

About the Student Mental Health Crisis

In the context of all the discussion about the Student Mental Health Crisis, did the headline “Schools' student-to-counselor ratio improves” strike you in the way it did us?

The American School Counselor Association recommends an average student-to-counselor ratio of 250:1. The highlighted “improvement” was a move from a ratio of 415:1 in 2020-21 to 408:1 in the 2021-22.

And, of course, counselors are just one part of the picture when discussing student/learning supports.

The reality is that sparse district budgets make it unlikely that schools will ever be able to afford hiring all the student support professionals advocates say are needed in order for schools to play their role in addressing current mental health concerns.

After the influx of relief funds, school budgets again are tight, and there is no indication that funding will increase.

We continue to be concerned that advocacy just for more and more student support professionals tends to work against efforts to rethink how schools use the student/learning supports they have. (See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/news.htm>)

What do you recommend beyond hiring more personnel?

We look forward to hearing from you. Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Best wishes for the year ahead; be well,

Howard & Linda

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