

Section 9-20.16. Mental health teletherapy services; memorandum of understanding required; how services are to be provided; student not subject to discipline action. — A. Suffolk Public Schools may provide school-based mental health teletherapy services and permit any student to schedule and participate in telehealth services and mental health teletherapy services on school property during regular school hours on the same basis as such students are permitted to schedule and participate in school counseling services.

B. When telehealth services are offered, the School Board enters into a memorandum of understanding with a nationally recognized school-based telehealth provider in accordance with the model memorandum of understanding developed by the Department of Education and provides guidance relating to the implementation of this telehealth services policy for administrative and instructional personnel and posts such guidance on its website at the beginning of each school year.

C. When school-based telehealth services and mental health teletherapy services are made available, each school where telehealth services are provided must:

- (1) Designate a location with internet access within the school for students to use for telehealth appointments that ensures the privacy and safety of the student; and
- (2) Implement measures to ensure the privacy and safety of each student participating in a telehealth appointment.

D. Any student who participates in a telehealth appointment during regular school hours will not be subject to any disciplinary measure or consequences for participating in such an appointment if the student would otherwise be considered absent or excused for the purposes of receiving health care services.

Legal Authority - Virginia Code §§ 22.1-272.2, 22.1-272.3, 22.1-274