Readiness to Engage Schools in CalAIM

Recognizing that CalAIM services can fundamentally change the lives of children and youth and acknowledging that children and youth enrollment in ECM and Community Supports lags behind adult utilization, Intrepid Ascent, with the support of Chapman Consulting and BluePath Health, created this “readiness to engage schools in CalAIM” guide for ECM and Community Supports providers to gauge where they are on the spectrum of engaging schools in CalAIM work and learn about tangible steps to get to the next phase of the spectrum.

Why schools?

Schools are the primary touchpoints for early intervention, as children spend most of their waking hours at school. Teachers, counselors, nurses, and other school staff are often the first to notice early indicators of social, emotional, behavioral, or physical health challenges. Many schools also already operate multidisciplinary triage teams, such as CARE or COST Teams, which are multidisciplinary groups of school providers (teachers, psychologists, CSCs, etc.) who meet regularly to proactively identify students who need social, emotional, behavioral, academic, and basic-needs support. Embedding CalAIM ECM and Community Supports resources and referrals into these established workflows can connect students to care faster. School-based outreach creates a trusted, direct pathway to ensure that students are learning about and being referred to these Medi-Cal benefits they may already be entitled to.

ENGAGEMENT ROADMAP: STEPS TO OUTREACH

Use the engagement roadmap below to reflect on the status of your organization's engagement with schools around CalAIM services and referrals. Once you've placed your organization on the readiness spectrum, use the roadmap steps (found on slides 3-7) to learn tactical and tangible next steps, considerations, and access resources for moving to the next phase of the readiness spectrum.



Curious

My organization has had **no engagement** with schools around CalAIM

Outreach

My organization has **done outreach** or made initial contact with schools to engage around CalAIM

Awareness

My organization has **shared resources** with schools about CalAIM at an awareness & information sharing level

Connection & Planning

My organization has **connected** with schools about engaging with CalAIM & are now in the **planning phase**

Implementation

My organization has **created pathways or workflows** to generate school-based CalAIM referrals

ENGAGEMENT ROADMAP:
STEPS TO GET FROM CURIOUS TO OUTREACH

1 Curious

Steps to take to get to outreach:

- Those who have not yet engaged with school around CalAIM should begin with **contact mapping**. Make a list of folks that you want or need to bring to the table for an initial introduction to your organization and to CalAIM. This may include:
  - School Principals
  - Teachers
  - District Superintendents
  - District Directors of Student Programs or Directors of Student Services
  - Community Schools Coordinators (CSCs) and Directors
  - County Offices of Education
  - District & Charter McKinney-Vento/Foster Youth Liaisons
  - County Foster and Homeless Liaisons
  - Anyone you think would benefit from learning about CalAIM services
- Find their contact information. You may be able to find school staff and admin email addresses through district-wide directories on your county's Office of Education website. If no contact information is available at the county-level, you may need to go to school districts' or school sites' individual websites to find the appropriate staff.
- Prepare your outreach, including how you will introduce yourself and why you are reaching out, the resources you will provide, and what your call to action is.

Considerations:

- In California, schools are generally closed from around late May/early June to around mid-August. While administrators may still be on school campuses, you will most likely not have access to most school providers (teachers, CSCs, nurses, etc.) during these summer weeks.

Resources:

- Consult Intrepid Ascent's Children & Youth Outreach Toolkit for sample outreach email templates and resources to share with schools.



ENGAGEMENT ROADMAP:
STEPS TO GET FROM OUTREACH TO AWARENESS

2

Outreach

Steps to take to get to awareness:

- Those who have done outreach should think about **following up and offering extra resources**, like a one-on-one conversation or a CalAIM 101 training for school providers, to expand awareness of CalAIM programs at school sites.
- Consider creating a flyer or visual to help people register for your event. On the flyer or in outreach, you should explain how learning about CalAIM services can be beneficial to the students at their school, and why they as school providers are in the unique position to share information with families and refer students into the program.
- Continue to make yourself available to school providers to have exploratory conversations, being mindful of the school year calendar.

Considerations:

- Building trust takes time, and trust is needed to be involved in the school community. Even if folks do not respond right away, they may still be benefiting from the resources you provide or the learning sessions you host.

Resources:

- Check out Intrepid Ascent's original CalAIM 101 for Children and Youth presentation facilitated in February 2025.
- Check out the BluePath Health's Alameda ECM and Community Supports Guide for more information about these CalAIM services.



ENGAGEMENT ROADMAP: STEPS TO GET FROM AWARENESS TO CONNECTION & PLANNING

3

Awareness

Steps to take to get to connection & planning:

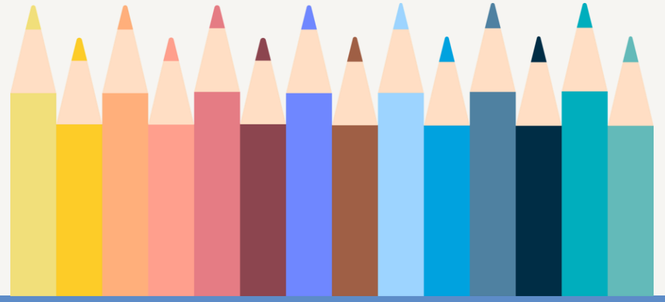
- Continue **building rapport with schools and test their interest in a referral pilot**. The ideal space to test a referral workflow would be with the school's CARE/COST Team. By providing the CARE/COST Team with information about children and youth populations of focus and how to make a referral to their local MCP, they can incorporate CalAIM referrals into the triage workflow they already use.
- Consider discussing with the school which Populations of Focus are most relevant to their community, and get curious about trying out a small referral test pilot with a defined group (e.g. McKinney-Vento and foster youth)
- Build relationships with the school's Community Schools Coordinator and CARE/COST Team, LEAs, Directors of Student Programs/Services at COEs, county foster youth and homeless youth liaisons. These are the folks that will be able to best support the planning of a workflow.

Considerations:

- Trust is everything in school communities. Creating and fostering local relationships with the school-based providers and teams will take time and patience, but it is necessary to support the students and families in your community.

Resources:

- The California School-Based Health Alliance created a Guide to CalAIM and ECM for Schools and School Health Partners that helps school staff and partners understand how CalAIM works and how to use it to connect students and families to meaningful support.
- Check out the ECM Referral Workflow that Intrepid Ascent created with the CARE Team at DeJean Middle School to pilot a school-site ECM referral pathway.



ENGAGEMENT ROADMAP: STEPS TO GET FROM CONNECTION & PLANNING TO IMPLEMENTATION

4

Connection & Planning

Steps to take to get to implementation

- **Meet with the school's CARE/COST Team about testing the workflow for a set period of time** (e.g. a trimester or school year)
- Create a workflow together, utilizing their existing processes and including CalAIM resources.
- Bring the key players to the table. Define roles, timelines, and a cadence for checking in to debrief, refine the workflow, and look at data.

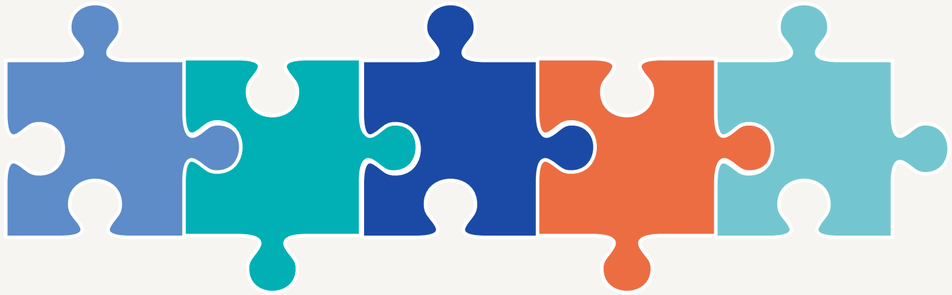


Considerations:

- It can take time for referrals to get up and running. Support the CARE/COST Team by making adjustments to the workflow and being mindful of the school calendar

Resources:

- On page 12 of the California School-Based Health Alliance's Guide to CalAIM and ECM for Schools and School Health Partners, you can read a case study about DeJean Middle School - the Contra Costa County school site that piloted an ECM referral workflow during the 2025-2026 school year.
- Check out Intrepid Ascent's white paper on best practices and lessons learned engaging with schools



ENGAGEMENT ROADMAP:
STEPS TO MAINTAIN SUSTAINABILITY

5

Implementation

Steps to maintain sustainability

- Once the school year ends or your pilot is over, **don't let go of the relationships you have created!** Our communal goal is to support children and youth in getting the resources they deserve and are eligible for through Medi-Cal across the Bay Area and beyond.
- Share what you've learned with your local MCPs!



Considerations:

- In order to sustain your progress, ensure you are collecting and monitoring measurable data on any work done with your school partners. This data should reflect your pilot project's potential impact and enable data-informed decision-making with your partners, such as more precise resource allocation and continuous programmatic improvement.

Resources:

- Check out Intrepid Ascent's public CalAIM Data Dashboards that visualizes ECM and Community Supports enrollment and utilization data in Contra Costa County, San Diego County, and surrounding counties. Contra Costa and San Diego specific data comes from each county's Managed Care Plans. Cross-county comparison data comes from DHCS' Quarterly ECM and Community Supports Implementation Report.
- Check out DHCS' CalAIM ECM and Community Supports Quarterly Implementation Report, where the state provides a comprehensive overview of ECM and Community Supports implementation to date and shares the latest data.

RESOURCES

For questions or more information about CalAIM, visit the Collaborative PATH CPI Pages and Resource Centers:

- CalAIM – Chapman Consulting LLC
- Alameda County CalAIM PATH Collaborative Resource Center - BluePath Health
- Contra Costa County PATH CPI - Intrepid Ascent

BluePath HEALTH

CHAPMAN CONSULTING LLC

Intrepid Ascent