

APHA Center for School, Health and Education



Dear APHA Supporter,

As the only institution educating all students regardless of their race, religion, social class, special needs or personal characteristics, public schools are well-positioned to reclaim the promise of lifelong success for all populations. With the right supports, they become the ideal setting for integrating wraparound services to conveniently meet students' diverse emotional, social and health needs. Public schools are a vital way to reach some of our nation's most marginalized youth.

Extensive research points to educational attainment as the leading pathway through which individuals can achieve their full potential and positively contribute to our economy. As such, we all have a responsibility for supporting schools in closing academic achievement gaps that persist. Currently, American Indian/Alaska Native, African American, and Hispanic students lag behind their Caucasian and Asian/Pacific Islander peers and have poorer outcomes.

To revive the quality of public education and ensure better trajectories for all youth, we must invest in and elevate promising and proven practices. The APHA Center for School, Health and Education honors public schools during American Education Week (Nov. 13-17, 2017). Over the past five years, we have supported public school educators, educational support professionals and school-based health centers who are prepared to work in an integrated way to advance student success.

Our [Program to Improve Graduation](#) provides schools and their support teams with an evidence-based public health framework for buffering the negative impact of social disadvantages (i.e., food insecurity, intermittent running water at home, and other environmental stressors) on the entire student population. Some examples of the responsive strategies in place at participating schools include, food pantries, de-escalation rooms, social-emotional learning curriculums, and de-stigmatized, universally accessible washers, dryers and showers. We are excited to see what additional strategies will evolve from these teams who are prioritizing students' basic needs to facilitate a strengthened focus on academics.

Learn more about how to strengthen and support public schools:

[School Connectedness: A Digital Story](#)

[Public Health Prevention in Schools: A Resource Guide](#)

[School-Based Healthcare: Advancing Educational Success and Public Health](#)

Join the conversation on Twitter using **#AEW2017** and find out more about [American Education Week](#)

At a time when public education is under attack, it is the responsibility of national, state and local public health practitioners, legislators, community members and other stakeholders to support the restoration and preservation of this fundamental right.

CSHE challenges you to educate, advocate and act where you can have a meaningful impact.

Please stay connected as we share key outcomes from our partner schools.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly Nelson, MPH
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