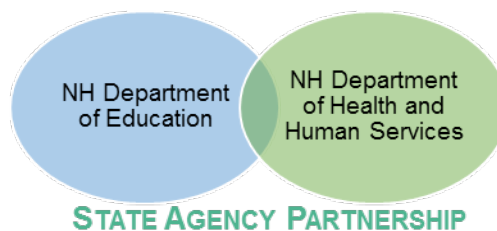




# New Hampshire Communities for Children: Safe Schools/Healthy Students

## BACKGROUND

In 2013, New Hampshire (NH) received its first Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) grant. Prior to SS/HS, school mental health (SMH) services and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) were available in only a small number of schools. With SS/HS funding, SMH supports and PBIS are beginning to scale up with greater training and integration offered at the state and local levels. The SS/HS Framework and statewide infrastructure have served as a foundation for successful grant proposals that are enhancing local and state efforts to support student safety and well-being.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Office of Student Wellness:** This newly founded NH Department of Education office represents a unifying infrastructure for related initiatives connected to student well-being. The office has successfully partnered with numerous agencies and community organizations as well as directly with students, families, and schools. The SS/HS Framework is a core foundation of the Office and is integrated into newly funded projects and activities. News, events, resources, mailing list information, and ways to get involved are all available at <http://www.nhstudentwellness.org/>.

## EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS

New Hampshire currently implements the following measures, practices, and programs as part of its SS/HS efforts:

- ✓ Ages and Stages Questionnaire
- ✓ Coping Cat
- ✓ PBIS
- ✓ Project SUCCESS
- ✓ RENEW
- ✓ Responsive Classrooms
- ✓ Too Good for Drugs
- ✓ Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- ✓ Youth Mental Health First Aid



- **Office of Student Wellness mobile app:** The app provides a centralized hub of information and training for NH school personnel, emergency first responders, and other adults who interact with students. App resources and events are intended to support whole-child development; mental and behavioral health, resilience, and cultural identity.
- **Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards:** To enhance cultural awareness across NH school districts and create a culture of inclusion, NH embedded National CLAS Standards within the foundation of public education. Learn more about their expertise at <https://vimeo.com/140684794>.
- **Professional Development (PD):** With an eye to sustainability and scalability, the Office of Student Wellness has developed a robust and comprehensive set of trainings and PD opportunities for educators, families, and community members. Topics include: Conversations on Culture & Diversity, Everyone is an Asset Builder, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) 101, Using PDSA Cycles in the School Setting, and Choosing a SEL Curriculum.
- **Student Wellness Toolkit:** Best practices and lessons learned from SS/HS are being packaged into this toolkit to guide NH school districts as they work to replicate similar programs in their communities.

NH SS/HS is committed to sustaining and/or expanding the following efforts:

- ✓ Office of Student Wellness
- ✓ Infrastructure and Guidance for Advancing SMH
- ✓ Early Childhood Screening and Early Intervention
- ✓ Family Resource Centers
- ✓ Substance Use Supports
- ✓ Workforce Development Capacity

## LOOKING DOWN THE ROAD

Statewide expansion efforts have enabled other NH districts to participate in state-of-the-art mental health and wellness training. The Office of Student Wellness has helped inform and shape local and state policy and has increased knowledge about and strategies and tools needed to advance multitiered systems of support (MTSS) at the local and state levels.

## Concord School District, New Hampshire

- **Family Resource Centers:** These centers help prepare families and children for a positive school experience by creating strong school connections. The centers have expanded to four Concord neighborhoods with higher rates of poverty and a large population of new American children and families. More than 180 families have been served.
- **Mindfulness in Schools:** In collaboration with the local mental health agency, Concord has piloted a Mindful Schools project that trains classroom teachers and students in mindfulness—64% of teachers felt mindfulness created an environment in which they could get at least 10 more minutes of instructional time; 18%, between 11 and 20 minutes; and 18%, between 21 and 30 minutes. More than 300 students have been served.
- **Universal Screening:** Concord has created a multigated screening process that enables students to be filtered through levels of assessment to identify those who need additional supports. The Universal Systematic Screening process effectively and efficiently assesses all students for level of concern, including nonresponsiveness to Tier 1 supports and at risk for disengagement or failure (academically or socially).

*“Friendships grow at Family Centers. You have to look at all these kids and families together. There’s a community being built.”*

*—Laurie Hart, Early Childhood Coordinator*

## Laconia School District, New Hampshire

- **PBIS and Discipline Outcomes:** Office discipline referrals have been significantly reduced as a result of district-wide, vertically aligned PBIS work. In Laconia High School, referrals during the first semester dropped from 1,606 in 2014 to 548 in 2015. Laconia Middle School referrals decreased from 12 to 16 per day in 2014 to 8 per day in 2015. At the elementary level, from 2014 to 2015, disciplinary referrals were cut in half.
- **School Mental Health:** Memorandums of understanding have been developed and significant collaboration has occurred, resulting in successful community-partnered SMH program implementation at the middle and high school levels.
- **Early Childhood:** Beginning with one public preschool program at Woodland Heights Elementary in 2013, Laconia now has a public early childhood program in all 3 elementary schools, serving more than 100 children as a result of the SS/HS grant. For sustainability, the district has moved to fully fund these programs through Title I and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*.

Up to a 50% reduction in disciplinary referrals in schools following PBIS implementation

*—in Laconia Schools*

## Rochester School District, New Hampshire (<https://sites.google.com/a/sau54.org/safeschools/>)

- **Online Resource Mapping:** Rochester has developed an easy-to-use, visually friendly, online resource directory for families to help them increase their knowledge of and access to school and community resources. A flyer was also created to facilitate the access for all families.
- **Substance Use Supports:** Rochester has used some SS/HS funds to develop and staff a licensed drug and alcohol counselor within its schools and has applied successfully for an additional student assistance program coordinator.
- **MTSS Leadership Team:** This district team created and manages a strategic plan of multisite training, coaches’ support, and online resources for effective implementation of the MTSS Framework in the 11 Rochester schools; 3,468 hours of training were provided to 663 participants (89% school district, 11% other partners).

*“Schools cannot do it alone! It does take a village and can start with one person at a time.”*

*—Michele Halligan-Foley*

*SS/HS Rochester Program Director*

Since the SS/HS grant began, more than 2,800 school-based staff members have participated in training sponsored by the Office of Student Wellness.