

To: Advisory Group Members
for the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA

From: Howard Adelman & Linda Taylor, Co-directors

Re: Monthly Report and Request for Input – October, 2009

As always, the frequent email and website messages from our Center provide a continuous perspective on the many activities in which we are involved. Below we highlight just a few benchmarks from this past month:

(1) Strategic Focus with National Organizations and on State Departments

***American Association of School Administrators, Scholastic Inc., and UCLA Collaboration**

As you know, our collaboration with Scholastic, Inc. has established an initiative with the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) that is providing a range of opportunities focused on developing a comprehensive approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. These include a Request for Application (deadline November 1, 2009) that will establish 3-4 Lead Districts in moving forward to develop a comprehensive system of learning supports. Districts will be guided in their work by the Center's co-directors.

On October 29, 2009 from 1 pm to 2 pm EDT, AASA, Scholastic and UCLA 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.

On December 3-4, 2009, the Lead District Learning Supports Collaborative will convene in Savannah, GA. At the February AASA National Conference on Education in Phoenix a special thought leader's session and related workshop will be offered on Wednesday, February 10, 2009.

Throughout the year there will be a variety of other opportunities for administrators to obtain guidance and tools for moving toward a comprehensive system of learning supports.

**You can keep up with all this work through our website:

For more on the *National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support*, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ndannouncement.htm>

For more on the Scholastic-UCLA collaboration online see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/rebuild/rebuilding.htm>

and on the AASA website – <http://www.aasa.org/LeadershipDevelopment.aspx>

*****Be sure to let us know of anyone who would like to learn more about our state-focused work.**

*CCSSO – Planning with CCSSO ongoing.

***Louisiana's New Design for Student and Learning Supports**

The Louisiana State Department of Education has just released its design prototype document that will guide its work across the state in supporting development of a *Comprehensive Learning Supports System*. The document can be accessed at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ladesigndocument.pdf>

Louisiana joins Iowa in having developed a prototype design for schools to adapt as they move forward

in developing a comprehensive system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

We are currently working with the state department on their strategic and action plans for rolling out the work and taking it to scale.

***Iowa** – In discussion with the state department, we explored some next steps for personalized capacity building with the Area Educational Agencies. We also drew their attention to the publication of the Louisiana design document and shared drafts of a strategic plan that the department might consider in delineating its work in this area. Iowa’s design can be accessed at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/wheresithappening/iowasystemofsupport.pdf>

***Requests for Assistance in Developing Projects and Proposals** – Each week we hear from folks across the country who want to use our frameworks and expertise as they develop demonstration projects and prepare proposals. We are able to offer them a variety of supports.

(2) Publications

****Mental Health in Schools: Engaging Learners, Preventing Problems, and Improving Schools***

Book Just Published by Corwin Press – This is a special resource focused on advancing the field written by UCLA Center co-directors Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

Please share this with anyone who might be interested.

(see description at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/corwin/mhinschoolsflyer.pdf>)

****Expanding School Improvement Policy to Better Address Barriers to Learning and Integrate Public Health Concerns***

We were invited to prepare this for a special issue of *Policy Futures in Education* that is being developed with a focus on examining health policies, practices and pedagogies.

****Creating Successful School Systems Requires Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching***

We were invited to prepare this for the second edition of *Creating successful school systems: Voices from the university, the field, and the community* edited by Francis Duffy (Galudet U.) and Jack Dale (superintendent of the Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia).

****Addressing Trauma and Other Barriers to Learning and Teaching: Developing a Comprehensive System of Intervention***

We were invited to do this for a book to be edited by Robert Hull Prince George County Public Schools. He already is using this chapter as part of courses he teaches for professional preparation and development .

****Native American Students and Higher Education: Transition Concerns and Supports***

We have been invited to do this article for a special issue of the *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*.

(3) Update on Resources

***New Hot Topic**

Last month’s ENEWS focused on “Preparing Everyone for College: What are the Implications?” We have included the questions posed by the Public Health Agenda and the Urban Institute for their webcast and the number of responses we received. See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/hottopic.htm> If you would like to weigh in on this important issue, send your response to ltaylor@ucla.edu

***Video additions to Quick Finds**

In response to frequent requests for videos related to learning supports, we are adding links to videos in our Quick Find online clearinghouse topic pages. If you have recommendations, please let us know.

***Emerging Practice: Any Issues?**

See the ENEWS on November 1 – “Chicago’s New Strategy for Addressing Students ‘At Risk’ of Violence” Let us know your views on this so we can share them.

***Monthly Focus for Schools to Address Barriers to Learning**

For November: “Responding to Referrals in Ways that Can “Stem the Tide” ”

See the November ENEWS for this and for more on “Ideas for Enhancing Support at School this Month,” see the Center’s homepage at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

*****It would be great if you could encourage more schools to adopt a monthly focus for addressing factors that interfere with students having an equal opportunity to succeed at school. And, we would appreciate any info about programs and resources related to this and other common concerns so we can follow-up during the month with more ways to help schools.*

(4) New Report Being Developed

***Transition and Retention Concerns and Supports for Postsecondary Education**

We are in the midst of doing a policy and practice analysis and recommendations related to this topic. If you have any thoughts, references, resources you could share on this, we would appreciate hearing from you.

(5) Networking

***See the various ways the Center is involved in and facilitates network activity on a regular basis – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/netexch.htm>**

***Other special examples of Networks we work with:**

>**National Initiative to Improve Adolescent Health (NIAH)** – NIAH continues to provide increasing opportunities for the Center’s efforts to enhance networking and to share its areas of expertise. General info on the initiative is also on the internet and can be accessed through a link on our home page.

>**Coalition for Community Schools** – We continue to network regularly through the Coalition for Community Schools and others around the country.

>**Researcher Without Borders** – We participate with this “resource hub for people interested in sustainability of change in education (and other fields).” They are concerned with “facilitating use of those resources and collaborations through interactions in the on-line environment.” Information on the project and community called “Researchers Without Borders,” can be found at: (www.researcherswithoutborders.org; researcherswithoutborders.ning.com). We have been asked to be on the advisory board for the new NSF project they are currently moving toward.

*****Let us know about other people and organizations we should contact.*

As always, we look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your ongoing contribution to the Center’s work. We truly value all ongoing guidance and support.

Howard & Linda