



**Indiana**  
**Department**  
**of**  
**Health**

# Governor's Public Health Commission

Draft Childhood & Adolescent Health  
Integration Proposed Recommendations

Dr. Maria Finnell

May 19, 2022

# Overall Goals

---

- Improve student learning by mitigating health barriers
- Enhance early childhood education and school-based health education, prevention, and wellness activities
- Improve access to child and adolescent health care
- Reduce childhood injuries

# Draft Recommendations

---

1. Increase the availability of school nurses
2. Increase access to services to support whole child wellness
3. Support evidenced-based health education and physical activity in schools and early childhood education settings
4. Support access to health screening and services that can be appropriately delivered in school and early childhood education settings
5. Reinforce meaningful implementation of school wellness policies
6. Support the development of school-based health centers
7. Inform the provider community on public health initiatives
8. Address childhood injury and violence prevention

# Improve student learning by mitigating health barriers

---

## Draft Recommendation 1.

### Increase the availability of school nurses

Potential action items:

- A. Establish a dedicated funding mechanism for school nurses.
- B. Implement policies to support school nurse recruitment and retention, such as addressing low pay and incentivizing school nurse credentialing.

# Improve student learning by mitigating health barriers

---

## Draft Recommendation 2.

### Increase access to services\* to support whole child wellness

Potential action items:

- A. Implement policies to reduce the school counselor, social worker, and psychologist to student ratio.
- B. Consider a dedicated funding mechanism for these personnel.

# Enhance early childhood education and school-based health education, prevention, and wellness activities

---

## Draft Recommendation 3.

### Support evidenced-based health education and physical activity in schools and early childhood education settings

Potential action items:

- A. Make evidence-based curricula on health matters available for schools and early childhood education settings to access.
- B. Provide technical assistance in implementing curricula.
- C. Support schools and early childhood education settings in identifying opportunities to increase physical activity during the school day.

# Enhance early childhood education and school-based health education, prevention, and wellness activities

---

## Draft Recommendation 4.

Support access to health screening and services that can be appropriately delivered in school and early childhood education settings

Potential action items:

- A. Make best practices resources available for schools and early childhood education settings to access.
- B. Convene a representative workgroup comprised of schools, community-based organizations, clinicians, and public health leadership to identify best-practices.
- C. Support policies to increase the availability of nutritious meals in schools and early childhood education settings.

# Enhance early childhood education and school-based health education, prevention, and wellness activities

---

## Draft Recommendation 5.

### Reinforce meaningful implementation of school wellness policies

Potential action items:

- A. Fund and leverage DOH, DOE, and community partners to collaborate with school districts regarding the benefits of evidence-based wellness policies.
- B. Fund direct technical assistance to implement evidence-based school wellness policies.
- C. Incentivize school districts to prioritize wellness policy via school grant processes.

# Improve access to child and adolescent health care

---

## Draft Recommendation 6.

### Support the development of school-based health centers (SBHCs)

Potential action items:

- A. Provide technical assistance to school systems interested in developing a SBHC.
- B. Leverage best practices from established SBHCs and in compliance with parental consent requirements.

# Improve access to child and adolescent health care

---

## Draft Recommendation 7.

### Inform the provider community on public health initiatives

Potential action items:

- A. Develop technical assistance framework for Indiana health care providers on public health best practices and available resources.
- B. Increase provider awareness of public health initiatives, opportunities, and requirements.
- C. Address practice variance across the state on public health matters.

# Reduce childhood injuries

---

## Draft Recommendation 8.

### Address childhood injury and violence prevention

Potential action items:

- A. Establish an inter-professional coalition of experts focused on keeping youth safe from unintentional firearm deaths and suicide.
- B. Fund and leverage DOH to develop policies to address safety issues and increase equitable access to safety equipment shown to significantly decrease child injuries (such as bike helmets, cabinet locks, and stair gates).