



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Agenda Item Summary

Meeting Date: July 20, 2026

Agenda Section: Consent

Agenda Item Title: Children's Bereavement Center

From: Dr. Jennifer Gutierrez, Deputy Superintendent

Additional Presenters if Applicable: Rosemary Morales, Director of Guidance and Counseling

Description: The Children's Bereavement Center is one of our CARE Zone partners who will provide psychotherapeutic support and grief activities to students and families. They provide grief activities that are age-appropriate and consistent with best practices for all grade levels.

Historical Data: SSAISD has approved a partnership with Character Strong since June 21, 2023.

Recommendation: Approve the MOU between SSAISD and The Children's Bereavement Center.

Purchasing Director and Approval Date: N/A

Funding Budget Code and Amount: N/A

Goal 3: SSAISD will create a safe, structured, and nurturing environment where all stakeholders feel supported and valued to foster a culture of care.

Goal 4: SSAISD will build strong partnerships with families, communities, and businesses to advance student success.



**South San Independent School District (SSAISD) and Children's Bereavement Center
of South Texas (CBCST)
Memorandum of Understanding 2026-2027**

The Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas is a non-profit provider of grief support programs in South Texas. The mission of CBCST is to foster healing for grieving children and youth, their families and the community.

This Memorandum of Understanding is in response to a request from SSAISD for grief support services for students and is written to outline the roles and relationships of these two entities related to working together to provide support of SSAISD students and their families.

Services to be Provided: CBCST will provide a full-time, on-site therapist to provide individual counseling, mental health screenings, peer support groups, caregiver consultations, district staff consultations, and grief professional development trainings for SSAISD staff. During the MOU agreement, the full-time CBCST therapist would offer three cycles of groups per year at a minimum of two campuses per cycle and maintain a maximum caseload of 15 individual referrals.

Confidentiality and Data Security: Both parties agree to maintain the confidentiality of any and all information, records, or data shared in the course of this Agreement and to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local privacy laws, including but not limited to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Each party shall implement appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to ensure the security and confidentiality of personally identifiable information. In the event of a data breach or suspected data breach, the affected party shall notify the other party without unreasonable delay and in compliance with applicable legal and contractual obligations, and the parties shall cooperate in responding to and mitigating the breach.

PRINCIPAL PARTICIPANTS

SSAISD Point of Contact: Ron Flores, MS, LMSW-IPR
CBCST Chief Program Officer: Adriana McKinnon, LPC
CBCST School-Program Director: Devan Aguilar-Mock, LPC

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

SSAISD agrees to:

- Identify students in SSAISD that would benefit from individual or group services and provide the referrals to the CBCST clinician in a confidential manner.
- Inform caregivers that a bereavement referral is being made prior to submitting the referral to the CBCST clinician.





- Obtain written parental or guardian consent for participation for each child before a student can join the grief support group and provide consent to CBCST staff.
- Arrange for adequate and confidential space for all therapy sessions for students.
- Provide a central point of contact for coordinating services and dates to staff, students, and their families.
- Inform caregivers about waitlist status if CBCST clinician reaches maximum caseload capacity.
- Maintain communication with CBCST Program Director and Chief Program Officer to address issues and concerns as needed.
- Provide school level information for the following data points: student behavioral referrals, student attendance/absenteeism, and student progress/promotion within 2 weeks of request.
- Ensure CBCST therapists receive timely notifications for all school drills and lockdowns for safety preparedness.

CBCST will agree to:

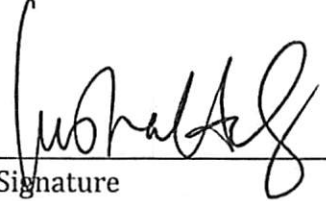
- Provide a licensed professional/supervised graduate level interns with qualification and experience necessary to provide psychotherapeutic support to students and family members as requested.
- Provide grief activities (including curriculum and supplies) that are age-appropriate and consistent with best practice.
- Inform SSAISD staff when a waitlist is created due to a maximum caseload reached.
- Maintain confidentiality of clients, group members, and information according to HIPAA and other applicable privacy laws.
- Maintain effective working relationships with campus staff to provide appropriate treatment referrals for clients to the CBCST.
- CBCST staff will properly refer students reporting abuse or intent to harm self or others to district/campus staff who assume responsibility for safety of student as well as well follow up care for students.
- Collaborate with campus staff to promptly create action or care plans for students who disclose abuse or express intent to harm themselves or others, in adherence to state reporting regulations and campus protocols.

Both parties agree to hold harmless each agency, its Board members, staff, volunteers and agents from any liability, loss or damage they may suffer as a result of claims, demands, costs of judgements against them or arising out of the activities to be carried out pursuant to the obligations of the MOU. CBCST and SSAISD acknowledge that any said loss or damage resulting from negligence or willful malfeasance is excluded from this agreement to hold harmless.





This MOU is valid through the 2026-2027 school year. This MOU will be reviewed annually and may be terminated by either party by providing written notice to the other party of a decision to terminate.



Signature
Kristina Hernandez, Chief Executive Officer
Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas



Date

Signature
Superintendent/Designee
South San ISD

Date