



School-based health care support toolkit:  
Assessing community specific issues  
and resources



One of the first steps in getting started with school-based health care is deciding what stakeholders should be involved in key decisions

**First, your school should decide on a point person to spearhead efforts**

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**Your point person can lead in building a diverse advisory council of school and community stakeholders that reflect the population of the school – this council could include:**

- School administrators
  - School board members
  - School staff
  - Students
  - Student families/PTA members
  - School health care providers
  - External health care providers
  - Public health officials
  - Community leaders (e.g. religious, business)
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**Advisory councils can play a major role in helping schools develop their programs and in advocating for their development, continuation and funding**

- They can be asked to review and endorse budgets, scope of services, hours of operation, health center policies, client satisfaction surveys, pay scales, staffing plans, community partnerships and advocacy efforts
  - It is suggested that each person serve a minimum two-year commitment with renewable option to encourage continuity and enhance committee functions
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**One key early role they will have is in helping complete the need and readiness assessments – see the following pages for guidance on completion**

The purpose of the need and readiness assessment is to help you align on the school-based health goals for your partnership

Categories of need



School academic and health needs



Community access to quality care

Categories of readiness



Understanding the provider landscape



Community interest in school-based health care



Existing and potential resources

The following materials contain the specific assessment questions partnerships should address as well as resources for answering those questions

# Need assessment

## Questions to define need

### School academic and health issues

- What are the health issues (e.g. physical, mental, behavioral) affecting students and families in our community?
- To what degree are health issues affecting the academic metrics that matter most to your school community?



### Community access to care

- What community health services exist that could help students in addressing their chief health issues?
- What are the key barriers that prevent students from using any existing or community health services (e.g. providers too far away, language)?
- For what health providers is students and community access the most limited and/or do students and community members see the least?



In completing the need assessment, your school should prioritize key goals that your school-based health model seeks to address

**Examples of impact from different school-based health goals**

**Health outcomes**

- Improved access to quality care
- Improved mental health outcomes
- Improved oral health outcomes
- Improved vaccination rate
- Improved vision outcomes
- Improved nutrition
- Reduced hospitalizations
- Improved family health outcomes

**Academic outcomes**

- Improved grades
- Improved test scores
- Increased classroom engagement
- Increased graduation rates

**Academic-related outcomes**

- Lower rate of student absenteeism
- Fewer disciplinary referrals
- Fewer students in restrictive classroom environments
- Reduced academic stress
- Improved community perception of school quality or safety
- Lower rate of teacher absenteeism

# Readiness assessment

## Questions to define readiness

### Understanding the provider landscape



- What types of care providers (e.g. School Nurse, school psychologist) currently support my school's students?
- What types of care providers are in my school's community as potential partners?
- What payment options do potential provider partners accept?

### Community interest in school-based health care



- Would students utilize the school-based health care services regularly?
- Are there populations beyond students (e.g. teachers, student families) that would utilize the services regularly?

### Existing and potential resources



- To what degree would we need to retrofit existing space or build new space to include our desired range of health interventions?
- Does our school have access to capital to make necessary building changes feasible?
- Does our school need to serve volume beyond students to make building economics work?
- Do we have a single person in mind to coordinate the effort?
- Does our school have access to existing community mobile health services?

# Types of data to help complete the need and readiness assessments

## **1 Utilize data you already have**

Much of the data needed (e.g. absenteeism, available space) to define your key needs and potential resources you already can easily access

## **2 Utilize publicly available data**

Existing public resources often have the data you need on topics like community health issues

## **3 Collect community data**

For data that does not currently exist (e.g. community interest in school-based health care) you can survey key stakeholders, adding questions to existing surveys where possible

# Needs assessment data resources

	Data source	Description/Use case
Utilize data you already have	Existing school-level data	Any data already tracked at the school level that corresponds to leading metrics, e.g. absentee rates
Utilize publicly available data	Head Start community assessment	Contact a <a href="#">local Head Start program</a> to identify the relevant county Head Start representative to access existing comprehensive community needs assessments. Head Start assessments provide comprehensive insight into a range of community needs beyond education
	<a href="#">Local Ohio Population Health Plans and Assessments</a>	County-level reports for hospitals and local health departments on the population's most significant health needs and plans and strategies to address those needs
	<a href="#">Ohio State Health Assessment</a>	State health assessment including 140+ metrics, data from regional forums, and a review of local health department and hospital assessments and plans. Includes <a href="#">community health profiles</a> and indicator toolkits for <a href="#">mental health and addiction</a> and <a href="#">chronic disease</a>
	<a href="#">County Health Rankings</a>	Comparative county-level data on outcomes and factors that drive health (e.g. health behaviors, clinical care, socioeconomic and environmental factors)
	<a href="#">Ohio KIDS COUNT</a>	State and county-level health and education outcomes, e.g. reading achievement, healthcare coverage, children receiving developmental screenings
	<a href="#">Health Professional Shortage Area database</a>	Identifies geographic areas, populations, and facilities with shortages of primary care, dental care, or mental health providers
	<a href="#">Northwest Ohio Community Health Assessments</a>	The Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio works with local hospitals, health departments and other partners to conduct community health assessments and community health improvement plans in more than 40 counties in Ohio
Collect community data	<a href="#">School health profiles</a>	Measure school health policies and practices to help education and health agencies monitor and assess characteristics of and trends in school-based health services
	Conduct new surveys <sup>1</sup>	Include student health surveys directed towards audiences of families and teachers/staff to help you understand how student health issues have affected academic outcomes or interviews, town halls and focus groups with stakeholders that reflect the community

<sup>1</sup> Template surveys in this section's appendix