

Integrated Student Support

STATE POLICY TOOLKIT, SECOND EDITION

INTRODUCTION

America's schools are in another academic year impacted by the pandemic and its aftermath, and federal stimulus funds are receding. With students experiencing barriers to academic progress and mental health, state policymakers are facing hard choices about which programs to fund and which initiatives to support. This Toolkit is designed to help policymakers navigate this challenge.

The new Integrated Student Support State Policy Toolkit—a joint publication of [Boston College Center for Thriving Children](#), [City Connects](#), and [Communities In Schools](#)—is designed to provide policymakers with research-informed recommendations and sample language from existing state legislation, laws, and frameworks. The Toolkit assists policymakers in developing a strategy tailored to the unique needs and contexts of their states to promote the effective and efficient implementation of integrated student support.



OVERVIEW

Integrated Student Support

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 to help promote healthy child development and learning.

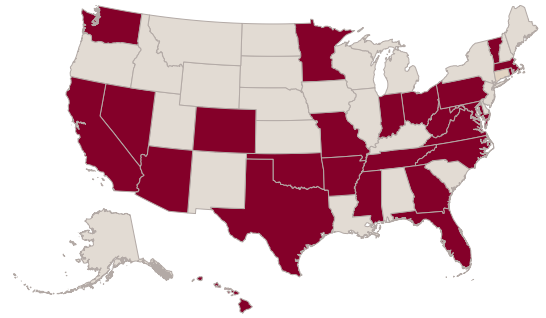
Integrated student support is not a new program, but the development of a coordinating infrastructure that leverages existing school- and community-resources to more effectively and efficiently address the needs and interests of students.

The National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support illuminate how policymakers can better support the implementation of approaches demonstrated to benefit students, teachers, schools, and taxpayers. Effective approaches to integrated student support are associated with:

- Increased attendance and reduced dropout rates.
- Improved academic achievement.
- Increased teacher retention and satisfaction.
- Improved cost-efficiency by using school and community resources more effectively in support of student wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Policy Context

At least 25 states are at some stage of policymaking to advance integrated student support. States are advancing on three policy trajectories: advancing frameworks and best practices, incentivizing implementation of evidence-based models, or a hybrid of the two. Policymakers must keep apprised of new information on the rapidly evolving evidence, the complex needs of students, and dynamic political contexts. This Toolkit can assist state policymakers in advancing legislation and protocols informed by the best practices reflected in the National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support, the sciences of learning and development, and examples of legislative and administrative language in use across the country.



Toolkit Overview

The Toolkit assists policymakers in making strategic decisions suited to their unique state and local contexts. It highlights three paths informed by current state policy trends:

- **PATH ONE: Promoting Best Practices** guides state policymakers in establishing best practices and the conditions which promote high-quality implementation of integrated student support.
- **PATH TWO: Scaling Evidence-Based Models** guides state policymakers seeking to scale evidence-based models of integrated student support.
- **PATH THREE: Adopting a Hybrid Approach** assists state policymakers in combining the promotion of best practices and the scaling of evidence-based models.

Conclusion

Integrated student support allows policymakers to promote evidence-based approaches that address the comprehensive strengths and needs of students so that they can succeed in school and in life. To learn more about drafting informed legislation, frameworks, and budgets, see the [Toolkit](#).

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