Leadership Initiative:  
Addressing Barriers to Learning & Teaching  
and Re-engaging Disconnected Students

Major Activities Update

- On October 29, 2009, this initiative hosted a webinar entitled: Strengthening School Improvement by Developing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching. The Center's co-directors explored why a system of learning supports is imperative for schools to succeed, and what forward thinking states and districts are doing to implement such systems. The archived copy can be accessed at [https://scholastic.webex.com/scholastic/lsr.php?AT=pb&SP=TC&rID=48915112&rKey=09f14d b0881f5159&act=pb](https://scholastic.webex.com/scholastic/lsr.php?AT=pb&SP=TC&rID=48915112&rKey=09f14d b0881f5159&act=pb)

  To access just the powerpoint presentation go to:  

- In November, using an RFA process, four AASA districts were selected via an application process to be Learning Supports Collaborative Lead Districts. The districts are Jefferson County, KY, Gainesville City Schools, GA, Indian River County, FL, and Sabine Parish Schools, LA. Over the coming year, the superintendent-led, district teams will work with Drs. Adelman and Taylor and Scholastic consultant and former Mobile Public Schools Asst. Superintendent, Dr. Rhonda Neal-Waltman. The focus will be to:
  
  - Build understanding about comprehensive systems of learning supports and how such systems transform public education;
  
  - Create policy and practice framework documents that can be shared among critical stakeholder groups;
  
  - Work to design and implement learning support systems for their schools and districts.

  Each district's leadership will become an integral part of AASA leadership development efforts and will provide new demonstrations and mentoring opportunities for districts in their states and across the country as they strive to transform schools in ways that significantly increase the likelihood that all students have an equal opportunity for success at school.

- On December 3-4, 2009, the Lead District Learning Supports Collaborative (with teams from the four Lead Districts) convened in Savannah, GA for a Leadership Institute. Click [here](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/powerpoint/Webinar(10-29-09).ppt) to see the power point and handouts for the Leadership Institute.

- Then, in connection with the February 2010 AASA National Conference on Education in Phoenix, the UCLA Center co-directors met with the four LEAD districts to clarify steps related to developing a design document and a related strategic plan.
• At the Phoenix Conference, the UCLA Center co-directors also presented a special thought leader's session and joined with the leaders from the LEAD districts to offer a related workshop. The sessions provided an opportunity for a large cross section of district administrators to be introduced to frameworks for a comprehensive approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

• In July 2010, the teams will meet again to share progress and discuss next steps.

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