School social workers support students’ mental, social, and emotional well-being by providing direct and indirect services to students, their families, and the school community, helping our students thrive.

School social workers are trained experts in:

- Mental Health
- Crisis Awareness
- Community Resources
- Behavior

They support:

- **Students** by providing crisis intervention, individual and group counseling
- **Families** by assisting parents in accessing and utilizing school and community resources
- **School Personnel** by providing staff with essential information to better understand factors (cultural, societal, economic, familial, health) affecting a student’s performance and behavior
- **School-Community Liaison** by advocating for new and improved community/school service to meet the needs of students and families

Recommended ratio:

1 school social worker per 250 students¹

Current ratio in PA:

1 school social worker per 3,416 students

Some counties have zero LEAs that employ school social workers

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¹ “Cops and No Counselors: How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students,” American Civil Liberties Union, March 4, 2019, [https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf](https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/030419-acluschooldisciplinereport.pdf)
SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

CERTIFICATION

Professionals working in schools should be:

- Educated
- Trained
- Experienced
- Prepared

SUPPORT HOUSE BILL 390

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS PREPARE PROFESSIONALS FOR SUCCESS IN SCHOOLS AND FOR STUDENTS.

Employing mental health professionals in schools allows us to serve kids where they are, but there are challenges to navigate when performing this work in a school setting.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS PROVIDE PROFESSIONALS WHO:

- Understand the education system and are integrated into the school community
- Collaborate the work of educators, administrators, parents, and their team of specialized instructional support professionals
- Commit to long-term student success and continuity of care
- Adhere to the high standards required for other professionals in schools, including the Educator Code of Conduct and Act 48 continuing education requirements