University

Impact on Student Success

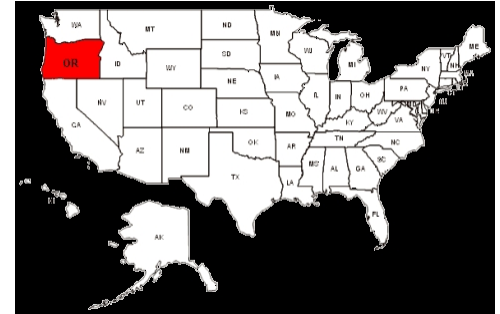
- Poor academics: lower grades (.2/.3 decrease in GPA), reduced attendance, assignment completion, participation, and productivity.
- School drop-out (up to 64% withdrawal).
- Every dollar invested in effective mental health programs could yield at least \$2 in tuition revenue and more than \$4 in **productivity and earnings for the student and society**.
- Mental health challenges in post-secondary education have **long-term implications for future occupational challenges:** missed work, reduced job performance, and unemployment.

(Bruffaerts et al., 2010; Collins & Mowbray, 2005; Eisenberg, Golberstien, & Hunt, 2009; Haller, Cramer, Lauche, Gass, & Dobos, 2014; Hartley, 2010; Hysenbegasi, Hass & Rowland, 2005; National Alliance on Mental Health, 2012; & Martin, 2010)

Mental Illness and Suicidality are Increasing



Spotlight on Oregon



- Mental Health America ranks Oregon as one of the **worst states** for mental health care access and one of the **highest prevalence rates of mental health** challenges for both adults and youth.
- Oregon is in the top ten states where those seeking help with crisis lines are **most affected by suicidal thoughts** (Crisis Text Line, crisistrends.org).

Emphasis on equity



- ***Culture counts*** in mental health care
- Students of color may **experience additional sources of distress** compared to white peers.
- Factors impacting well-being: **Discrimination, stigma, cultural mistrust, and feelings of isolation**

(Cokley, Smith, Bernard, & Roberts, 2017; Harris Poll 2015/2017; Hunt, Eisenberg, Lu, & Gathright, 2015)

Needs Assessment Overview

- **Mental Health Task Force** – bi-weekly meetings with experts and partners to direct the needs assessment.
 - Research
 - Survey
 - Interviews
- **Surveyed** administration, staff, and students across all public universities and colleges in Oregon
- In-depth **interviews** with administration, staff, and students at all public universities and colleges in Oregon
- Purposeful sampling to capture diverse experiences and ensure representation across university and college roles

Student Survey Findings

- **46%** felt so sad or hopeless for at least two weeks that they stopped participating in typical activities.
- **45%** seriously considered attempting suicide.
- **19%** of students attempted suicide at least one time.
- **77%** believe it is the institution's responsibility to provide care for mental illness.

Administrator Survey Findings

- **52%** believe that students are **NOT** receiving the accommodations they need.
- **Under 20%** of Oregon public higher education campuses **screen and assess** their students and programs related to mental health.
- **Only 26%** of institutions have **systems for collecting data** related to substance abuse for enrolled students.
- **78%** believe it is the institution's responsibility to provide care for mental illness.

Differences Across Communities

- University students report their campus has effective mental health programs at a higher rate **(65%)** compared to students from community colleges **(45%)**.
- Community college students report feeling sad or hopeless at a higher rate **(54%)** compared to university students **(36%)**.
- Administrators reported that community colleges and rural campus have less programs targeting substance abuse.

Interview Themes



- **Stigma and/or Discrimination Issues**

- *“Once you get in you have to keep that secret or else you’ll be kicked out... It’s the reality of, you know, social prejudice against people with a disability.”*

- **Supports Needed for Special Populations**

- *“We only have...one person of color who’s working in our counseling services. So like, having more staff of color is a pretty major one, especially on a campus that is predominantly white.”*

- **Funding Needed!**

- “The counseling services department is just really underfunded or understaffed I think is a better word.”

****Funding also links to other needs & barriers including long wait and/or not enough services, staff shortages, difficulty finding and/or knowing about services, and other systemic barriers****

1. Create a Permanent State-wide Task Force (p. 37)

- Convene a body of experts to facilitate the **implementation of the recommendations** set forth by this report.
 - Focus on: Infrastructure for assessment, progress monitoring of mental health and substance use.
- Provide a **5-year plan** to address mental health and substance use on campuses to meet the objectives of HECC and OHA.



2. JED Campus (p. 38)



CAMPUS

- Provide funding for JED Campus **strategic action planning process** at every Oregon public higher education institution.
- Multi-informant and individualized data-collection.
- Access to:
 - **Technical assistance**
 - **Innovative and promising practices**
 - **JED Community**

3. Campus Mental Health Liaison (p.39)

- Implement and oversee JED Campus strategic action planning process.
- Oversee **implementation** and monitoring of specific **evidence-based** and **emerging practices**.
- Oversee reporting of collected information to the permanent Mental Health Task Force.



4. Implementation and Evaluation Partnership (p. 40)

- This partnership will consult and provide services to the Mental Health Task Force.
- Provide **access to experts** in implementation science, program evaluation, information management and analysis.
- Provide a **centralized resource portal** to share practices, programs, and data.



Thank You



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