

Illinois K-2 Workgroup Indicator Discussion Guide Access to Wraparound Resources and Supports

October 2017

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Indicator Summary

Educational success is not determined by academics alone. Students are more likely to thrive academically when they are healthy, safe, and well-supported across all areas of their lives. Examples of resources and supports that are associated with higher levels of student achievement include health, dental, nutrition, and counseling services for students, as well as employment and housing supports for families.¹ Ensuring access to these kinds of resources has the potential to enable better classroom outcomes by allowing both students and teachers to focus on instruction, and can improve an array of outcomes in communities as a whole.² Specialized resource models centered on schools have seen growing attention and rigorous evaluation in recent years, under terms such as wraparound supports, integrated student supports, community schools, and promise neighborhoods.³

Young children, especially young children who live in poverty or have experienced trauma, will benefit particularly from wraparound supports, while they are learning and growing faster than at any other time in their school years.⁴ One of the oldest and most successful whole child/whole family wraparound support models is Head Start.⁵

There are some reasons for caution on using resources and wraparound supports in statewide accountability systems. Effective resources and supports must be responsive to the needs of students and the community. There is not a one-size-fits-all model for staffing and providing social services. For example, a school in a high-poverty neighborhood might have a high proportion of in-school health providers and case workers, but those resources may still not be enough to meet the community’s needs. Additionally, in-school staffing might not be fully indicative of supports. Several successful examples of wraparound models are community partnerships or centralized at the district level. Finally, improved health, nutrition, and community outcomes are worthwhile goals; however, the evidence of direct academic benefits is sometimes mixed and difficult to measure.⁶

Measurement Options and ESSA Alignment

Wraparound supports encompass many dimensions of health, wellness, and community supports, and as mentioned above, successful models can vary in their specific areas of focus and their staffing approaches. One of the most common proposed proxy measures for access to resources is school staffing ratios for resource staff. Key measures might include student-counselor ratios, student-paraprofessional ratios, student-nurse ratios, and/or student-social service provider ratios.⁷ To be more equitable, these ratios and resources could also be considered in combination with school funding factors and student/community needs, to form a needs-to-support ratio.

- **Valid and Reliable:** Likely not.
 - As discussed above, while access to resources can be important and beneficial, school staffing ratios are may not capture students' opportunity to learn or the quality of resources, both because they do not account for relative needs in the school community, and because they exclude alternative models for student support.
 - Additionally, similar to the challenges in student-teacher ratios as an accountability metric, this might be better suited to "reciprocal accountability" for a state or district than for a school, because schools often cannot control their staffing or resources.⁸
- **Meaningfully Differentiated:** Unknown.
 - Further analysis is needed on specialized staffing ratios in Illinois schools.
- **Comparable:** Maybe.
 - This indicator would be strictly comparable as an indicator of in-school staffing, but it may not be comparable as an indicator of access to resources with regard to student needs.
- **Reportable Annually and By Subgroup:** No
 - Because most integrated support services and resources are experienced schoolwide, access to resources by subgroup would be identical to the student population.
- **Additional Considerations:** There are alternative ways in which Illinois could encourage wraparound resources and community school models in the context of ESSA. The state could report more data on staffing ratios and resources without high stakes initially.⁹ They could favor community school models as an intervention in struggling schools, or give schools and districts technical assistance, guidance, and extra funding to do design a wraparound approach that would be responsive to the needs of their schools. Illinois could also form stronger connections and create cohesive data systems with other state agencies so schools can see when their students are enrolled in other social services, or refer students and families more seamlessly to existing community services.

Examples from Other States

Very few states propose a resource-based measure in their school quality ratings. One exception is Kentucky, which proposed a menu of "whole child supports," including various staffing ratios and opportunities to learn. This plan has not yet been approved by the Department of Education. More states plan to report specialized staffing ratios in their school report cards or data dashboards, so parents can be aware of these supports, and to emphasize their importance. For example, Massachusetts and New York both plan to include an array of resource and input metrics in their school and district report cards, but will not use these measures to rate schools in the immediate future.

Pros/Cons of Using This Indicator in K-2 Accountability Ratings

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasizes the importance of K-2 wraparound resources. • Growing base of evidence and broad consensus that wraparound support models can positively impact students and families. • Could encourage schools to take a “whole child/whole family” approach that would be particularly beneficial in the early grades, and reflect developmental best practice. • Staffing data easily collected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing ratios do not capture needs, or alternative resource models. • Not clearly actionable at the school level without extensive additional resources from district or state. • Mixed evidence as to direct academic impact • Would not meet ESSA validity and reporting standards • Can be encouraged via other state policies

¹ Kristin Anderson Moore and Carol Emig, “Integrated Student Supports: A Summary of the Evidence Base for Policymakers,” Child Trends, 2014, <https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2014-05ISSWhitePaper1.pdf>; Center for Disease Control, “Research Brief: Chronic Health Conditions and Academic Achievement,” 2017, https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/chronic_conditions/pdfs/2017_02_15-CHC-and-Academic-Achievement_Final_508.pdf.

² Jeannie Oake, Anna Maier, and Julia Daniel “Community Schools: An Evidence Based Strategy for Equitable School Improvement,” Learning Policy Institute and National Education Policy Center, 2017, https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Community_Schools_Evidence_Based_Strategy_BRIEF.pdf.

³ Reuben Jacobsen, “Community Schools: A Place-Based Approach to Education and Neighborhood Change,” Brookings Institution, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/jacobson-final-layout-published-11-16-16.pdf>.

⁴ Kristin Anderson Moore, et. al., “Integrated Student Supports: Assessing the Evidence,” Child Trends, 2014, <https://childtrends-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2014-07ISSPaper2.pdf>.

⁵ The Coalition for Community Schools, “Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools,” 2003, <http://www.communityschools.org/assets/1/Page/CCSFullReport.pdf>; Melissa Dahlin, “The resources, policies, and processes it takes to ensure equitable access to high quality programs for all children, birth to third grade,” CEELO, <http://ceelo.org/selected-resources/systems/>.

⁶ Matt Barnum, “Community Schools are expanding –but are they working? New study shows mixed results,” Chalkbeat, May 12, 2017, <https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/us/2017/05/12/community-schools-are-expanding-but-are-they-working-new-study-shows-mixed-results/>.

⁷ Illinois Federation of Teachers, Chicago Teachers Union, “Comments on Illinois ESSA State Plan Second Draft,” Delivered to State Superintendent Tony Smith, December 27, 2016, <https://www.ift-aft.org/docs/default-source/Legislative/ESSA/ctu-ift-essa-comments.pdf?sfvrsn=0>.

⁸ Linda Darling-Hammond, Soung Bae, Channa M. Cook-Harvey, Livia Lam, Charmaine Mercer, Anne Podolsky, and Elizabeth Leisy Stosich, “Pathways to New Accountability Through the Every Student Succeeds Act,” Learning Policy Institute, April 2016, https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Pathways_New-Accountability_Through_Every_Student_Succeeds_Act_04202016.pdf.

⁹ CCSSO, Learning Policy Institute, Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, “Exploring Multiple Measures Dashboards,” Webinar presentation, May 2, 2016, [http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/MMD%20Webinar%201%20\(05-01-16\).pdf](http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/MMD%20Webinar%201%20(05-01-16).pdf).