Session Description
Healthy children perform better academically than children who struggle with poor mental and physical health. Uncontrolled chronic illnesses and unhealthy behaviors, such as physical inactivity and too much screen time, are linked to low grades and test scores and low educational attainment. What’s more, the health and academic patterns established from early childhood into the school years predict future health in the adult years.

This session highlights the link between health and educational attainment and features options for supporting successful and healthy learners. Speakers will highlight innovative strategies for promoting health, reducing risky behaviors and enhancing so-called “protective factors” that all contribute to a student’s well-being and academic achievement.

The audience will understand:
- State spending on health and education and value of coordination of investments;
- Evidence that shows a strong relationship between physical and mental health and academic performance; and
- Policies that support health and academic outcomes alike

9:15 am- 9:20 am Welcome and Overview
Bruce Feustel, moderator

9:20 am- 9:40 am Connection between Health and Academics
John Ratey, MD, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School

9:40 am –10:00 am State Policy Options to Improve Children’s Health
Dana Carr, Consultant, Moringa Policy Consulting

10:00 am - 10:25 am Legislative Panel and Questions for Speakers
Senator Deb Soholt, South Dakota
Senator Mimi Stewart, New Mexico

10:25 am – 10:30 am Wrap-up