

WHOLE CHILD DEFINITION

ABOUT

Whole Child has been discussed in the Top 10 in 10 goals, the Michigan ESSA Plan, and various other initiatives including Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS). As the department moves to whole child, whole learner focus support, it is imperative that a department definition be defined. After a series of workgroup meetings and feedback session, the following definition and visuals were designed and adopted.

DEFINITION

The “whole child” is a unique learner comprised of interacting dimensions, such as cognitive, physical, behavioral, social and emotional. The whole child lives within multiple and interconnected environments including home, school, and community.



MDE WHOLE CHILD APPROACH

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) believes caring for, supporting, and educating the whole child is an essential part of promoting academic achievement and excellence throughout the P-20 system. Having a common definition and understanding of the whole child sets the stage for action. The practical aspects of promoting the whole child requires an approach that encompasses evidence-based practices. MDE supports the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model or WSCC, a national leading model. The WSCC model was developed in collaboration by education and public health practitioners (ASCD and the Centers for Disease Control).



The WSCC model provides a broad framework for addressing both academic and non-academic needs of students in an integrated approach. The model helps how children and youth achieve a higher level of academic excellence through greater motivation and engagement in learning derived from meeting their basic needs (to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged). This whole child approach applies Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs for 21st Century children and youth and provides a practical understanding of the supports and collaboration necessary to promote student success.

For more information on the WSCC model go to:
<http://www.ascd.org/programs/learning-and-health/wsc-model.aspx>