

Ohio's Whole Child Framework

Executive Summary

Supporting the Whole Child

Ohio's strategic plan for education, [Each Child. Our Future](#), puts the whole child at the center, where each component of the plan works harmoniously to support a whole-child approach. Likewise, *Ohio's Whole Child Framework* also places the whole child at the center, with district, school, family and community supporting the needs of the whole child using a comprehensive approach. A whole child approach broadens district and school focus beyond academics to include meeting students social-emotional, physical and safety needs. The *Whole Child Framework* provides a blueprint to meet these whole child needs which are foundational to a child's intellectual and social development and necessary for students to fully engage in learning and school.



The Five Tenets of Ohio's Whole Child Framework

The five tenets of Ohio's Whole Child Framework are five commonly held beliefs reflecting optimally desired student conditions leading to success in life and learning. In the infographic, the tenets are shown in green surrounding the star that represents the whole child. These tenets recognize that students' basic physiological and psychological needs must be met before they can fully engage in complex learning and social activities. *When students are **healthy**, feel **safe**, are **supported** through strong systems and relationships, are **challenged** and experience success, and **engaged** in learning that is relevant and meaningful, they are more likely to enjoy learning, develop positive social skills and achieve greater success.* Each tenet is amplified by multiple indicators that define goals and outcomes which can be shared and discussed with staff, parents and community members to create a common understanding and vision for supporting the needs of the whole child.

Systemic Practices for Learning and Health

Students thrive in schools and districts committed to aligning their work with the needs of the populations they serve through a thoughtful, systemic approach. To best coordinate resources, districts should **coordinate policy, processes and practices, practice cultural responsiveness**, deliberately focus on **equity** and dedicate time and resources to structured **continuous improvement**. These practices are shown in the infographic in a white band. They represent systemic approaches that districts and schools employ to strengthen the tenets and support students and families.

Components of School and Health Support Systems

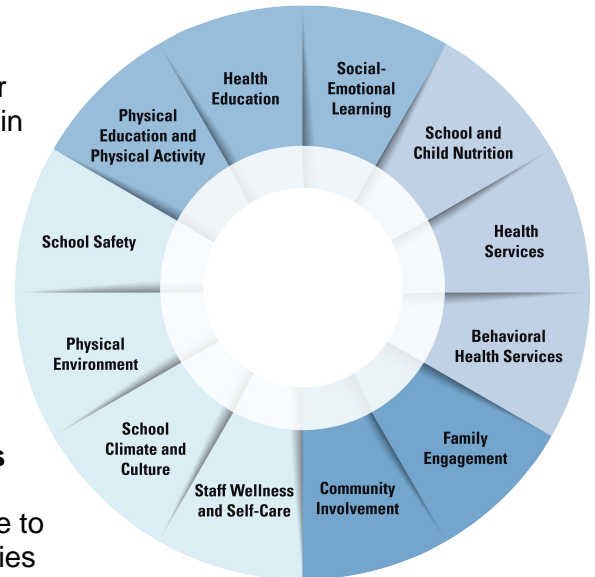
The components of school and health support systems are clustered into four categories shown as segments in various shades of blue in the infographic.

Healthy Behaviors: Supporting healthy behaviors give students knowledge and skills to make decisions that positively impact their health and social-emotional well-being. Schools engage students in **health education, physical education and social-emotional lessons** and activities from prekindergarten through high school.

Services to Students and Families: Schools provide **services** to meet students' **nutrition and physical and behavioral health needs**. Services are tiered and support the needs of individual students and the student body as a whole.

Engaging Others: Students benefit from knowing they are surrounded by caring adults in school, at home and within the community at large. **Schools engage families and communities** to best align efforts to support students' needs. Schools create systematic and multiple ways for families to engage and contribute to their children's education and school. Schools, students and families benefit when leaders and staff at the district or school solicit and coordinate information, resources and services available from community-based organizations, businesses, cultural and civic organizations, social services agencies, faith-based organizations, health clinics, and colleges and universities.

Safe and Supportive School Environments: Students learn best and thrive in safe and supportive learning environments. The components of a safe and supportive learning environment include creating a positive **school climate and culture**, addressing students' **emotional and physical safety** and ensuring the school's **physical environment** and grounds are safe. Promoting and supporting **staff wellness and self-care** is also an important component to help ensure student's academic success and overall wellbeing.



Family and Community Partnerships

Challenging, preparing and empowering students is a communitywide effort. Partners represent the collective action needed to support each child and increase the likelihood of student success. Everyone, not just those in schools, shares the responsibility of preparing children for a successful future. Addressing the needs of each child starts with **parents and caregivers** (represented by the maroon circle) and extends to schools and other government and **community partners** that serve children (represented by the gold band).

