
Schools have an important role to play in supporting student mental health and well-being. As a partner to communities in designing excellent and equitable learning environments, Transcend believes we must engage all levers—from design to policy—in creating caring schools that support the whole child.

The following resources aim to help everyone from parents to educators, system leaders to elected officials, think about how they can advocate for better policy around student mental health. The resources provide real-world examples of districts and states taking action to improve mental health support in schools and provide context for assessing which approaches might apply to new school communities. They come from a diverse range of health policy organizations and coalitions and reflect the latest post-pandemic realities our students are facing.
5 Ways State Governments Can Support Student Mental Health (2023) by the Center for American Progress

This issue brief outlines how state governments can support schools in best serving their students and addressing the student mental health crisis. The brief recommends five key actions:

- Establish a statewide student mental health task force
- Organize state-level interagency coordination
- Expand access to Medicaid-covered school-based mental health services (The U.S. Department of Education has a related two-pager about using Medicaid funds to cover school-based health services)
- Increase access to school-based mental health providers (The National Conference of State Legislatures has a related post about states taking action to increase access to mental health in schools)
- Invest in programs that improve school culture

National Governors Association Launches Project To Support Five States To Bolster Mental Health And Well-Being In Schools (2023) by National Governors Association

This press release shares updates on a National Governors Association initiative to support states in advancing mental health supports in schools. Five states are developing and implementing action plans focused on one or more well-being priority areas, including:

- Maine is scaling implementation of the BARR (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) model
- New Hampshire is expanding its comprehensive programs like Choose Love to support students about to enter the workforce or secondary education
- North Carolina is hosting stakeholder meetings as it enacts its cross-agency School Behavioral Health Action Plan
- Oregon is pursuing greater cross-agency collaboration and shared accountability metrics

States Take Action to Address Children’s Mental Health in Schools (2022) by the National Academy of State Health Policy

This blog details four strategies states took post-Covid and examples of state policies passed within each strategy:

- Supporting strategic planning to improve school mental health systems
- Allocating funding to increase school-based mental health services
- Providing mental health education and resources for school staff and students
- Guiding school mental health policies
**America’s School Mental Health Report Card (2022) by Inseparable**
This report grades every state on policies that support school mental health, with recommendations so that every state can take further action to help their children. In addition to the rankings, the report highlights programs and policies in some states that stand out as models for positive change. The report’s policy categories include:
- School Mental Health Professionals, School-Family-Community Partnerships, Teacher and Staff Training
- Funding Supports, Well-Being Checks, Healthy School Climate
- Skills for Life Success, Mental Health Education

**State Funding for Student Mental Health (2021) and State Approaches to Addressing Student Mental Health (2021) by Education Commission of the States**
These policy briefs explore common sources of funding that states use to support K-12 school-based mental health programming, and trends in state legislation with particular attention to how the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified mental health challenges for students. Other resources in this line of work are:
- Student Mental Health Services Ecosystem
- Glossary of Student Mental Wellness Concepts
- State Funding for Student Mental Health

**Three State Policy Levers to Support Teacher Mental Health (2021) by Education Commission of the States**
This blog post highlights key policies for state leaders to support teacher mental health:
- Address Secondary Trauma in the Workplace
- Support Teacher Mentorship
- Implement Planning Time and Reduced Work Hours