

## National Overview

We examined the extent to which the 11 healthy schools domains are addressed in state policy. These domains include the 10 components of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model: Health Education; Physical Education and Physical Activity; Nutrition Environment and Services; Health Services; Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services; Social and Emotional Climate; Physical Environment; Employee Wellness; Family Engagement; and Community Involvement. An additional domain, WSCC References, addresses the extent to which laws include explicit references to the WSCC model or similar language, such as Coordinated School Health.

We assessed how broadly state policies cover the WSCC framework by measuring how comprehensively each state addresses each domain. For each domain (e.g., Health Services), we measured the percentage of related topics (e.g., health screenings, school-based health services, vaccinations) addressed within a state's policies. We then assigned the state's domain to one of four categories based on the percentage of topics addressed: none (no topic areas addressed), low (less than a third addressed), moderate (less than two-thirds addressed), or high (more than two-thirds addressed). This assessment does not speak to the prescriptiveness of state laws; laws that include mandates or merely encourage a focus on a domain's topic areas counted equally toward the measure of the domain's comprehensiveness.

States were then rated on the breadth and depth of their coverage of all ten domains: deep (6 or more comprehensive domains), broad (8 or more moderate or comprehensive domains), limited (between 3 to 5 low domains), or weak (more than 6 low domains).

### How broadly do states cover the WSCC framework?

State law coverage of the WSCC framework ranged from limited to deep (see map, above).

- **Ten states have deep coverage of the WSCC by addressing at least six domains in a comprehensive manner.** These states not only touch upon each of the WSCC components but also thoroughly cover each component's topics. These states include Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia.
- **Twenty states and the District of Columbia have broad coverage of the WSCC.** Although these states cover most components of the WSCC, some topic areas are not thoroughly addressed. For example, Pennsylvania moderately or comprehensively addresses all components except Nutrition Environment and Services (low) and Employee Wellness (none).

**Figure 1. Coverage of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Framework, by state**  
National overview of policies promoting health in schools, by state



This map shows states that have [◊] **deep** (10), [△] **broad** (21), [□] **limited** (18), [○] and **weak** (2) coverage of the ten Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child domains in statutes and regulations governing education.

- **Eighteen states have limited coverage of the WSCC.** These states may address any given WSCC domain, but do not address other domains. For example, Arizona comprehensively addresses both the Community Involvement domain and the Physical Environment domain but does not cover Employee Wellness and has low comprehensiveness for the Health Education; Nutrition Environment and Services; and Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services components.
- **Two states' laws have weak coverage of the WSCC framework, with six or more categories rated as none or low.** North Dakota and South Dakota do not cover or have low comprehensiveness in eight of the 10 components.
- **There were no distinct geographic patterns associated with coverage of the WSCC-related domains, but neighboring states' laws were often classified similarly across the WSCC domains.** For example, the Pacific Coast region (Washington, Oregon, California, and Nevada) has broad coverage, while states in the Rocky Mountain region (Idaho, Montana, Utah, Arizona, Wyoming) tend to have more limited coverage.

**Table 1. Average Comprehensiveness of WSCC Components**

Domain (# of Constructs Coded)	Average % (# of Constructs Coded Per State)
Health Education (18)	68% (12)
Physical Education and Physical Activity (12)	44% (5)
Nutrition Environment and Services (14)	25% (4)
Health Services (16)	76% (12)
Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services (10)	69% (7)
Social and Emotional Climate (20)	65% (13)
Physical Environment (18)	74% (13)
Employee Wellness (8)	7% (1)
Parent Engagement (9)	52% (5)
Community Involvement (5)	67% (3)

### What opportunities exist for states to address WSCC in their state laws?

- **State laws addressed considerably fewer topics related to school nutrition environments and physical activity/physical education than in prior analyses of state laws.** Although there has been considerable focus over the past 12 years on issues related to these domains at the federal, state, and local levels,<sup>1,2,3</sup> this analysis explored recent and emerging topics. These topics included restrictions on junk food marketing in schools, reducing stigma associated with unpaid meal charges, and restrictions or prohibitions on fees for participation in sports programming.
- **Employee wellness seems to have garnered limited attention in state law.** In fact, on average, state laws only addressed one of the eight topics examined within the Employee Wellness domain. (See the Employee Wellness sub-brief).
- **Topics related to children's social and emotional well-being, their physical and mental health and knowledge, and parent/community engagement are predominant in the states' laws.** Although these areas of the WSCC framework indicate heavier coverage comparatively, opportunities for new and cross-cutting initiatives exist within each domain.

<sup>1</sup> National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for all Foods Sold in School as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Final Rule, (2016). 81 *Federal Register* 50132. Retrieved from <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-07-29/pdf/2016-17227.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Piekarz-Porter E, Chriqui JF, Schermbeck RM, Leider J, Lin W. The Active Role States Have Played in Helping to Transform the School Wellness Environment through Policy, School Years 2006-07 through 2014-15. Chicago, IL: Bridging the Gap Program and the National Wellness Policy Study, Institute for Health Research and Policy, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2017, [www.go.uic.edu/NWPSproducts](http://www.go.uic.edu/NWPSproducts).

<sup>3</sup> Local School Wellness Policy Implementation Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, Final Rule, (2016). 81 *Federal Register* 50151. Retrieved from <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-07-29/pdf/2016-17230.pdf>