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# EDUCATING THE WHOLE CHILD: A RESEARCH-BASED FRAMEWORK

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# Changes to learning in 2020

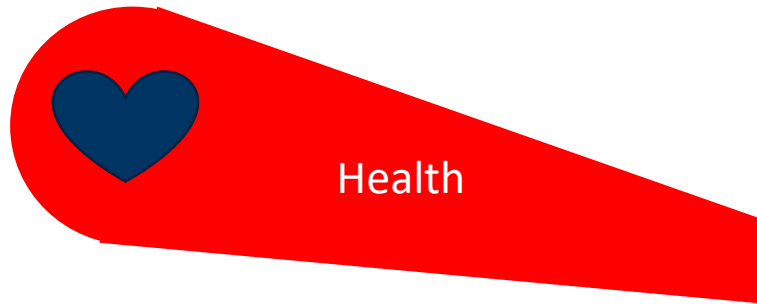
Student home and learning situations changed dramatically in 2020, and schools have responded with renewed focus on educating the whole child.

- **Online learning is now the primary instructional modality.**
- **Students with disadvantages experience heightened barriers to learning.**
- **More students are experiencing out-of-school time and gaps in learning.**
- **Parents are concerned about food sourcing.**
- **More families are receiving federal support, due to unemployment or underemployment.**



# Educating the ‘whole child’

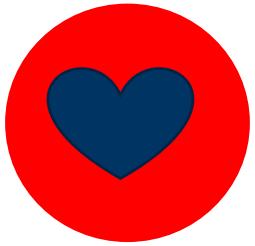
Addressing the developmental needs of the whole child is essential now. But what does educating the “whole child” mean?



American Institutes for Research  
Learning Policy Institute  
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Turnaround for Children  
National Research Academies  
Mind, Brain and Education at Harvard

# Educating the whole child: Student health

School, working in partnership with other agencies, support student physical and mental health.



Health: Each student enters school physically healthy and supported, and schools work in partnership with families and agencies to develop students' healthy habits and lifestyles.

## What's included:

- Nutritional health and care
- Mental health and care
- Social supports and care (caring adults and family)

## What it means for schools:

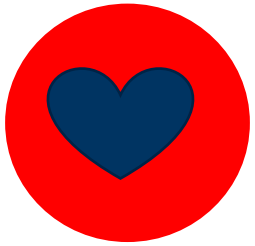
- Strong school culture focused on student care
- Tight-knit and committed staff
- Personalized support and intervention
- Pre-elementary readiness
- Partnerships with community organizations
- Integrated service support and data

## What the research says:

- Healthy diet and behaviors associated with higher academic performance.
- Students with balanced diets perform better, academically.
- Student exercise is associated with better mental health.
- Student exposure to trauma affects performance, attendance and success.

# Educating the whole child: Student health

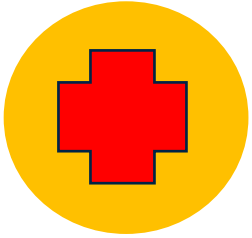
ASCD (2019) provides useful indicators for K-12 school activities supportive of student health.



- School culture supports and reinforces health and well-being of each child.
- Health curriculum addresses student mental, nutritional, physical, emotional, social dimensions.
- School schedules support and reinforce healthy life styles.
- School physical education program reinforces health and engagement, regardless of fitness.
- School formally addresses health and well-being of staff.
- School has formal partnerships with parents and community provides to support student health.
- School sets realistic goals for each students' health and development.
- School food service supports healthy nutritional choices.
- School revisits data on student health, stress, access to food, poverty by subgroup to match needs with services.

# Educating the whole child: Student safety

School, working in partnership with other agencies, support student physical and mental health.



**Safety:** Each student learns in an environment that is physically, emotionally safe for students and staff.

## **What's included:**

- Physical safety and freedom from threats
- Emotional safety and freedom from threats
- Supportive social network

## **What it means for schools:**

- School security plans
- Equitable disciplinary policies
- Establishing welcoming environment
- Social and emotional development and education
- Character education
- Restorative justice initiatives
- Partnerships for school safety
- Trauma informed education
- Counseling services

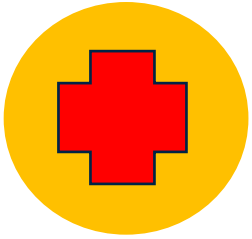
## **What the research says:**

- Students that have experienced trauma face attention, engagement, and advancement challenges.
- Explicit modeling of social-emotional competencies creates safe environments for learning.
- Strong, supportive school climate is associated with reduced anti-social behavior and bullying.
- Proactive and non-punitive disciplinary policies are associated with more positive student behaviors.

Sources: Klinger and Klinger, 2019; NCES, 2017; Gallup, 2017; Osher et al., 2010; Thapa, 2017; National Commission for Social, Emotional and Academic Learning, 2018

# Educating the whole child: Student safety

ASCD (2019) provides useful indicators for K-12 school activities supportive of student safety



- Schools can ensure grounds, buildings, vehicles are secure.
- School grounds allow for easy traffic flow by multiple modes of transportation.
- Schools are welcoming to all, regardless of background, experience or current context.
- Schools check that students and staff feel valued, recognized, supported, motivated.
- Schools maintain codes of conduct that are equitably enforced.
- School curriculum explicitly teaches self-reflection, self-regulation and social-emotional support strategies.
- School leaders and teachers set high expectations for all.
- School staff check personal and institutional biases regularly and ensure curricula are free of bias.

# Educating the whole child: Student academics

School, working in partnership with other agencies, support student physical and mental health.

Academics: Curriculum and instruction are the core of what schools do.



What's included:

- Student engagement
- Student proactive and responsive support
- Cognitively-challenging, personalized learning

What this means for schools:

- Equitable access to talented educators
- Availability of well-rounded academic program
- Focus on individual student development
- Setting high expectations for all
- Understanding learning processes
- Establishing learning contexts

## What the research says:

- Each student has potential to learn and thrive.
- Each student learns and develops differently.
- Learning is non-linear.
- Social, cultural and historical contexts influence academic learning.
- Learning is an integrative process.
- Learning that requires performance in authentic ways that are valued by students and adult is more engaging.





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