

About Legislation for Mental Health in Schools

In October, the Education Commission of the States (EDC) sent out a policy snapshot entitled: *Student Mental Health: What is the Issue and Why Does it Matter?* (<https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Student-Mental-Health.pdf>).

While we are appreciative of the attention that EDC brings to legislative matters related to factors interfering with learning and teaching, it is important to emphasize that the way state legislators currently address the matter of student mental health is in itself a problem.

The problem is that legislators tend to approach this facet of school improvement in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner which contributes to the ongoing marginalization and fragmentation of efforts to address behavior, emotional, and learning problem at schools.

As our analyses indicate, policy efforts related to mental health in schools need to be embedded into a more unified, comprehensive and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

For more on this, see our Center report on:

How Well Do State Legislatures Focus on Improving School Efforts to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching & Re-engage Disconnected Students?

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Legisanal.pdf>)

Let us know if you need additional information.