

Collaborating for Student Success

Exploring Mental Health
Careers in West Virginia
Schools: **A Resource for
College Students**



Collaborative Partners



Key Understandings for College Students

1

Student support personnel roles are shaped by policies and professional frameworks.

2

Mental wellness is vital to student academic and career success.



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3

Requirements and salaries for school-based mental health professionals vary from those for clinical professionals.



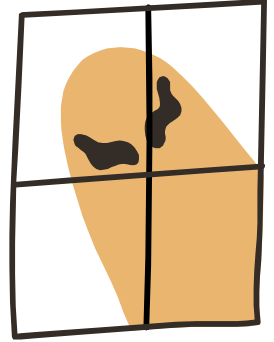


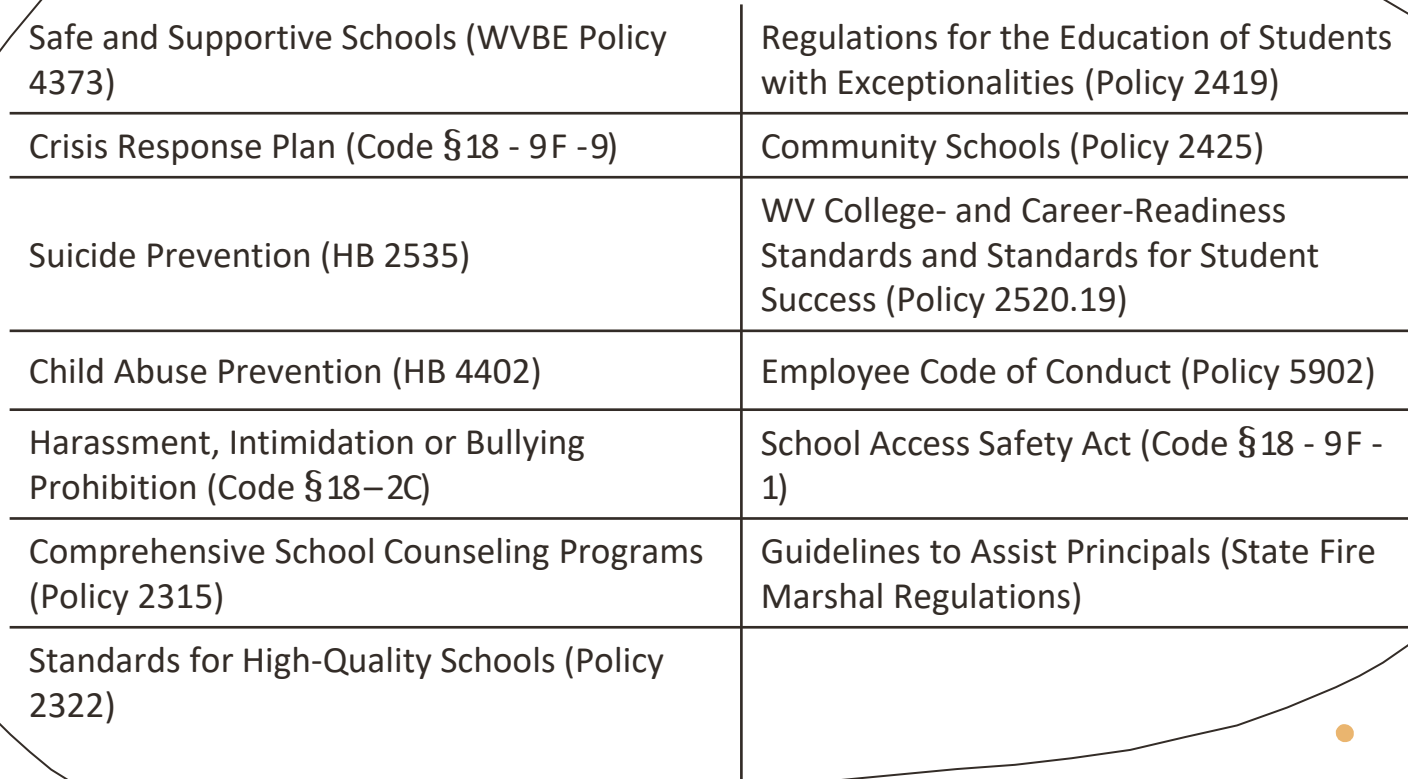
WV State Code §18-9A-2

identifies **professional student support personnel** as staff who provide direct social and emotional support services to students. This definition also includes staff who address chronic absenteeism.

Policies, Codes, and Regulations

Policies, codes, and regulations focused on creating safe and supportive learning environments shape the roles and responsibilities of professional student support personnel.





Safe and Supportive Schools (WVBE Policy 4373)	Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities (Policy 2419)
Crisis Response Plan (Code §18 - 9F -9)	Community Schools (Policy 2425)
Suicide Prevention (HB 2535)	WV College- and Career-Readiness Standards and Standards for Student Success (Policy 2520.19)
Child Abuse Prevention (HB 4402)	Employee Code of Conduct (Policy 5902)
Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying Prohibition (Code §18–2C)	School Access Safety Act (Code §18 - 9F - 1)
Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (Policy 2315)	Guidelines to Assist Principals (State Fire Marshal Regulations)
Standards for High-Quality Schools (Policy 2322)	



**Student Support
Personnel Are a
Vital Asset**

Professional Student Support Personnel



School
Attendance
Directors



Communities In
Schools
Coordinators



School
Behavior
Interventionists



21st Century
Community
Learning
Centers



Community
Partners



School
Counselors



School
Psychologists



School Social
Workers



School Nurses

Why are student support personnel so vital in schools?





1 in 5

children are diagnosed with a
mental disorder ever year

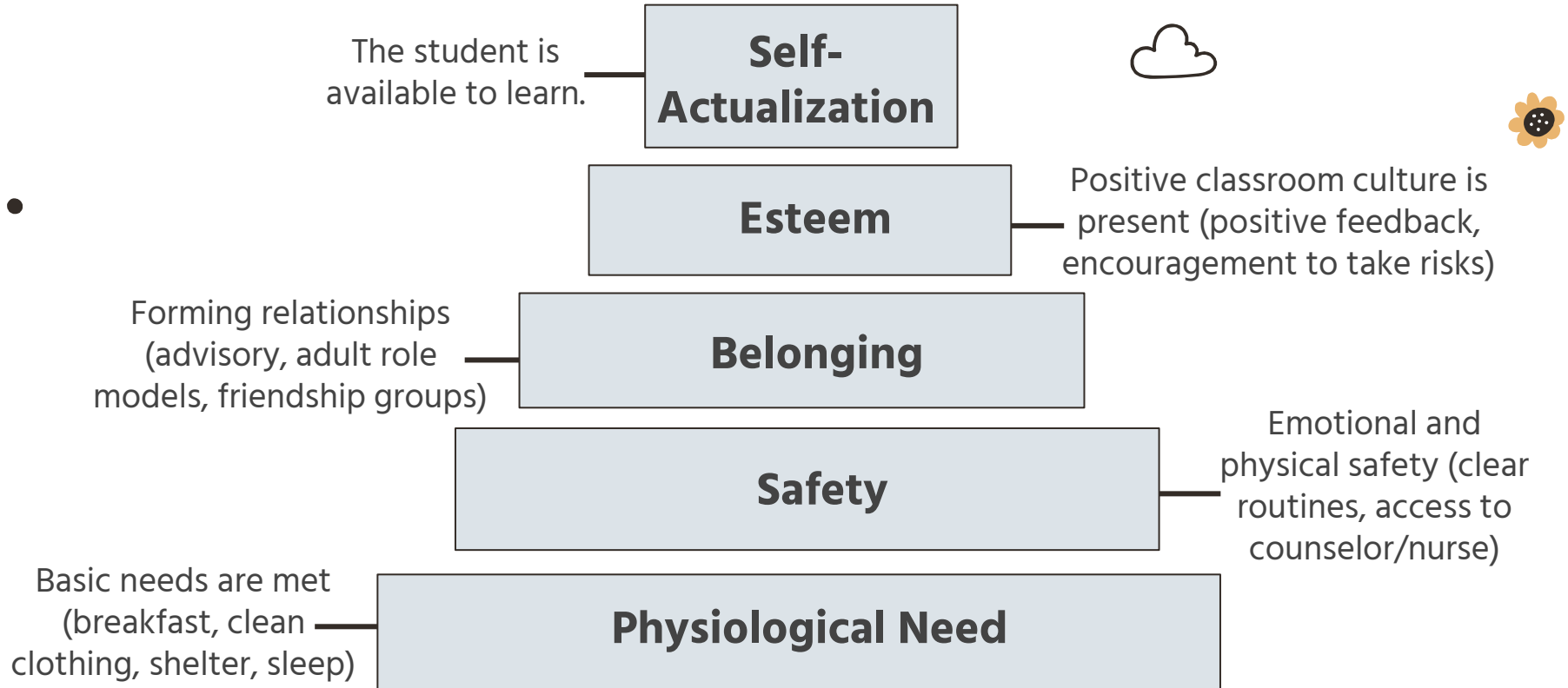
5 million

American children and
adolescents suffer from a serious
mentall illness

more than 12 million

children live in poverty

Maslow's Hierarchy of School Needs



When student support personnel are integrated members of the school community, they ...

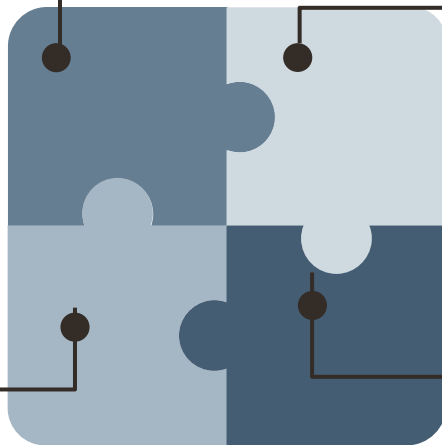


empower principals
to effectively
deploy resources

improve access
to services

coordinate,
evaluate, and adjust
services to meet
student needs

collaborate with
community providers to
meet intense or clinical
needs of students





Understanding the Roles

Student Support Personnel Share Common Goals

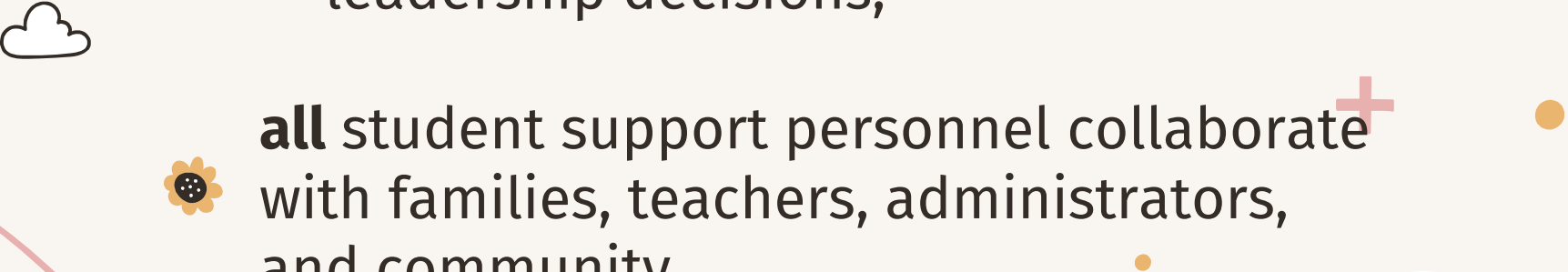
- Wellness
- Learning
- Safety
- Success






While student support personnel roles vary by county and school based on

- 
- identified needs,
 - financial allocation decisions, and
 - leadership decisions,



 **all** student support personnel collaborate with families, teachers, administrators, and community.


School Attendance Directors



- **Ensure** compliance with attendance and truancy policies
- **Collaborate** with principals and other staff to promote and organize comprehensive approaches to improving attendance, beginning with prevention
- **Support** at-risk students to promote regular school attendance
- **Provide** interventions that support regular attendance



School Behavior Interventionists and Board-Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs)

- **Conduct** functional behavior assessments
 - **Identify** behavior goals, **design** intervention plans, and **adjust** plans based on data
 - **Develop** and **implement** data-collection and monitoring systems to support interventions and student behavior change
 - **Collect** and **analyze** data related to positive behavior strategies for all students
 - **Support** special educators with IEP development, research-based instructional strategies, and behavior management
- 




Behavior Interventionists and Board-Certified Behavior Analysts



Behavior Interventionist

- Work in general education or special education settings
- Typically requires a master's degree and is a general title that may look different in various districts

Board-Certified Behavior Analyst

- Work with special education students on the Autism spectrum or with other disorders that cause severe, challenging behaviors
 - Requires a master's degree, specialized training, and passing score on the national BACB certification exam
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School Counselors



- **Analyze** data to identify student and schoolwide needs and challenges
- **Develop** and **implement** a comprehensive counseling program
- **Ensure** staff promote integrated delivery of standards
- **Teach** schoolwide, standards-based classroom lessons
- **Provide** short-term individual/small-group counseling
- **Refer** students for long-term supports
- **Support** students with academic planning and goal setting
- **Improve** access, achievement, and opportunities for every student
- **Advocate** for students and student-focused meetings
- **Provide** crisis response

School Nurses



- **Protect** and promotes student health
- **Advocate** for and **coordinate** student-centered care
- **Bridge** health care and education
- **Collaborate** to design systems that allow individuals and communities to develop to their full potential



School Psychologists



- **Follow** NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated Psychological Services
- **Identify** behavior goals, **design** intervention plans, and **adjust** plans based on data
- **Support** students' social, emotional, and behavioral health
- **Evaluate** student eligibility for special education services within a multidisciplinary team
- **Refer** students and coordinate community support services
- **Identify** and **resolve** academic barriers to learning
- **Design** and **implement** student progress monitoring systems
- **Strengthen** connections between school, home, and community

School Social Workers



- **Remedy** barriers to learning created by social factors.
- **Provide** supports to high-risk students to prevent truancy and dropping out of school.
- **Support** students' social, emotional, and life adjustment to school and/or society
- **Link** school and community services to promote and support students' academic and social success



Communities In Schools Coordinators

- **Engage** school support team to implement CIS model
- **Build relationships** with school, community, and volunteers
- **Lead** annual needs assessment
- **Develop** and **implement** school support plan
- **Coordinate** delivery of evidence-based services
- **Provide** services for students at risk of dropping out
- **Monitor** and **adjust** services to maximize impact
- **Evaluate effectiveness** at school and student levels
- **Lead** the school support team in reporting




Licensed Mental Health Professionals*



- **Provide** individual therapeutic interventions for guardian-approved student
- **Conduct** small-group psychotherapy interventions
- **Co-create** and implement supports for all tiers
- **Collaborate** with students, teachers, parents, administrators, and communities to enhance student mental-health support
- **Carry** caseloads of up to 50 clients at any one time
- **Provide** professional development centered on prevention, mental health, and wellness

*Either hired by school board or employed by community mental health agency





Community Partners

- West Virginia Common Ground
- Handle with Care
- Prevent Suicide WV
- School-based health centers
- WV Behavior and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center












Mental and Behavioral Health Career Pathways



What are your career options?



- Youth Development
 - Counseling
 - Psychology
 - Social Work
 - Nursing
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Youth Development Professional

1. **Non-degree or Certificate:** Childcare entry-level staff often only need a high school diploma, experience working with children, and to pass a background check. You can earn a Child Development Specialist certificate to build skills and knowledge.
 2. **Associate's Degree:** Afterschool staff work daily with students, organize afterschool or childcare programming, and may supervise staff. You can work in a variety of youth organizations, such as churches, Girl/Boy Scouts, and YMCAs.
 3. **Bachelor's Degree:** You can work with non-profit youth service or child and family welfare organizations, university extension programs, educational corporations, government agencies, or recreation centers.
 4. **Master's or Doctoral Degree:** You can work as a professor, evaluator, or researcher.
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Bachelor's Degree

There are a variety of social services careers you can pursue with a **bachelor's degree** in counseling, psychology or social work:

- Case manager
- Social & Community Services Manager
- Community Outreach Worker
- Eligibility Worker
- Child Protective Services Worker/Child Welfare Worker
- Human Services Specialist
- Juvenile Court Liaison
- Probation Officer
- Rehabilitation Case Worker
- Social & Human Services Assistant



Master's Degree

When you earn a Master's Degree in a social or behavioral health, you specialize in the field of your choice.





Master's in Counseling

A **master's degree** in counseling can open the door to multiple careers, depending on credentials, including



- Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
- Certified School Counselor
- Substance Use Disorder Counselor
- Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder & Mental Health Counselor
- Rehabilitation Counselor



Master's in Psychology



There are a variety of of psychology careers you can pursue with a **master's degree**:

- Licensed School Psychologist
- Industrial Organizational Psychologist
- Licensed Clinical Psychologist
- School Psychologists



Master 's in Social Work •

There are a variety of social work careers you can pursue with a **master's degree** (LGSW, LCSW, LICSW): 

- Child & Family Social Worker
- Child Welfare Worker
- Therapist/Counselor
- Social Worker
- Social Work Supervisor
- Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder Social Worker
- School Social Worker
- Medical Social Worker
- Social Work Supervisor
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Behavior Analyst
- Healthcare Social Worker
- Manager Non-Profit Organization



Nursing Degrees

Nursing degrees range from an associate's degree (2 years of college) to a master's degree. There are a variety of careers you can pursue as a registered nurse (RN) that support both medical and behavioral health:

- Hospitals and physicians' offices
- Home healthcare services
- Nursing care facilities
- Outpatient clinics
- Schools
- Specialty areas include: Addiction, Critical Care, Genetics, Neonatal, Public Health, and Surgical



Doctorate Degrees

You may choose to further your education and earn a doctorate degree in any of these fields of study. A doctorate degree will enable you to:



- **Teach** at the college level.
- **Research** to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field of study.
- **Supervise** or be a leader in your workplace.



Interested in a Career? Start Early!



College

- Volunteer as a Peer Counselor or Natural Helper, volunteer to start a program. or organize caring projects such as clothing or food drives.
- Shadow or talk with a practicing professional.
- Volunteer in places that connect you with people from all walks of life or with a specific group, such as children or the elderly.
- Learn and practice Reflective Listening techniques.



References



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- Working Together to Support the Whole Child, Oklahoma Education <https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/SCHOOL-BASED%20MENTAL%20HEALTH%20PROFESSIONALS.pdf>