Over the next two years, Ohio will invest $675 million in a newly created fund that provides nonacademic, wraparound services to students. This money (part of the state budget, HB 166) can be used by schools in several ways — for example, mental health counseling, mentoring and after-school programs, child nutrition services, help for homeless youths, and training in the area of trauma-informed care. Schools will partner with local organizations and treatment providers to deliver these wraparound services.

According to the Ohio chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the $675 million investment marks a “once in a generation type of achievement for mental health advocates.” Ohio’s recent legislative actions reflect a trend across the Midwest, where many laws have been enacted in recent years to boost school-based mental health services.

- Indiana’s SB 325, which will help schools and families develop plans for at-risk children to receive mental health services.
- Illinois’ HB 1561, which allows school districts to use a local-option, 1-cent county sales tax to hire mental health professionals.