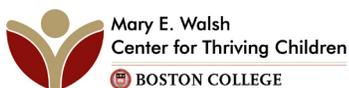


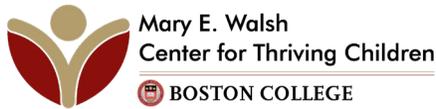


Integrated Student Support STATE POLICY TOOLKIT

SECOND EDITION



This State Policy Toolkit is a joint publication of:



The Mary E. Walsh Center for Thriving Children engages in rigorous interdisciplinary research to investigate how all children can thrive. We innovate, test, and implement interventions. We convene educators, researchers, policymakers, and community leaders to exchange knowledge and catalyze changes that promote healthy child development, learning, thriving, and opportunity for all.



At Communities In Schools® (CIS®), we surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Communities In Schools is a national organization that ensures every student, regardless of race, gender, ability, zip code, or socioeconomic background has what they need to realize their full potential in school and beyond.



City Connects builds a network of support for students, their families, and the schools that serve them, improving outcomes now—and for years to come. City Connects partners with schools to transform their approach to student support so that each child receives the resources and opportunities that address their needs and cultivate their strengths and interests. By leveraging resources in the school and the surrounding community, City Connects efficiently uses existing resources and improves student learning and life-long outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

America's schools are in another academic year impacted by the pandemic and its aftermath, and federal stimulus funds are receding.

Headlines and the pleas of parents, teachers, and school leaders tell of an ongoing student mental health crisis, an uptick in school violence, steep declines in math and reading scores, and disparities of opportunity and social mobility that quash many students' talents and stifle their hopes.¹

Against this backdrop, policymakers are facing hard choices about which programs to fund, which initiatives to support, and how to simultaneously bring 21st century capabilities to better serve their constituents—especially children: the nation's future leaders, workers, inventors, soldiers, parents, taxpayers, and active citizens.

The Toolkit is designed to help policymakers navigate this challenge.

A robust body of research illuminates how policymakers and practitioners can effectively support healthy child development and learning by implementing “whole child” approaches in schools that address students' needs and cultivate students' strengths.² When well implemented, these approaches can use existing resources—across education, social services, health and mental health, and youth development—more efficiently and effectively, creating short- and long-term benefits for taxpayers.³

Integrated Student Support

“Integrated student support” was first referenced in the 2015 federal law known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Soon afterwards, states like Washington, Nevada, and Massachusetts called for integrated student support frameworks, protocols, and best practices.

Positive outcomes accumulated for specific evidence-based models that demonstrate robust improvements for students’ academic performance, attendance, high school graduation, post-secondary enrollment, and completion. In response, more and more states like Texas, West Virginia, Indiana, Ohio, Georgia, and Minnesota incentivized schools and local education agencies to implement specific integrated student support models that are likely to benefit students. Other states, like California and New York—as well as the federal government—are including integrated student support as a component of “community schools.”⁴

A Moment of Opportunity

Insights about what works and the readiness of schools to strengthen their current approaches to student support provide state policymakers with a moment of opportunity.

As articulated in the first National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support, the field has several evidence-based models with aligned professional development, coaching, technology, and metrics for accountability, as well as best practices for use by any school.

The Toolkit is designed to help policymakers attuned to their state’s specific context draft legislation, budgets, and frameworks consistent with the research and current policy trends. Like the first, this second edition provides examples from existing legislation, laws, and frameworks as well as recommendations based on scientific understanding of best practices, child development, and learning. In your hands, this information can transform every student’s opportunity to thrive.

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INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORT

The Definition

Integrated Student Support is an evidence-based approach for schools to provide student support by intentionally and systematically leveraging and coordinating the resources and relationships available in the school and in the surrounding community to address the comprehensive strengths and needs of each and every student in order to help promote healthy child development and learning.⁵

Integrated Student Support is Relevant to Many Issues

“Integrated student support” is a term used by both federal and state policymakers to denote a more effective approach to student support and wraparound services. Integrated student support is relevant to a variety of issues that policymakers work to address, including:

- Academic progress
- Child and youth mental health
- Wraparound services
- School-community collaborations
- Community Schools
- Student support improvement
- School climate and safety
- Efficient use of government funds

The National Guidelines

The first National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support outline how traditional student support approaches can be built upon to effectively transform existing school and community resources into a powerful engine of learning and lifelong opportunity for each and every student. The National Guidelines were developed under the auspices of the Boston College Center for Thriving Children by practitioners and leading experts in research and evaluation from four of the nation’s most rigorously evaluated approaches to providing integrated student support: City Connects, Communities In Schools, Building Assets Reducing Risks, and the New York City Department of Education’s Community Schools program.

The National Guidelines provide policymakers with insights into how to enable implementation that is consistent with the best practices that promote healthy development and positive outcomes; expand high-quality implementation; target resources; and use data to inform decision-making and understand outcomes. These guidelines also detail quality benchmarks that can ensure public investments are more likely to benefit students, teachers, families, and taxpayers.

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Student Outcomes

Implementation of evidence-based models of integrated student support can promote the success of individual students and create a learning environment that enables every student to thrive. Implementation of evidence-based approaches to integrated student support is associated with:

- Improved school climate⁶
- Improved performance in class⁷
- Improved school engagement and effort⁸
- Improved attendance⁹
- Improved achievement on state standardized tests¹⁰
- Increased postsecondary program enrollment and completion¹¹
- Improved overall GPA¹²
- Reduced dropout rates¹³
- Raised grade promotion and on-time graduation rates¹⁴

Improvements for Teachers

Teachers in a school with a system of integrated student support in place feel more supported and satisfied in their jobs. Preliminary research from Boston College shows that teachers are significantly more likely to choose to stay in a school with a system of integrated student support in place.¹⁵

Benefits to Taxpayers

Integrated student support benefits taxpayers by using school and community resources more efficiently and effectively. Recent studies have demonstrated that well-implemented approaches to integrated student support yield net financial returns on investment.¹⁶



City Connects is a high-impact, cost-effective, evidence-based approach to integrated student support that helps students—academically, socially, emotionally, and physically—by connecting each and every child to a tailored set of prevention, intervention, and enrichment services in the school and community. City Connects addresses the out-of-school factors that can impede a student’s ability to succeed and thrive in school. City Connects currently serves about 50,000 students across 200 public, charter, and private schools in five states and the nation of Ireland.

City Connects meets every student’s individual strengths and needs by connecting the right combination of resources to the right child at the right time, over time. City Connects Coordinators are school-based, Master’s-trained school counselors or social workers who meet with each classroom teacher and other school staff each year to discuss the strengths and needs of every child. In close collaboration with students and families, coordinators create an individualized plan for each child while working effectively and systematically to cultivate community partnerships. Coordinators use proprietary software to document, track, and report on service referrals, ensure service delivery, and assess effectiveness. City Connects leads to a wide range of measurable outcomes such as increased effort and attendance, improved academic achievement, lower high school dropout, positive school climate, and increased teacher retention and feelings of support.



Communities In Schools® (CIS®) works inside public and charter schools full-time, building relationships with students to empower them to stay in school and succeed in life. Working directly in more than 3,270 schools in 25 states and the District of Columbia, Communities In Schools serves nearly 1.8 million students every year.

For over 40 years, Communities In Schools has worked with school leaders to implement a model of integrated student support. Communities In Schools positions a site coordinator in each school to assess the needs of students in that school. The site coordinator then identifies and connects students to resources that meet these needs. Through strategic partnerships with local providers, site coordinators bring together various community supports to provide integrated services benefiting an entire student body (Tier I). Simultaneously, site coordinators work with school leaders to identify a subset of the most at-risk students, who then receive targeted and/or individualized interventions (Tiers II and III) based on their identified needs.



POLICY CONTEXT

At all levels of government, policymakers are taking steps to ensure the successful implementation and expansion of integrated student support within schools. Local education agencies and schools are looking for solutions that address the comprehensive needs of students while also helping teachers and administrators improve outcomes. Policymakers are identifying quality benchmarks and evidence-based models, aligning bureaucratic systems, and providing resources that allow for sustainability.

This section provides a brief overview of the federal and state policy contexts relevant to integrated student support.

Federal Policy Context

In the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), federal policymakers emphasized the need for schools to adopt strategies that address the comprehensive needs of students and their communities. The 2015 law includes several provisions that encourage school and district leaders to implement integrated student support programs and other evidence-based strategies that improve student outcomes.

Importantly, ESSA allows schools and local education agencies to use federal funding for integrated student support or similar activities. For example, policymakers named integrated student support as an allowable use of funds in Title I. School-based coordinators are identified as an allowable use of funding in the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program outlined in Title IV Part A. Many districts also apply Title II, III, and V funding towards integrated student support.

Since the pandemic, federal policymakers are doing more to enable schools to address students' comprehensive well-being, including by creating the conditions that enable the effective implementation of integrated student support. In answer to the COVID-19 crisis, the nation appropriated \$190 billion in federal stimulus funds for education (ESSER) which can be

used to address the “comprehensive social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs of students.” The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) invested over \$1 billion to advance evidence-based approaches that improve student attendance, engagement, and mental health, among other purposes.¹⁷ Congress also doubled funding for Full-Service Community Schools, which require integrated student support as part of implementation.

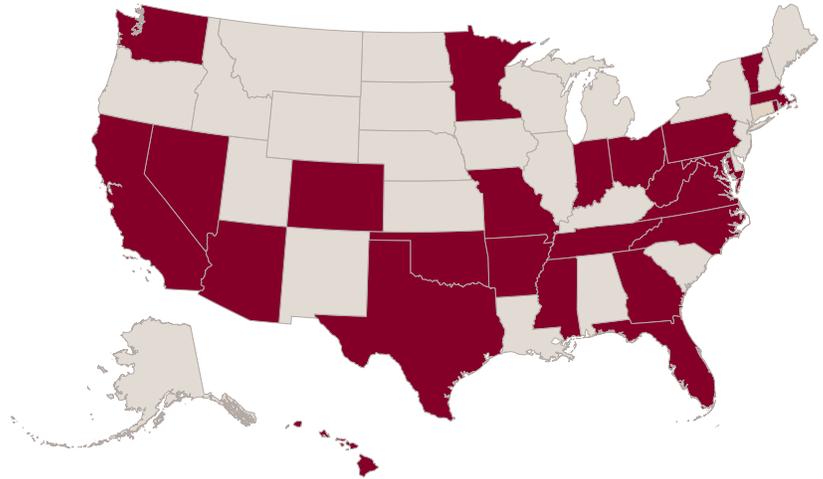
Key provisions of the BSCA direct the federal Center for Medicaid Services (CMS) to make it easier for schools to seek reimbursement for services like education accommodations and behavioral and mental health services. CMS issued state guidance that seeks to improve alignment between the health care and education systems.¹⁸ This guidance further incentivizes the implementation of approaches to integrated student support.

State Policy Contexts

States are advancing on three policy trajectories:

- Advancing frameworks and best practices
- Incentivizing implementation of evidence-based models
- A combination of the two

At least 25 states—red and blue—are at some stage of policymaking to advance integrated student support.¹⁹ While in some cases policymaking is happening in concert with the expansion of community schools, in others, integrated student support models and best practices are advancing independently for uptake by any school. Below is a summary of state actions.



Select States Are Promoting Frameworks and Best Practices

States on the initial vanguard of integrated student support, from 2015–2018, primarily opted to advance best practices through legislation, frameworks, protocols, and professional development. Policymakers in several states are taking the lead to enact pieces of legislation that establish clear standards and protocols, define the key components, and designate resources to ensure the successful implementation of integrated student support. For example:

- The **Massachusetts** FY18 budget directed the Safe and Supportive Schools Commission to adopt principles of effective practice for integrated student support. These principles were reported to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in partnership with The Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy and the Boston College Center for Thriving Children, is also supporting schools and districts in moving towards best practices for integrated student support via the Systemic Student Support (S3) Academy. In 2019, the state overhauled its school financing formula, known as Chapter 70, for the first time in a generation. The Student Opportunity Act recognizes the relationship between whole child development and learning, unlocks education dollars for the purposes of “social services to support students’ social-emotional and physical health” and requires each district to annually determine whether to allocate funds for these purposes, creating a sustainable source of funding for integrated student support approaches.²⁰
- The **Nevada** State Legislature passed a state statute in 2017 requiring the Department of Education to establish a statewide framework for an Equitable Integrated System of Student Supports.

- The **Washington** State Legislature directed the education department in 2016 to develop the Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol which is included within the Washington Multi-tiered Systems of Supports Framework. The protocol aims to “help districts and schools create equitable, consistent, and flexible systems and supports that empower educators, students, families, and communities to ensure benefit for every student.” Washington specifically encourages the use of Learning Assistance Program (LAP) state funding for integrated student support. The state increases school district flexibility to utilize LAP state funding streams for community partnerships in alignment with the Washington State Integrated Student Supports Protocol to address the holistic academic and nonacademic needs of students. The state allows school districts to use up to fifteen percent of their LAP allocations to deliver academic, nonacademic, and social-emotional supports and services to students through partnerships with community-based and other out-of-school organizations. Washington also requires school districts to annually report the percentage of LAP funding used to provide community-based services, the number of students receiving direct supports and services from those community partners, and the types of supports and services provided.

Select States are Promoting Evidence-Based Models

Policymaking evolved with the accumulation of evidence for specific models of integrated student support. Progress accelerated when the pandemic arose, and the complexity of students’ needs became more widely recognized. While policymakers understand and apply the term “evidence-based” differently, there is a clear trend towards models that may improve student academic and social-emotional outcomes. For example:

- **California** invested \$4 billion over 7 years in the California Community Schools Partnership Program to establish new or expand upon existing community schools. Community schools include integrated student support.
- **Georgia** appropriated \$1.4 million of state general funds in their FY22-23 budget to Communities In Schools.
- **Indiana** is using a combination of state and federal funds to establish a City Connects Midwest Technical Assistance Center at Marian University that supports schools in implementing City Connects. The Boston College Center for Thriving Children, which houses City Connects, is partnered with Marian University to build local capacity to support the implementation of City Connects statewide.

As more and more states take action to advance evidence-based models of integrated student support and/or best practices, policymakers need to keep apprised of the rapidly evolving research and evidence, as well as dynamic federal and state policy contexts.

The Toolkit is designed to aid in the drafting of legislation, budget language, and frameworks. It brings together model and sample language currently in use in specific states as well as research-informed recommendations.

- **Minnesota** dedicated \$5 million in FY24–25 to allow 18 geographically distributed schools to implement the BARR Center model over three years. The state is also considering further investments to scale the BARR model to additional schools.
- **Nevada** appropriated \$6.9 million from the state general fund in FY24 to Communities In Schools to provide integrated support services, including services related to academics, basic needs, physical and mental health, and social and life skills.
- **Ohio** has invested more than \$1.1 billion in Student Wellness and Success in FY20–23 and named City Connects and Communities In Schools as allowable uses of funds. The state is considering further investments to incentivize schools to adopt City Connects. The Ohio Department of Education also created an Office of Integrated Student Support within the agency.
- **Tennessee** designated \$3 million in FY22–23 for Communities In Schools to provide integrated student support to 23 high schools located in economically distressed rural counties. The state also allocated \$500,000 towards Communities In Schools of Memphis.
- **Texas** allocated funds in FY21–23 from both general revenue and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) for Communities In Schools.
- **Virginia** appropriated \$5 million over FY23–24 to Communities In Schools to strengthen and sustain existing programming and to expand to new schools. The state also allocated \$10 million in FY23–24 for grants to support the development and implementation of initiatives that provide a framework for integrated student support and named Communities In Schools as an eligible recipient of funds. CIS also received a line item in the state budget providing over \$2 million per year.
- **West Virginia** committed \$4.9 million in FY23 for local counties to hire site coordinators to implement the Communities In Schools model and continued this funding in FY24.

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THE TOOLKIT

The Boston College Center for Thriving Children, together with City Connects and Communities In Schools, developed the Toolkit to assist state policymakers and education leaders in the implementation and expansion of high-quality evidence-based systems of integrated student support. Research shows that quality of implementation is critical to promoting long-term student outcomes. State policymakers can improve the practice of integrated student support and help local leaders ensure that their efforts are effective by providing guardrails for high-quality implementation and clearly defining expected outcomes.

The Toolkit brings practical examples from existing legislation, budgets, frameworks, and protocols together with a rigorous understanding of best practices and the sciences of human development. It provides model language and recommendations that can be used to establish or expand upon whole child approaches that address the most pressing challenges in a state. The information outlined in the Toolkit can assist policymakers in developing a context that enables the effective and efficient implementation of integrated student support based on the unique needs of their states. The Toolkit can help closely link policymaking with evidence-based best practices to improve student outcomes, opportunities, and life chances.

Getting Started

Each state is unique. Different histories, players, relationships, and contexts factor into the political judgment necessary to chart an effective course.

As a first step, readers should decide which path best fits their state:

- Promoting best practices
- Scaling evidence-based models
- Adopting a hybrid approach

The sections below provide information relevant to each pathway.

PATH ONE: Promoting Best Practices

This section will guide state policymakers in establishing the best practices and enabling contexts that can create the conditions which promote the successful implementation of integrated student support. This section can help local leaders ensure that their efforts are effective by providing guardrails for high-quality implementation and clearly defining expected outcomes. Policymakers are encouraged to use the language that best meets their state's specific needs and objectives. Path One will provide model legislative language which can help policymakers to:

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The Toolkit can assist policymakers in developing a context that enables the effective and efficient implementation of integrated student support based on the unique needs of their states.

- Define Integrated Student Support
- Direct the State Education Agency to Establish a Statewide Framework Consistent with the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support
- Establish the Purposes of Integrated Student Support
- Establish Core Components of Integrated Student Support
- Direct the State Education Agency To Provide Guidance and Support for Implementation Consistent with Best Practices
- Establish State- and School-Level Advisory Groups
- Establish a Mechanism for Oversight and Accountability
- Create an Enabling Context and Conditions that Promote the Integration of Comprehensive Services and Opportunities for Each Student

PATH TWO: **Scaling Evidence-Based Models**

This section guides state policymakers on how to scale evidence-based models of integrated student support through the budget and by directing their state's education agency. Policymakers are encouraged to use the language that best meets their state's specific needs and context. This section will provide model legislative language and descriptive examples which can help policymakers to:

Expand Through the Budget

- Provide Appropriations for Evidence-Based Integrated Student Support Models
- Expand Funding Sources which can be used by Local Education Agencies to Implement Evidence-Based Models of Integrated Student Support
- Create a Context Conducive to Integrated Student Support that Supports the Whole Child

Direct the State Education Agency

- To Identify, Incentivize, and Support Implementation of Evidence-Based Approaches
- To Report on Evidence-Based Approaches to Integrated Student Support
- To Establish a Technical Assistance Center for Widespread Implementation of Evidence-Based Models
- To Establish a Grant Program to Incentivize Uptake of Evidence-Based Integrated Student Support

PATH THREE: **Hybrid Approach**

This section will assist state policymakers in tailoring their approaches to the unique needs, interests, and capacities of their schools and local education agencies by combining the spread of best practices and the scaling of specific evidence-based models. Path Three will introduce a series of questions that state policymakers should consider when pursuing a hybrid approach to integrated student support. Policymakers are encouraged to utilize the model legislative language and state examples in Paths One and Two while drawing upon the information in this section.

PATH ONE

PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES

Define Integrated Student Support

GUIDANCE: State policymakers should adopt a definition of integrated student support that is consistent with the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support. A clear definition will help policymakers to build consensus, clearly identify research-based components, and direct resources towards more effective implementation.

MODEL LANGUAGE

“Integrated student support is an evidence-based approach for schools to provide student support by intentionally and systematically leveraging and coordinating the resources and relationships available in the school and in the surrounding community to address the comprehensive strengths and needs of each and every student in a school in order to help promote healthy child development and learning” (National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support).

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “Integrated student supports are the academic and nonacademic supports for pupils enrolled in public school and the families of such pupils, to include methods for engaging the parents and guardians of pupils; assessing the social, emotional and academic development of pupils; and screening, intervening and monitoring the social, emotional and academic progress of pupils” (Nevada).
- “Integrated student supports address non-academic and out-of-school barriers to learning through partnerships with social and health service agencies and providers that may include school-based or school-linked health care, case management services and family stability supports coordinated by a community school coordinator and that are culturally and linguistically responsive to the needs of students and their families” (New Mexico).
- “Integrated supports services, including the coordination of trauma-informed health, mental health, and social services that ensure coordination and support with county and local educational agency resources and nongovernmental organizations, and early screening and intervention for learning and other needs” (California).

1. Direct the State Education Agency to Establish a Statewide Framework Consistent with the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support

GUIDANCE: The state’s education agency can develop a framework that incorporates the core principles outlined in the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support. As noted in the model definition, integrated student support is comprehensive by addressing the “whole child;” customized or personalized for every student; coordinated across home, school, and community; continuous or systematic to get the right resources to the right student at the right time; and uses data to inform decision making. Use the model language in this section as a guide to legislation that would direct the state’s education agency to develop a statewide framework.

MODEL LANGUAGE

“The [State Education Agency] shall establish a statewide framework for building systems of integrated student support consistent with the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support. The framework shall incorporate evidence-based best practices to guide approaches to integrated student support including that the approaches be:”

Comprehensive to address the “whole child”

MODEL LANGUAGE

“An approach to integrated student support will address child development across multiple developmental domains in order to promote students’ readiness to learn and thrive in school. This includes but is not limited to improved access to health and mental health services, social services including food and clothing, and after-school and summer programs.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “An Integrated Student Support service model that provides students and families with access to wrap-around services, including but not limited to health services, after-school programs, drug prevention programs, college and career readiness programs, and food and clothing banks” (Florida).
- “Addressing the needs of the whole child starts with parents, caregivers and schools and extends to other government and community organizations that serve children” (Ohio).
- “The Community Schools Act is enacted to provide a strategy to organize the resources of a community to ensure student success while addressing the needs, including cultural and linguistic needs, of the whole student from early childhood programs and voluntary public pre-kindergarten through high school graduation” (New Mexico).

Customized or Personalized

MODEL LANGUAGE

“An approach to integrated student support will consider the comprehensive strengths and needs of every student in a school and connect each student to a customized set of resources, relationships, and opportunities available in the school or in the surrounding community.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “A system-level needs assessment with resource mapping must be conducted in order to identify academic and nonacademic supports that are currently available or lacking in schools, districts, and the community. A student-level needs assessment must be conducted for all at-risk students in order to develop or identify the needed academic and nonacademic supports within the students’ school and community. These supports must be coordinated to provide students with a package of mutually reinforcing supports designed to meet the individual needs of each student” (Washington).

Coordinated

MODEL LANGUAGE

“An approach to integrated student support will provide for coordination across home, school, and community in order to efficiently and effectively provide the full array of supports and services a student may need.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “The school and district leadership and staff must establish clear, cooperative policies and procedures with community-based and other out-of-school providers of academic and nonacademic supports to enhance the effectiveness of the protocol... Supports must be coordinated to provide students with a package of mutually reinforcing supports designed to meet the individual needs of each student” (Washington).
- “The Community Schools Act is enacted... to partner federal, state and local and tribal governments with community-based organizations to improve the coordination, delivery, effectiveness and efficiency of services

provided to students and families; and to coordinate resources, in order to align and leverage community resources and integrate funding streams” (New Mexico).

- “Coordination is to enable effective and ongoing communication at the school level so that all services and support to an individual student and family are cohesive, comprehensive, mutually reinforcing, individually tailored to specific needs, and organized around common goals that support students’ success at school” (Massachusetts).

Continuous or Systematic

MODEL LANGUAGE

“An approach to integrated student support will develop an operational infrastructure within the school to ensure that student support is continuous and systematic so that the individual strengths and needs of every student will be reviewed every year, there is follow up to ensure delivery of service referrals, and capacity to revisit and revise student support plans as circumstances and needs change.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “Students’ needs and outcomes must be tracked over time to determine student progress and evolving needs” (Washington).
- “Guide data-informed continuous improvement; manage data collection; and align, leverage and coordinate resources for student and family success” (New Mexico).

Data-informed

MODEL LANGUAGE

“An approach to integrated student support will gather and analyze data to ensure that individual student strengths and needs are being addressed and tracked over time to determine student progress. Further, aggregated data will be used to inform school and district decisions about services, programs, and partnerships responsive to the needs and interests of students and families.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “Students’ needs and outcomes must be tracked over time to determine student progress and evolving needs” (Washington).
- “Guide data-informed continuous improvement; manage data collection; and align, leverage and coordinate resources for student and family success” (New Mexico).

2. Establish the Purposes of Integrated Student Support

GUIDANCE: State policymakers should establish integrated student support as a strategy to address relevant needs that resonate with fellow policymakers and constituents. In tailoring language to the unique context of each state, consider purposes outlined in the National Guidelines which include to: (1) improve educational equity and outcomes, (2) improve school climate and safety, (3) make more efficient use of existing resources, (4) strengthen families, and (5) provide preventative, comprehensive, and school-based mental health programming.

Improve Educational Equity and Outcomes

MODEL LANGUAGE

“The integrated student support framework shall include evidence-based best practices for integrated student support to promote student success. Best practices promote a school-based approach to identifying barriers to

learning and healthy child development, tailoring an individualized plan of supports and opportunities for every student, and by connecting students with comprehensive resources, such as medical care, food assistance, mental health counseling, afterschool programs, and other critical supports. When well implemented, integrated student support approaches close educational opportunity and performance gaps, raise graduation rates, increase attendance rates, and reduce dropout rates by customizing services to address the unique strengths and needs of every student.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “The integrated student support protocol shall support a school-based approach to promoting the success of all pupils by establishing a means to identify barriers to academic achievement and educational attainment of all pupils and methods for intervening and providing integrated student supports which are coordinated to reduce those barriers, including, without limitation, methods for: (I) Engaging the parents and guardians of pupils; (II) Assessing the social, emotional and academic development of pupils; (III) Attaining appropriate behavior from pupils; and (IV) Screening, intervening and monitoring the social, emotional and academic progress of pupils” (Nevada).

Improve School Climate and Safety

MODEL LANGUAGE

“A framework incorporating evidence-based best practices for integrated student support improves school climate and student feelings of safety and belonging within the school community. Best practices ensure that each student in a school receives a personalized support plan and the intervention and prevention services that can create conditions for students to build positive relationships with adults and their peers, develop self-regulation skills, achieve success in- and out-of-school, and promote student well-being.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “Schools that foster a safe, positive, healthy and inclusive whole-school learning environment that: (i) enables students to develop positive relationships with adults and peers, regulate their emotions and behavior, achieve academic and non-academic success in school and maintain physical and psychological health and well-being; and (ii) integrates services and aligns initiatives that promote students’ behavioral health, including social and emotional learning, bullying prevention, trauma sensitivity, dropout prevention, truancy reduction, children’s mental health, foster care and homeless youth education, inclusion of students with disabilities, positive behavioral approaches that reduce suspensions and expulsions and other similar initiatives” (Massachusetts).

Make More Efficient Use of Existing Resources

MODEL LANGUAGE

“A system of integrated student support consistent with best practices will more effectively and efficiently leverage existing resources within the school and the community to support student well-being and learning.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “The goal of coordination is to enable effective and ongoing communication at the school level so that all services and support to an individual student and family are cohesive, comprehensive, mutually reinforcing, individually tailored to specific needs, and organized around common goals that support student’s success at school” (Massachusetts).
- “Integrated student supports shall supplement rather than duplicate the supports already provided by the school district, intermediate school district, or public school academy” (Michigan).

Strengthen Families

MODEL LANGUAGE

“A framework incorporating evidence-based best practices for integrated student support will strengthen families by empowering them to be active partners with the school and community, providing opportunity for conversation about supports and opportunities for their child(ren), and by connecting families to a tailored set of resources that meet their needs and interests and promote stability and opportunity.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “Community partners must be engaged to provide academic, nonacademic, and social-emotional supports to reduce barriers to students’ academic success, including supports to students’ families” (Washington).
- “The community school framework shall ensure the use of research- and evidence-based strategies and best practices that support students, families and communities in ensuring student success and shall include integrated student supports that address non-academic and out-of-school barriers to learning through partnerships with social and health service agencies and providers that may include school-based or school-linked health care, case management services and family stability supports coordinated by a community school coordinator and that are culturally and linguistically responsive to the needs of students and their families” (New Mexico).
- Providing and coordinating integrated student supports to include methods for “engaging the parents and guardians of pupils” (Nevada).

Provide Preventative, Comprehensive, and School-Based Mental Health Programming

MODEL LANGUAGE

“A framework for an evidence-based system of integrated student support shall ensure that every student’s social-emotional-behavioral well-being is supported through an individualized combination of resources, relationships, and opportunities that may include preventive, intervention, or crisis mental health supports and interventions.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “Evidence-Based integrated student support will help to address mental illness and the opioid crisis by connecting students and families to support across the continuum of care which includes promotion, prevention, treatment, and recovery” (Massachusetts).
- “Evidence-Based integrated student support will promote behavioral health in schools by advancing professional development in social-emotional learning and including mental health in schools’ comprehensive health education curricula” (Massachusetts).

3. Establish Core Components of Integrated Student Support

GUIDANCE: State policymakers can align their state’s integrated student support framework with an evidence-based conceptual model of integrated student support by identifying the core components outlined in the National Guidelines. These core components are intended to create a system that is comprehensive, customized, coordinated, continuous, data-informed, and associated with positive student outcomes. Policymakers can use the National Guidelines to establish a minimum standard of quality implementation. The model language below provides an example.

MODEL LANGUAGE

“The [State Education Agency] shall develop a framework for integrated student support consistent with the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support. Core components of implementation include:

- (1) Setting the Stage
- (2) Structures and Staffing
- (3) Process
- (4) School and Community Resources
- (5) Record-Keeping and Data
- (6) Sustainability

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- The essential framework of the Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol includes (i) needs assessments, (ii) integration and coordination, (iii) community partnerships, (iv) data-driven” (Washington).

4. Direct the State Education Agency to Provide Guidance and Support for Implementation Consistent with Best Practices

GUIDANCE: State policymakers can direct the state education agency to provide guidance and support for the implementation of integrated student support that is consistent with the best practices outlined in the National Guidelines. This may include access to aligned professional development, coaching, technology, and other tools and resources. Consider how technologies currently in use by local education agencies could be augmented to support key integrated student support functions. For example, whether student information systems can include a space to develop individualized student plans or store information about school- and community-resources.

MODEL LANGUAGE

“The [State Education Agency] shall support schools and local education agencies in implementing and expanding integrated student support consistent with the National Guidelines by providing ongoing professional learning opportunities, coaching, access to technology, access to resource information, and other tools and resources to enable successful implementation.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- Consistent with the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is providing a school and district learning network named the Systemic Student Support (S3) Academy. Participants in the S3 Academy will “examine and fortify student support processes, building upon existing structures to review student data, discuss strengths and needs for all students, and connect them with resources; create an individual plan for each student’s success based upon a holistic review of their strengths and needs; place equity at the center of student support practices, ensuring teams make student support decisions that affirm each child’s cultural and linguistic identity; organize resources, interventions, and enrichments in order to connect students to the support they need at the time they need it” (Massachusetts).
- The Department of Education shall “Support statewide and local organizations in their efforts to provide leadership, coordination, technical assistance, professional development and advocacy to improve access to integrated student supports and expand upon existing integrated student supports that address the physical, emotional and educational needs of pupils” (Nevada).

5. Establish State- and School-Level Advisory Groups

GUIDANCE: State policymakers can establish mechanisms for stakeholder engagement through which state and local education agencies can solicit feedback and guidance. At the state level, it is recommended that an advisory group be

established for counsel in the development of a state integrated student support protocol and an ongoing basis. At the local level, an advisory group can be engaged throughout the process of implementing integrated student support. Use the language provided in this recommendation to ensure that state and local education agencies collect feedback from diverse groups of stakeholders.

MODEL LANGUAGE

“The [State Education Agency] shall convene an interdisciplinary advisory team of state officials, educational leaders, community partners, and local professionals who reflect the cultural and geographic diversity of the state to advise on implementation of the integrated student support framework. Local Education Agencies or schools may convene an interdisciplinary advisory group that includes local education leaders such as district administrators, principals, and teachers, community leaders, community agency representatives, families, students, and others invested in the learning and healthy development of children and youth to guide collaborative implementation.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “Site-based leadership team means an interdisciplinary, school-based leadership team that includes the school principal, the community school coordinator teachers, other school employees, families, community partners, tribal partners, nonprofit organizations, unions, and neighboring community residents that guides collaborative planning, implementation and oversight” (New Mexico).
- “The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall create a work group to determine and recommend policies on how to best implement the framework throughout the state. The work group must be composed of the following members who must reflect the geographic diversity of the state: the superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent’s designee; three principals and three superintendents representing districts with diverse characteristics, selected by state associations of principals and superintendents, respectively; a representative from a statewide organization specializing in out-of-school learning; a representative from an organization with expertise in the needs of homeless students; a school counselor from an elementary school, a middle school, and a high school, selected by a state association of school counselors; a representative of an organization that is an expert on integrated student support programs, and a representative from a career and technical student organization” (Washington).

6. Establish a Mechanism for Oversight and Accountability

GUIDANCE: State legislatures and State Education Agencies have different orientations towards their schools and local education agencies, and the degree of oversight and accountability they can appropriately require. Consider each state’s context and whether to require (1) verification of implementation progress in accordance with quality benchmarks; (2) verification of supporting technology functions and security; (3) requirements regarding data collection, analysis, and utilization; (4) outcomes metrics and evaluations; or (5) other.

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “Students’ needs and outcomes must be tracked over time to determine student progress and evolving needs. The legislature expects that schools and school districts will use data in an iterative process to drive decisions about how learning assistance program funds continue to be used by school districts. School districts shall record in the state-wide individual student data system annual entrance and exit performance data for each student participating in the learning assistance program according to specifications established by the office of the superintendent of public instruction” (Washington).

7. Create an Enabling Context and Conditions that Promote the Integration of Comprehensive Services and Opportunities for Each Student

GUIDANCE: State policymakers should create an enabling context for integrated student support at the state and local level. Studies of school-community collaboration and school improvement show that context matters. Implementation is more likely to lead to positive outcomes when all stakeholders work collaboratively and have access to resources and tools that support effective implementation. Use this section to define the key features of an enabling context that strengthen service delivery and ensure positive outcomes for students, teachers, administrators, and taxpayers.

MODEL LANGUAGE

“The state integrated student support framework must be implemented within an enabling school and community context which facilitates the integration and coordination of school- and community-based resources for the needs, strengths, and interests of all students.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “In order for the implementation of an integrated student supports approach to lead to positive student outcomes, it must be implemented within an enabling school and community context. Successful implementation of integrated student supports requires participation from all school staff and the engagement of families and communities within a context that supports this collaborative way of work” (Washington).
- “The framework must facilitate the ability of any academic or nonacademic provider to support the needs of at-risk students, including, but not limited to: Out-of-school providers, social workers, mental health counselors, physicians, dentists, speech therapists, and audiologists” (Washington).
- “The statewide framework must include integration and coordination across school- and community-based providers of integrated student support services through the establishment of partnerships and systems that support this framework” (Nevada).

Supporting The Implementation of Best Practices

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy, and the Boston College Center for Thriving Children are partnering with schools and districts to reimagine student support to focus on the holistic development of every child through the Systemic Student Support (S3) Academy. Using the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support as a foundation, the S3 Academy provides workshops, professional development, tailored coaching, and practical tools to help participants develop the capacity to review each individual students’ strengths and needs across multiple developmental domains, create and follow up on individualized student plans, connect students to the right school- and community-based resources, and use data to inform ongoing decision making at the child- and school-levels. The S3 Academy helps schools to build a foundational operating infrastructure that aims to ensure that every child receives the right support at the right time.

SAMPLE LAW: NEVADA

NRS 388.885 Establishment of statewide framework for integrated student supports; requirements for framework; board of trustees and governing body of charter school required to take certain actions; requirements for requests for proposals for integrated student supports.

1. The Department shall, to the extent money is available, establish a statewide framework for providing and coordinating integrated student supports for pupils enrolled in public schools and the families of such pupils. The statewide framework must:

(a) Establish minimum standards for the provision of integrated student supports by school districts and charter schools. Such standards must be designed to allow a school district or charter school the flexibility to address the unique needs of the pupils enrolled in the school district or charter school.

(b) Establish a protocol for providing and coordinating integrated student supports. Such a protocol must be designed to:

(1) Support a school-based approach to promoting the success of all pupils by establishing a means to identify barriers to academic achievement and educational attainment of all pupils and methods for intervening and providing integrated student supports which are coordinated to reduce those barriers, including, without limitation, methods for:

(I) Engaging the parents and guardians of pupils;

(II) Assessing the social, emotional and academic development of pupils;

(III) Attaining appropriate behavior from pupils; and

(IV) Screening, intervening and monitoring the social, emotional and academic progress of pupils;

(2) Encourage the provision of education in a manner that is centered around pupils and their families and is culturally and linguistically appropriate;

(3) Encourage providers of integrated student supports to collaborate to improve academic achievement and educational attainment, including, without limitation, by:

(I) Engaging in shared decision-making;

(II) Establishing a referral process that reduces duplication of services and increases efficiencies in the manner in which barriers to academic achievement and educational attainment are addressed by such providers; and

(III) Establishing productive working relationships between such providers;

(4) Encourage collaboration between the Department and local educational agencies to develop training regarding:

(I) Best practices for providing integrated student supports;

(II) Establishing effective integrated student support teams comprised of persons or governmental entities providing integrated student supports;

(III) Effective communication between providers of integrated student supports; and

(IV) Compliance with applicable state and federal law; and

(5) Support statewide and local organizations in their efforts to provide leadership, coordination, technical assistance, professional development and advocacy to improve access to integrated student supports and expand upon existing integrated student supports that address the physical, emotional and educational needs of pupils.

(c) Include integration and coordination across school- and community-based providers of integrated student support services through the establishment of partnerships and systems that support this framework.

(d) Establish accountability standards for each administrator of a school to ensure the provision and coordination of integrated student supports.

2. The board of trustees of each school district and the governing body of each charter school shall:

(a) Annually conduct a needs assessment for pupils enrolled in the school district or charter school, as applicable, to identify the academic and nonacademic supports needed within the district or charter school. The board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of a charter school shall be deemed to have satisfied this requirement if the board of trustees or the governing body has conducted such a needs assessment for the purpose of complying with any provision of federal law or any other provision of state law that requires the board of trustees or governing body to conduct such a needs assessment.

(b) Ensure that mechanisms for data-driven decision-making are in place and the academic progress of pupils for whom integrated student supports have been provided is tracked.

(c) Ensure integration and coordination between providers of integrated student supports.

(d) To the extent money is available, ensure that pupils have access to social workers, mental health workers, counselors, psychologists, nurses, speech-language pathologists, audiologists and other school-based specialized instructional support personnel or community-based medical or behavioral providers of health care.

3. Any request for proposals issued by a local educational agency for integrated student supports must include provisions requiring a provider of integrated student supports to comply with the protocol established by the Department pursuant to subsection 1.

4. As used in this section, "integrated student support" means any measure designed to assist a pupil in:

(a) Improving his or her academic achievement and educational attainment and maintaining stability and positivity in his or her life; and

(b) His or her social, emotional and academic development.

(Added to NRS by 2017, 1156; A 2019, 3246)

PATH TWO

SCALING EVIDENCE-BASED MODELS

As noted above, many states are incentivizing schools and local education agencies to implement evidence-based models with a defined approach, aligned professional development, coaching, technical assistance, and technology. States are moving more quickly than federal policymakers to incorporate the research on child development and learning with the evidence of what works to improve student outcomes. States proceeding to scale evidence-based models of integrated student support are using two common paths: by expanding through a budget appropriation designated for a specific program, or by directing the state education agency to identify programs meeting evidentiary standards and then issue grants to promote implementation.

Expand Through the Budget

1. Provide Appropriations for Evidence-Based Integrated Student Support Models

GUIDANCE: Many states establish line items to promote investment in approaches that include integrated student support, or designate funding for specific integrated student support providers.

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- **California** appropriated \$2.8 billion over seven years from the general fund to establish new, or expand upon existing, community schools, which include integrated student support. The language requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to “award grants on a competitive basis to qualifying entities, as defined, to support the establishment of new, and for the expansion or continuation of existing, community schools at local educational agencies, as provided.”
- **Georgia** appropriated \$1.4 million of state general funds in their FY22-23 budget to Communities In Schools.
- **Minnesota** dedicated \$5 million in FY24-25 to allow 18 geographically distributed schools to implement the BARR model over three years.
- **Ohio** has named City Connects and Communities In Schools as allowable uses of its Student Wellness and Success Funds.
- **Texas** allocated funds in FY21-23 from both general revenue and TANF for Communities In Schools that highlight integrated student supports and seek to increase students’ and families’ interests, passions, and relationships in the service of promoting equitable learning conditions both inside and outside of school.
- **West Virginia** committed \$4.9 million in FY23 for Communities In Schools.

2. Expand Funding Sources Which Can be Used by Local Education Agencies to Implement Evidence-Based Models of Integrated Student Support

GUIDANCE: In addition to a number of federal sources of funds that can be used by local education agencies for implementation of evidence-based models of integrated student support—including Titles I, III, IVA, Full-Service Community Schools grants, and School-Based Medicaid reimbursements—state policymakers can also make integrated student support an allowable use of various state funding streams. Local leaders are best positioned to identify appropriate opportunities to advance funding for integrated student support.

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- **California** state funding for Community Schools is being used by two large school districts to support the implementation of a model of integrated student support in at least 14 schools in the Fall of 2023. Additional support is being provided by a philanthropic foundation.
- **Massachusetts** allocates \$2 million for the Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE) line item to “provide an integrated student wellness grant program to assist schools with addressing non-academic barriers to student success; provided, that grants shall be used to support districts in establishing an infrastructure to facilitate integrated coordination of school and community-based resources, including, but not limited to, social services, mental health and behavioral health resources.”
- **Massachusetts** revised its school funding formula through passage of the Student Opportunity Act in 2019. Districts must consider using a portion of the education funds distributed by the formula known as Chapter 70 for expenditures on “social services to support students’ social-emotional and physical health.”
- **Ohio** has invested more than \$1.1 billion in Student Wellness and Success in FY20–23 which distributes funds to school districts, joint vocational school districts, community schools, and STEM schools to provide certain services that address nonacademic barriers to student success. City Connects and Communities In Schools were identified as allowable uses of these funds.
- **Virginia** allocates \$10 million from the state general fund for grants to school divisions and Communities In Schools and its affiliates to “support the development and implementation of community schools initiatives that provide a framework for integrated student supports, expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities, active family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership and practices.”

3. Create a Context Conducive to Integrated Student Support that Supports the Whole Child

GUIDANCE: State policymakers should create an enabling context that allows the effective and efficient implementation of integrated student support. This includes ensuring the availability of supports and opportunities that benefit students.

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- The **Indiana** Student Learning Recovery Grant Program and Fund, administered by the Indiana Department of Education in consultation with the Indiana State Board of Education, allocated \$150 million in state funds during FY21 to be used by FY25 for competitive, discretionary grants to eligible entities to provide “recovery learning and remediation to students in kindergarten through grade 12 who have experienced learning loss; have fallen behind in acquiring anticipated grade level academic skills and knowledge; have scored below academic standards or average benchmarks; or are at risk of falling below academic standards due to the disruption in student education caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and insufficient instructional alternatives.”
- **Massachusetts** provides grants that focus on the whole child which include Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health Grants, Educational Improvement Project Grants, and After-School and Out-Of-School Grants. Massachusetts also expanded Medicaid reimbursements for school services through the MassHealth School-Based Medicaid Program. The state increased after-school programming and renewed its commitment to universal free meals while also revising its school funding formula through passage of the Student Opportunity Act in 2019. Massachusetts outlines that districts must consider using a portion of the education funds distributed by the formula known as Chapter 70 for expenditures on “social services to support students’ social-emotional and physical health.”

- The **Washington** “integrated student supports framework must facilitate the ability of any academic or nonacademic provider to support the needs of at-risk students, including, but not limited to: Out-of-school providers, social workers, mental health counselors, physicians, dentists, speech therapists, and audiologists.”

Direct the State Education Agency

1. Direct the State Education Agency to Identify, Incentivize, and Support Implementation of Evidence-Based Approaches

GUIDANCE: State policymakers can direct the state education agency to identify evidence-based models of integrated student support consistent with the National Guidelines, and create incentives for schools and local education agencies to implement proven approaches.

MODEL LANGUAGE

“The [State Education Agency] shall identify one or more evidence-based approaches to integrated student support which are consistent with the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support. These models will leverage existing school- and community-based resources to address the comprehensive strengths and needs of students in order to promote healthy child development, learning, and thriving. Further, these models will make available to participating schools and local education agencies a defined practice, aligned professional development, technology, coaching, and technical assistance. Subject to appropriations, the [State Education Agency] shall grant funds to eligible schools and local education agencies to support the implementation of identified evidence-based models of integrated student support.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- “A description of the evidence-based programs, supports and interventions that the school district will implement to address persistent disparities in achievement among student subgroups, including, but not limited to... social services to support students’ social-emotional and physical health” (Massachusetts).

2. Direct the State Education Agency to Report on Evidence-Based Approaches to Integrated Student Support

GUIDANCE: State policymakers should direct the state education agency to report on the implementation and outcomes associated with evidence-based integrated student support approaches.

MODEL LANGUAGE

“The [State Education Agency] shall report annually to the Legislature and the [Board of Education] on the number of local education agencies and schools implementing evidence-based approaches to integrated student support; the number of students enrolled in participating schools; the number of community partners engaged by participating schools; and measures of student outcomes including but not limited to attendance and performance on statewide tests compared to matched peers who did not receive integrated student support.”

3. Establish Technical Assistance Centers for Widespread Use of Evidence-Based Models

GUIDANCE: State policymakers may wish to build local capacity to support the effective implementation of specific evidence-based models of integrated student support by establishing state or regional technical assistance centers. Technical assistance centers may work with local schools and local education agencies on coaching, delivery of professional development, technical support, and other functions.



MODEL LANGUAGE

“The [State Education Agency] shall, subject to appropriation, enable the development of one or more technical assistance centers to support the implementation of identified evidence-based models of integrated student support. The local technical assistance center shall work in close partnership with the model program to provide aligned professional development, coaching, technical support, and other functions mutually agreed upon by all parties. Eligible entities to host a technical assistance center must demonstrate existing and potential expertise and capacity to support effective implementation of integrated student support in schools and local education agencies. Eligible entities may include universities, established educational research and practice organizations, and others that the SEA may deem appropriate.”

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- The **California** Community Schools Partnership Act requires the California Department of Education to contract to develop a lead technical assistance center and at least five regional centers which support county offices of education dedicated to facilitating the collaboration between government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and external community partners. The three-tiered approach to technical assistance with support from County Offices of Education, universities, national associations, and state organizations provides technical assistance to potential applicants and grant recipients seeking to establish or expand community schools, and assists local educational agencies and community schools.
- In **Indiana**, Marian University houses the City Connects Midwest Technical Assistance Center which works with Boston College—home of City Connects—to build local capacity to support the implementation of City Connects in schools across the state. Funded by an Indiana Department of Education Student Learning Recovery Grant alongside additional federal and state funds, the Center provides participating schools with access to state and federal grant funding and technical support to implement City Connects.

- Over the years, the **West Virginia** Department of Education has worked with Communities In Schools to provide year-round training and technical assistance. The Department also convenes school-site coordinators annually and holds quarterly regional training sessions.

4. Establish a Grant Program to Incentivize Uptake of Evidence-Based Integrated Student Support

GUIDANCE: State policymakers can establish a grant program for the initial implementation and expansion of evidence-based integrated student support models consistent with the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support.

EXISTING EXAMPLES

- The **California** Community School Partnership Act appropriates \$2.86 billion from the General Fund to administer the California Community Schools Partnership Program and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to “award grants on a competitive basis to qualifying entities, as defined, to support the establishment of new, and for the expansion or continuation of existing community schools.”
- **Indiana** allocated \$150 million in funds during FY21 to be used through FY25 for Student Learning Recovery Grants which provide “recovery learning and remediation to students in kindergarten through grade 12 who have experienced learning loss; have fallen behind in acquiring anticipated grade level academic skills and knowledge; have scored below academic standards or average benchmarks; or are at risk of falling below academic standards due to the disruption in student education caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and insufficient instructional alternatives.” The Indiana Department of Education is using a portion of these funds to support implementation of City Connects, a systemic approach to addressing the out-of-school factors that can impede a student’s ability to succeed and thrive in school.
- Using a combination of state and federal funds, the **Maine** Department of Education established a grant to eligible schools and districts that will “cover all costs of implementing the program for schools new to BARR, and all costs of continued implementation support to existing BARR schools. Additionally, the DOE will provide travel reimbursement and educator stipends associated with participation in the program.”
- The **Maryland** Full-Service Community School Expansion Act invest \$3.65 billion over the next five years to “plan, implement, expand, and support full-service community schools” while providing them with “the resources and technical assistance they need to provide integrated student supports ranging from academic opportunities and mentoring programs to the critical nutritional, medical, and mental health services that will better serve students and families.” Local education agencies in the state have been able to use the Maryland LEADS program, which consolidated the state’s ESSER funds, to procure implementation support from Communities In Schools.

PATH THREE

HYBRID APPROACH

A hybrid approach allows state policymakers to combine support for schools and local education agencies to carve their own paths towards best practices, as well as for other schools and local education agencies to opt into proven models of integrated student support. Policymakers may adapt the language provided above in Path One and Path Two to create a hybrid approach. Below are additional considerations to help determine whether a hybrid approach is the right fit.

Considerations for State Policymakers

1. Are schools or local education agencies in the state presently implementing integrated student support models, programs, or best practices? If so, how widespread is current integrated student support implementation?
2. Does the state education agency or legislature typically support or incentivize the use of evidence-based practices, curricula, or programs?
3. Are there schools and local education agencies that would benefit from an evidence-based model with a defined framework, aligned professional development, and supporting technology?
4. Can the state education agency identify one or more evidence-based models of integrated student support?



EXISTING EXAMPLES

- **Minnesota** allocated \$4 million in FY24–25 for the development and implementation of a statewide multi-tiered student support framework with assistance from the BARR Center, a provider of integrated student support. The state dedicated \$5 million to allow an additional 18 geographically distributed schools to implement the BARR system over three years. Over 46 schools across Minnesota have implemented the BARR model.
- The **Massachusetts** Tiered System of Support Framework (MTSS) leverages preexisting investments and establishes an infrastructure to facilitate the coordination of school and community-based resources in accordance with research-based practices of integrated student support that focus on system level change across the classroom, school, and district to responsively meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students. Similarly, the state's Safe and Supportive Schools Framework incorporates integrated student support best practices. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in partnership with the Rennie Center and Boston College's Center for Thriving Children, established the Systemic Student Support Academy (S3) which supports schools and districts in developing the skills, knowledge, and internal capacity necessary to provide an effective system of integrated support for 100% of their students. Over 90 schools across Massachusetts have implemented City Connects and 9 have implemented the BARR model.



CONCLUSION

State policymakers are increasingly adopting strategies that address the comprehensive needs of students. Integrated student support addresses these needs and is being implemented and expanded across the United States. The Toolkit is designed to help state policymakers and educational leaders create legislation and protocols informed by the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support, the sciences of effective practice, and existing examples of proposed or enacted legislative and administrative language. In your hands, this Toolkit can help to create the conditions for all children to receive the integrated student support and opportunities they need to learn and thrive.

RESOURCES

The Center for Thriving Children: Our Work For Policymakers

The National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support

Building Systems of Integrated Student Support: A Policy Brief for Federal Leaders

Building Systems of Integrated Student Support: A Policy Brief for Local and State Leaders

The Whole Child: Building Systems of Integrated Student support During and After COVID-19

Select Research Publications

ENDNOTES

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