



This school year, states are working hard to ensure all students are safe, healthy, and fully equipped to be successful.

This week's newsletter highlights the mental health, school safety, and wellness policies states are advancing and implementing to ensure all students are physically and emotionally supported in schools.

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State Spotlights



OKLAHOMA
STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION
— JOY HOFMEISTER —
STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

The **Oklahoma** State Department of Education announced “Project Get Fit!”— a new partnership to increase health and wellness for students in five high-need districts. Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, this initiative is designed to improve student access to nutrition, increase physical education opportunities, and provide access to case management services for students with chronic health conditions.

Project Get Fit will also provide teachers with professional development and evidence-based best practices to promote healthy schools.

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Through its School Safety Specialist Academy, the **Indiana** Department of Education is leading the way in preparing and training individuals who are responsible for school safety and security plans.

School safety specialists oversee the development of a safety plan for each school building in a district and serve as a district resource on discipline, safety, and security.

Most school safety specialists are principals or assistant principals, but teachers, deans, resource officers, and superintendents may also serve in this role. Training is provided at no cost to the participants.

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In a back to school letter, the **Montana** State Office of Public Instruction named student and school safety as its number one priority for the school year.

The Office of Public Instruction is working with local school and community leaders to ensure that every school has a plan to respond to emergencies and hazards, including gun violence, floods, wildlife, and winter storms.

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The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration awarded the **Louisiana** Department of Education (LDE) a Project AWARE grant to expand mental health services to support health development and prevent youth violence.

In partnership with the Louisiana Department of Health, LDE will establish a comprehensive Louisiana School Mental Health Support Program to increase awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth, provide specialized training to school personnel on how to detect and respond to mental health issues, and connect students struggling with behavioral or mental health issues and their families to the appropriate services.

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Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

The **North Carolina** Department of Public Instruction also recently received a grant from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to support NC Project ACTIVATE. This five-year program increases mental health awareness for students, provides training for staff in recognizing and accommodating students with mental health needs, and continues research into early prevention plans for substance abuse.

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The **Arkansas** Department of Education was awarded a \$9 million grant from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to develop and support school-based mental health programs.

The Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education program will develop comprehensive school mental health programs; develop a statewide system of support and training for educators; and promote a safe, supportive, and positive school environment for students, educators, and the community.

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New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
[Knowledge](#) > [Skill](#) > [Opportunity](#)

As the first state in the nation to require mental health education, the **New York** State Education Department (NYSED) provided school districts with guidance and resources to support mental health education and implement social-emotional learning benchmarks, policies, and programs over the summer.

NYSED and the New York State Office of Mental Health have also awarded \$1.8 million to three schools to increase mental health support for school-aged children.

The state provides resources to help health educators support mental health well-being in schools including comprehensive guidance for mental health education literacy.

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Tools & Resources



As marijuana legalization grows across the U.S., it raises issues for education policy. This synopsis of K-12 medical marijuana administration policies from Education Commission of the States addresses safety concerns that states should consider and also addresses how states are using marijuana tax revenue for K-12 education.

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Strong connections between families and schools can lead to better outcomes for students. Education Commission of the States has analyzed research and compiled resources about the importance of family engagement and the relationship between mental health and school safety.

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We want to hear from you!

Send your state's stories or organization's resources to communications@ccsso.org



The States Leading campaign celebrates the progress states are making toward providing equitable education for all students through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and innovative policies in other key areas of education, such as early childhood education, teacher preparation, and career readiness, among others.

Thank you to our proud partners:

The Council of Chief State School Officers
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The National Association of State Boards of Education
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Our mailing address is:

One Massachusetts Avenue NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001
202.336.7000

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