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## WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION AND INTEGRATED SUPPORT SYSTEMS

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## ABSTRACT

The U.S. education system is in need of a new approach to education—one that addresses the multidimensional aspects of a child’s ability to learn. The science of learning and development proves that adversity, like chronic food insecurity, creates cognitive impairments that impact academic achievement. The effects of adversity on academics can be reversed, however, when education systems connect children and families to services that improve their life circumstances. Unfortunately, this knowledge is largely underutilized, and education systems remain disconnected from social service agencies. This Article proposes that children are in need of an integrated support system that weaves education together with social services to improve physical, mental, and academic outcomes. It describes the policies and practices necessary to create effective integrated support systems at scale and takes a deep dive into three of the most successful examples in the country.

## INTRODUCTION

Though the United States is among the world’s most developed nations, many of its children face adversity. A lack of basic necessities—like food or housing—are among the most obvious examples, but adversity can come in many forms.<sup>1</sup> For instance, mental health conditions considerably impact a child’s well-being, particularly when left untreated.<sup>2</sup> Environmental factors, such as rural disconnectedness or urban neighborhood violence, cause everyday stress.<sup>3</sup> A child may experience adversity due to identity-based discrimination or alienation.<sup>4</sup> And familial hardships, like parental substance abuse or terminal illness, often result in trauma and placement in foster care.<sup>5</sup>

Adverse childhood experiences are more pervasive than one might think. In the United States, twenty-five percent of families face food insecurity and over

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<sup>1</sup> LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR SCHOOLS: PUTTING THE SCIENCE OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT INTO ACTION v (2021), [https://5bde8401-9b54-4c2c-8a0c-569fc1789664.filesusr.com/ugd/eb0b6a\\_38d9ed572e634257855b13069b3bad4d.pdf](https://5bde8401-9b54-4c2c-8a0c-569fc1789664.filesusr.com/ugd/eb0b6a_38d9ed572e634257855b13069b3bad4d.pdf) [https://perma.cc/8KC3-RHLH] [hereinafter DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES]; see CHARLES BRUNER ET AL., WHAT DOES RESEARCH SAY ABOUT INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION? 1 (1992), [http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/stw\\_esys/8agcycol/](http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/stw_esys/8agcycol/) [https://perma.cc/GTP2-ZT4X].

<sup>2</sup> See BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., WORKING PAPER: CALIFORNIA’S CHILDREN AND YOUTH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ECOSYSTEM 6 (2022), <https://www.chhs.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Ecosystem-Working-Paper--ADA.pdf> [https://perma.cc/S9S3-FEJY].

<sup>3</sup> Katherine P. Theall et al., *Association Between Neighborhood Violence and Biological Stress in Children*, 171 JAMA PEDIATR. 53, 54, 59 (2017), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5262476/pdf/nihms843220.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> HARVARD UNIVERSITY CENTER ON THE DEVELOPING CHILD, HOW RACISM CAN AFFECT CHILD DEVELOPMENT, <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/racism-and-ecd/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/B8KR-3UM4].

<sup>5</sup> See Dorothy Roberts, *Prison, Foster Care, and the Systemic Punishment of Black Mothers*, 59 UCLA L. REV. 1474, 1475, 1480 (2012).

one million children experience homelessness.<sup>6</sup> More than sixty percent of children are exposed to violence, crime, abuse, or psychological trauma each year.<sup>7</sup> With the rise in social media use, cyberbullying has grown exponentially.<sup>8</sup> Mental health is ranked first in causes of hospitalization for children aged 0–17 and suicide is ranked second in causes of death for youth aged 10–24.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, seventy percent of children in the juvenile criminal justice system have a diagnosable mental health disorder.<sup>10</sup>

In the last few decades, there has been an explosion of scientific research on how social circumstances affect learning and development.<sup>11</sup> The scientific findings confirmed what many already knew—academic learning is negatively impacted by adversity.<sup>12</sup> Research demonstrates that out-of-school factors explain a whopping two-thirds of the variation in student achievement.<sup>13</sup> Luckily, the science also draws optimistic conclusions: children’s brains are malleable and learning barriers caused by adversity can be reversed when children are connected to services that address their full range of needs.<sup>14</sup>

The scientific findings make clear that we are in need of a new approach to education—one that addresses the needs of the “whole child.” A whole child

<sup>6</sup> KASSANDRA MARTINCHEK ET AL., AS INFLATION SQUEEZED FAMILY BUDGETS, FOOD INSECURITY INCREASED BETWEEN 2021 AND 2022: FINDING FROM THE WELL-BEING AND BASIC NEEDS SURVEY 1, 2–4 (2023), <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/inflation-squeezed-family-budgets-food-insecurity-increased-between-2021-and-2022> [<https://perma.cc/SLB2-HK4U?type=image>]; NATIONAL CENTER FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION, STUDENT HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA: SCHOOL YEARS 2018–19 TO 2020–21, at 1 (2022), <https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Student-Homelessness-in-America-2022.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/CP6V-3BPU>].

<sup>7</sup> PRISCILLA M. LITTLE ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED SETTINGS: PUTTING THE SCIENCE OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT INTO ACTION 82 (2021) (citing TURNER D. FINKELHOR ET AL. CHILDREN’S EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE: A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL SURVEY, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2009), <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/227744.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/EV4K-XJSA>].

<sup>8</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 1; *see generally* Daisy Mui Hung Kee et al., *Cyberbullying on Social Media under the Influence of COVID-19*, 41 GLOBAL BUS. AND ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE 11 (2022).

<sup>9</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 6.

<sup>10</sup> RON POWELL ET AL., REALIZING ONE INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF CARE FOR CHILDREN 4 (2020), [https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/pb\\_powel\\_feb20.pdf](https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/pb_powel_feb20.pdf) [<https://perma.cc/JP8H-K4D5>].

<sup>11</sup> Pamela Cantor et al., *Malleability, Plasticity, and Individuality: How Children Learn and Develop in Context*, 23 APP. DEV. SCI. 307, 307 (2018).

<sup>12</sup> DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 113; Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 310.

<sup>13</sup> BOS. COLL. MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILD., THE WHOLE CHILD: BUILDING SYSTEMS OF INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORT DURING AND AFTER COVID-19, at 17, <https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/bc1/schools/lsoe/centers/city-connects/coss/pdfs-for-ctc/CTC%20Action%20Guide.pdf> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/FY4J-PFGS>] (citing Marieke Heers et al., *Community Schools Unfolded: What We Know and What We Need to Know about Their Effectiveness*, 86 REV. OF EDUC. RSCH. 1016 (2016)).

<sup>14</sup> Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 310.

education, an emerging term in education reform circles, draws from the science of learning and development to address the multidimensional aspects of a child's ability to learn.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, the education system is far removed from this ideal and the scientific knowledge remains largely underutilized.<sup>16</sup>

Views have fluctuated over the years on the education system's role in addressing broader social and economic inequities. For a period, education leaders heroically insisted that schools alone were capable of closing academic achievement gaps caused by adversity.<sup>17</sup> Later, some shifted to the position that the education system could not change outcomes for disadvantaged students until social and economic inequities were eliminated.<sup>18</sup> Today, many advocates have reached a reasoned middle ground: the education system must work together with other government entities to improve physical, mental, and academic outcomes.<sup>19</sup> This Article calls for an integrated support system that weaves education together with social service agencies to provide a comprehensive set of services to children and families in need.<sup>20</sup>

The Article proceeds as follows: Part I discusses the science of learning and development and explains how adversity impacts a child's ability to learn. Further, it describes the ways child-serving systems are currently disconnected from each other. Part II proposes that children need an integrated support system. Part II.A outlines the essential components of an integrated support system, like joint leadership and aligned funding. Part II.B then takes a deep dive into the leading examples of integrated support systems in the United States, exploring their legal infrastructure and operations.

## I. MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE WHOLE CHILD

Today's education system fails to meet the needs of the whole child. Until the education system addresses the multidimensional aspects of a child's ability to learn, social circumstances will continue to impede academic advancement.

<sup>15</sup> See *infra* Section I.A.

<sup>16</sup> Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 307.

<sup>17</sup> JEFFREY R. HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON LOCAL CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE EDUCATION 19 (2015), <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Putting-Collective-Impact-Into-Context.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/9F2K-85AK>] [hereinafter HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT].

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> See DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 111; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 20; BOS. COLL. MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILD., *supra* note 13, at 2 (citing KRISTEN A. MOORE & CAROL EMIG, CHILD TRENDS, INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORTS: A SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR POLICYMAKERS (2014)); NAT'L TECH. ASSISTANCE AND EVALUATION CENTER, A CLOSER LOOK: INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION 2 (2008), <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/interagency.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/Y5KP-WY2R>]; ASPEN INST., FROM A NATION AT RISK TO A NATION AT HOPE 56 (2018), [https://soldalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2018\\_aspen\\_final-report\\_full\\_webversion.pdf](https://soldalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2018_aspen_final-report_full_webversion.pdf) [<https://perma.cc/V9WM-G7ZW>].

Section I.A details the pertinent findings of the science of learning and development, explaining how adversity impacts academic achievement. Further, it explains how the effects of adversity can be buffered when children and families are provided with the proper interventions. Section I.B then describes the ways our education system fails to implement the actionable lessons of the science and remains disconnected from social service agencies.

#### A. *The Science of Learning and Development*

The science of learning and development refers to a growing body of research on how children develop, learn, and are affected by their environments.<sup>21</sup> It draws from the fields of neuroscience, psychology, developmental science, epigenetics, adversity science, resilience science, and learning science.<sup>22</sup> The scientific findings hold actionable lessons that have the potential to open pathways for each child to reach their fullest potential.

Researchers have found that “child development is neither genetically predetermined nor governed by a nature versus nurture dichotomy.”<sup>23</sup> Instead, development is shaped by interactions between a child’s genetics, biology, relationships, and environments, with the latter playing a defining role.<sup>24</sup> Ecological contexts, including families, schools, neighborhoods, and culture, all impact a child’s brain.<sup>25</sup> So, differing ecological contexts—like growing up with wealth versus living in poverty—bring about differences in brain development.<sup>26</sup>

These findings have important implications for a child’s academic learning.<sup>27</sup> The education system often compartmentalizes academics and a child’s out-of-school experiences, yet the science demonstrates that they are interconnected.<sup>28</sup> Ecological contexts embedded with adversity cause cognitive impairments that interfere with a child’s ability to concentrate, remember information, organize school work, and exercise self-control.<sup>29</sup> While many factors play a role in

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<sup>21</sup> Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 307.

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> David Osher et al., *Drivers of Human Development: How Relationships and Context Shape Learning and Development*, 24 APP. DEV. SCI. 6, 6 (2018).

<sup>24</sup> *Id.* at 6–7; Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 310.

<sup>25</sup> Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 310; Osher et al., *supra* note 23, at 7.

<sup>26</sup> Osher et al., *supra* note 23, at 7, 15–16.

<sup>27</sup> See DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 113; Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 310.

<sup>28</sup> Linda Darling-Hammond et al., *Implications for Educational Practice of the Science of Learning and Development*, 23 APP. DEV. SCI. 97, 97 (2018) [hereinafter Darling-Hammond et al., *Implications for Educational Practice*].

<sup>29</sup> Osher et al., *supra* note 23, at 21; Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 324–25; BOS. COLL. MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILD., *supra* note 13, at 17; CMTYS. IN SCHS. AND LEARNING POL’Y INST., A WHOLE CHILD APPROACH TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UNDER ESSA: SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IN LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS 1 (2019), [https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Community\\_Schools\\_CIS\\_ESSA\\_RESOURCE.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Community_Schools_CIS_ESSA_RESOURCE.pdf) (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/ZF35-4LU2>].

academic success, research demonstrates that out-of-school ecological factors account for two-thirds of the differences in student outcomes.<sup>30</sup>

But the science also draws optimistic conclusions. A child's brain is malleable, and cognitive impairments can be reversed when a child's relationships and environments improve.<sup>31</sup> In fact, children who experience adversity may have brains that are more malleable than those who do not.<sup>32</sup> Educational environments that connect students to social services that address mental and physical well-being improve academic achievement on a wide range of indicators, including attendance, standardized testing, GPA, graduation rates, and dropout rates.<sup>33</sup>

#### B. *The Lack of Coordination Among Child-Serving Agencies*

Children and families have interdependent needs that can benefit from support across government systems, including agencies focused on education, child welfare, mental health, substance abuse, housing, and food assistance.<sup>34</sup> Schools alone do not have the capacity to meet the expansive needs of children, but they are the ideal place to connect students to a wide range of services. Unfortunately, education systems remain largely disconnected from social service agencies.<sup>35</sup>

Social services are rarely provided within educational institutions, even though children are twenty-one times more likely to receive services when they are provided on school grounds.<sup>36</sup> The lack of coordination between the education system and other child-serving institutions prevents children from accessing the services they need. Students, parents, and caretakers are uninformed that services

<sup>30</sup> BOS. COLL. MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILD., *supra* note 13, at 17.

<sup>31</sup> Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 310.

<sup>32</sup> Darling-Hammond et al., *Implications for Educational Practice*, *supra* note 28, at 101.

<sup>33</sup> *Id.* at 98–99, 128; CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 1; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 20; BOS. COLL. MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILD., *supra* note 13, at 17–19; DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 112; AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH ET AL., KEY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE SCIENCE OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT 3 (2018), <https://turnaroundusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Key-Findings-and-Implications-of-the-Science-of-Learning-Development.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/PSL8-KM5Q>]; ELIZABETH FREEMAN, THE ROLE OF SYSTEM OF CARE COMMUNITIES IN DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES 8 (2014), <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/Systems%20of%20Care%20Communities%20in%20School%20Mental%20Health%20Systems.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/HW3V-PHMX>].

<sup>34</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 30; JEFFREY ALVIN ANDERSON, THE NEED FOR INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION FOR CHILDREN WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES, 81 J. CONTEMP. HUM. SERV. 484, 484 (2000), [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275699714\\_The\\_Need\\_for\\_Interagency\\_Collaboration\\_for\\_Children\\_with\\_Emotional\\_and\\_Behavioral\\_Disabilities\\_and\\_Their\\_Families](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275699714_The_Need_for_Interagency_Collaboration_for_Children_with_Emotional_and_Behavioral_Disabilities_and_Their_Families).

<sup>35</sup> See Cantor et al., *supra* note 11, at 307; CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., CHILDREN'S CABINET TOOLKIT: A ROADMAP FOR GETTING STARTED IN YOUR COMMUNITY 4 (2019).

<sup>36</sup> POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 3–4; see FREEMAN ET AL., *supra* note 33, at 3 (recommending services be offered at schools because adolescents feel more comfortable accessing health and social services in a single location, such as through school-based clinics).

are available to them or struggle to navigate the complex patchwork of existing programs.<sup>37</sup> For example, a study by the U.S. Surgeon General shows that two-thirds of children are not receiving necessary behavioral health care.<sup>38</sup>

Silos among agencies also prevent effective delivery of child services at a systems level. For example, unclear responsibilities across agencies create gaps in their offered services.<sup>39</sup> Conversely, fragmentation can lead to duplication of efforts, wasting resources on overlapping but disconnected programs.<sup>40</sup> A lack of uniform definitions and eligibility criteria frustrate efforts to merge related services.<sup>41</sup> And instead of shared goal and accountability frameworks, each agency is focused on a narrow set of outcomes in isolation.<sup>42</sup>

One of the most common results of fragmented systems is inefficient funding structures. The myriad of state and federal funding streams available for child services are underutilized and ineffectively spent.<sup>43</sup> This results in perceived scarcity of funding and competition among agencies for resources.<sup>44</sup> Resource constraints then lead agencies to create a “fail first” system, where children must reach a crisis point before being prioritized for services, instead of having access to preventative programs.<sup>45</sup> Incidentally, preventative programs are not only

<sup>37</sup> POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 3; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 9; JAMES BELL ASSOCS., EARLY CHILDHOOD/CHILD WELFARE SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS: THE CHALLENGES AND THE POTENTIAL 4–5 (2011), <https://www.jbassoc.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Early-Childhood-Child-Welfare-Partnerships.pdf> [https://perma.cc/PG2S-4PYF].

<sup>38</sup> FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 2.

<sup>39</sup> SHARON SILOW-CARROLL ET. AL., INTERAGENCY, CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE CARE FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN: LESSONS FOR CALIFORNIA FROM SIX STATE INITIATIVES 5 (2018), [https://www.lpfch.org/sites/default/files/field/publications/hma\\_interagency\\_collaboration\\_national\\_report\\_1.23.18\\_.pdf](https://www.lpfch.org/sites/default/files/field/publications/hma_interagency_collaboration_national_report_1.23.18_.pdf) [https://perma.cc/YGS2-EQSM?type=standard].

<sup>40</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 10; *see* SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 5 (listing the multiple programs, entities, and systems of care, from which children with heightened needs receive help).

<sup>41</sup> SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 5

<sup>42</sup> POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 7; DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 115; BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1, at 3; *see* SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH: INTEGRATING SYSTEMS, INSERT TO THE EDGE NEWSLETTER: INTEGRATING SYSTEMS 4 (2020), [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/554a3e82e4b0fe31e575f48b/t/5f2da64f4108a1536cd9ddb8/1596827222847/TheEDge\\_spring2020\\_insert\\_mental\\_health\\_final.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/554a3e82e4b0fe31e575f48b/t/5f2da64f4108a1536cd9ddb8/1596827222847/TheEDge_spring2020_insert_mental_health_final.pdf) [https://perma.cc/EGZ8-PMPB] (noting that in current system, children and families are slipping through the gaps).

<sup>43</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 10, 28; GUY JOHNSON & MELISSA MITCHELL, RIVERS OF GREEN: ALIGNING FUNDING FOR CHILDREN (2022), <https://theopportunityinstitute.org/blog/2022/4/1/rivers-of-green-aligning-funding-for-children> [https://perma.cc/V8JQ-5LG5]; *see also* SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH: INTEGRATING SYSTEMS, *supra* note 42, at 3 (utilizing braiding of funds to expand services).

<sup>44</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 10, 28; BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1, at 3.

<sup>45</sup> POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 4; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 56.

better for the well-being of children and families, but are also more cost effective in the long run.<sup>46</sup>

Another result of disconnected systems is mis-aligned data.<sup>47</sup> Data sharing is an important tool in coordinating information about a child's case across agencies.<sup>48</sup> Data also helps to identify areas of need in the community, measure gaps among subgroups, and track progress towards goals over time.<sup>49</sup> But data sharing is hindered by regulatory privacy protections and differences in data sets, defined populations, and software.<sup>50</sup>

Child-serving agencies are not only disconnected from each other, but also from children and families.<sup>51</sup> Service agencies seldom solicit and value input from the individuals being served.<sup>52</sup> Additionally, children and families can hesitate to share personal information with government providers for fear of how the information will be used.<sup>53</sup> The absence of communication between service agencies and families creates misalignment between needs and actions.<sup>54</sup>

## II. INTEGRATED SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Children, families, and advocates are increasingly demanding that the education system meet the needs of the whole child.<sup>55</sup> Integrated support systems weave education together with social service agencies—including those focused on healthcare, housing, child welfare, and food and nutrition—to create a seamless and comprehensive system of services.<sup>56</sup> Collaboration among agencies

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<sup>46</sup> FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 3; SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH: INTEGRATING SYSTEMS, *supra* note 42, at 1.

<sup>47</sup> POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 8; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 5; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 10, 27.

<sup>48</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 10; JACOB DEITZ & CHIARA PARISI, ALIGNING DATA SYSTEMS ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH (2021), <https://theopportunityinstitute.org/blog/2022/3/2/aligning-data-systems-on-children-and-youth> [<https://perma.cc/ZCX2-M64C>].

<sup>49</sup> DEITZ & PARISI, *supra* note 48.

<sup>50</sup> *Id.*; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 10, 27.

<sup>51</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 9.

<sup>52</sup> *Id.* at 9, 17.

<sup>53</sup> *Id.* at 9, 11.

<sup>54</sup> *Id.* at 9, 17.

<sup>55</sup> BOB WISE AND JAVAID SIDDIQI, WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION: SUPPORT STUDENTS' LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT, 2 (2022), <https://hunt-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/HI-CC-Report-2-2022-v3.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/3P4L-SFX5>].

<sup>56</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 9, 17, 20; DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 111; NAT'L TECH. ASSISTANCE AND EVALUATION CENTER, *supra* note 20, at 2; BOS. COLL. MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILD., *supra* note 13, at 2; ASPEN INST., *supra* note 20, at 56.

improves the physical and mental well-being of children, which in turn removes impediments to academic achievement.<sup>57</sup>

The education field is dotted with integration efforts that vary broadly in scope and impact. Part II.A looks at the essential components of effective integrated support systems, like joint leadership, collective goals, and shared data. Part II.B then gives an overview of the existing models of integrated support systems, including deep dives into three of the most successful examples in the country.

#### A. *The Essential Components of Integrated Support Systems*

Developing an integrated support system is a “messy and fragile” process that is too often unimpactful and short lived.<sup>58</sup> Studies on the various models of integrated support systems have provided insights into what it takes to develop effective integrated support systems at scale. This section outlines the essential components of successful integrated support systems.<sup>59</sup>

##### 1. Stable Legal Foundation

Integrated support systems are long-term solutions to fragmented systems. The stability of an integrated support system over time is heavily dependent on its legal foundation. Legislation is one of the most secure ways to create an integrated support system.<sup>60</sup> Though legislation can take time and require compromise, it ensures continuation beyond changes in state leadership.<sup>61</sup> For example, coordinating bodies in Rhode Island and Louisiana were established through legislation.<sup>62</sup>

Executive orders are another way to establish an integrated support system. Executive orders are a good option when legislation is unsuccessful or unlikely.<sup>63</sup> They can be done swiftly and ensure active involvement of the state’s highest official, the governor.<sup>64</sup> For example, children’s cabinets were established through executive order in Tennessee and Arizona.<sup>65</sup> However, executive orders are a less stable option than legislation; once the governor’s term in office ends,

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<sup>57</sup> DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 111; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 20; CHILDREN’S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., *supra* note 35, at 4; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 5.

<sup>58</sup> HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 2, 5, 8.

<sup>59</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 4, 5.

<sup>60</sup> SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 22.

<sup>61</sup> CHILDREN’S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., *supra* note 35, at 9, 14, 23; ELIZABETH GAINES, 2017 STATE POLICY SURVEY: CHILD AND YOUTH POLICY COORDINATING BODIES IN THE U.S. 6 (2017), [https://forumfyi.org/knowledge-center/2017-state-policy-survey/?\\_sft\\_knowledge\\_project=childrens-cabinet-networks](https://forumfyi.org/knowledge-center/2017-state-policy-survey/?_sft_knowledge_project=childrens-cabinet-networks) [<https://perma.cc/WC8J-3RRC>].

<sup>62</sup> NAT’L GOVERNORS ASS’N, A GOVERNOR’S GUIDE TO CHILDREN’S CABINETS 23 (2004), <https://nwi.pdx.edu/pdf/ChildrensCabinet-NatGovernorsAssoc.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/M8M4-G4AL>].

<sup>63</sup> *Id.* at 22, 23.

<sup>64</sup> *Id.*

<sup>65</sup> *Id.* at 22.

a new administration has the power to discontinue the initiative.<sup>66</sup> Some states have created integrated support systems through executive order and later passed legislation to protect the effort.<sup>67</sup>

Integrated support systems created through grant programs or philanthropic funding offer less stability. Grant programs are subject to trends and fluctuating budgets; efforts to integrate can go to waste when a grant program ends. Integrated systems developed through philanthropy are voluntary and missing the legal backing to ensure long term sustainability.<sup>68</sup>

## 2. Joint Leadership

Integrated support systems bring together leaders of diverse government bodies. Government leaders share responsibility over the well-being of children and families instead of working independently on their respective missions. The representative of each government body should have full knowledge of their body's resources and authority to make decisions on behalf of the body.<sup>69</sup>

Effective integrated support systems include a wide range of participants. They should invite different government sectors to participate, including, for example, the departments of education, mental health, food and nutrition, and child welfare.<sup>70</sup> Integration can also happen at different levels of government, including the school, district, county, regional, state, and federal level.<sup>71</sup> They can benefit from the participation of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.<sup>72</sup> For example, Louisiana's children's cabinet includes executive department heads, the Superintendent of Education, two legislators, and a representative of the Louisiana Supreme Court.<sup>73</sup>

Integrated support systems can also bring in organizations from the private and non-profit sectors.<sup>74</sup> For example, New Jersey's coordinating body includes religious leaders, philanthropists, advocates, and business leaders.<sup>75</sup> However, extending participation in the integrated support system beyond the government has the potential to slow down progress and stifle honest conversation.<sup>76</sup> So,

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<sup>66</sup> *Id.* at 23.

<sup>67</sup> *Id.*

<sup>68</sup> *Id.* at 19, 20.

<sup>69</sup> U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., GAO-12-1022, MANAGING FOR RESULTS: KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIVE MECHANISMS 19 (2012).

<sup>70</sup> *Id.*; CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 8.

<sup>71</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 4.; CAROLYN J. RIEHL ET AL., BUILDING IMPACT: A CLOSER LOOK AT LOCAL CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIONS FOR EDUCATION xi (2019), <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Building-Impact.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/SB7Z-C8CN>].

<sup>72</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 22.

<sup>73</sup> *Id.* at 21.

<sup>74</sup> *Id.* at 27–28.

<sup>75</sup> *Id.* at 22.

<sup>76</sup> GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 7; NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 28.

some systems include private and non-profit organizations through advisory boards, commissions, or task forces to create a layer of separation.<sup>77</sup>

This form of shared leadership requires a commitment to, among other things, building quality interpersonal relationships.<sup>78</sup> Agencies and organizations can be territorial, untrusting, reluctant, and have diverging political pressures.<sup>79</sup> It takes time to establish the relationships necessary to work as a cohesive team.<sup>80</sup>

One way of ensuring joint leadership and equal say among participants is by housing an integrated support system in a neutral space.<sup>81</sup> Housing a coordinating body in a specific agency can elevate that agency's position and diminish the sense of leadership among the other government bodies.<sup>82</sup> For example, Maryland chose to move their children's cabinet from their education agency to their governor's office to ensure neutrality.<sup>83</sup>

### 3. Collective Goals

Government bodies often have diverging, or even competing, goals and priorities.<sup>84</sup> In an integrated support system, government leaders develop shared goals to guide their work.<sup>85</sup> The participating government bodies collectively try to move the needle on their shared goals and are held jointly accountable for making progress.<sup>86</sup> For example, the Department of Education and Department of

<sup>77</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 22.

<sup>78</sup> U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 69, at 1; THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING 25 (2008), [https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/25241\\_02\\_Cheminais\\_Ch\\_02.pdf](https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/25241_02_Cheminais_Ch_02.pdf).

<sup>79</sup> RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71, at 8; THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 27–28.

<sup>80</sup> NAT'L TECH. ASSISTANCE AND EVALUATION CENTER, *supra* note 20, at 2, 5; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY: CHILD & YOUTH POLICY COORDINATING BODIES IN THE UNITED STATES 11 (2021), <https://forumfyi.org/knowledge-center/2020-state-policy-survey-child-youth-policy-coordinating-bodies-in-the-united-states/> [https://perma.cc/ZD7K-7WMQ] [hereinafter F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY].

<sup>81</sup> GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 5–6; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 15; F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN'S CABINETS: A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR STATE LEADERS 5 (2022), <https://forumfyi.org/knowledge-center/strong-and-sustainable-childrens-cabinets-a-discussion-guide-for-state-leaders/> [https://perma.cc/2G83-JJVC] [hereinafter F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN'S CABINETS].

<sup>82</sup> GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 5–6; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 15.

<sup>83</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 9; F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN'S CABINETS, *supra* note 81, at 9.

<sup>84</sup> THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 27–28; U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 69, at 11.

<sup>85</sup> THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 25; NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 12, 18; U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 69 at 11; CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., *supra* note 35, at 30; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 4.

<sup>86</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 25; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 8.

Food and Nutrition can work together on the shared goal of reducing childhood hunger by signing families up for food assistance programs at school. In turn, that effort can impact the shared goal of improving academic achievement for low-income youth.

A common first step in establishing shared goals is to conduct a needs assessment.<sup>87</sup> A needs assessment learns from data, community voices, and other sources to identify the unique assets and needs of the specific community.<sup>88</sup> The needs assessment should analyze a wide range of issues rather than focus on narrow questions or subsets of the population.<sup>89</sup> These assessments provide insight into where the coordinating body needs to focus its efforts and prioritize resources.<sup>90</sup> For example, West Virginia's children's cabinet conducted a needs assessment which led to the shared goal of expanding career opportunities for low-income families.<sup>91</sup>

Once a needs assessment has been conducted and corresponding goals are established, a strategic plan should be developed to effectuate those goals.<sup>92</sup> The strategic plan creates a framework for action and organizes existing resources to be more effective.<sup>93</sup>

#### 4. Shared Data

Data plays a critical role in integrated support systems.<sup>94</sup> Shared data systems merge new and existing datasets to ease the flow of information across agencies.<sup>95</sup> The shared data is used to efficiently manage a child's case and track progress towards the overarching goals of the integrated support system.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., *supra* note 35, at 30; CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 4.

<sup>88</sup> CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 4, 8.

<sup>89</sup> GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 3.

<sup>90</sup> DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 110–34; JAMES BELL ASSOCS., *supra* note 37, at 13.

<sup>91</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 25.

<sup>92</sup> *Id.*

<sup>93</sup> *Id.* at 15, 24; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 22; CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., *supra* note 35, at 30.

<sup>94</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 21; GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 7; RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71, at xi.

<sup>95</sup> HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 31; *see also* LYNNE SACKS & MICHELLE SEDACA, SUSTAINING CROSS-SECTOR SYSTEMS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR CHILDREN: INTERIM LESSONS FROM THE BY ALL MEANS CONSORTIUM 2–3 (2019), [https://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/edredesign/files/sustaining\\_cross-sector\\_systems-exec\\_summary.pdf](https://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/edredesign/files/sustaining_cross-sector_systems-exec_summary.pdf) [<https://perma.cc/MQ3V-ND3N>] (recounting challenges of aligning data systems for intra-community collaboration).

<sup>96</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 27; Guy Johnson, *Ryan and Biden and Evidence Oh My, Whole Child Equity* (Mar. 23, 2022), <https://theopportunityinstitute.org/blog/2022/3/24/ryan-and-biden-and-evidence-oh-my> [<https://perma.cc/4WY3-685F>].

At the individual level, shared data systems make personal data available across agencies.<sup>97</sup> This can help service providers identify needs, set up referrals, and coordinate services for a child and their family.<sup>98</sup> Merging data systems to flow across government agencies will typically require the development of common terminology, data sets, defined populations, and software.<sup>99</sup> Government workers will also need to navigate confidentiality and privacy protections related to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (“HIPAA”) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”).<sup>100</sup> These complex regulations can be overcome by data sharing agreements that facilitate the exchange of information.<sup>101</sup> For example, San Diego developed a master memorandum of understanding between their school districts and the child welfare system.<sup>102</sup> Of course, families should always be well informed about how data will be shared before consenting.<sup>103</sup>

At a systems level, data tracks progress towards the shared goals of the integrated support system.<sup>104</sup> A set of indicators on wide ranging outcomes creates a feedback loop for continuous improvement.<sup>105</sup> Data is only impactful insofar as it is used to analyze the effectiveness of programs and make changes to goals

<sup>97</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 27.

<sup>98</sup> *See id.*; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 11.

<sup>99</sup> DEITZ & PARISI, *supra* note 48; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 22; GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 7; *Aligning Data*, F. FOR YOUTH INV., <https://forumfyi.org/ccn/aligning-data/> [<https://perma.cc/EG7H-PQST>] [hereinafter *Aligning Data*].

<sup>100</sup> SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 11, 24; FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 5; *see also* REBECCA GUDEMAN, NATIONAL CENTER FOR YOUTH LAW, HIPAA OR FERPA? A PRIMER ON SHARING SCHOOL HEALTH INFORMATION IN CALIFORNIA (2018), <https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/BTB25-2O-01.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/X3DA-KNL5>]; U.S. DEP’T OF EDUC., DATA-SHARING TOOL KIT FOR COMMUNITIES: HOW TO LEVERAGE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS WHILE PROTECTING STUDENT PRIVACY (2016), <https://web.archive.org/web/20220901040441/https://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/datasharingtool.pdf> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/C4TL-VNDJ>].

<sup>101</sup> SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39; *see* POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 8; *Aligning Data*, *supra* note 99.

<sup>102</sup> *Aligning Data*, *supra* note 99.

<sup>103</sup> *Id.*; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 24.

<sup>104</sup> CHILDREN’S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., *supra* note 35, at 30; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 21; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 27; NAT’L GOVERNORS ASS’N, *supra* note 62, at 16, 25; U.S. GOV’T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 69, at 12; BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 31; RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71, at xi.

<sup>105</sup> DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 110–34; *Aligning Data*, *supra* note 99; CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL’Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 4; NAT’L GOVERNORS ASS’N, *supra* note 62, at 26; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 14, 21–22; RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71, at xi; JAMES BELL ASSOCS., *supra* note 37, at 15; F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN’S CABINETS, *supra* note 81, at 5, 7; CHILDREN’S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., *supra* note 35, at 35–36; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 31.

and strategies.<sup>106</sup> Data should also be disaggregated by subgroup to reveal disparities, including by race, gender, and socioeconomic status.<sup>107</sup> For example, Maine's children's cabinet tracks eighty indicators related to improving child and family outcomes, including youth obesity rates, parents who read to their children, and youth not in school or the workforce.<sup>108</sup>

Where possible, data with non-personally identifiable information should be made available to the public.<sup>109</sup> There are various ways data can be shared broadly, including through online dashboards, annual reports, or press briefings.<sup>110</sup> Publicly available data empowers community members to hold the government accountable for making progress towards their goals.<sup>111</sup>

## 5. Aligned Funding

Effective integrated support systems align the array of available funding streams to maximize resources and impact.<sup>112</sup> Aligned funding increases access to services, reduces competition among agencies, and ensures sustainability in challenging economic times.<sup>113</sup> For example, in Maine, effective funding integration led to a twenty-eight percent decrease in overall mental health expenditures.<sup>114</sup>

Often, integration of funding begins with a fiscal mapping of federal, state, local, and private funding streams.<sup>115</sup> Mapping financial resources helps government bodies understand where funding is coming from and where funding is

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<sup>106</sup> DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 110-134; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 8; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 32; *Aligning Data*, *supra* note 99.

<sup>107</sup> CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT ET AL., *supra* note 35, at 35; RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71, at xi.

<sup>108</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 26.

<sup>109</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 25, 27; RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71, at xi; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 8.

<sup>110</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 25; NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 26.

<sup>111</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 33, 42.

<sup>112</sup> JOHNSON & MITCHELL, *supra* note 43; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 28.

<sup>113</sup> FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 1; *see also* THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 24, 27; GARY DECAROLIS ET AL., IMPROVING CHILD WELFARE OUTCOMES THROUGH SYSTEMS OF CARE: BUILDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE 49 (2007), <https://www.williamscountyoh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/178/Systems-of-Care-A-guide-for-Communities-PDF?bidId=> [https://perma.cc/2QFU-U22S?type=standard]; PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH, COMMUNITY SCHOOL FINANCING: ALIGNING COMMUNITY SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS 4 (Oct. 2016), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59f76b95268b96985343bb62/t/5a21b4a1652dead348f7f152/1512158370841/Community+School+Financing.pdf> [https://perma.cc/5FHQ-V5YX].

<sup>114</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 28.

<sup>115</sup> JOHNSON & MITCHELL, *supra* note 43; NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 16; *Aligning Money*, F. FOR YOUTH INV., <https://forumfyi.org/ccn/aligning-money/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/ES5E-2EDT] [hereinafter *Aligning Money*].

going.<sup>116</sup> The fiscal map should document what requirements are tied to each funding source, including mandates on how the money is spent, eligibility requirements, and data reporting requirements.<sup>117</sup> For example, in Illinois, a fiscal mapping was performed annually to see what resources were available to the children's cabinet.<sup>118</sup>

With a fiscal map in hand, the integrated support system can pool funding for each goal.<sup>119</sup> There are different methods of pooling funding, including braiding, blending, layering, or sequencing.<sup>120</sup> For example, braided funding integrates two or more funding streams to support a single initiative, but may have restrictions on how funding can be used because costs are tied back to the original funding source.<sup>121</sup> Instead, blended funding pools funding sources into a single funding stream without tying them back to the original funding source, granting more flexibility.<sup>122</sup> In layered funding, each funding source funds a discrete component of an initiative, allowing for easy disentanglement if one funding source is removed.<sup>123</sup> With sequenced funding, resources are strategically made available for the initiative at different points in time.<sup>124</sup> For example, West Virginia's coordinating body pools funding across agencies to support operational grants for Family Resource Networks.<sup>125</sup> And in community schools programs across the country, studies show that school districts are funding less than fifty percent of the total resources at play for child programs and services.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> *Aligning Money*, *supra* note 115.

<sup>117</sup> DECAROLIS ET AL., *supra* note 113, at 49; CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT, BLENDING AND BRAIDING: FUNDING OUR KIDS 101, at 1, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b75d96ccc8fedfce4d3c5a8/t/63f65aff3aee53b799245e6/1677089535474/FOK101+Blending+and+Braiding-FINAL.pdf> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/N37S-853M>] [hereinafter CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT, BLENDING AND BRAIDING].

<sup>118</sup> JOHNSON & MITCHELL, *supra* note 43.

<sup>119</sup> *Aligning Money*, *supra* note 115; F. FOR YOUTH INV., MAPPING COORDINATED AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO IMPACT COMMUNITY OUTCOMES 2 (2018), <https://forumfyi.org/knowledge-center/mapping-coordinated-and-collaborative-efforts-to-impact-community-outcomes/> [<https://perma.cc/MLS3-WUEW>] [hereinafter F. FOR YOUTH INV., MAPPING COORDINATED].

<sup>120</sup> JOHNSON & MITCHELL, *supra* note 43, at 2; *Aligning Money*, *supra* note 115; ASPEN INST., *supra* note 20, at 59; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 7; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 10.

<sup>121</sup> SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 10; CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT, BLENDING AND BRAIDING, *supra* note 117, at 1; Marcella Cabello & Katrina Ballard, *Braiding And Blending: Managing Multiple Funds to Improve Health*, URBAN INST. (Sept. 17, 2018, 1:10 PM), <https://pfs.urban.org/pay-success/pfs-perspectives/braiding-and-blending-managing-multiple-funds-improve-health> [<https://perma.cc/CHL3-7PDJ>].

<sup>122</sup> Cabello & Ballard, *supra* note 121.

<sup>123</sup> CHILDREN'S FUNDING PROJECT, BLENDING AND BRAIDING, *supra* note 117, at 1.

<sup>124</sup> SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 10.

<sup>125</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 16.

<sup>126</sup> Partnership for Children and Youth, *supra* note 113, at 7.

Often, funding for integrated support systems comes directly from the government bodies in the system, not from outside grants or funding streams.<sup>127</sup> Other times, state budgets or private foundations provide dedicated funding streams to the integrated support system.<sup>128</sup> Dedicated funding streams, through local tax increases or line-item budget allocations, can provide useful resources for expenses like full-time staff or new data systems.<sup>129</sup> For example, the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund receives \$50 million annually from a master tobacco settlement to support their integrated support system.<sup>130</sup>

## 6. Youth, Family, and Community Engagement

Meaningfully engaging with youth, families, and community members is critical to developing impactful solutions.<sup>131</sup> There is often a disconnect in experiences between those operating an integrated support system and the population they are serving, leading to policies and practices that don't effectively address needs.<sup>132</sup> Input from community members should be coupled with research and evidence to establish the goals of the integrated support system.<sup>133</sup> For example, the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund developed an engagement tool that analyzes and aggregates community member feedback to identify common themes and concerns.<sup>134</sup>

The community can be engaged in a range of different ways.<sup>135</sup> In-person options include focus groups, community meetings, home visits, parent teacher

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<sup>127</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 28; Partnership for Children and Youth, *supra* note 113, at 6; CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 9.

<sup>128</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 20; JOHNSON & MITCHELL, *supra* note 43; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 7.

<sup>129</sup> *Aligning Money*, *supra* note 115; RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71, at x.

<sup>130</sup> JOHNSON & MITCHELL, *supra* note 43.

<sup>131</sup> DANILA CRESPIAN ZIDOVSKY ET AL., GROUNDING CHILDREN'S CABINETS IN RACIAL EQUITY: A RESOURCE GUIDE 6 (2021), [https://web.archive.org/web/20220509224532/https://edredesign.org/files/edredesign/files/racial\\_equity\\_guide\\_april\\_2021.pdf?m=1617749057](https://web.archive.org/web/20220509224532/https://edredesign.org/files/edredesign/files/racial_equity_guide_april_2021.pdf?m=1617749057) [https://perma.cc/NAP8-BAQS].

<sup>132</sup> SACKS & SEDACA, *supra* note 95, at 4; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 17.

<sup>133</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 9, 24, 29; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 17-18, 25; ZIDOVSKY ET AL., *supra* note 131, at 6-7; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 8; *Aligning People*, F. FOR YOUTH INV., <https://forumfyi.org/ccn/aligning-people/> (Last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/NMC4-GLZT] [hereinafter *Aligning People*]; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 21; FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 4; BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1.

<sup>134</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., CONTINUITY THROUGH CRISIS: HOW CABINETS MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE DURING A PANDEMIC 3 (2020), <https://forumfyi.org/knowledge-center/cabinetization> [https://perma.cc/UP62-69DR] [hereinafter F. FOR YOUTH INV., CONTINUITY THROUGH CRISIS].

<sup>135</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 29; *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 19.

conferences, town halls, and student and parent advisory groups.<sup>136</sup> In-person engagement should be accessible in terms of location, timing, language, and childcare.<sup>137</sup> Engagement can also happen in virtual formats, like surveys, e-mails, or webpages.<sup>138</sup> No matter the form of engagement, a foundation of trust between government officials and community members is essential to open the door to deeper dialogue.<sup>139</sup> For example, New Mexico’s children’s cabinet gathered stories and recommendations from over 4,000 community members through online surveys, community meetings, state leadership meetings, and emails.<sup>140</sup>

All of the different populations in a community should be represented in engagement efforts.<sup>141</sup> First, it is important to elevate youth voices on issues that directly impact them.<sup>142</sup> Similarly, parents and caretakers must be heard as they too are directly impacted by the practices of an integrated support system.<sup>143</sup> Culturally diverse populations, including community members of different racial, socioeconomic, or immigration backgrounds, can have unique needs and experiences.<sup>144</sup> A broader set of community members, like local businesses or nonprofits, can also bring valuable input.

## 7. Coordinated Services

Coordinated services seamlessly organize a range of supports to ensure timely access to comprehensive care.<sup>145</sup> Because of their frequent access to children, schools are uniquely positioned to serve as a central hub for children to be connected to services.<sup>146</sup> However, the integrated support system should take a “no wrong door” approach to care where an individual is connected to the appropriate

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<sup>136</sup> *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 19; ASPEN INST., *supra* note 20, at 57; NAT’L GOVERNORS ASS’N, *supra* note 62, at 29; SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 10.

<sup>137</sup> ZIDOVSKY ET AL., *supra* note 131, at 7.

<sup>138</sup> *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 19.

<sup>139</sup> *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133; BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 18; ZIDOVSKY ET AL., *supra* note 131, at 18.

<sup>140</sup> Holly Bluhm & Chiara Parisi, *Aligning Child-Serving Agencies for Improved Services and Supports*, OPPORTUNITY INST. (Mar. 10, 2022), <https://theopportunityinstitute.org/blog/2022/3/9/nbspaligning-child-serving-agencies-for-improved-services-and-supports> [<https://perma.cc/5A2E-UWXL>].

<sup>141</sup> *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 19; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 8.

<sup>142</sup> *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 11.

<sup>143</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 17, 25.

<sup>144</sup> POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 8; ZIDOVSKY ET AL., *supra* note 131, at 7.

<sup>145</sup> DECAROLIS ET AL., *supra* note 113, at 30; U.S. GOV’T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 69, at 13; FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 5.

<sup>146</sup> CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL’Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 4; THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 25; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 7.

services no matter what government door they walk through.<sup>147</sup> Intentional and thoughtful collaboration between service providers is necessary to overcome administrative hurdles like service referrals, definitions, roles and responsibilities, case planning, technologies, protocols, and diagnostic processes.<sup>148</sup> For example, New York's Council on Children and Families created an online platform to help families easily access the various services that are available to them.<sup>149</sup>

#### 8. Other Essential Components

There are other key practices that have proven to make integrated support systems effective. For example, coordinating bodies often use existing agency staff to support integration efforts.<sup>150</sup> However, coordinating bodies with full-time staff members dedicated exclusively to the integration of systems are better able to support a broad scope of work.<sup>151</sup> Full-time staff members are helpful in project managing, conducting research, scheduling meetings, preparing materials, managing communications, and supporting implementation.<sup>152</sup> Full-time staff also provide continuity through changes in leadership.<sup>153</sup>

Another essential component of successful integrated support systems is technical assistance.<sup>154</sup> Technical assistance helps local and school level personnel effectively implement the vision of the integrated support system.<sup>155</sup> Technical assistance can include training, resource hubs, guidance documents, toolkits, and coaching.<sup>156</sup> For example, Washington developed the Washington Integrated

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<sup>147</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 30; THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 28.

<sup>148</sup> THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 25, 27; JAMES BELL ASSOCS., *supra* note 37, at 14; FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 5–6; U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF., *supra* note 69, at 13.

<sup>149</sup> *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133.

<sup>150</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 19, 27.

<sup>151</sup> GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 5; THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 25; NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 19; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 17.

<sup>152</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 19–20, 27.

<sup>153</sup> *Id.* at 8, 27; GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 5; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 17.

<sup>154</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 8; BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 23; CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 7.

<sup>155</sup> BREAKING BARRIERS CAL., *supra* note 2, at 23; CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 9; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 7–8.

<sup>156</sup> CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 8–9; THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORKING, *supra* note 78, at 24–25; FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 3; JAMES BELL ASSOCS., *supra* note 37, at 14; ANNA MAIER ET AL., LEVERAGING RESOURCES THROUGH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: THE ROLE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE 2 (2020), <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/leveraging-resources-community-schools-technical-assistance-brief> [<https://perma.cc/Z5P5-4H9Z>].

Student Supports Protocol to lay out the key practices for implementing integrated student supports at the local level.<sup>157</sup>

Last, successful integrated support systems address the policy barriers to effective care coordination.<sup>158</sup> The leaders in integrated support systems develop deep expertise and are well qualified to make policy recommendations to the governor, legislature, and other decision makers.<sup>159</sup> Coordinating bodies should foster public awareness of policy issues and advocate for policy reform to improve outcomes for children and families in need.<sup>160</sup>

### B. *Promising Examples of Integrated Support Systems*

The education field is dotted with integration efforts that vary broadly in scope and impact.<sup>161</sup> This section gives an overview of the different approaches to integrated support systems. This Article uses the phrase integrated support system, but other terms have been used to characterize the initiatives, including systems of care, multi-sector partnerships, cross-sector collaboration, interagency collaboration, and collective impact.<sup>162</sup> Examples in New Jersey, Maryland, and Indiana, detailed in parts II.B.1 through II.B.3, are among the best in the country and contain most of the essential components listed in the prior section. Part II.B.4 then goes over the other more modest forms of integration that exist today.

#### 1. New Jersey Department of Children and Families

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) is an integrated agency focused on providing support to vulnerable members of the state.<sup>163</sup> Families and advocates complained that New Jersey's child welfare system was fragmented, cumbersome, and disorganized, and Governor Jon Corzine proposed it

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<sup>157</sup> CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 9; *Washington Integrated Student Supports Protocol (WISSP)*, WASH. OFF. OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUB. INSTRUCTION, <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/support-programs/multi-tiered-system-supports-mtss/washington-integrated-student-supports-protocol-wissp> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/HRC8-5YNT>].

<sup>158</sup> CAL. CHILD.'S TRUST, *THE CALIFORNIA CHILDREN'S TRUST INITIATIVE: REIMAGINING CHILD WELL-BEING 2* (2018), <https://cachildrenstrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/PolicyBriefReimaginngChildWellBeing.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/YF9T-WSMC>].

<sup>159</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 8, 17; HENIG ET AL., *PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT*, *supra* note 17, at 30.

<sup>160</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 12, 17.

<sup>161</sup> BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1; RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71, at 11; *BREAKING BARRIERS CAL.*, *supra* note 2, at 13.

<sup>162</sup> *BREAKING BARRIERS CAL.*, *supra* note 2, at 13; RIEHL ET AL., *supra* note 71.

<sup>163</sup> *About Us*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/LN2W-9KFQ>].

be restructured into an integrated department during a Budget Address in 2006.<sup>164</sup> A few months later, legislation passed establishing the DCF.<sup>165</sup>

Though an agency in and of itself, the DCF consists of over a dozen agencies, divisions, and offices that work together as an integrated department.<sup>166</sup> While each agency brings its own focus, there is also connectivity among the charges of each office. For example, the Division of Child Protection and Permanency deals with instances of child abuse and arranges services like counseling, parenting classes, substance abuse treatment, and foster care placement.<sup>167</sup> The Division of Children's System of Care coordinates treatment for youth who struggle with behavioral health issues.<sup>168</sup> The Office of Adolescent Services supports youth during the transition to adulthood by providing services related to housing, job training, financial stability, and health care.<sup>169</sup> The Office of Education provides intensive educational services for children who have been removed from the public school system.<sup>170</sup> Further, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Belonging develops initiatives that address statistical gaps, implicit bias, and structural racism.<sup>171</sup>

In addition to the 6,600 staff members of the various partner agencies, the integrated department also has its own full-time staff. The Chief of Staff provides leadership and oversees communications, legislative affairs, and external

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<sup>164</sup> Richard Lezin Jones, *Insiders Say Corzine Plans New Unit for Child Welfare*, N.Y. TIMES (Mar. 19, 2006), <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/19/nyregion/insiders-say-corzine-plans-new-unit-for-child-welfare.html>; *Governor Jon S. Corzine Administration Timeline*, EAGLETON INST. OF POL., <https://governors.rutgers.edu/jon-s-corzine-administration-timeline/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/29CG-YBX7>].

<sup>165</sup> *Governor Jon S. Corzine Administration Timeline*, *supra* note 164; Leg. B. S2069 Sca (1R), 212th Leg. (N.J. 2006), <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2006/S2069>; S. No. 2069, 212th Leg. (N.J. 2006), [https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2006/S2500/2069\\_I1.PDF](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2006/S2500/2069_I1.PDF) [<https://perma.cc/GJN2-VW7B>].

<sup>166</sup> STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., *supra* note 163.

<sup>167</sup> *Child Protection and Permanency*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/dcpp/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/B4CA-644R?type=standard>].

<sup>168</sup> *DCF Executive Management*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/executive/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/D6Z7-6W9Z>]; *Children's System of Care*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/dsc/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/99ZE-4VCP>].

<sup>169</sup> *Division of Adolescent Services*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/oas/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/T9E6-9WQN>].

<sup>170</sup> *Office of Education*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/oe/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/8AVM-SCW8>].

<sup>171</sup> *Diversity, Equity, and Belonging*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/deb/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/CHP2-NHQB>].

relations.<sup>172</sup> The Director of Communications develops the messaging, branding, and promotion for DCF efforts.<sup>173</sup> The Deputy Commissioner of Administration manages human resources, training, facilities, and security.<sup>174</sup> The Executive Director of Staff Health and Wellness ensures that the government employees who work with highly traumatized patients are provided support.<sup>175</sup> The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for fiscal operations, including contracting, accounting, procurement, budget, and revenue.<sup>176</sup> The Director of Information Technology is responsible for managing all technology related operations.<sup>177</sup>

DCF develops, and routinely updates, a strategic plan that outlines the high-level goals of the integrated department.<sup>178</sup> Currently, DCF goals include preventing maltreatment, increasing kinship and familiar placements, supporting evidence-based contracting, reducing staff safety incidents, and promoting adverse childhood experiences prevention.<sup>179</sup> Separate divisions within the DCF also develop strategic plans to work towards the shared goals of the department.<sup>180</sup>

Various councils and centers connect the DCF to the local level.<sup>181</sup> The Human Service Advisory Councils, for example, are county-based planning, advisory, and coordinating bodies that focus on enhancing the delivery of human services in their county.<sup>182</sup> The Children's Interagency Coordinating Councils similarly plan and coordinate cross-system care for children with behavioral health issues.<sup>183</sup> The County Human Service Departments then provide services, such as child care, mental health, and substance abuse treatment.<sup>184</sup>

The DCF also provides technical assistance for the implementation of their programs. For example, the DCF partnered with the Rutgers Behavioral

<sup>172</sup> *DCF Executive Management*, *supra* note 168.

<sup>173</sup> *Id.*

<sup>174</sup> *Id.*

<sup>175</sup> *Id.*

<sup>176</sup> *Id.*

<sup>177</sup> *Id.*

<sup>178</sup> *Safe, Healthy, Connected: DCF In The 21st Century*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/strategic.html> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/4PW5-4JHT>].

<sup>179</sup> *About Us*, *supra* note 163; *Meet the Commissioner*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/commissioner/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/3SMC-ES5P>].

<sup>180</sup> OFF. OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND BELONGING, STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2025, <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/deb/DEB-StrategicPlan-2023-25.pdf> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/57V2-4R2Q>]; *Striving for Success in Transitions to Adulthood - New Jersey – DCF Adolescent Services Strategic Plan*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/oas/OASStrategicPlan120611.pdf> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/7FWX-BPZ2>].

<sup>181</sup> *Community Resources*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/resources/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/7TRAU-4AKG>].

<sup>182</sup> *Id.*

<sup>183</sup> *Id.*

<sup>184</sup> *Id.*

Research & Training Institute to provide training for the Children's System of Care workforce.<sup>185</sup> The DCF also publishes webinars, implementation guides, and resource documents for practitioners and families.<sup>186</sup>

The DCF influences state level budget and policy decisions. The DCF Commissioner provides yearly budget testimony to the New Jersey Senate and Budget Appropriations Committee, for example.<sup>187</sup> Most recently, in May 2023, Commissioner Norbut Beyer's testimony applauded the Governor's proposal to allocate \$126 million to the DCF and outlined the specific ways they would use the funding.<sup>188</sup> The Office of Policy and Regulatory Development and Office of Advocacy also identify trends and develop policies in support of the DCF's goals.<sup>189</sup>

The Office of Family coordinates youth, family, and community engagement, ensuring that constituents with relevant lived experiences influence policy and practice decisions.<sup>190</sup> Its Youth Council, comprised of twenty-four members ages fourteen to twenty-three, works with the DCF staff to identify key issues and priorities, recommend policies and practices, and train and educate adults.<sup>191</sup> The Fatherhood Engagement Committee similarly makes policy and practice recommendations to the DCF.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> *Training and Technical Assistance*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/csc/training/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/CQY6-4WFH>].

<sup>186</sup> *Id.*; *Office of Strategic Development*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/strategicdev/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/NSK8-HUVF>]; Allison Metz et al., *An Implementation Science and Service Provider-Informed Blueprint for Integration of Evidence-Based/Evidence-Informed Practices into New Jersey's Child Welfare System*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM. (Sept. 2017), [https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/strategicdev/Blueprint-ExecutiveSummary\\_Sept2017.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/strategicdev/Blueprint-ExecutiveSummary_Sept2017.pdf) [<https://perma.cc/MF6E-PNPE>]; *Publications*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/news/publications/index.html> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/4CU7-HTFW>].

<sup>187</sup> *Budget Information*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/budget/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/L3JU-B5XG>].

<sup>188</sup> *May 4, 2023 - NJ Department of Children and Families Budget Testimony, FY 2024 from Commissioner Christine Norbut Beyer*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., [https://www.nj.gov/dcf/news/testimony/230504\\_senatebudget.html](https://www.nj.gov/dcf/news/testimony/230504_senatebudget.html) (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/P2R8-TPRV>].

<sup>189</sup> *Office of Policy and Regulatory Development*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://dcfpolicy.nj.gov/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/GWL3-VQKE>]; *Office of Advocacy*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/oa/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/78UP-ZVKB>].

<sup>190</sup> *Family Voice*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/ofv/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/8PK8-AC55>].

<sup>191</sup> *Id.*

<sup>192</sup> *Id.*

Collecting data and performing evaluations are key components of the DCF. The Office of Analytics and System Improvement, Office of Applied Research and Evaluation, and Office of Quality all utilize qualitative and quantitative data to report on outcomes and ensure continuous quality improvement.<sup>193</sup> The New Jersey Child Welfare Data Hub, in collaboration with Rutgers University, publicly disseminates data, and reports are published analyzing the outcomes.<sup>194</sup> A recent annual report shows that after twelve months of enrolling in Home Visiting services, ninety-eight percent of families had no child protective findings.<sup>195</sup> Over ninety percent of survivors of domestic violence reported gaining knowledge of strategies and community resources to enhance their safety through DCF programs.<sup>196</sup> The DCF safely reduced the number of New Jersey children living in foster care by over ten percent from 2017 to 2018.<sup>197</sup> Eighty-five percent of middle and high schoolers felt that DCF services helped them have greater success in school and prepare for life after school.<sup>198</sup> Compared to the national average, New Jersey's children are sixty-six percent less likely to be victims of maltreatment.<sup>199</sup>

## 2. Maryland Governor's Office of Children & Children's Cabinet

The Maryland Governor's Office of Children is responsible for the well-being of Maryland's children and families.<sup>200</sup> The Office was initially created in 1978

<sup>193</sup> *Analytics and System Improvements*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/divisions/asi/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/D6YP-DDMF>].

<sup>194</sup> *New Jersey Child Welfare Data Hub*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/childdata/protection/hub/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/BC6X-JBRD>]; *CP&P Data Portal Home*, RUTGERS SCH. OF SOC. WORK INST. FOR FAMS., <https://njchilddata.rutgers.edu/portal/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/9WGX-U2XL>]; *N.J. Child Welfare Data Hub*, RUTGERS SCH. OF SOC. WORK INST. FOR FAMS., <https://njchilddata.rutgers.edu/#home> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/C6LD-9ED6>]; *Analytics and System Improvements*, *supra* note 193; *Children's Interagency Coordinating Council Dashboard*, STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/childdata/interagency/index.html> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/3WAT-CYH3>].

<sup>195</sup> STATE OF N.J. DEP'T OF CHILD. AND FAM., 2018 ANNUAL REPORT 12 (2018), <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/childdata/exitplan/FY18-DCF.Annual.Report.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/Y9DX-MX9D>].

<sup>196</sup> *Id.*

<sup>197</sup> *Id.* at 14.

<sup>198</sup> *Id.* at 12.

<sup>199</sup> *Id.* at 15.

<sup>200</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., MARYLAND CHILDREN'S CABINET (2014), <https://forumfyi.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Childrens-Cabinet-Profile-Maryland-2015.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/CEA5-QBMQ>] [hereinafter F. FOR YOUTH INV., MARYLAND CHILDREN'S CABINET]; *Governor Hogan Launches New Initiatives to Maximize Resources and Results for Maryland's Children, Youth, and Families*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD. (Apr. 22, 2015), <https://goc.maryland.gov/cc/> [<https://perma.cc/YR46-87DR>]; *Priority 8: Establish Community Schools and Wraparound Supports*, LEARNING POL'Y INST.,

through legislation; however, in 2005, the law expired and the office was re-established by Executive Order.<sup>201</sup> The Maryland Children's Cabinet, housed within the Governor's Office of Children, leads the integrated support system.<sup>202</sup> The Cabinet is chaired by the Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services and includes the Superintendent of the Department of Education, the Secretaries of the Departments of Budget and Management, Disabilities, Health and Mental Hygiene, Human Resources, Juvenile Services, Labor, Licensing & Regulation, and Public Safety & Correctional Services.<sup>203</sup>

The Children's Cabinet identifies big picture goals in a strategic plan that is re-issued every three years.<sup>204</sup> In the current three-year plan, the Children's Cabinet's priorities include reducing childhood trauma and adverse childhood experiences, promoting strengths-based models, promoting research-based practices, and addressing racial and ethnic disparities with intentionality.<sup>205</sup> The 2019 strategic plan prioritized juvenile justice diversion, trauma informed care, and preventing out of state placements.<sup>206</sup> The 2015 strategic plan focused on reducing the impact of incarceration of children and families, improving outcomes for disconnected youth, and reducing childhood hunger and homelessness.<sup>207</sup>

An Implementation Team operationalizes the goals of the Children's Cabinet.<sup>208</sup> The Implementation Team is composed of the heads of each of the member agencies and chaired by the Deputy Director of the Governor's Office for Children.<sup>209</sup> It is responsible for developing an action plan for funding, technical

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<https://restart-reinvent.learningpolicyinstitute.org/establish-community-schools-and-wraparound-supports> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/3PXJ-4JZU>].

<sup>201</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., MARYLAND CHILDREN'S CABINET, *supra* note 200; MD. CHILD.'S CABINET, THREE-YEAR PLAN 2021–2023, at 6 (2020), <http://goccp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/Childrens-Cabinet-Three-Year-Plan-2021-2023.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/UM3Z-449P>]; MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., Exec. Order 01.01.2005.34 (June 9, 2005), [https://goc.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2013/11/ex\\_order1.pdf](https://goc.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2013/11/ex_order1.pdf) [<https://perma.cc/7NCQ-3UHK>].

<sup>202</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., MARYLAND CHILDREN'S CABINET, *supra* note 200; F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN'S CABINETS, *supra* note 80, at 5, 9.

<sup>203</sup> *Maryland Children's Cabinet*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH AND VICTIM SERVS., <https://goccp.maryland.gov/mdchildrenscabinet/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/9Z8G-SZ7A>].

<sup>204</sup> MD. CHILD.'S CABINET, THREE-YEAR PLAN, *supra* note 201, at 5.

<sup>205</sup> *Id.* at 7.

<sup>206</sup> *Id.* at 9.

<sup>207</sup> *Id.* at 8; MD. CHILD.'S CABINET, MARYLAND CHILDREN'S CABINET THREE-YEAR PLAN VISION FOR CROSS-AGENCY COLLABORATION TO BENEFIT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES (Mar. 10, 2017), <https://goc.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2015/09/Childrens-Cabinet-Three-Year-Plan-2017-FINAL.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/C82T-7CPD>].

<sup>208</sup> MD. CHILD.'S CABINET, THREE-YEAR PLAN, *supra* note 201, at 16.

<sup>209</sup> *Id.* at 16–17.

assistance, and evaluation of performance and outcomes.<sup>210</sup> The Implementation Team also oversees all committees, councils, and task forces.<sup>211</sup>

One of the most impressive features of Maryland's integrated support system is its coordination between the state and local levels of government. All twenty-four counties in Maryland are required to establish county-level coordinating bodies called Local Management Boards (Boards).<sup>212</sup> The Boards were initially created through an Executive Order, but later codified through legislation in the 1990s and again in 2006.<sup>213</sup> Each administrative agency that participates at the state level, such as the Department of Human Resources, is also required to participate at the county level.<sup>214</sup> The Boards work to serve the overall vision and goals of the state level Children's Cabinet.<sup>215</sup> In return, the state provides funding, training, and technical assistance to help the Boards coordinate and implement programs.<sup>216</sup> In 2022, the Boards received a total of \$16 million in funding.<sup>217</sup> A Policies and Procedures Manual goes into great detail about the roles

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<sup>210</sup> *Id.* at 16.

<sup>211</sup> MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., INTERAGENCY PLACEMENT COMMITTEE: LOCALLY COORDINATED INTERAGENCY CASE MANAGEMENT (2017), <https://goc.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2018/03/Interagency-Placement-Committee-12-21-2017.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/A9KZ-P2R8>].

<sup>212</sup> PHYLLIS ROZANSKY, MARYLAND'S LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARDS 4, <https://goccp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/LMBs-making-a-difference-20-years.pdf> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/MS5B-4VN6>].

<sup>213</sup> S. B. 294, 2006 Reg. Sess. (Md. 2006); H.B. 301, 2006 Reg. Sess. (Md. 2006); *History of Local Management Boards*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://goc.maryland.gov/history-of-lmbs/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/VTF7-LH52>]; ROZANSKY, *supra* note 212, at 4.

<sup>214</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., MARYLAND CHILDREN'S CABINET, *supra* note 200, at 1; *Maryland Children's Cabinet*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVS., *supra* note 203; MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVS., THE STATE OF MARYLAND POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL FOR LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARDS 15, 46 (2021), <https://goccp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/LMB-Manual-07-01-2021.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/PF8L-2XLC>].

<sup>215</sup> CAROLINE CNTY., MD., COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN STATE OF MARYLAND AND CAROLINE COUNTY, MARYLAND 1–2 (2017), <https://www.carolinemd.org/DocumentCenter/View/2895/FY18-Boilerplate-Caroline> [<https://perma.cc/KCF3-6MDD?type=image>]; MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FUNDING 6 (2017), [https://goc.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2015/10/JCR\\_LMB-Allocations-Final.pdf](https://goc.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2015/10/JCR_LMB-Allocations-Final.pdf) [<https://perma.cc/M3KH-8VDE>]; MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVS., THE STATE OF MARYLAND POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL FOR LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARDS, *supra* note 214.

<sup>216</sup> MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FUNDING, *supra* note 215, at 4.

<sup>217</sup> Press Release, Md. Governor's Off. of Crime, Prevention, Youth, and Victim Servs., Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services Announces Funding Availability for Community Partnership Agreements in Fiscal Year 2022 (Feb. 2, 2021), <https://goccp.maryland.gov/governors-office-of-crime-prevention-youth-and-victim>

and responsibilities of the Boards, Children's Cabinet, Implementation Team, and Office of Children.<sup>218</sup>

For over fifteen years, the Governor's Office for Children has collected data and reported on outcomes for the integrated support system.<sup>219</sup> Data is collected annually on eight results and twenty-eight corresponding indicators.<sup>220</sup> For example, the "children are successful in school" result has the corresponding indicators of standardized test scores for reading and math, chronic absenteeism rates, and career readiness upon graduation.<sup>221</sup> Some of the indicators are also disaggregated by racial and ethnic subgroups.<sup>222</sup> Each year, the office publishes a Child-Well Being Scorecard that evaluates the impact of its initiatives.<sup>223</sup>

Throughout the years, the Children's Cabinet has seen varying degrees of success. For example, the rate of teenage pregnancies fell from nineteen percent in 2013 to fourteen percent in 2019.<sup>224</sup> The rate of referral for juvenile felony offenses fell twenty-two percent from 2013 to 2019.<sup>225</sup> The rate of youth over sixteen not in school and not working decreased three percent from 2013 to 2019.<sup>226</sup> On the other hand, high school graduation rates have not changed much

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-services-announces-funding-availability-for-community-partnership-agreements-in-fiscal-year-2022/ [https://perma.cc/E8KU-TVMT].

<sup>218</sup> *Maryland Children's Cabinet*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVS., *supra* note 203.

<sup>219</sup> MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FUNDING, *supra* note 215, at 7; ROZANSKY, *supra* note 212, at 5; *Child Well-Being Scorecards*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://goc.maryland.gov/reportcard/> (last visited Dec. 2, 2023).

<sup>220</sup> MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FUNDING, *supra* note 215, at 7–8; ROZANSKY, *supra* note 212, at 5.

<sup>221</sup> *Child Well-Being Scorecards*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 219.

<sup>222</sup> *Health Insurance Coverage: % of Children Who Have Health Insurance Coverage*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://embed.clearimpact.com/Measure/Embed/100008266> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/42N6-ZCLA] (linked on *Maryland's Child Well-Being Scorecard: Tracking Outcomes for Maryland's Children and Families*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://goc.maryland.gov/wellbeingscorecard/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/QM89-P324] [hereinafter *Tracking Outcomes*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD.]); *Births to Adolescents: Adolescent Birth Rate per 1,000 women (ages 15–19 years)*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://embed.clearimpact.com/Measure/EmbedGraph/99042661> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/UU2D-NVE4] (linked on *Tracking Outcomes*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD.).

<sup>223</sup> MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD FUNDING, *supra* note 215, at 7; *Child Well-Being Scorecards*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 219; DEITZ & PARISI, *supra* note 48.

<sup>224</sup> *Births to Adolescents*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 222.

<sup>225</sup> *Juvenile Felony Offenses: 11 through 17: Rate of Referrals per 100,000*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://embed.clearimpact.com/Measure/EmbedGraph/99073969> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/NH7J-GCE9] (linked on *Tracking Outcomes*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 222).

<sup>226</sup> *Youth Disconnection: Percent of Youth Ages 16–24 Not in School and Not Working*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://embed.clearimpact.com/Measure/EmbedGraph/100008274> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/LN88-YDPP] (linked on *Tracking Outcomes*, MD. GOVERNOR'S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 222).

over the years.<sup>227</sup> The percentage of middle school students reporting a depressive episode increased twelve percent from 2016 to 2021.<sup>228</sup> The rate of children enrolled in publicly funded pre-K decreased eight percent from 2016 to 2022.<sup>229</sup> Chronic absenteeism rose fourteen percent from 2016 to 2022.<sup>230</sup> Factors outside of the control of the Children’s Cabinet, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and increases in social media use, may influence results, but the data is useful in identifying areas of impact and shifting priorities over the years.

### 3. Indiana Commission on Improving the Status of Children

The Commission on Improving the Status of Children (“CISC”) in Indiana, established through legislation in 2013, is a coordinating body with the mission of integrating systems to improve the well-being of children.<sup>231</sup> The CISC is uniquely housed within the Indiana Supreme Court and has a chair that rotates annually among the three branches of government.<sup>232</sup> Specifically, the chair rotates between a judge or justice, a legislative member from the House or Senate, and a member of the Governor’s staff.<sup>233</sup> The CISC’s structure provides stability and continuity, as well as strong commitment by each branch of government.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> *High School Completion: 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate*, MD. GOVERNOR’S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://embed.clearimpact.com/Measure/EmbedGraph/100008289> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/299P-WYWQ>] (linked on *Tracking Outcomes*, MD. GOVERNOR’S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 222).

<sup>228</sup> *Mental Health: % of Public School Students [in Grades 6–8] Reporting Depressive Episode*, MD. GOVERNOR’S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://embed.clearimpact.com/Measure/EmbedGraph/100008286> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/WU78-UHTF>] (linked on *Tracking Outcomes*, MD. GOVERNOR’S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 222).

<sup>229</sup> *Percent of Children Enrolled in Publicly Funded PreK the Year prior to Kindergarten*, MD. GOVERNOR’S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://embed.clearimpact.com/Measure/EmbedGraph/100008283> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/5NXJ-X9DU>] (linked on *Tracking Outcomes*, MD. GOVERNOR’S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 222).

<sup>230</sup> *Chronic Absenteeism: Students enrolled in school at least 10 days who are absent for 10% or more days*, MD. GOVERNOR’S OFF. FOR CHILD., <https://embed.clearimpact.com/Measure/EmbedGraph/100008251> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/W2RL-V2LB>] (linked on *Tracking Outcomes*, MD. GOVERNOR’S OFF. FOR CHILD., *supra* note 222).

<sup>231</sup> IND. CODE § 2-5-36-9; *About*, COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., <https://www.in.gov/children/about/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/4973-AHEM>].

<sup>232</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., CONTINUITY THROUGH CRISIS, *supra* note 134, at 2; F. FOR YOUTH INV., SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES: HOW INDIANA CONTINUES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE 1 (2020), <https://forumfyi.org/knowledge-center/indiana-cabinetization/> [<https://perma.cc/MV4R-LC62>] [hereinafter F. FOR YOUTH INV., SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES].

<sup>233</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES, *supra* note 232, at 1.

<sup>234</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN’S CABINETS, *supra* note 81, at 5; F. FOR YOUTH INV., SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES, *supra* note 232, at 2; COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 2 (2023), <https://www.in.gov/children/files/RolesandResponsibilities.Updated.02152023.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/86Z5-MZVL>].

The CISC is made up of the heads of twenty state government bodies and a few full-time staff members.<sup>235</sup> The rotating chair is responsible for determining the agenda for meetings, providing guidance to the executive staff, and proposing task force and committee chairs.<sup>236</sup> The Executive Director testifies, drafts reports, oversees operations, supports implementation, and conducts research.<sup>237</sup> The Executive Committee supports the Executive Director by developing meeting agendas and researching issues of interest.<sup>238</sup> The CISC includes the heads of the Office of the Governor, Department of Education, Department of Child Services, Supreme Court, General Assembly, Prosecuting Attorneys Council, Public Defender Council, Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Mental Health and Addiction, Department of Health, Department of Correction, Division of Youth Services, Budget Agency, and the Office of the Attorney General.<sup>239</sup> There are also ten task forces and committees, including an Educational Outcomes Task Force, staffed by agency members and over 300 volunteers across the state.<sup>240</sup>

The CISC regularly conducts an extensive needs assessment and develops strategic plans with long-term goals.<sup>241</sup> Each goal has specific objectives and qualitative and quantitative benchmarks set to track progress.<sup>242</sup> For example, the strategic plan for 2023–2025 includes the goals of improving the health and safety of vulnerable children, increasing access to quality mental health and addiction services, improving educational outcomes, and improving outcomes for children in the justice system.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, *supra* note 234, at 2.

<sup>236</sup> *Id.*; *Meetings*, COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., <https://www.in.gov/children/meetings/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/CJ95-QF5Q>].

<sup>237</sup> COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD IN IND., ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, *supra* note 234, at 5.

<sup>238</sup> *Id.* at 2.

<sup>239</sup> COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2 (2020), <https://web.archive.org/web/20230518180928/https://www.in.gov/children/files/CISC-Org-Chart.Nov-2020.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/A8LE-BK6A>].

<sup>240</sup> *About*, COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., *supra* note 231; COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., IMPACT EVALUATION 3 (2022), <https://www.in.gov/children/files/CISC-Impact-Evaluation-Report.10.13.22.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/GV3M-W9FA>]; COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., ORGANIZATIONAL CHART, *supra* note 239, at 1.

<sup>241</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES, *supra* note 232, at 1; F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN’S CABINETS, *supra* note 81, at 8.

<sup>242</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES, *supra* note 232, at 2.

<sup>243</sup> COMM’N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., STRATEGIC PLAN, 2023–2025, at 2–3 (2023), <https://www.in.gov/children/files/Strategic-Plan-Adopted-2023.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/QA7F-4PDW>].

Each year, the CISC publishes a report to the governor, legislative council, and chief justice outlining the commission's accomplishments.<sup>244</sup> The activities range in scope from policy reform to local technical assistance. For example, the CISC routinely tracks legislation affecting children and recommends changes to state law, including expanding developmental screenings for youth, ensuring child victims of human trafficking have attorneys, reducing barriers to licensing for addiction counselors, and raising the age youth can stay in collaborative care.<sup>245</sup> During the COVID-19 pandemic, the CISC developed an online enrollment program for food benefits.<sup>246</sup> They have also developed local implementation guides on topics like data sharing and trauma screening.<sup>247</sup> The CISC also launched a virtual youth engagement summit, in partnership with the VOICES non-profit, that allowed hundreds of policy makers, educators, and service providers to hear from youth that are directly impacted by the system.<sup>248</sup>

The CISC does not have a single shared data platform; but in 2022, it commissioned an evaluation that pulled from various data sources to assess the impact of its work over the last nine years.<sup>249</sup> Overall, the commission made improvements for vulnerable children.<sup>250</sup> For example, from 2013 to 2022, there were significant decreases in juvenile probation referrals, juvenile detention, delinquencies, and children without health insurance.<sup>251</sup> However, the evaluation also identified areas that needed increased attention. For example, rates of repeat child maltreatment and days in foster care increased.<sup>252</sup> The evaluation found that the CISC's ability to form collaborations and relationships was ranked as one of the biggest areas of impact, as well as its youth engagement, data sharing, and policy reform efforts.<sup>253</sup> The study also found that the commission needed to increase awareness of its tools and resources to community partners.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN'S CABINETS, *supra* note 81, at 1; COMM'N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., ANNUAL REPORT (2022), <https://www.in.gov/children/files/2022-ciscar.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/CP8B-FYH4>]; *Reports*, COMM'N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., <https://www.in.gov/children/reports/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/TF44-7F7K>].

<sup>245</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHILDREN'S CABINETS, *supra* note 81, at 1; COMM'N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., IMPACT EVALUATION, *supra* note 240, at 13; *Reports*, COMMISSION ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILDREN IN INDIANA, *supra* note 244.

<sup>246</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., CONTINUITY THROUGH CRISIS, *supra* note 134, at 3.

<sup>247</sup> COMM'N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., IMPACT EVALUATION, *supra* note 240, at 18; see *Information Sharing Guide*, DATA SHARING AND MAPPING COMM. OF COMM'N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., <https://publicaccess.courts.in.gov/isdg/#/categories>. (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/5JUM-LZVH>].

<sup>248</sup> F. FOR YOUTH INV., SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES, *supra* note 232, at 1.

<sup>249</sup> COMM'N ON IMPROVING THE STATUS OF CHILD. IN IND., IMPACT EVALUATION, *supra* note 240, at 3.

<sup>250</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>251</sup> *Id.* at 4.

<sup>252</sup> *Id.*

<sup>253</sup> *Id.* at 10, 12.

<sup>254</sup> *Id.* at 10.

#### 4. Other Examples

New Jersey, Maryland, and Indiana are among the most robust examples in the country, but there are also other models of integrated support systems. Though most are missing some of the essential components of successful integrated support systems, they still offer benefits to children and families in need.

Today's efforts to create integrated support systems can be seen as modern iterations of historical attempts to encourage interagency collaboration in service of low income families.<sup>255</sup> As several scholars have noted, our nation seems to episodically "rediscover" poverty and cycle through shallow reform efforts to provide communities in need with resources.<sup>256</sup> Early initiatives go as far back as the late 1800s with settlement houses that provided immigrant communities with a comprehensive set of services.<sup>257</sup> Later, in the 1930s, the New Deal aimed to coordinate services for families in need through programs like Head Start for preschool aged children and their families.<sup>258</sup> War on Poverty programs in the 1960s built on those initiatives with place-based efforts like Model Cities and Community Action Agencies.<sup>259</sup> In the 1980's, more narrow federal attempts at service integration were made through the Education of the Handicapped Act and the Child and Adolescent Service System Program.<sup>260</sup> In the 1990s and early 2000s, more place-based cross-sector efforts, like "comprehensive community initiatives" and Urban Renewal and Empowerment Zones began to proliferate.<sup>261</sup> In the late 2000s and 2010s, the Obama administration built on those efforts with Promise Neighborhoods, Choice Neighborhoods, Performance Partnership Pilots, and Promise Zones.<sup>262</sup> While some of these initiatives were able to establish a record of accomplishment, most succumbed to capacity issues, lack of funding, competing political priorities, and the technical complexities of integration.<sup>263</sup>

The early federal emphasis on integration served as a catalyst for state and local initiatives.<sup>264</sup> Today, there is some level of integration present in most

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<sup>255</sup> HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 9.

<sup>256</sup> *Id.* at 8, 61.

<sup>257</sup> BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 9.

<sup>258</sup> BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 8, 10.

<sup>259</sup> BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 8, 12.

<sup>260</sup> BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1.

<sup>261</sup> HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 10–11.

<sup>262</sup> *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133.

<sup>263</sup> HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 10–11, 16; BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1.

<sup>264</sup> BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1; HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 1, 12.

schools.<sup>265</sup> For example, many states have policies that require teachers to report suspected domestic child abuse to child welfare agencies.<sup>266</sup>

But there have also been more expansive efforts. Maryland and Indiana's coordinating bodies, described in detail above, are good examples of what are often referred to as state children's cabinets. Generally, children's cabinets are collaborative government bodies tasked with improving the well-being of children through the coordination of state agencies and community stakeholders.<sup>267</sup> They can go by different names, including interagency councils or commissions, and there are over fifty of them throughout the U.S.<sup>268</sup> While some have comprehensively integrated systems, like those described in the prior section, others have made more modest efforts.<sup>269</sup> For example, many children's cabinets only concentrate on early childhood, like Washington's Early Learning Advisory Council or Connecticut's Early Childhood Cabinet.<sup>270</sup> Others focus on discrete aspects of integrated support systems, like California's Interagency Coordinating Council on Early Intervention or West Virginia's Commission to Study the Residential Placement of Children.<sup>271</sup>

Children's cabinets can also be created at the local level. Local children's cabinets are a good option when there is no appetite for a coordinating body at the

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<sup>265</sup> BRUNER ET AL., *supra* note 1; JEFFREY R. HENIG, ET AL., COLLECTIVE IMPACT AND THE NEW GENERATION OF CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIONS FOR EDUCATION 1 (2016), <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Collective-Impact-and-the-New-Generation-of-Cross-Sector-Collaboration-for-Education.pdf> [https://perma.cc/2WAC-ZRYJ].

<sup>266</sup> *Policies and Procedures for Mandated Reporting*, U.S. DEP'T. OF EDUC., [https://rems.ed.gov/ASM\\_Chapter2\\_Reporting.aspx](https://rems.ed.gov/ASM_Chapter2_Reporting.aspx) (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/8E6L-UA9L].

<sup>267</sup> NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 7; F. FOR YOUTH INV., CONTINUITY THROUGH CRISIS, *supra* note 134, at 1; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 5.

<sup>268</sup> See F. FOR YOUTH INV., STATE-LEVEL COORDINATING BODIES PROFILES, <https://forumfyi.org/ccn/state/state-level-coordinating-bodies-profiles/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/Y784-DFDK]; F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 9–10.

<sup>269</sup> See, e.g., GAINES, *supra* note 61, at 5; NAT'L GOVERNORS ASS'N, *supra* note 62, at 11, 15; DEITZ & PARISI, *supra* note 48; KAN. CHILD.'S CABINET AND TRUST FUND, <https://kschildrenscabinet.org/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/5G8P-4Q6B].

<sup>270</sup> See, e.g., F. FOR YOUTH INV., 2020 STATE POLICY SURVEY, *supra* note 80, at 13; Early Learning Advisory Council, WASH. STATE DEPT. OF CHILD. AND FAMS., <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/about/community-engagement/elac> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/8D4R-CHXF]; CONN. EARLY CHILDHOOD CABINET, <http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/32YU-YSM4].

<sup>271</sup> W. V. COMM'N TO STUDY RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT OF CHILD., [http://www.wvdhhr.org/oos\\_comm/](http://www.wvdhhr.org/oos_comm/) (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/EL8R-5N5W]; *State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) on Early Intervention Overview*, CAL. DEP'T OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVS., <https://www.dds.ca.gov/services/early-start/state-icc-on-early-intervention-overview/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [https://perma.cc/FKD8-3JST].

state level. However, they are not able to perform high level tasks, like advocating for policy reform or integrating data systems, to the degree state level bodies can. Across the country, there are over thirty children's cabinets at the city or county level.<sup>272</sup> For example, the Harvard Graduate School of Education helped launch children's cabinets in six cities, including Oakland and Boston.<sup>273</sup>

Community schools are another method of integrating supports and services.<sup>274</sup> Community schools, funded through grant programs, are schools that think beyond academic practices by incorporating integrated student supports, expanded learning, community engagement, and collaborative leadership.<sup>275</sup> Several use community schools grants to organize small scale service integration.<sup>276</sup> For example, a community schools program in Grand Island, Nebraska focuses on bringing services like immunization clinics, dental check-ups, yoga, and financial planning into schools.<sup>277</sup> Others have developed more robust integrated support systems through community schools grant funds. The Los Angeles County of Education used community school funding to create a county level children's cabinet, integrating a dozen county agencies with the education system.<sup>278</sup>

There are also state laws and regulations that break off a piece of integrated support systems without attempting large scale integration. For example, California is developing a Cradle to Career Data System to integrate data.<sup>279</sup> Oregon has developed a common developmental screening metric for health and early learning systems.<sup>280</sup> New York has created a ten-point plan for improving outcomes for children enrolled in Medicaid.<sup>281</sup>

Today's federal initiatives often promote service integration for specific populations. For example, the McKinney-Vento Act requires state and local inter-agency coordination for homeless children.<sup>282</sup> The Individuals with Disabilities

<sup>272</sup> *Local Children's Cabinet Network*, F. FOR YOUTH INV., <https://forumfyi.org/ccn/local/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/SN87-DFS9>].

<sup>273</sup> *By All Means Communities of Practice*, EDREDESIGN LAB, <https://edredesign.org/by-all-means-initiative> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/M2JW-CBL9>]; *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133.

<sup>274</sup> Darling-Hammond et al., *Implications for Educational Practice*, *supra* note 28, at 131.

<sup>275</sup> MEIER ET AL., *supra* note 156, at 2.

<sup>276</sup> CMTYS. IN SCHS AND LEARNING POL'Y INST., *supra* note 29, at 2.

<sup>277</sup> See DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 110–34.

<sup>278</sup> See MAIER ET AL., *supra* note 156; Anna Maier, *County-Level Coordination Provides Infrastructure, Funding for Community Schools Initiative*, LEARNING POL'Y INST. (Jun. 9, 2020), <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/covid-county-coordination-community-schools> [<https://perma.cc/GJ3L-SQHW>]; *Priority 8: Establish Community Schools and Wraparound Supports*, *supra* note 200.

<sup>279</sup> See *Making Data Public – for the people*, CAL. CRADLE TO CAREER DATA SYS., <https://c2c.ca.gov/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/7GR2-NM9Q>].

<sup>280</sup> See SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 27.

<sup>281</sup> See *id.*

<sup>282</sup> See NAT'L CTR. FOR HOMELESS EDUC., BEST PRACTICES IN INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION BRIEF SERIES (2018), <https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Working-Together.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/Y2YR-D3EX?type=image>].

Education Act requires state interagency coordinating councils for children with disabilities.<sup>283</sup> The Children's Mental Health Initiative, housed within the Substance Abuse Mental Health Administration, started a System of Care approach that has been adopted in states throughout the country.<sup>284</sup>

Non-government led place-based initiatives have also sought to provide children with an array of services. For example, the Harlem Children's Zone, which served as the inspiration for Obama's place-based initiatives, was founded by a non-profit organization and funded by philanthropists.<sup>285</sup> Strive Together, created by a group of college presidents, business executives, school district leaders, and community based organizations, is a network of collective impact communities dedicated to supporting students inside and outside of the school.<sup>286</sup> Say Yes to Education, founded by wealthy investment banker George Weiss, creates community leadership councils in cities across the country.<sup>287</sup> City Connects helps schools develop a comprehensive and tailored support plan for every student in need.<sup>288</sup> Communities in Schools works to bring community services into schools through full-time site coordinators.<sup>289</sup>

At the practice level, different models can be implemented through the integrated support systems listed above. For example, schools using Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) have on-site teams that meet regularly to discuss students and design interventions.<sup>290</sup> MTSS uses a three-tiered model, where universal interventions provide evidence-based teaching approaches that improve the school climate for all students.<sup>291</sup> Targeted interventions include programs and support for small groups of at-risk students.<sup>292</sup> And intensive interventions develop individualized support for students with high needs.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> See 20 USC § 1441 (2004); 34 CFR §§ 303.600–605 (2011); SILOW-CARROLL ET AL., *supra* note 39, at 6; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 2.

<sup>284</sup> See FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 15–17; NAT'L TECH. ASSISTANCE AND EVALUATION CENTER, *supra* note 20, at 1; POWELL ET AL., *supra* note 10, at 5.

<sup>285</sup> HENIG ET AL., PUTTING COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN CONTEXT, *supra* note 17, at 22–23.

<sup>286</sup> *Id.* at 24–25.

<sup>287</sup> *Id.* at 23–24.

<sup>288</sup> BOS. COLL. MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILD., *supra* note 13, at 2, 34; *About, CITY CONNECTS*, <https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/lynch-school/sites/city-connects/about.html> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/9US8-79GS>].

<sup>289</sup> DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 127; *Our Mission and History*, CMTYS. IN SCHS., <https://www.communitiesinschools.org/about-us/mission-and-history/> (last visited Dec. 20, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/8R8V-ZXG9>].

<sup>290</sup> FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 6–11; BOS. COLL. MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILD., *supra* note 13, at 33–34; Darling-Hammond et al., *Implications for Educational Practice*, *supra* note 28, at 130–31; DARLING-HAMMOND ET AL., DESIGN PRINCIPLES, *supra* note 1, at 115–26.

<sup>291</sup> FREEMAN, *supra* note 33, at 8–10.

<sup>292</sup> *Id.* at 10.

<sup>293</sup> *Id.* at 10–11.

## CONCLUSION

The science of learning and development tells us that adversity not only impacts a child's well-being, but also their academic performance. Yet, this knowledge remains underutilized in education, leaving children and families without access to necessary support. Schools must address the needs of the whole child through integrated support systems that weave education together with other social service agencies.

States seeking to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children and adults should consider the essential components of integrated support systems and examples in New Jersey, Maryland, and Indiana. Most states have some level of integration taking place and can build off existing efforts. States that already have state level coordinating bodies, for example, can learn from the essential components in this Article to strengthen and expand their initiative.<sup>294</sup> States that only have small-scale integration efforts, on the other hand, can fold them into a new state-wide system of integrated supports.<sup>295</sup>

Decades of reform efforts aimed at increasing educational equity have only marginally moved the needle. New evidence-based practices for closing achievement gaps are necessary to create equal opportunity. Though there is no silver bullet, integrated support systems are an important part of the patchwork of programs in an equitable education system.

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<sup>294</sup> *Aligning People*, *supra* note 133.

<sup>295</sup> *Id.*