This resource is from the national

Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA (36 Years & Counting)

Featured:

> *>Superintendents Like Their Jobs Despite All the Drama*
> *>Back to school this year requires special attention to welcoming and providing supports for students, families, and staff*

Plus:
>Quick links to online resources

>A few news stories

>Comments and sharing from the field

New Report: Superintendents Like Their Jobs Despite All the Drama

"Despite a couple of years of pandemic upheaval, staff shortages, and political clashes, the nation's school superintendents are feeling pretty good about their jobs. As many as 87 percent of these district leaders feel their job is valued... report hypothesizes the high job satisfaction could come from "a strong sense of mission." ... The report recommends keeping the workload from falling entirely on superintendents, by "developing strong, well-integrated senior teams across which superintendents can distribute leadership."

https://www.edweek.org/leadership/superintendents-like-their-jobs-despite-all-the-drama-a-new-survey-shows/2022/07

>Back to school this year requires special attention to welcoming and providing supports for students, families, and staff

With added concerns about the pandemic, shootings, social justice, and political conflicts, starting the new school year requires extra planning. Special attention is needed to enhance processes for welcoming, inducting, engaging, and ensuring students, families, and staff are effectively supported.

Q. What are local schools planning for welcoming, inducting, engaging, and supporting students, families, and staff so that they successfully adjust and assimilate into school culture and daily life?

Establishing social and working relationships at the beginning of a school year requires adjusting/readjusting to the social milieu and diverse personalities. Youngsters, families, and staff vary in terms of their capabilities and motivation with respect to psychologically transitioning into a new school year, especially if the school is new to them. And, of course, a commitment to welcoming, inducting, engaging, and supporting newcomers extends to those who enter throughout the year. (Students, families, and staff entering later in a school year often find it especially hard to connect and adjust.) Our emphasis here is mainly on students and their families. However, implications for welcoming and supporting staff will be evident.

Estimates suggest that 20-25% of students change schools each year. These figures are higher in school districts with high immigrant populations. Although, some make the transition easily, many find themselves alienated or "out-of- touch" with their new surroundings, making the transition into a new school difficult. Youngsters entering a new school and neighborhood are confronted with multiple transition challenges. The challenges are compounded when the transition also involves recent arrival in a new country and culture.

Planning must recognize differences in motivation and capability. For example, when a family comes to register, the office staff must be prepared to welcome, enroll, and provide basic orientation information while recognizing if the family needs some special assistance and support. Planning involves ensuring front office and school-wide initial contacts are inviting and supportive:

1. Common strategies are designed for those who are motivated and able to benefit from general clerical and school procedures for welcoming, orienting, and facilitating enrollment. Initial contact with the front office is followed by a variety of welcoming and orientation efforts. For example, designated staff members (or trained volunteers) along with student representatives may add their welcome and begin an orientation and tour, with initial introductions to teachers, principal, support staff, and others. This can include information about matters such as: (a) how the school runs each day, (b) special activities for parents and students, (c) community services they may find helpful, (d) parents who are ready to help them join in, (e) students ready to meet with new students to help them join in, and (f) how the family can help the child adjust to, learn, and do well at school.

2. Additional strategies are implemented for those who need just a bit more personalized assistance. For example, some families are not sure how to interact with a new school; some are wary about dealing with bureaucracies and authorities; some have negative histories with schools. Such assistance may include personal invitations, ongoing support to handle interpersonal interactions and for becoming involved in activities, aid in overcoming minor barriers to successful adjustment and for enabling effective functioning, and so forth.

3. Finally, intensive strategies are required to identify, connect, and reconnect with those who have not made an effective adjustment after a couple of weeks or who were expected to enroll but did not (e.g., due to major barriers, an intense lack of interest, or negative attitudes). As with other intensive interventions, these involve significant resource investments.

Note: *About initial welcoming and support strategies*:
   • ensure that most communications and interactions between the school and students and families convey a welcoming tone and, to the degree feasible, written material is provided in the various languages of those likely to enroll at the school
   • limit first communications to welcoming statements and simple orientation information
   • ensure the office staff are provided with training and resources so they can create a welcoming and supportive atmosphere to everyone who enters the school
   • establish processes whereby teachers have time to personally welcome and clarify student and family interests and answer questions
   • ensure that teachers are formally linked with student support staff so that they can access immediate assistance in (a) addressing students who are not making a satisfactory adjustment to classroom learning and (b) connecting with their families.

As with all school interventions, efforts to welcome and successfully facilitate adjustment and assimilation of students, families, and staff require institutional ongoing commitment and operational mechanisms for effective program planning, implementation, sustainability, and renewal.

Changing schools and changing grades are among the many transition demands with which students regularly cope. Every transition can exacerbate problems or be used as a natural opportunity to promote positive learning and attitudes and reduce alienation.

Welcoming, inducting, engaging, and supporting students, families, and staff are a crucial part of the broader goal of creating schools where staff, students and families interact positively with each other and identify with the school and its goals. The objectives are to foster smooth transitions; promote positive informal encounters and social interactions; facilitate social support; provide opportunities for ready access to information and for learning how to function effectively in the school culture; encourage involvement in decision-making; facilitate students' school adjustment and performance; and evolve a positive sense of community at a school.

Anticipated overall outcomes are increased involvement in school and learning activities, enhanced motivation and reduced alienation, and less school avoidance and dropping out.

For more, see:

>*Welcome back to School!* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/spring2021.pdf

>*Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/welcome/welcome.pdf

>*What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/WELMEET/welmeetcomplete.pdf

>*Transitions: Turning Risks into Opportunities for Student Support*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/transitions/transitions.pdf

>*Support for Transitions to Address Barriers to Learning*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/transitions09.pdf

>*Improving Teacher Retention, Performance, and Student Outcomes*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newteach.pdf

>*Enhancing Professional Development to Better Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/persdevel.pdf

For links to more resources from the Center and many other sources, use the Online Clearinghouse Quick Finds. For example, see:

>*Transition Programs/Grade Articulation/Welcoming* –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101_01.htm

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Well-being is possible when human beings have people to love, places to live and purpose in life. While we of course have to get everyone the treatment they need and hopefully want, care cannot be effective if not delivered in inclusive, connected communities.

Jonathan Sherin, Department of Mental Health Director

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>Quick Links to Online Resources

Create a welcoming classroom and school
https://neaedjustice.org/social-justice-issues/racial-justice/create-a-welcoming-classroom-and-school/

Newcomer toolkit https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/newcomers-toolkit/ncomertoolkit.pdf

How to write a welcome page on your school website
https://www.schudio.com/write-welcome-page-school-website/

Resolution to promote welcoming and inclusive schools
https://cdn5-ss14.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_270532/File/ESOL/Resolution%20to%20Promote%20%20Welcoming%20and%20Inclusive%20Schools.pdf

What can schools do to improve attendance?
https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Reducing-Chronic-Absence-in-Connecticuts-Schools/What-can-schools-do-to-improve-attendance

District strategies to reduce student absenteeism
https://annenberg.brown.edu/sites/default/files/EdResearch_for_Recovery_Brief_22.pdf

Family welcome centers
https://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enrollment-help/family-welcome-centers

High yield actions to improve student attendance
https://www.nassp.org/publication/principal-leadership/volume-17-2016-2017/principal-leadership-December-2016/10-high-yield-actions-to-improve-student-attendance/

Study Furthers Understanding of Disparities in School Discipline
https://www.nimh.nih.gov/news/research-highlights/2022/study-furthers-understanding-of-disparities-in-school-discipline

Supporting Quality in Summer Learning: How Districts Plan, Develop, and Implement Programs
https://www.edc.org/sites/default/files/Supporting-Quality-Summer-Learning-ES.pdf

2 Exercises for Teaching Secondary Students About Consent
https://www.edutopia.org/article/2-exercises-teaching-secondary-students-about-consent

Research Update on Peer Support for Youth and Young Adults
https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/research-update-on-peer-support-07-2022.pdf

Resources for Responding to School Shootings and Violence
https://selcenter.wested.org/resource/resources-for-responding-to-school-shootings-and-violence/

What a Systematic Review of 32 Evaluations Says About the Impact of School-Based Law Enforcement
https://www.wested.org/resources/impact-of-school-based-law-enforcement-systematic-review/?utm_source=e-bulletin&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2022-07-issue-1#

Should Schools Be Conducting Lockdown Drills?
https://www.wested.org/resources/schools-lockdown-drills/?utm_source=e-bulletin&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2022-07-issue-1

Providing Culturally Competent Mental Health Care to LGBTQIA+ Youth & Young Adults
https://www.umassmed.edu/TransitionsACR/resources/culturally-competent-mhc-to-LGBTQIA/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=TA+Telegram+-+July+18%2C+2022&utm_campaign=Telegram+7+18+22

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After almost two years, we are concluding that well-being is also learning. In addition to the importance of academic knowledge, most people know that human qualities are essential: like compassion, reliability, teamwork, helping others in time of need, gratitude, loyalty, dependability, courage. More people know that mental and physical well-being are crucial, and fragile. Overall, good at learning and good at life will become the new goal.

Michael Fullan

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Here's what was discussed in the Community of Practice during July
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm
Note: *All community of practice editions contain Links to relevant shared resources*.
>Legislation is bringing more money for mental health to schools:
　　But the funding is not sustainable
>What we're hearing from districts working on improving student support
>Behavioral issues, absenteeism at schools increase
>Youth Voice and Participation
>Restoring teacher and principal well-being
>Special education students and nonpublic schools
>Comments on Center cautions about universal suicide screening

For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

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**For an update on how the center is responding to the Coronavirus crisis,
see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/centercorona.pdf**

**>For more resources in general, see our website
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu**
**>For info on the status of upcoming conferences
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm**
**>For info on webinars
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm**
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What tends to happen after school shootings is we embrace a really narrow version of school safety: How can we keep kids from getting shot to death in school, but it's much more complex than that. Promoting a sense of safety in schools means adequately funding programs, supporting educators to build relationships with students, and supporting children's mental health. Robert Beretta, Principal

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**>Calls for grant proposals
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm**

**> *job and training opportunities
when available*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm**

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**Online Summit Being Planned by the
National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports**

As part of the *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports*,
a national online summit is being planned focused on unifying student/learning supports
with mental health concerns fully embedded.

We are seeking widespread input as we plan the summit.

*Please take a few minutes to respond to the 4 questions
on p. 3 of the following brief article.*

***Reversing the Fragmentation of Student/Learning Supports:
Are You Part of the Problem?***
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/summer2022.pdf

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Our Center emphasizes the opportunity to start now to transform how
schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected
students. See http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html .

We have provided a blueprint for such a transformation in the following free
books:
> *Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*
> *Improving School Improvement*
> *Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*
>> all three books can be accessed at
>> http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Also see:
> *Implementation Science and Complex School Changes*
> http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/implemreport.pdf
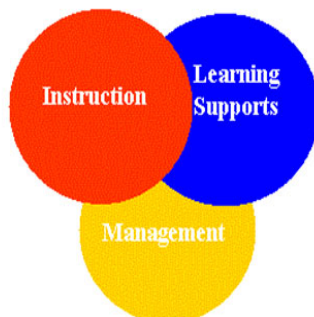
**Be sure to let us know about any district activity related to unifying student/learning
supports and developing them into comprehensive and equitable system.**
Send all info to ltaylor@ucla.edu

***We continue to offer technical assistance and coaching to
those involved in transforming student/learning supports*** – see
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/coach.pdf

*Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to
promoting whole child development, advancing social justice,
and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.*

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>A Few News Stories (excerpted from various news sources)

Governor signs open enrollment bill. Iowa parents can now enroll their children in any public school regardless of where they live at any point throughout the year. The change takes effect immediately, meaning families no longer need to give a reason to send their student to a new district anytime throughout the year as long as the new district accepts them. Lawmakers voted to eliminate the school open enrollment deadline after it became clear the Iowa House lacked the votes to pass a more ambitious proposal from Reynolds that would have given 10,000 Iowa families scholarships to pay for private school expenses.
https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2022/06/21/kim-reynolds-iowa-signs-bill-ending-open-enrollment-deadline-2022-legislative-session/7694047001/

Teams organized to help with critical incidents at schools. The Wisconsin Department of Justice is creating 12 regional teams to support schools around the state deal with critical incidents such as shootings. Team members include law enforcement members, school administrators, counselors, social workers, nurses, teachers and others. The teams are currently being trained on how to minimize the psychological impact of school-related critical incidents, identify people in need of long-term mental health support and how best to help school employees.
https://apnews.com/article/politics-wisconsin-school-safety-congress-gun-violence-120e249f310a11e240a23a58bdc7264c

Covid lessons. Pandemic years reveal some better approaches to post-pandemic schooling. They have driven states and districts to experiment with decoupling the delivery of family services from physical presence inside school buildings... Another lesson of the pandemic is that it will pay to diversify the schools that kids are in. Different kids experience school in different ways, so although all kids need to be in school, not all kids need to be in school in exactly the same way. Every educator can tell stories of academic successes during Zoom school among students who are shy or have social anxiety, who suffer from illnesses or disabilities that make attending school difficult, who live in unstable circumstances, who have special talents, or who need on occasion to work or care for others during the school day.
https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/06/covid-learning-loss-remote-school/661360/

Educator appreciation. Reset, recharge and reimagine with Mesa (AZ) Arts Center as it celebrates teachers and the start of a new school year. "...we look forward to having the opportunity to express our gratitude for the tremendous work teachers do throughout the school year at what we hope is a fun and meaningful event for educators," Sarah Dolens-Moon.
https://yourvalley.net/stories/educator-appreciation-and-preview-night-aug-18-at-mesa-arts-center,315157

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> *While these times were unprecedented and we faced uncertainty, as a school system and community, we worked together to offer the best opportunities for our students and members of our school system. Our amazing teachers overcame much adversity to provide something that not all school systems were able to do — maximizing their opportunities, time, and resources to provide safe environments so that they could give students the opportunity to continue with in-person instruction.* Kimberly Fraker, Superintendent

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Comments and sharing from the field

1. Here is the first reply to the questions guiding input for planning the national online summit focused on unifying student/learning supports with mental health concerns fully embedded.

 "I am looking forward to the national online summit! Here are my responses to the prompts:

> **>What is the degree of importance you place on ending the marginalization of student/learning supports in school improvement policy and practice ?**

 "It is a top priority for our organization...."

>*What is your understanding of the factors that are interfering with moving forward?*

"No consensus among on-the-ground education leaders: There is an overreliance on test scores and other measures of academic performance--student health and wellbeing is not consistently tracked or evaluated to inform school improvement strategy. School staff are overwhelmed, burnt out, and without capacity to pause and reimagine how to approach education. Policymaking can only go so far as each individual school/district wants to implement.

It's hard to decide who pays: ever present "budget constraints," the compounding impact of Prop 13, and widening inequality (increased need)--feed a scarcity mindset. Funders favor scale, so parties compete against each other address the same problems. County mental health wants to hire its own staff to serve schools, schools want to hire their own staff, CBOs want to send their staff to schools, etc.*"*

>*What role does competing advocacy by organizations, associations, guilds, experts, etc. play in maintaining the marginalization (and fragmentation)?*

"Everyone stays in their clearly defined lane to maintain credibility, fundability, and must elevate single issues in their realm of expertise. We compete for funding, political and public attention, and supporters under (largely artificial) scarcity. This competition pits issues against one another, hampering our ability to see the interconnected, interdependent realities of student circumstance. Our movements are getting more intersectional, but this is difficult to staff and fund under the philanthropic status quo. Collaborative, intersectional advocacy...is challenging. Our members have very limited capacity as they are not directly funded to participate. Education advocates will support housing advocacy if they have extra time in their already overpacked nonprofit day."

>*What plans do you (and your constituents/colleagues) have for ending the marginalization and establishing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports?*

"Our organization is building bridges between education, health, youth leadership groups, and community organizers to advocate whole child education--integration within a comprehensive system of student supports. We see Community Schools as a promising organizing framework, a tool for uniting fragmented experts/advocates/practitioners, shifting mindsets and driving culture change in education. We are seeking support from the County Board of Supervisors and/or philanthropy to convene cross-sector/agency stakeholders, parents, and students to create a shared vision to making transformative investments in health/education."

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As noted: We are seeking widespread input as we plan the summit.

Please take a few minutes to respond to the 4 questions
on p. 3 of the following brief article.

Reversing the Fragmentation of Student/Learning Supports:
*Are You Part of the Problem?*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/summer2022.pdf

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(2) Response to July enews "heavy media blitz focusing mainly on student mental health has a downside." http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/july2022.pdf

From a Superintendent: *We continue to come across reports identifying the student mental health crisis, however, it is not being addressed systematically. Most importantly, there seems to be little interest in addressing or hearing about it by school leaders. For example, in a state administrator conference, a presentation by a well respected County Office of Education leader, there were maybe six attendees in a section intended for at least forty attendees.*
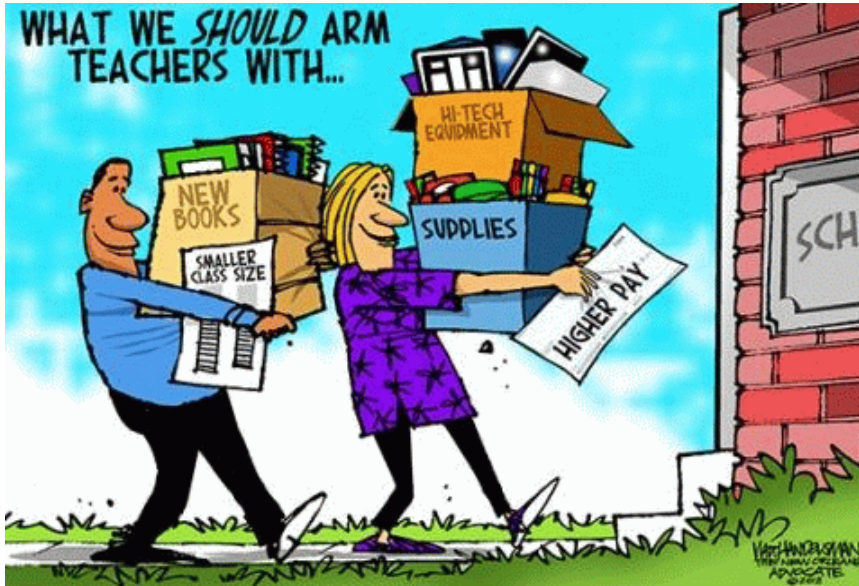
AND they also need a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Student/Learning Supports

Invitation to All Who Read This

Everyone has a stake in the future of public education.
This is a critical time for sharing and action. Let us hear
from you so we can circulate the information.

Send to **Ltaylor@ucla.edu**

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS

Who Are We? Recently renamed the Center for MH in Schools and Student/Learning Supports, our national Center was established in 1995 under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project (which was established in 1986). We are part of the Department of Psychology at UCLA. The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

For more information about the Center and its many resources, go to the website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu or email Ltaylor@ucla.edu   or adelman@psych.ucla.edu

Send info to share with others or ask for specific resources by email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu