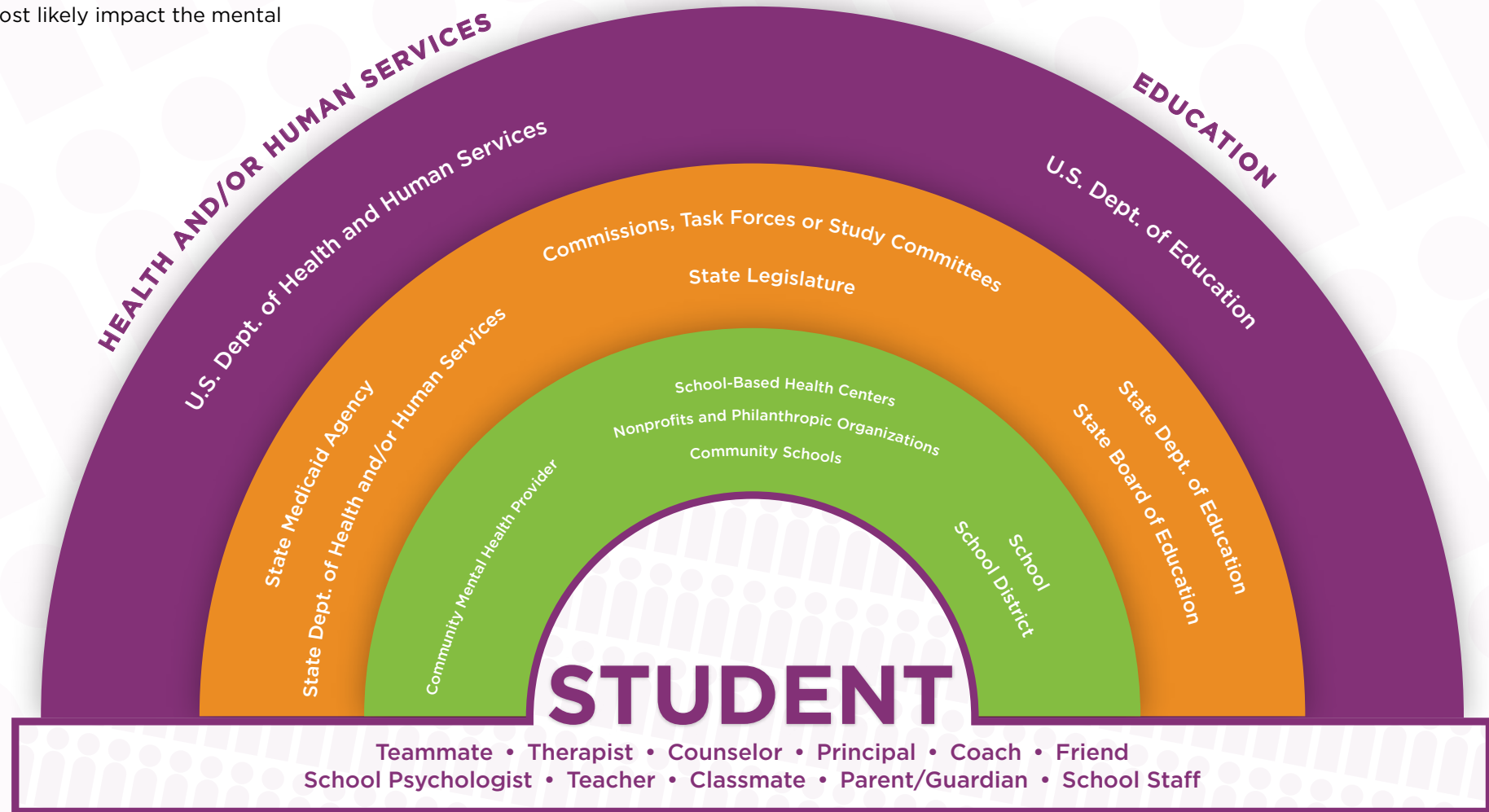


Student Mental Health Services Ecosystem

A key component of school-based mental health services is the oversight of those programs and the varied stakeholders. Oversight and governance involve an intricate web of federal, state and local entities. To effectively address student mental health, it is helpful for state leaders to know the players to bring to the table and how the various systems interact. As the graphic illustrates, students are at the center of this complex ecosystem surrounded by a circle of support with those closest to them, in school, at home and in the community. Local, state and federal entities from education, health and human services sectors, as well as various entities that work across sectors to provide wraparound supports comprise the remainder of the ecosystem. These entities make decisions about programs and offer supports that most likely impact the mental health and wellness of students.

Resources

- [Glossary of Student Mental Wellness Concepts](#)
- [State Funding for Student Mental Health](#)
- [Glossary of School Health Professionals](#)
- [Education Policy Approaches to Trauma-Informed Practices](#)
- [Student Mental Health](#)
- [Student Health and Wellness Key Issue Page](#)



State Policy and Local Examples



Through coordinated efforts among federal, state and local education and health and human services agencies, states have created the ecosystem through which students receive supports and services. States are often at the forefront of coordination and innovation by developing an inventory of existing entities and services; fostering local partnerships; encouraging school-linked mental health programs and community schools; developing comprehensive systems and strategic plans; and providing funding for integrated supports.

In **Colorado**, a partnership between Denver Public Schools and Denver Health supports a network of [school-based health centers](#) that serve all DPS students as well as children enrolled in district-affiliated early childhood education programs at no charge to families. The centers offer medical, mental health, dental, health education and family planning, as well as insurance enrollment and advising services.

A 2018 **Iowa** [executive order](#) established the [Children's Behavioral Health System State Board](#) to manage a statewide mental health system that focuses on improving children's well-being, building healthy and resilient children, providing for educational growth, and coordinating medical and mental health care. The board was required to develop a [strategic plan](#) to implement the children's mental health system. In 2019, lawmakers enacted [H.F. 690](#), which established the children's behavioral health system and board in statute. The board is co-chaired by the departments of human services and education, and the governor appoints its members.

Maryland enacted [S.B. 661](#) in 2019, which creates community schools to provide an integrated approach to academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and family and community engagement. The programs may include school-based mental health services. Under the [Blueprint for Maryland's Future](#), districts can use funding distributed by the state department of education to support a community school's program coordinator and integrated services for students. The Maryland State Department of Education provides support to and information about [community schools](#).

The **Minnesota** Department of Human Services administers [School-Linked Mental Health programs](#), which are intended to increase accessibility to services, improve outcomes for children and youth with a mental health diagnosis, and improve identification of mental health issues. In a 2020 [report](#), the commissioners of human services and education, representatives from the education community, mental health providers and advocates provided an assessment of and recommendations for the school-linked mental health programs.

North Carolina leveraged its federal Project AWARE grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to compile a school mental health initiative [inventory](#) across state and local education and health agencies. The inventory detects redundancies across agencies, provides suggestions to address inefficiencies, identifies additional needs to fill gaps in the state's student mental health landscape and offers recommendations for improving alignment throughout the state and across agencies. One of the recommendations is to create a department of public instruction office or section of school mental health to align efforts across the state departments of health and human services, public safety and public instruction.

The **Ohio** appropriations bill enacted in 2019 included \$675 million for the [Student Wellness and Success Fund](#) to help districts and schools support their students' academic achievements through mental health counseling, wraparound services, mentoring and after-school programs. Under the [program's guidance](#), schools and districts are required to develop a plan for the funds in collaboration with at least one specified community partner, including an educational service center or a community-based mental health treatment provider. The fund aligns with the department of education's strategic plan for education, [integrated student supports](#) and whole child framework.