



Overcoming Barriers to Effective Collaboration

On School Mental Health System and Service Delivery Between Schools and Healthcare Centers, Mental/Behavioral Health Agencies, and/or Community-Based Organizations



What are the barriers to effective collaboration?

- Mission mismatch
- Role confusion
- Difficulty integrating potential collaborators' systems, policies, or culture
- Confusion about funding streams
- Tension between productivity and referral targets vs needs of students
- Difficulty moving beyond episodic care
- Lack of staff time to coordinate
- Lack of physical space in building
- Lack of support from leaders
- Lack of existing relationships between potential collaborators
- Focus solely on individual student vs family and social context
- Lack of peer and educator support

How do we overcome these barriers?

- Teach communication and collaboration skills
- Clarify school mental health funding stream options
- Change Medicaid productivity and referral targets
- Workforce development: raise wages for sustainability and provide more funding for new hires
- Make mental health a priority at the federal DOE level
- Create networking and collaboration opportunities
- Ensure clinicians understand intergenerational trauma and consider trauma-informed practices in treatment
- Increase mental health literacy for Pre-K-12 teachers and students
- Increase opportunities for peer support in school buildings

What resources and supports are needed to achieve effective collaboration?

- Free training and technical assistance on collaboration
- Federal revision and guidance on Medicaid and other funding streams
- Higher minimum wages for mental health providers
- Permanent state and federal funding for mental health providers in schools
- Federal DOE directives around mental health in schools
- Mandates for training in intergenerational trauma and trauma-informed treatments
- Required mental health literacy training for school staff
- Increased training and resources for peer support programs