



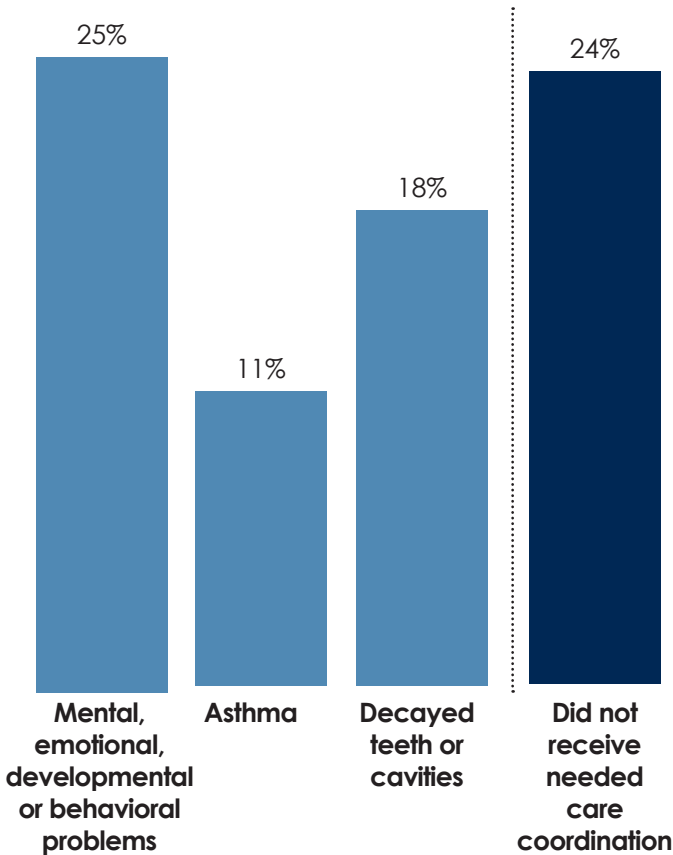
# Health Policy Fact Sheet

## K-12 student wellness and health equity

### Why is K-12 student wellness important?

Students with untreated physical or mental health conditions often struggle academically and are more likely to be absent from school than their healthier peers.<sup>1</sup> Many Ohio children experience serious health issues, including depression, asthma, tooth decay and trouble accessing care.<sup>2</sup> Research has shown that schools can positively impact academic success and educational attainment through student wellness and health improvement efforts, such as school-based health care, drug and violence prevention and social-emotional learning programs.<sup>3</sup>

### Common health issues among school-age children in Ohio, 2018-2019



Source: National Survey of Children's Health, Health Resources and Services Administration

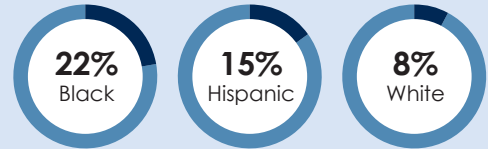
### How does K-12 student wellness affect health equity?

K-12 student wellness can improve educational attainment and close troubling gaps in outcomes for Ohio children who are at the greatest risk for experiencing poor health. This includes closing gaps in:

#### Absenteeism

Nearly one quarter of Black children in Ohio (22%) were chronically absent during the 2019-2020 school year, compared to 8% of white children in Ohio.<sup>4</sup>

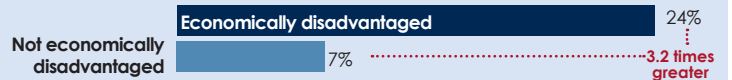
#### Chronic absenteeism, Ohio, 2019-2020 school year



#### High school graduation

The percent of high school students in Ohio who did not graduate in four years was 3.2 times higher for students with low incomes compared to peers with higher incomes.<sup>5</sup>

#### Percent who do not graduate high school in four years, Ohio, 2018-2019 school year



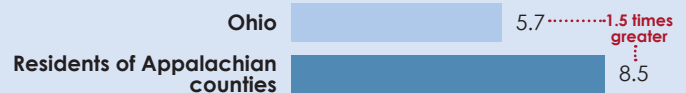
#### Care coordination

Among children in Ohio with special healthcare needs who needed care coordination, 41% did not receive needed care coordination in 2018-2019.<sup>6</sup>

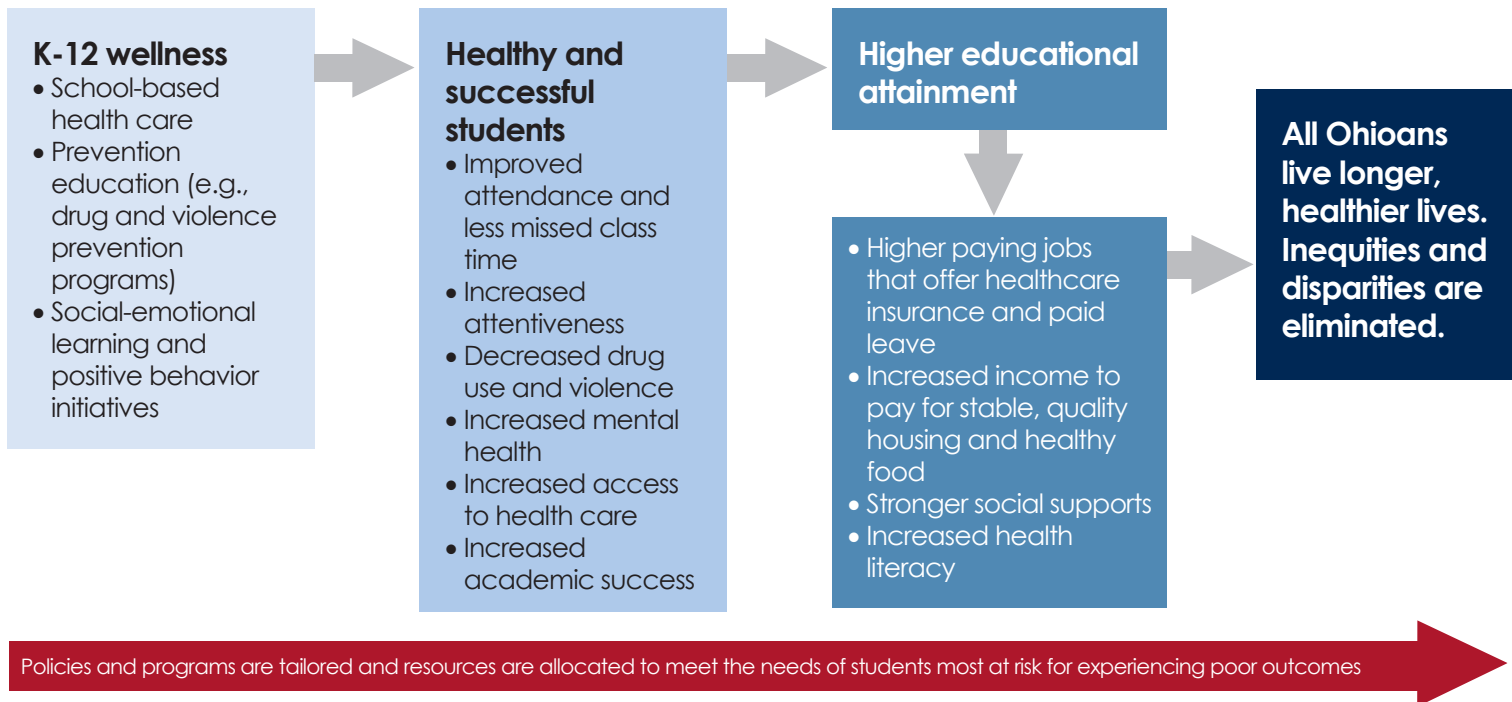


#### Suicide

The suicide rate for youth, ages 8-17, in Appalachian counties in Ohio was 1.5 times higher than the overall youth suicide rate in 2018.<sup>7</sup>



# What is the relationship between K-12 student wellness and health?



## How can state policymakers strengthen K-12 student wellness?

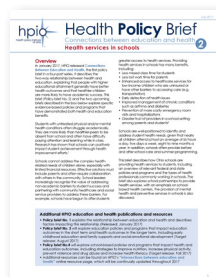
To advance equitable health and education outcomes for all of Ohio's children, Ohio policymakers can strengthen evidence-informed K-12 student wellness by fully implementing recommendations in existing state plans and resources:



**COVID-19 Ohio Minority Health Strike Force Blueprint**  
Ohio Governor's Office



**2020-2022 State Health Improvement Plan**  
Ohio Department of Health



**Connections between education and health: Health services in schools**  
HPIO



**Connections between education and health: School-based drug and violence prevention and mental health promotion**  
HPIO



**Ohio Health Education Model Curriculum project overview**  
Ohio Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance

### Notes

1. Health Policy Institute of Ohio. "Connections between Education and Health No. 2: Health Services in Schools," July 2017.
2. Data from 2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health. "Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health: NSCH Interactive Data Query (2016 – Present)." Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Johns Hopkins University. Accessed March 18, 2021. <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey>
3. Health is vital for student success: An overview of relevant research. Denver, CO: The Colorado Education Initiative, 2015. <http://www.coloradoeducationinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MakingtheCaseFF.pdf>
4. Data provided by the Ohio Department of Education upon request. Provided Feb. 25, 2021
5. Data provided by Ohio Department of Education. Compiled by Health Policy Institute of Ohio. 2021 *Health Value Dashboard*. April 2021.
6. Data from 2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health. "Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health: NSCH Interactive Data Query (2016 – Present)." Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Johns Hopkins University. Accessed March 18, 2021. <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey>
7. 2020-2022 State Health Improvement Plan. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio Department of Health, 2020. <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/about-us/sha-ship>