

## **Yet another initiative meant to enhance *Mental Health in Schools*: It needs some more thought**

The Jed Foundation (JED) and AASA have announced a multi-year partnership initiative to develop and deploy a comprehensive approach to mental health and suicide prevention for school districts.

<https://jedfoundation.org/jed-and-aasa-form-exclusive-partnership-to-develop-comprehensive-approach-to-youth-mental-health-and-suicide-prevention-for-districts-nationwide/>

As always, we never argue against efforts to improve mental health in schools.

What we do emphasize is that another ad hoc and piecemeal initiative isn't the way to go.

As JED and AASA move forward, they need to consider that (a) the *District Comprehensive Approach framework* they have adopted is not comprehensive enough, and (b) such an initiative cannot generate the fundamental changes needed in the way student and learning supports are conceived and structured. Indeed, when new initiatives aren't conceived in ways that help districts and schools rethink student and learning supports, they can exacerbate what is a fragmented and marginalized state of affairs.

To understand why this is the case, and what needs to be done to fully embed mental health into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports, see

>*Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*

<https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/mh20a.pdf>

>*Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions*

<https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefguide.pdf>

As always, send all comments and questions, as well as requests for resources, TA, and coaching to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu) .

