A ROADMAP & GUIDEBOOK TO IMPLEMENTING A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO LEARNING & HEALTH AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Destination: Healthy Schools Successful Students, A Roadmap & Guidebook to Implementing a Collaborative Approach to Learning and Health at the School Level is a stellar example of what can happen when a desire for systems change and collaborative work exists among agencies.

In 2006, RMC Health, the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the Center for Research Strategies embarked on a journey to create a step-by-step process for schools implementing Coordinated School Health. The original Roadmap to Healthy Schools has been utilized by hundreds of Colorado schools and adapted for use in other states.

To create the Destination, RMC Health and the Colorado Department of Education have drawn heavily on the experiences of Colorado schools that are implementing Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child under conditions that range from simple to challenging. The Destination includes a revised Roadmap written as a step-by-step guide for school health teams just getting started and a Guidebook for experienced teams seeking in-depth support in specific areas.

As with all collaborative efforts, thanks are in order. It is with great appreciation that we recognize:

• The Colorado Health Foundation for funding this and other important projects focused on healthy schools and students
• Colorado school health team members and District Health and Wellness Coordinators for their input and feedback
• DuffyDoyen Consulting for their research, organization, and writing of this tool
• Creative Media Solutions, Inc., for design and layout
• The Colorado Education Initiative for the creation of Colorado’s Best Practice Guidelines for Schools

For more information or to download the Destination: Healthy Schools Successful Students, A Roadmap & Guidebook to Implementing a Collaborative Approach to Learning and Health at the School Level, visit rmc.org/destination.
Why a Collaborative Approach
Schools are one of the most efficient systems for reaching children and youth to provide health services and programs, as approximately 95 percent of all U.S. children and youth attend school. At the same time, integrating health services and programs more deeply into the day-to-day life of schools and students represents an untapped tool for raising academic achievement and improving learning.

Studies demonstrate that when children’s basic nutritional and fitness needs are met, they attain higher achievement levels. Similarly, the use of school-based and school-linked health centers—ensuring access to needed physical, mental, and oral health care—improves attendance, behavior, and achievement. The development of connected and supportive school environments benefits teaching and learning, engages students, and enhances positive learning outcomes. The development of a positive social and emotional climate increases academic success, reduces stress, and improves positive attitudes toward self and others.

In turn, academic success is an excellent indicator for the overall well-being of youth and a primary predictor and determinant of adult health outcomes. Individuals with more education are likely to live longer; experience better health; and practice health-promoting behaviors such as exercising regularly, refraining from smoking, and obtaining timely health care check-ups and screenings. These positive outcomes are why many of the nation’s leading educational organizations recognize the close relationship between health and education, as well as the need to foster health and well-being within the educational environment for all students.

The Need for a New Model
The traditional Coordinated School Health (CSH) model has been a mainstay of school health in the United States since 1987. Disseminated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the CSH model has provided a distinct framework for organizing a comprehensive approach to school health. In addition to the CDC, many national health and education organizations have supported the CSH approach. However, the approach has been viewed by educators primarily as a health initiative and has consequently gained limited application across the education sector at the school level.

The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model combines and builds on elements of the traditional WSCC approach and the whole child framework. ASCD and the CDC developed this expanded model—in collaboration with key leaders from the fields of health, public health, education, and school health—to strengthen a unified and collaborative approach to learning and health.

Expanded Components
The traditional CSH model contained eight components, while the WSCC model has ten, expanding the two original components of Healthy and Safe School Environment and Family and Community Involvement into four distinct components. The expansion focuses additional attention on the effect of the Social and Emotional Climate in addition to the Physical Environment. Family and Community Involvement is divided into two separate components to emphasize the role of community agencies, businesses, and organizations, as well as the critical role of Family Engagement. This change marks the need for greater emphasis on both the psychosocial and physical environments as well as the ever-expanding roles that community agencies and families must play. Finally, this new model also addresses the need to engage students as active participants in their learning and health.1

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO LEARNING AND HEALTH

WHOLE SCHOOL
WHOLE COMMUNITY
WHOLE CHILD

A Collaborative Approach to Learning and Health
The beginning of any journey is full of both anticipation and uncertainty, and the journey of creating a healthy school is no different. The Destination: Healthy Schools Successful Students provides a structure for you to track your milestones and log your progress along the way. When you get stuck, the Destination provides guidance, direction, and tips for success for school health co-leaders, team members, and school administrators.

The Destination is written in two sections. The Roadmap: Getting Started with School Health is written primarily for schools that are just starting to implement school health initiatives or programs. It is also appropriate for school teams that have had significant turnover in members or administrators, and who will benefit from going back to the basics. The Roadmap has step-by-step guidance for creating a team with administrator support, conducting an assessment, and implementing and evaluating a School Health Improvement Plan. Like any good map, we hope it will be dog-eared, bent, and marked with coffee stains from use. The Guidebook: Creating a Healthy School Culture is appropriate for all school teams, and will be particularly relevant for experienced school teams that have been in place for more than one school year. The Guidebook includes research, strategies, and sample documents to create a healthy, sustainable school culture.
The **Roadmap** starts at the very beginning of the school health journey and is intended to be chronological. It includes information about creating the infrastructure for a school health team, and provides step-by-step guidance about conducting a school health assessment and using the results to write a School Health Improvement Plan. These are foundational steps to create a school health program and, ultimately, a healthy school culture.

The **Roadmap** includes Mile Markers with information and tips for each part of the process. At the end of each section, the “traffic light” will help you pause and assess your readiness to move on to the next section. Travel Log worksheets will help your team document progress and create a written history of your process.

**Roadmap Mile Markers:**
1. Get your administrators on board
2. Identify leaders for the school health team
3. Assemble a school health team
4. Conduct an assessment of your current school health efforts
5. Identify a priority for the School Health Improvement Plan
6. Write a School Health Improvement Plan
7. Implement the School Health Improvement Plan

The **Guidebook** is relevant for all school teams, especially teams that have already become proficient at conducting an assessment and writing/implementing a School Health Improvement Plan. It includes research, strategies, and sample documents to “go deeper” by strengthening administrative support, using data effectively, building the team infrastructure, and ultimately creating a school culture in which health and academics are inextricably intertwined.

While the **Roadmap** is chronological in nature, the **Guidebook** can be used as needed. For example, a school team that has implemented many different School Health improvement Plans may decide that they need to use data more effectively for planning and/or to measure their success. Another school team may want to be able to articulate the research linking health and academics more readily and to provide that information to others. Some teams may need to recharge and energize themselves to become high performing. The **Guidebook** has resources to support these kinds of efforts, including examples from successful schools.

**The Guidebook includes the following Travel Guides:**
- Carpooling with your Community Partners
- Creating a High Performing Team
- Getting Others to Notice and Support Your Efforts
- Making Meetings Matter
- Using Data to Drive Decisions

The **Guidebook** will be updated periodically and is available at www.rmc.org/destination.

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**NOTE:**
The Destination: Healthy Schools Successful Students was created for use by building-level school health teams. Every part of the document is downloadable at www.rmc.org/destination.
THE ROADMAP:
Getting Started with School Health

- Get Your Administrators on Board ..................................................... 1
- Identify Leaders for the School Health Team .................................. 4
- Assemble a School Health Team ......................................................... 7
- Conduct an Assessment of Your Current School Health Efforts .......... 11
- Identify a Priority for the School Health Improvement Plan ............... 14
- Write a School Health Improvement Plan ......................................... 17
- Implement the School Health Improvement Plan ............................ 22
THE ROADMAP: GETTING STARTED WITH SCHOOL HEALTH

The way that the healthy school journey starts is different for each school and often depends on how funding is provided and whether there is a District Health and Wellness Coordinator. Here are two examples of how the process could unfold:

**SCENARIO 1**
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS AWARDED FUNDING

1. District obtains funding to support 5–7 school health teams
2. District Health and Wellness Coordinator is hired
3. District Health and Wellness Coordinator meets with Principals
4. Principals indicate that their schools will participate
5. District Health and Wellness Coordinator and Principal select co-leaders and convene a team

**SCENARIO 2**
THE SCHOOL IS AWARDED FUNDING

1. Interested staff at the school write a grant proposal for funding
2. Principal signs off on proposal and agrees to support the project
3. School receives a grant award
4. Principal and interested staff work together to identify co-leaders and convene a team

Regardless of how your school gets started in Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child, all of the Mile Markers in the Roadmap will provide guidance and support. Some schools may implement Mile Markers 1 and 2 in reverse order.
For each Mile Marker, a traffic light icon will help you think through whether or not you have a “green light” to move forward. If you feel like you are “yellow” you might want to take another look, and a “red” light means you should definitely double check that you’ve got all the pieces of that Mile Marker in place before you head down the road. Remember, foundational work is important to do correctly before you tackle more advanced markers.

Alert! Think through the information provided when you see this icon. It provides some additional guidance to consider that may contribute to your success.

Fuel up! This icon could give you more “juice” (e.g., more content, a tip) to help you get better mileage in your journey.

The best road trips are the ones you want to remember! The Travel Logs are there to do a couple of things:

a) Help your team process logistical details (worksheets, checklists, etc.)

b) Provide a record of decisions and destinations arrived at in case you get on a side trip along the way, new members join the team, or new drivers/leaders become a part of the journey!

Points of interest to make notes on your journey to a healthier school.

Roadside Assistance: Where your District Health and Wellness Coordinator can assist you. Don’t hesitate to ask for help!
REFERENCES

