

Healthy Students, Promising Futures

Learning Collaborative

The Healthy Students, Promising Futures Learning Collaborative (the learning collaborative), in partnership with Healthy Schools Campaign and Trust for America's Health, was launched in July 2016 to support states in expanding Medicaid services in schools, including physical and behavioral health services. It was established with support from the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services out of the growing recognition that healthy students are better learners, and that delivering health services in schools is a key strategy for improving access to quality health care for underserved children.

The learning collaborative is currently comprised of 14 teams from California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington. To participate, state teams must include representatives of state Departments of Education, state Medicaid agencies and at least two school districts, and may also include advocacy groups and other allies. Any state that wishes to make a commitment to improving student health and is able to identify the right participants may join the collaborative at any time.

Each participating state team's work is guided by the vision and strategy they develop to improve student health in their state. The learning collaborative supports this work by helping state teams develop and implement their state vision and build strategies to scale up school-based and school-linked Medicaid services, including:

- Identifying and assessing the options for delivering health services in schools (school nurses, partnerships with providers such as hospitals, health centers, school-based health centers, mobile health, telehealth).
- Addressing barriers and leveraging new opportunities, including those found in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) change in the free care policy.
- Connecting with technical assistance on delivery models, Medicaid reimbursement and policy opportunities from federal policymakers and national and state organizations.
- Assessing opportunities for innovative partnerships.

The learning collaborative supports state teams through strategic advice, technical assistance, regular communication, monthly newsletters and timely webinars. In addition, the learning collaborative holds two in-person meetings a year to facilitate cross state conversation and brainstorming. State teams also benefit from the robust participation of other national advocacy organizations and trade groups who provide technical assistance and support.

In addition, the learning collaborative facilitates the sharing of best and emerging practices for expanding access to Medicaid services in schools. Through discussion, feedback and concrete case studies, states learn about the successes of their peers and how they overcame implementation challenges. Recent conversations have focused on topics such as:

- Integrating new delivery models such as school nurses and other specialized instructional support personnel, telehealth and mobile health services.
- Building and expanding relationships with providers such as hospitals, health centers, and school-based centers and with payors such as managed care plans.
- Expanding data collection and data sharing while maintaining student confidentiality.
- Serving specific student populations or students with high health care needs that impact learning.

More than 150 individuals are currently participating in the learning collaborative and working to support increased access to school health services.