**RFP 24-76492**

**TECHNICAL PROPOSAL**

**ATTACHMENT F**

Please supply ***all*** requested information ***in the yellow-shaded areas*** and indicate any attachments that have been included. Document all attachments and which section and question they pertain to.

**2.4.1 General Information**

Please provide a brief history of your agency, including the following: the year it was established, mission/vision statements, and range of services and capabilities. Please attach an agency organizational chart.

**The Paramount Health Data Project (PHDP)** is based on the knowledge that there is an interaction between mental and physical health, poverty and education that impacts overall health and wellness throughout the lifespan. The mission of PHDP is to leverage student health and wellness data to improve academic outcomes for all children.

Paramount Health Data Project was incorporated in 2019 as a non-profit in the state of Indiana. PHDP began in 2015 as a collaboration between educators and researchers to examine the relationship between student health and academic achievement. Using student health data obtained from the school nurse and achievement data from academic assessments, PHDP has found a predictive relationship between the number and type of visits to the school nurse and later academic success. This research has been published in peer-reviewed journals and has been presented at national health and education conferences.

PHDP has expanded its original focus on student health data to include providing professional development and supports to schools in the use of data to address student mental health and wellness. PHDP offers materials and training to school to increase the use of student data in Multi-tiered Systems of Support, with a particular focus on students at risk, such as students with special needs and students from traditionally underserved populations.

In 2022, PHDP was recognized by the Charter School Growth Fund as a promising practices in education and received over $225,000 in funding and supports. In 2023, PHDP was chosen by Elevance Health (formerly Anthem, Inc.) to provide data analyses and professional development in pilot schools across Indiana. Additionally, PHDP is providing training and expertise to special education paraprofessionals as part of the Indiana Department of Education 2022-23 Paraprofessionals Training Grant.

PHDP currently offers schools the following services: Analysis of student academic and health data, evaluation of school-based health services, paraprofessional training, training in Medicaid billing in schools. Additional services include qualitative and quantitative data gathering, special education training for paraprofessionals and professional development in best-practices for Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

The organizational chart for Paramount Health Data Project is very simple: Addie Angelov, Ph.D. serves as the Chief Executive Officer and Mary Jo Rattermann, Ph.D. serves as the Director of Research. Drs. Angelov and Rattermann are both co-founders of PHDP and have provided their services as consultants as needed. Consequently, PHDP ran with very low overhead, with the focus being on providing high quality data to client schools at a reasonable price. PHDP has experienced considerable growth in the past 2 years, and will be adding full time staff as the growth continues.

Please provide a list of all full-time staff members that are considered key personnel for this project. Include the following: staff name, position, and professional background. Please identify the management staff that would directly handle this account, including length of tenure with the agency and the roles they perform.

Currently, the Paramount Health Data Project has been operating without full time employees (FTEs), with Dr. Addie Angelov and Dr. Mary Jo Rattermann acting as CEO and Director of Research, respectively, as paid consultants. As a non-profit, PHDP has a Board of Directors who oversee their work. PHDP brings in other consultants when additional expertise is needed to complete a project.

Dr. Azure D.S. Angelov, CEO & Co-Founder of the Paramount Health Data Project, holds a BA in Elementary and Special Education from the Klipsch School of Education at Marian University, an MS from the College of Education at Butler University, a Ph.D. in Special Education and Multicultural Education from the School of Education at Indiana University Bloomington, and most recently completed the High Potential Leaders program at the Harvard Business School in Boston, MA. She served as an Associate Professor at the University of Indianapolis, where she taught in the School of Education and School of Business and served as Chair of the Institutional Review Board, earning promotion and tenure in 2011 while also serving as an Associated Adjunct Professor of Special Education in the Alliance of Catholic Education at the University of Notre Dame. Dr. Angelov has written 42 peer-reviewed research articles and five books on education, health, innovation, and exceptionality.

Dr. Angelov has extensive experience developing alternative certifications, having developed the ExceptionalED pathway to alternative licensure for special education.

In 2016, Dr. Angelov was hired by Goodwill Industries of Indiana to create the first state approved Special Education teacher licensure program outside of a university setting, SPEDPrep. In 2017 the curriculum created by Dr. Angelov was reviewed and approved by the State of Indiana. In 2018, Goodwill chose to move the program to Marian University. In 2018, Dr. Angelov worked with Marian University to implement and offer the SPEDPrep program in the Klipsch School of Education, her alma mater. The SPEDPrep program earned national accreditation by CAEP and is currently flourishing at Marian University as a nationally accredited special education teacher licensing program.

https://www.marian.edu/educators-college/licensure-programs/sped-prep

Dr. Mary Jo Rattermann, Director of Research and Co-Founder of the Paramount Health Data Project, received her Ph.D. in cognitive development from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.  She has expertise in experimental methodologies, advanced statistics, and evaluative procedures and extensive experience in conducting research in k-12 settings with students, staff & families. Dr. Rattermann has performed research for the Office of Education Innovation of the Mayor of Indianapolis, Ball State University, the Association of Recovery Schools, the Christel DeHaan Foundation, the Indiana Department of Education and the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction. Prior to founding her own research & evaluation company, Dr. Rattermann was a Research Associate at the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis, where she was also adjunct faculty in the School of Education. She has served as the Local Evaluator for Indiana Project AWARE since 2018. Her research interests include the impact of mental health in schools, school-based health services, K-12 recovery from substance use disorders services, and evidence-based best practices in schools.

Both Drs. Rattermann and Angelov would be responsible for the completion of this project, and both have been with Paramount Health Data Project since its inception. Dr. Rattermann will direct the quantitative data gathering, including survey data, and Dr. Angelov will direct the qualitative data gathering (Deliverable 1). Both Drs. Angelov and Rattermann will participate in the development of the Plan of Study (Deliverable 2) and the development of the materials (Deliverable 3). Dr. Angelov will take the lead in the recruitment and development of recruitment/educational/promotional materials to be distributed statewide (Deliverable 5), while Dr. Rattermann would take the lead in the development of the electronic tracking system (Deliverable 4).

Does this agency plan to subcontract any services required in the scope of work for this project? If yes, please provide a list of services that the agency plans to subcontract out to meet the requirements of this contract. In addition, please provide a list of potential subcontractors that will be utilized and a rationale as to why the subcontractors were selected.

PHDP will be employing subcontractors to meet the requirements of this contract.

**Kevin Berkopes, Ph.D.** is the CEO & Founder of MathTrack and Education Innovation at NEXT Studios. Dr. Berkopes has also served as faculty at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis and Wabash College. MathTrack is a math-specific training, degree and licensure pathway to prepare people for teaching mathematics. MathTrack employs an online learning platform to provide a fast-track pathway to becoming a math teacher as they work in schools. The model includes a two-year apprenticeship, recognized as college credits, with the end result being math licensure. As founder of MathTrack, Dr. Berkopes has experience in alternative licensures, apprenticeship models and online education. Dr. Berkopes will be working with PHDP on Deliverable 2, helping to design a plan of study that includes research-based best practices in online and hybrid education, apprenticeship models and alternative licensure. Dr. Berkopes will also help with Deliverable 3, working with PHDP and content creators to implement the program on the LMS platform.

**Tamika Zapolski, Ph.D.** Dr. Zapoliski is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the Indiana University School of Medicine, a licensed clinical psychologist, and the director of the Prevention Research in Substance Use and Minority Health (PRISM) research lab. Her program of research focuses on developmental risk for substance use and related health behaviors, particularly among minoritized populations, and the implementation of interventions in community settings with a specific focus on treatment implementation in primary care, schools, and juvenile justice settings. She also has clinical and teaching roles within the School of Medicine and is a core faculty member of the Adolescent Behavioral Health Research Program (BHP), a multidisciplinary team of researchers within Indiana University School of Medicine created to improve the health and well-being of adolescents and young adults through research, education, and intervention. She is also part of the core team of faculty and staff at IU overseeing the implementation of the ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) model, which provides education and training in best practices for the treatment of various mental and behavioral health topics to providers, social workers, psychologists, community mental health workers, and other service providers. Dr. Zapolski will be working with PHDP on Deliverables 2 and 3, designing the plan of study that includes Diversity, Equity and Inclusion goals as part of the design structure, and providing content for the DEI content module. Dr. Zapolski will also have input into the different pathways to the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement to ensure that candidates from marginalized populations have equal access to the endorsement.

**Angel Ash, MSW,** is the Director of System Support within South Bend Community School Corporation. She has also served as coordinator for Project AWARE at SBCSC for the past 4 years. Ms. Ash has designed and facilitated professional developments for educators to increase their awareness of mental health and the use of Tiered interventions and has delivered evidence-based suicide intervention workshops open to all educators and administrators. At Western Michigan University, she has been an adjunct professor teaching master's social work and doctoral psychology students community and social change, school social work interventions, and social welfare policy courses for the last two years. Ms. Ash will be working on Deliverables 2 and 3 and will provide invaluable insight based on her experiences in a school-based setting, and from her work on equity, diversity and restorative justice.

**Sharmaine Pechac, Ph.D. , SHRM-SCP,** Dr. Pechac earned her PhD in higher education from the University of Toledo. She holds an MA in public administration and a BA in business and organizational communication, both from the University of Akron. In addition, Dr. Pechac is recognized by the Society for Human Resource Management as a Senior Certified Professional (SHRM - SCP).  Dr. Pechac’s background includes project management, partnership development, higher education administration, training development and project evaluation. Her teaching portfolio includes coursework in organizational communication, student affairs, human resources in higher education, and public administration. Dr. Pechac’s key competencies have been demonstrated in her work to improve student and staff experiences through strategic recommendations as a special assistant to the vice provost of student affairs and dean of students, Indiana University. She has also steered development and implementation of a cross-institutional initiative to enrich transfer pathways as the coordinator of the Columbus State Community College and Ohio State University – Preferred Pathway Program. Dr. Pechac will serve as project evaluator and will also advise Deliverable 5, developing relationships with institutions of higher education.

**Carrie Bennett, M.S.Ed, LMHC(a),** is the school counselor for Invent Learning Hub, a Title I elementary and middle school on the southeast side of Indianapolis. She is qualified to be a LMHCa and has trained and educated professionals to be aware of the unique setting a school offers to address the mental health needs of the students valuable part of any school support structure. Previous to her work at Invent Learning Hub, Ms. Bennett was the Project AWARE coordinator for Sheridan Community Schools. Ms. Bennett will be working on Deliverables 1 and 3, performing interviews with mental health professionals currently workin in schools and will also be part of the team that reviews the finished content modules for rigor, clarity and substance.

**Amanda Bennett, M.Ed., Ed.S,** has served Indiana schools in various capacities during her 20 years in education. While teaching for Indianapolis Public Schools, a specialized position offering individualized instruction and remediation for struggling students introduced her to school psychology. Advocating and supporting hard-to-reach students was a passion, and furthering her skillset by pursuing a degree in school psychology supported that goal. She went on to earn her Master's of Education and Educational Specialist degrees to expand her expertise in increasing accessibility and advancing interventions for neurodiverse student populations. For the next 10 years, she worked shoulder-to-shoulder with administrators, teachers, and support teams to isolate needs and develop comprehensive student support plans. She then transitioned to a role in school improvement partnering with underperforming schools to take a deep dive into systemic weaknesses, craft detailed improvement plans, and bolster student outcomes by implementing research-based, high-efficacy practices. Ms. Bennett will be working on Deliverable 3, and will be part of the team that reviews the finished content modules for rigor, clarity and substance.

Does the agency (or its subcontractors) plan to directly deliver the services (training, materials, instruction) for this proposal? If so, please provide a timeline and explanation of capacity for implementation.

Paramount Health Data Project will not be directly delivering the services for this proposal.

**2.4.2 Financial Information and References**

Please provide references of any other state or federal contracts or grants that the agency has received and executed that demonstrate the agency’s ability to carry out the work described in this proposal.

Mary Jo Rattermann has been a subcontracted by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) to serve as the local evaluator for Indiana Project AWARE I, II and III. As part of the PIRE Evaluation Team, Dr. Rattermann has performed site visits, focus group interviews and data analysis examining the impact of Project AWARE on mental health infrastructure in schools. She has also developed working relationships with the community of interest for this project—mental health professionals in K-12 education.

What (if any) other DMHA specific grants/contracts has the agency received in the last five (5) years?

Mary Jo Rattermann received a contract to perform and Environmental Scan of mental health resources in Indiana from DMHA. The contract was supervised by Turkesha Poindexter-Mosby of DMHA.

Please demonstrate your agency’s ability to oversee and manage accounts payable/receivable for suppliers, as well as the ability to pay promptly for continuation of services.

Paramount Health Data Project has a professional bookkeeper who oversees and manages accounts payable/receivable for suppliers and have set up processes through Bill.com and Quickbooks online.

**2.4.3 Project Plan and Estimate**

Please provide a thorough project plan, including an estimate (budget breakdown) for development and execution of a statewide School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement program based on the following parameters:

* 1. Project Overview – may include, but is not limited to the following:
     1. Planning (research, curriculum development, eligibility determination, delivery/ongoing tracking method
     2. Implementation (digital and/or in person training delivery, endorsement process, evaluation)
  2. Budget range: maximum $750,000
     1. The following items must be itemized in the budget:
        1. Salaries
        2. Materials/Supplies
        3. Digital platform (costs association with online training)
        4. Facility rental (costs associated with in-person training)
        5. Subcontractor services
        6. Travel (lodging, parking, transport, per diem, etc.)
        7. Other costs identified by applicant

This proposal aims to address 3 challenges to providing high quality, equitable and readily available mental health services in schools:

• There is currently a shortage of mental health professionals across the United States, and Indiana is not immune to that shortage, with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimating that to meet the needs of the existing caseload in Indiana, the current number of 8,000 licensed social workers would need to double (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211029.htm). In this context of overall shortage of mental health professionals, school districts struggle to find mental health professionals to work alongside social and emotional wellness educators in school buildings and are also finding it difficult to locate resources for Tier 2 and Tier 3 Multi-systems of Support (MTSS) referrals for outside of school.

• The current workforce of mental health professionals is predominantly white, a problem noted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, who note that in 2015 86% of U.S. psychologists were white, and in 2019, the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that close to 70% of U.S. social workers and 88% of mental health counselors were white. As of 2019 approximately 40% of the U.S. population identifies as a racial or ethnic group other than white (https://www.nami.org).

• Licensure as a mental health professional in Indiana (e.g, LCSW, MSW, LMFT) requires candidates to have post-secondary degrees, supervised clinical and practicum experience and that they pass a national licensure exam. Consequently, the investment of time and money to become a licensed mental health professional is substantial, with undergraduate social work students required to complete at least 400 hours of ﬁeld education and graduate students a minimum of 900 hours, both often consisting of mostly unpaid work. These requirements are a barrier to a diverse and plentiful mental health workforce.

the Paramount Health Data Project (PHDP) proposes to provide a plan of study for an endorsement in school based mental health that is research-based and rigorous, and is designed to be equitable and available to a diverse set of candidates. This endorsement would be designed to provide a pathway to a career in mental health in schools to current mental health professionals, to current educational professionals and to higher education students who are contemplating a career in education or mental health. PHDP will also provide content modules for this plan of study, with reference materials, readings, exams and other necessary materials included. PHDP will also provide educational and recruitment materials to disseminate to community stakeholders, and will develop relationships with local community colleges, universities and licensure entities to educate them on the benefits of the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement.

**Deliverable 1: Research and collect data from community stakeholders**

Paramount Health Data Project (PHDP) will begin the project by surveying community stakeholders across the state of Indiana, asking them to describe best practices and positive characteristics of highly qualified School Based Mental Health Provider (Deliverable 1). PHDP plans to use surveys, interviews and focus groups to gather this data, and will focus on gathering data from mental health professionals in schools, as well as other stakeholders such as teachers, principals, parents, and if possible, students.

An initial online survey using the platform SurveyMonkey will be designed to gather data from mental health professionals currently practicing in Indiana schools. A similar DMHA funded state-wide survey of licensed mental health professionals was conducted in 2022-23 by Dr. Mary Jo Rattermann, and lessons learned from that project will help to inform this proposal. Based on this previous experience, PHDP understands the importance of having a large sample of potential respondents to recruit for the survey in order to obtain a large enough sample of respondents. This important work is time consuming, consequently PHDP is subcontracting with two Indiana businesses to help in this effort: Coverdale Consulting (an Indiana WBE) and Diverse Staffing Indianapolis (an Indiana MBE). Diverse Staffing Indianapolis will provide the staff to perform a series of web-based searches for potential respondents. Beginning with a list of all school districts in the state from the Indiana Department of Education, Diverse Staffing will find the contact information of the directors of mental health and student supports in each district. Diverse Staffing will also search the internet to find direct contact information of school-based mental health professionals on sites such as LinkedIn or Psychology Today. Concurrently, PHDP will reach out the Indiana Association of School Psychologists, Indiana School Counselor Association and the Indiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, asking them to send out emails and texts to their members on behalf of this project. This two-prong approach, contacting schools directly and contacting professional organizations, will allow PHDP and Diverse Staffing to construct a contact list of a large population of mental health professionals who work in schools. PHDP will also contact the Education Development Center, who has partnered with North Central Health Services to provide training and technical assistance for schools in Indiana. PHDP will contact these organizations to both reach out to their members to encourage them to participate in the survey and to collaborate with PHDP on the content of the school based mental health provider endorsement.

As the initial contact list is being created, Coverdale Consulting, a locally owned communications and marketing company, will work with PHDP to create an effective messaging template for email and text messages to be sent to potential respondents. Coverdale Consulting staff will design the emails and texts, use their platform to disseminate the messages on a regular basis. Coverdale Consulting will work with PHDP to find additional potential respondents, working from the initial lists provided by PHDP and Diverse Staffing. Coverdale Consulting will also work to recruit respondents of the initial survey to participate in additional focus groups and individual interviews with PHDP staff to delve deeper into the challenges associated with their work. Finally, Coverdale Consulting will work with PHDP to contact additional stakeholders in the community, e.g., parents, educational professionals, and others, to obtain their perspective on the qualities needed to provide mental health supports to students.

Finally, PHDP hopes to ask an important and sometimes overlooked group of stakeholders- the students who receive the mental health supports offered by school-based mental health professionals. Dr. Rattermann has developed relationships with several school districts in Indiana through her work on Project AWARE and will work with several of these school districts to determine if it would be possible to conduct student interviews with middle and high school students, asking them what they think makes an effective school-based mental health provider. Students participating in the Bring Change 2 Mind program would be a recruited due to their interest in mental health. These focus groups would be performed with both parental consent and student assent and would follow the procedures outlined in HB 1447.

Ideally, PHDP staff will travel across the state to interview health care professionals, teachers, parents, and if possible, students at schools that have shown success in providing mental health supports to students. Using the professional connections developed by Dr. Rattermann through her work on Project AWARE, a day long site visit would be performed with the goal of determining what all stakeholders believe are the characteristics of an effective school based mental health professional. This data gathering is particularly important, in that mental health supports in schools impact all of the communities that make up a school—students, teachers, parents and leadership—and obtaining information from only the providers of those supports will lead to a one-sided view of what is needed.

Development of the survey questions will be done in collaboration with DMHA, and will include, but not be limited to, questions about the daily challenges of mental health professionals in schools, the skills and knowledge needed to be effective in this role, and any barriers respondents may have faced in licensure and accreditation as they worked in the school setting. Respondents will be asked if they would be willing to participate in follow-up interviews. The survey will be hosted on SurveyMonkey, and PHDP staff will monitor the results.

PHDP will also work with DMHA to design the protocols for the follow-up interviews with mental health professionals and the protocols for any other stakeholder interviews performed. These follow-up interviews will be performed by either Dr. Angelov or Dr. Rattermann, with the participation of Carrie Bennett. Ms. Bennett was the Project AWARE coordinator at Sheridan Community Schools and is currently a mental health provider in a charter school in Indianapolis. Ms. Bennett worked with Dr. Rattermann on the previous DMHA project and brought the perspective of a practicing mental health professional to the interviews, providing context and asking follow up questions based on her experiences in schools. The content of these interviews will be transcribed by Diverse Staffing Indianapolis and Drs. Rattermann and Angelov will compile the results of the survey and the interviews into a report for DMHA.

**Deliverable #2: Utilize research and data collected to design and develop a plan of study for School Based Mental Health Providers**

Using the data obtained from Deliverable 1, PHDP will design and develop a plan of study for School Based Mental Health Providers who wish to obtain the endorsement from DMHA. PHDP will develop multiple pathways to obtain the endorsement based on Mental Health provider’s level of experience and education in the field.

PHDP envisions a plan of study for the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement that is designed with three distinct pathways based on the candidate’s level of experience in mental health and their area of expertise, either mental health or education. Specifically, one path for current mental health professionals, another path for current educational professionals, and a third path for the professionals of the future—community college and university students who are studying to become mental health or educational professionals, and students in complementary fields. The goal of these multiple pathways is to address two of the challenges outlined at the beginning of this overview: the lack of mental health professionals in schools and the lack of diversity in the mental health workforce. Data from the Project AWARE Environmental Scan performed by Dr. Rattermann revealed that only 2% of private practice mental health professionals and 13% of group practice mental health professionals who responded to the survey work in schools, despite 74% and 91%, respectively, having the capacity to work with children and adolescents. When asked why they did not work in schools, many answered that they did not feel qualified or that they felt out of place and unwelcome. This particular challenge is met by providing mental health providers with the knowledge of school-based best practices in mental health so that they do feel qualified, and also provide them with the knowledge of how schools function so that they can join the school community and rapidly develop a sense of belonging. Additionally, the focus on current community college and university students will introduce the mental health professionals of the future to school-based practice, thereby increasing the pipeline of mental health professional with experience in working in schools. PHDP will pay particular attention to the needs of community college students, the goal being to provide a pathway to a career in mental health for students who may not have the resources to devote to a bachelors or masters degree, thereby bringing many different forms of diversity to the pipeline of mental health professionals in schools. Finally, the pathway for current educators may have the most potential for growing the number of mental health professionals in schools, with the logic of this approach being quite simple: train people who want to be in schools to provide mental health supports in schools.

The plan of study will be developed by a team that includes Drs. Rattermann and Angelov, as well as Angel Ash, Director of System Support at South Bend Community School Corporation and Adjunct Instructor at Western Michigan University, Dr. Tamika Zapolski, Director of the PRISM (Prevention Research in Substance Use and Minority Health) Lab and Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Indiana University School of Medicine, and Dr. Kevin Berkopes, Founder and CEO of MathTrack. Ms. Ash is currently directing student supports at South Bend schools and was the Project AWARE coordinator for SBCSC for the past five years. Ms. Ash is also an instructor at Western Michigan University where she teaches in their social work program. Dr. Zapolski is a nationally known expert on mental health interventions for minoritized populations and has been working in school systems to implement mental health skills group services in schools, as well as training school staff in evidence-based interventions. Dr. Zapolski is also part of the team implementing the ECHO model, which provides education and training in best practices for the treatment of mental and behavioral health to providers, social workers, psychologists and mental health providers. Dr. Berkopes is the Founder and CEO of MathTrack, which proves a math-specific training, degree and licensure pathway using an apprenticeship model. MathTrack provides online training modules and curriculum for aspiring secondary math teachers, who are placed in schools to apprentice with more experiences math teachers as they acquire skills and knowledge through the MathTrack online program. Drs. Angelov and Berkopes have previous experience designing and implementing alternative pathways to certification and licensure, experience that will be valuable in designing the plan of study for the School Based Mental Health Provider.

While the exact characteristics of the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement will emerge as this work progresses, PHDP envisions an online curriculum with stand-alone modules that can be combined to provide the needed training and information for each pathway to the endorsement. Specifically, there will be a core set of modules that all candidates for the endorsement must complete, and then a set of modules specific to each level of expertise and education. These modules will be described in more detail in the section on Deliverable 3.

The Plan of Study will be informed by several current endorsements offered by the Indiana Department of Education, most notably the IDOE School Safety Specialist training for School Resource Officers, and the IDOE School Nurse Endorsement. Just as with the School Safety Specialist Endorsement, the delivery method will be web-based and available for self-study and for candidates to work at their own pace. Ideally, the format of the endorsement will be hybrid—with yearly or biyearly meetings of the candidates at one central location for a day of instruction and, more importantly, building of professional connections among the candidates. Decisions regarding the feasibility of a hybrid model will be made in collaboration with DMHA (subsection a of Deliverable 2).

Concepts of diversity, equity and inclusion and Health Equity will be encompassed both in the content of the modules and in the structure of the pathways to School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement (subsection b of Deliverable 2). DEI/Health Equity will be the subject of one of the core modules that all candidates must complete and this module will be designed by Dr. Zapolski, and expert in the field. Additionally, the pathway to Endorsement for education professionals will be differentiated for classroom instructors, special education instructors and, most importantly, will be designed for Instructional Assistants (IAs). There is some flexibility in requirements, but most Instructional Assistants in Indiana must have a high school diploma and receive on-the-job training, and in many cases (for instance Title 1) they must have two years of college coursework or have completed the ParaPro Assessment. Instructional Assistants play a crucial role in the classroom—they often work one on one or in small groups of students to provide support and remediation, and they build very strong and supportive relationships with the students they educate and are in a unique position to provide mental health supports to their students. Providing paraprofessionals who are already in schools with mental health skills will address part of the need for mental health professionals.

PHDP will work closely with DMHA School and Community Team to develop eligibility requirements for each of the three pathways to School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement (subsection c of Deliverable 2). Using the flexibility that comes with a modular approach, the course of study will be closely linked to the education and experience of the candidate, with the professional requirements for each pathway reflecting the goal of increasing the number of mental health professionals in the schools.

The Plan of Study will include relevant topics and components for mental health providers working within school-based settings, including regulations and parameters of educational and mental health treatment settings (subsection d of Deliverable 2). The topics and components will be described in more detail in Deliverable 3, but one or more of the core modules will cover HIPAA and FERPA regulations around student data, parent engagement, federal and state regulations that apply in schools, and other crucial information that people from outside of the school community often struggle to understand.

**Deliverable 3: Include in the plan of study all materials participants may need in completion of the program, which may include but is not limited to reference materials, online resources, books, study materials, and examinations.**

PHDP will work with Ms. Ash, Dr. Zapolski and Dr. Berkopes to design a set of educational modules that will include all materials that participants will need to complete the program, including reference materials, online resources, books, study materials and examinations (Deliverable 3). PHDP will also consult with professional organizations that work in the field of school based mental health, such as the Great Lakes Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network to review the educational content of current best practices in school based mental health to determine how to best present information and what information is needed to be successful.

The content will include a core set of modules that will be required for all candidates for the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement. While the number and content of these modules will be developed by the team, an initial set could contain:

• Best practices in School Based Mental Health

• Providing mental health support to students with special needs

• Mental health supports for diverse populations

• Disproportionality and disparity in health access

• HIPAA, FERPA and student privacy rights

• Parent relationships around mental health

• Mental health and trauma

• Health, Equity and Social Determinants of Health

• Recognizing substance use disorders

• Best Practices in MTSS

Additional modules will be developed that are specific to the needs of candidates based on the pathway they choose. For example, current mental health professionals would also be required to complete modules on:

• School administrators—roles and responsibilities

• Academic Success and mental health

• School safety procedures

While educators who enter through that pathway would be required to complete:

• Ethics and mental health practice

• Social and emotional skill group work

• Social welfare policies

While students who enter through the community college and university pathway would also perform a practicum on site at a local school. Working with local universities, PHDP would design an apprenticeship program so that the students choosing to pursue the School Based mental Health Endorsement would receive credit toward graduation. The inclusion of apprenticeships would address Challenge 3 noted in the introduction—the considerable cost of becoming a licensed health care professional—by receiving course credit for their work in schools, students can move more quickly toward fulfilling their degree requirements. Ideally, students would have the option of either course credit towards their degree or would be paid for their work during their apprenticeships.

Modules will be developed using a learning management system, such as Blackboard, Canvas or Percievant, and would require one to two hours to complete. When possible, assessments would be project-based, with the possibility of a portfolio model being explored. Each module would be organized around Key Concepts and Key Competencies and the lessons would be interactive rather than lecture. Dr. Kevin Berkopes has extensive experience designing online content and would be working closely with PHDP, Dr. Zapolsky and Ms. Ash to translate the Key Concepts and Key Competencies into interactive and engaging modules. The options of providing “digital badges” or microcredentialing upon completion of modules would be explored.

Upon completion of the content modules, Amanda Bennett, a practicing school psychologist and Carrie Bennett, will review both the plan of study and the content of the modules for coherence, logic of presentation and quality of content. While Carrie Bennett was involved in the initial data gathering of Deliverable 1, neither she nor Amanda Bennett will be involved in the development of the content modules or of the plan of study. Their input will be used to improve the content module and the plan of study, prior to it being presented to the DMHA.

**Deliverable 4: Develop an electronic tracking system**

PHDP will develop an electronic tracking system that will monitor the status of those individuals who are completing step to obtain the endorsement, as well as continued monitoring of active status, including continuing education to renew the endorsement (Deliverable 4). A LMS system such as Canvas and Perceivant will allow for the tracking of module completion and the monitoring of candidate activity. Using the LMS to monitor as candidates receive CEU’s is also possible. A member of PHDP Board of Directors is a design engineer for SalesForce, and will be advising PHDP on the development of the electronic tracking system.

**Deliverable 5: recruitment/educational/promotional materials for the program to be distributed statewide**

PHDP will collaborate and build relationships with post-secondary education institutions that offer Mental Health/Behavioral Health coursework credits. Drs. Rattermann, Angelov, Berkopes and Zapolski and Ms. Ash, have been, or are currently associated with post-secondary institutions and have large networks of colleagues and contacts that can be used to build relationships with community colleges and universities across the state. These relationships will be used to reach students in the traditional mental health fields, such as social work and psychology, as well as students in complementary fields. The pipeline analysis performed by Dr. Rattermann for DMHA revealed that students in majors such as Criminal Justice/Safety Studies, Early Childhood Education and Teaching and Human Services often lead to a career in social work/mental health. These academic programs produce a large number of completed degrees and that has been increasing over time: in 2016 there were 6,970 completions in these fields, while in 2018 there were 7,083, and in 2020 the total increased 9,524. Reaching these students and presenting them with the possibility of a paid internship or internship for credit could move their career path toward providing mental health is schools. Aiding PHDP will be Dr. Sharmaine Pechac of GreyPrint Consulting. Dr. Pechac will be working with PHDP in the role of external evaluator for the first phases of the project, checking in monthly to ensure that PHDP is meeting goals and making progress toward deliverables. Dr. Pechac will not be involved in content creation or any other activities in her role as evaluator. When PHDP engages in the work of Deliverable 5, Dr. Pechac will work with PHDP to foster relationships with universities and colleges to provide CEUs and college credit for the school-based apprenticeships.

Providing paid internships would be easier if there were state funding for the School Based Mental Health Provider endorsement. PHDP will work with Veteran Strategies to design an educational program for members of Indiana state government, and if possible, introduce legislation to fund the ongoing operation of the program. Mr. Robert Vane, Owner of Veteran Strategies, has designed successful communications strategies for Indianapolis Public Schools, the Capital Improvement Board, and Pacers Sports and Entertainment. Mr. Vane will also provide access to traditional media outlets to publicize the availability of the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement.

Ensuring that candidates who complete the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement training that is developed qualify for CEUs or other qualifying endorsement is crucial to the success of this project. Ideally, this endorsement would have the imprimatur of state licensing from the Indiana Department of Education or the Indiana Professional Licensing Agency. Dr. Berkopes has successfully worked in this area in the development of the MathTrack program. Dr. Berkopes will work with PHDP and DMHA to ensure that the School Based Mental Health Endorsement is recognized by the state of Indiana.

PHDP will work with Coverdale Consulting to design recruitment, educational and promotional materials for the program to delivered statewide. These materials will be both electronic and paper and will be tailored to the interests of the candidates interested in all three pathways. Coverdale Consulting will also design and implement a full social media campaign for this project.

**2.4.4 Other Information**

Please describe your agency's experience/knowledge as it relates to the following:

* Ability to network and communicate with key stakeholders
* Best practices for mental and behavioral health providers, particularly within youth services
* K-12 school systems and pedagogy
* Developing curriculum, pathways, tracking systems/endorsement database
* Online/in-person teaching methods
* Licensing boards/obtainment of CEUs, etc.

Drs. Angelov and Rattermann have extensive experience networking and communicating with key stakeholders, having worked in K-12 education for over twenty years. They both have extensive ties to the higher education community, having both been faculty at the University of Indianapolis. As CEO of PHDP, Dr. Angelov has developed close working relationships with key members of the Indiana state government and has worked with Veteran Strategies to successfully advocate for several legislative bills. She has also developed strong relationships with Elevance Health, the Charter School Growth Fund, Gary Community Schools and Northwest Indiana Lighthouse Charter Schools. Dr. Angelov recently presented at an international conference in Oxford, England on best-practices in education. Both Dr. Rattermann and Dr. Angelov has been working in the K-12 school community as evaluators for the Office of Education Innovation, and in this capacity have developed extensive knowledge of K-12 school systems and pedagogy. The team assembled to design the plan of study and the content modules described in the proposal (Rattermann, Angelov, Berkopes, Ash and Zapolsky) all have experience in the development of curriculum materials for higher education, and Angelov and Berkopes have both successfully created alternative pathways to certification and licensure in special education (Angelov) and mathematics teaching (Berkopes), and Dr. Berkopes has designed a successful online program to complement the alternative pathway to mathematics certification in the MathTrack program. Both Drs. Angelov and Berkopes have navigated licensure boards in the development and implementation of their programs. PHDP has letters of support from Dr. Sharr Pechac of GreyPrint Consulting, who has successfully worked with higher education in the past to design and implement mental health programs in colleges and universities.

How does your agency intend to incorporate Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and/or Health Equity (HE) into this project? How will your agency incorporate DEI and/or HE considerations when designing and completing the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement deliverables of this contract? Please provide a detailed response.

Health Equity is the mission of Paramount Health Data Project, and is woven into this project. PHDP will contract with Dr. Tamika Zapolski and Ms. Angel Ash, both experts in DEI, to help design the entry points into the School Based Mental Health Provider Endorsement and the content of the training modules. PHDP will also contract with Dr. Sharmaine Pechac who will serve as project evaluator, and will view the work of PHDP through a DEI lens to ensure that the initial data gathering work includes a representative sample of underrepresented communities, that the entry points into the program allow for underrepresented communities to find their way into the mental health profession and that the content modules contain the information needed for mental health professionals to provide mental health and wellness supports to all students, regardless of their race and ethnicity, cultural background, gender or sexual preferences.

What additional information can your agency provide that will assist the state in the evaluation of your proposal?