



## *A Center Policy Brief*

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# **Arguing About Charters VS. “Traditional” Schools Masks the Failure of School Improvement Policy and Practice to Enhance Equity of Opportunity**

(January 2010)

What the best and wisest parent  
wants for his (her) own child  
that must the community  
want for all of its children.  
Any other ideal . . . is narrow  
and unlovely; acted upon it  
destroys our democracy.  
John Dewey

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## Abstract

As the argument over charter vs. traditional schools burgeons, it is overshadowing discussion about the ongoing failure of the majority of charters and traditional schools to substantially increase the percentage of youngsters who succeed at school over the long run. This colludes with the tendency to downplay the fact that school improvement policy and practice lacks a primary emphasis on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. This brief report focuses on what's missing in most analyses of school improvement policy and practice and what type of policy shift is needed to stimulate development of a comprehensive, cohesive, and coherent system to replace the prevailing piecemeal and marginalized approach to student and learning supports.

## Arguing About Charters VS. “Traditional” Schools Masks the Failure of School Improvement Policy and Practice to Enhance Equity of Opportunity

The raging battle around the charter school movement is consuming more and more attention. The debate centers on the pros and cons of charters as a vehicle for school improvement, the need for standards to weed out poor quality performers, and the role of the federal and state governments in promoting charters. Not discussed is the ongoing failure of the majority of charters *and* traditional schools to effectively address factors that are depriving so many students of the opportunity to succeed at school.

Currently the argument about the effectiveness of charter vs. traditional schools (and about other school improvement initiatives) focuses mostly on comparisons of academic growth with reference to students’ average proficiency levels usually on state reading and math achievement tests (e.g., Center for Research on Education Outcomes, 2010). If there is some differential increase in percentages, a winner is declared. More often than not, however, mixed results have been reported. This is well illustrated by a recent report in the Los Angeles Times highlighting that, in aggregate, magnet schools do better than charters which do better than traditional schools (see Exhibit 1). Disaggregated data is provided on the charters (but for some reason not the traditional schools); we note that these data indicate that 44% of the charters do poorer than traditional schools.

Setting aside methodological concerns and differences in interpretation of data, the meaning of the respective findings is seldom fully discussed with respect to the *future progress of the students*. Indeed, the assumptions seem to be that schools that do better than others in raising the average proficiency level are models of school improvement and will continue to produce the type of gains that bring students up to the standards set by high performing schools.

Whether the focus is on charter, traditional, or other school improvement initiatives, available data from schools serving economically disadvantaged families clearly show that too few provide the majority of students with the type of academic success that opens the door to a bright future. The levels of academic performance reported in most of the schools indicate that less than half the students are performing at grade level and many are doing much worse. This is certainly what the data reported in Exhibit 1 indicate. And, while the leveling-off effect is not inevitable, trends across the country suggest that initial growth spurts tend to plateau over a period of years (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2007; Center on Educational Policy, 2009; National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2008).

Exhibit 1

**A Recent Report Comparing Different Types of Schools  
in the Los Angeles Unified School District**

A major front page special report in the Los Angeles Times (1/10/10) led off with the statement: “Enrollment at charters is soaring, changing the face of education. Some flourish and some struggle, but overall they outscore traditional campuses.” The following data were highlighted in a graphic presentation as part of the article:

| <b>Type of School</b>   | <b>Campuses</b> | <b>Enrollment</b> | <b>Ethnic Breakdown</b>                           | <b>Proficiency avg.<br/>Math Reading</b> |     |
|---|-----------------|-------------------|---|--|-----|
| <b>Magnets</b><br>Started in the 1970s to promote integration, they are prized by parents seeking high-powered academics and ethnic diversity | 161             | 53,146            | Latino 52%<br>Black 17%<br>White 17%<br>Asian 14% | 54%                                      | 67% |
| <b>Charters</b><br>Independently managed, they are largely free of district constraints, including union contracts.                           | 152             | 58,080            | Latino 58%<br>Black 20%<br>White 16%<br>Asian 5%  | 41%                                      | 47% |
| <b>Traditional</b><br>They receive students based on where they live; the schools are under full district control.                            | 671             | 581,457           | Latino 76%<br>Black 9%<br>White 7%<br>Asian 6%    | 35%                                      | 34% |
| <b>Breakdown with Respect to Types of Charters</b>  |                 |                   |   |  |     |
| <b>Charter management organizations</b><br>...typically focus on low-income minority students   | 68              | 22,188            | Latino 68%<br>Black 30%<br>White 1%<br>Asian 1%   | 32%                                      | 38% |
| <b>Independent start-ups</b><br>...stand alone schools, usually in nontraditional locations ... broad range of philosophies                   | 55              | 15,270            | Latino 60%<br>Black 20%<br>White 15%<br>Asian 5%  | 40%                                      | 46% |
| <b>Independent conversions</b><br>...traditional schools converted, thru faculty vote ...   | 7               | 13,117            | Latino 59%<br>Black 7%<br>White 21%<br>Asian 10%  | 45%                                      | 57% |
| <b>Affiliated conversion</b><br>...formally traditional schools, they remain under L.A. Unified’s budgetary control                           | 11              | 6,994             | Latino 21%<br>Black 12%<br>White 55%<br>Asian 11% | 74%                                      | 75% |

As the charter vs. traditional schools argument burgeons, the cacophony from the debate must not be allowed to obscure the fact that few school improvement efforts are doing a satisfactory job. Recognizing the problem, federal school improvement policy is calling for use of one of four approaches they designate as (1) the turnaround model, (2) the restart model, (3) the school closure model, and (4) the transformation model. The hope is that schools will use these to move well beyond previous efforts to *enable* learning. The question arises: How valid is that hope?

Our previous analyses suggest that the majority of school improvement efforts are not designed to effectively address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students (Adelman & Taylor, 1997; 2006a, 2007; Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2005a, 2005b). Moreover, what federal policy makers emphasize in guidance for the Race to the Top and School Improvement Grants is no remedy for this deficiency. And we suggest that this does not bode well for the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*.

As we have done in other reports, the aim of this brief is to ensure that discussions about improving schools include a substantial direct and specific focus on addressing factors interfering with so many students having equity of opportunity to succeed at school. This requires an understanding of what's missing in most analyses of school improvement policy and practice and what type of policy shift is needed.

### **What's Missing?**

We take as given that effective instruction is fundamental to a school's mission. We know that no one wants children to have to go to a school where teachers do not have high standards and expectations and high levels of competence. We also take as given that a school must be well managed and governed and that all facets require strong and inspiring leadership. Clearly, these are matters that warrant and are receiving strong attention in school improvements planning.

At the same time, however, the reality is that many factors can interfere with effective learning and teaching. Teachers in low performing schools point to how few students appear motivationally ready and able to learn what the daily lesson plan prescribes. Teachers in the upper grades report that a significant percentage of their students have become actively disengaged and alienated from classroom learning. And "acting out" behavior, especially bullying and disrespect for others, often is rampant. (So is passivity, but "hypoactivity" attracts less attention.) One result of all this is seen in the increasing number of students misdiagnosed as having learning disabilities (LD) and attention deficit-hyperactivity disorders (ADHD). Another result is the achievement gap. In the longer

run, all this is related to the number of dropouts (often referred to as “pushouts”) and the school to jailhouse track.

Teachers need and want considerable help in addressing barriers to student success. Unfortunately, the help they receive is grossly inadequate. Part of the problem is that most guidelines for school improvement give only sparse attention to matters other than the instructional component of schooling. Such guides *do* recognize that “acting out” students are disruptive of teaching and may harm others. And, thus, some planning focuses on improving classroom management with a heavy emphasis on rule enforcement and discipline and providing schoolwide strategies to enhance school safety (e.g., metal detectors, camera surveillance, school police and resource officers, violence and bullying prevention programs). This may or may not be paired with efforts to enhance students’ respect for school staff, parents, and each other (e.g., “character education,” social and emotional learning).

Primarily, however, the overall approach to school improvement conveys the impression that better academic instruction is sufficient for making large gains in a school’s test score averages, closing the achievement gap, and reducing the number of students leaving school before graduation. Anything not directly instruction-centered runs a distant second in planning and therefore in resource allocation, and will be among the first things cut when budgets shrink.

The problem in too many classrooms is that improving instruction is not sufficient to ensure equity of opportunity. In daily practice, schools continue to be plagued by student disengagement, behavior problems, and dropouts. The achievement gap remains and in some situations is increasing. Recognition of this reality is seen in the efforts schools make to provide some student and learning supports (e.g., in the form of guidance and counseling, compensatory and special education, health and safety programs, parent and community involvement initiatives). But, the marginalized policy status of these supports leads to reactive, ad hoc, piecemeal, and fragmented practices that reach a relatively small percentage of students in need.

Because school improvement policy marginalizes and fragments student and learning supports, the practices are not well conceptualized in systemic ways, and allocated resources are not well deployed. At all levels, there is a lack of developmental leadership and operational capacity building. Interventions are mostly reactive; relatively little is done to prevent students from experiencing learning and behavior problems and to respond as soon as students begin to have problems. At times the work is redundant and breeds counterproductive competition for sparse resources. The overall result is that prevailing approaches are not meeting the extensive needs confronting so many schools and students.

## Expanding the Framework for School Improvement

A basic goal of school improvement is to ensure that all students will have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. Unfortunately, school improvement policy and guidance currently do not include a primary emphasis on helping schools *enable* that success. With this in mind, we suggest that ongoing concerns about student disengagement, disrespect, and misconduct, and the new cycle of distress over dropouts, all need to be pursued as critical opportunities for a *fundamental transformation in how schools enable learning and re-engage disconnected youth*. Such a transformation requires expanding school improvement policy to focus schools on developing a *comprehensive system of learning supports*.

Some will argue that the guidance from the U.S. Department of Education covers the concerns we raise and simply lacks examples related to developing a system of learning supports. The lack of specifics is defended as necessary to avoid distracting schools from the primary objective of improving direct efforts to facilitate instruction. Unfortunately, this emphasis ignores a profound reality: lack of specific attention to how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students contributes to ongoing *marginalization* of such efforts. Such marginalization maintains an expensive student and learning supports enterprise that overrelies on clinical models, proliferates separate and costly initiatives for dealing with overlapping problems, and fosters overspecialization of staff roles and functions. While some facets of the prevailing enterprise have merit, in toto they are holding back development of a system for ensuring all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

As is widely acknowledged, the factors interfering with student engagement and success in a formal education environment are complex, and complex problems require comprehensive solutions. Below we stress that moving toward comprehensive solutions calls for (1) a unifying concept and (2) expanded policy for developing a much more comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system of schoolwide and classroom interventions that begins preK and continues in a fully interconnected way through postsecondary graduation (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2008, 2010).

***A unified concept.*** Student and learning supports are essential for schools to accomplish their mission. As emphasized by a Carnegie task force focusing on education: “while school systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students, when the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge.” Meeting this challenge requires *addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students*. In our work, framing the challenge in this way provides a unifying enabling concept for student and learning supports

with the aim of enhancing equity of opportunity for the full range of students with whom teachers interact each day (Adelman & Taylor, 1997a, 2006a, 2006b).

From this perspective, schools need to develop and implement a comprehensive and systemic component to provide what increasingly are referred to as learning supports. (We define learning supports as all the resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, and emotional supports in the classroom and schoolwide to enable all students to have an equal opportunity for success at school by directly addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.)

***Reframing policy and practice.*** Translating the unifying concept into school improvement policy and practice involves

- moving school improvement policy from a two to a three component framework with the third component directly focused on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students; this third component must be treated as equal and primary to the others in policy so that it is not marginalized in practice (see Exhibit 2)
- moving away (except for the most severe problems) from the tendency to over-pathologize in defining student learning, behavior, and emotional problems and the related tendency for staff to over-specialize
- reframing current student and learning support programs and services and embedding them into the component to address barriers to learning and teaching
- redeploying available resources
- revamping and interconnecting operational infrastructures and aligning them horizontally and vertically to ensure that new policy directions are implemented cohesively, effectively, and efficiently
- revamping school-community infrastructures to weave resources together to enhance and evolve the system
- supporting the necessary transformative systemic changes and related capacity building in ways called for by comprehensive innovation, scale-up, and sustainability
- expanding the school accountability framework to encompass the three component framework

See the attached reference and resource list for further discussion of each of the above matters.

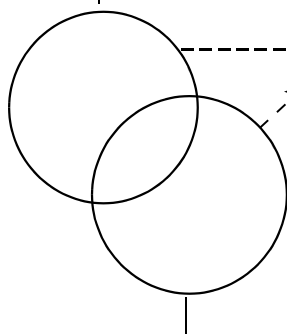


Exhibit 2

**Moving from a Two- to a Three-component School Improvement Policy Framework**

FROM ← → TO

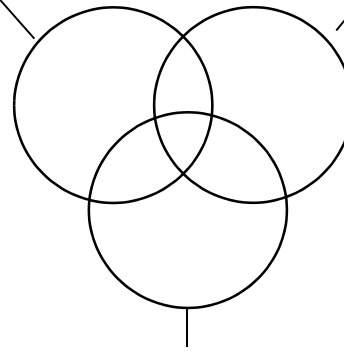
*Direct Facilitation of  
Development & Learning*  
**Developmental/  
Instructional  
Component**



Besides offering a small amount of school-owned student "support" services, schools outreach to the community to add a few school-based/linked services.

*Governance and  
Resource Management*  
**Management Component**

*Direct Facilitation of  
Development & Learning*  
**Developmental/  
Instructional  
Component**



*Addressing Barriers  
to Learning*  
**Enabling  
Component\***

*Governance and  
Resource Management*  
**Management Component**

\*The third component (an enabling or learning supports component) is established in policy and practice as primary and essential and is developed into a comprehensive approach by weaving together school and community resources.

***About a full continuum of interventions.*** In our work, we have stressed that a comprehensive system of student and learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching requires developing, over time, a full *continuum* and organizing intervention *content*. Properly designed, such a system embeds strategies specifically designed to promote interest in learning and success at school.

With respect to conceptualizing a full intervention continuum, the range encompasses

- promoting healthy development and preventing problems
- intervening early to address problems as soon after onset as is feasible
- assisting with chronic and severe problems.

Exhibit 3 graphically illustrates the continuum as three levels of subsystems. The subsystems overlap, embrace school and community resources, and require processes to integrate the continuum into an cohesive system. Note that, unlike the popular trend in education to describe the range of interventions simply in terms of tiers, the emphasis in this conceptualization is on developing a subsystem at each level and integrating all three levels. Then, as we will clarify, the levels are combined with an organized set of intervention content arenas to establish a comprehensive intervention framework.

A full continuum requires weaving together the resources of school, home, and community. The intent is to interconnect all levels through effective collaboration. The collaboration involves horizontal and vertical restructuring of programs and services within and between jurisdictions.

The school and community examples listed in the exhibit highlight programs involving individuals, families, and the contexts in which they live, work, and play. There is a focus on mental and physical health, education, and social services. Some of the examples, however, reflect the type of categorical thinking about problems that contributes to fragmentation, redundancy, and counterproductive competition for sparse resources. Many problems are not discrete and must be addressed holistically and developmentally and with attention to root causes. An appreciation of these matters helps minimize tendencies to develop separate programs for each observed problem. In turn, this enables moving away from “silo” approaches and improves coordination and integration of resources, all of which can increase impact and cost-effectiveness.

Note that moving away from fragmented approaches requires more than just improving coordination. It involves integrating school and community, including home, efforts at each level of the continuum in ways consistent with various institutional missions and sparse resources. And, system building requires concurrent intra- and inter-program integration over extended periods of time.

A full continuum reduces the number of students who require specialized supports. As graphically illustrated by the tapering of the three levels of intervention in the exhibit, development of fully integrated subsystems of intervention is meant to prevent the majority of problems, deal with another significant segment as soon after problem onset as is feasible, and end up with relatively few students needing specialized assistance and other intensive and costly interventions.

Exhibit 3

**Levels of Intervention:\***  
**Connected Systems for Meeting the Needs of All Students**

**School/Campus Resources**

(facilities, stakeholders, programs, services)

Examples of Programs:

Interventions to

- Cultivate awareness & readiness
- Recruit students & enhance access
- Support initial transition
- Retain students
- Maintain physical and mental health
- Prevent psychosocial problems (e.g., violence, substance abuse)
- Address financial needs

Extend transition supports

- Minimize psychosocial problems (e.g., violence, substance abuse, suicide)
- Accommodate and respond to learning difficulties

- Serve & accommodate those needing specialized assistance and supports



**Community Resources**

(facilities, stakeholders, programs, services)

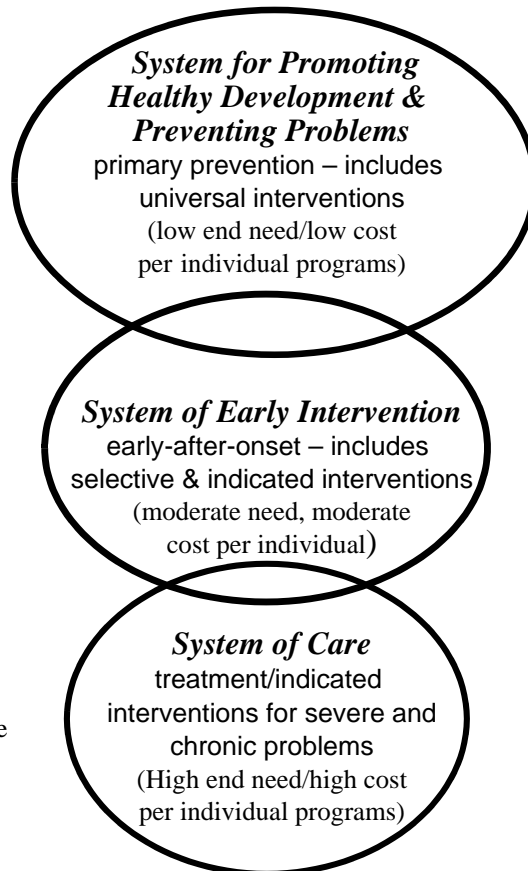
Examples of programs:

Interventions for

- Recreation & Enrichment
- Public health & safety programs
- Internships & community service programs
- Employment opportunities
- Economic development

- Early identification to treat physical & mental health problems
- Monitoring health problems
- Short-term counseling
- Shelter, food, clothing

- Emergency/crisis treatment
- Long-term therapy
- Disabilities programs
- Hospitalization
- Drug treatment



Systemic collaboration is essential to establish interprogram connections on a daily basis and over time to ensure seamless intervention within each system and among *systems for promoting healthy development and preventing problems, systems of early intervention, and systems of care.*

Such collaboration involves horizontal and vertical restructuring of programs and services

(a) within jurisdictions, school districts, community agencies, postsecondary institutions (e.g., among departments, divisions, units)

(b) between jurisdictions, campus and community agencies, public and private sectors; among community agencies

\*Various venues, concepts, and initiatives permeate this continuum of intervention *systems*.

***Each level of the continuum has content.*** For any school and community, the continuum encompasses many activities, programs, and services. These are often presented as a lengthy list of specifics. Conceptually, it is more powerful to cluster them into a delimited set of overlapping arenas, each of which reflects the intervention's general "content" focus.

Pioneering school initiatives have operationalized six arenas of intervention *content*. In doing so, these trailblazers have moved from a "laundry-list" of interventions to a defined set of general categories that captures the multifaceted work schools need to pursue in comprehensively addressing barriers to learning.

While there are variation in how the categories are designated, essentially they encompass:

- *Classroom support to enable learning* – enhancing regular classroom strategies to enable learning (e.g., improving instruction for students with mild-moderate learning and behavior problems and re-engaging those who have become disengaged from learning at school)
- *Support for transitions* (e.g., assisting students and families as they negotiate school and grade changes, daily transitions)
- *Engaging the home* – strengthening families and home and school connections
- *Crisis response and prevention* – responding to, and where feasible, preventing school and personal crises
- *Engaging the Community* (e.g., outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers)
- *Student and family assistance* – facilitating student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed.

Appended to this report is a brief set of examples for each of the six content arenas.

***Continuum + content = a unifying intervention framework.*** As we suggest above, focusing only on a continuum of intervention is insufficient. For example, "mapping" done with respect to three levels of intervention does not do enough to escape the trend to generate laundry lists of programs and services at each level. By combining the three system levels with an organizing set of intervention *content* arenas, we generate a matrix that constitutes an intervention prototype for a *comprehensive system of learning supports* (see Exhibit 4).

The framework encompasses a commitment to appropriately using the least restrictive and nonintrusive forms of intervention in responding to problems and accommodating diversity. For school and community, the intent is to produce a safe, healthy, nurturing environment/culture characterized by respect for differences, trust, caring, support, and expectations for a bright future.

Exhibit 4

**A Unifying Umbrella Framework for Student and Learning Supports**

**Levels of Intervention**

|                |  | Systems for Promoting<br>Healthy Development &<br>Preventing Problems | Systems for<br>Early Intervention<br>(Early after problem onset) | Systems of Care  |
|----------------|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Content</b> | Classroom<br>Supports<br>to Enable<br>Learning             |   |  |  |
|                | General Crisis/<br>Emergency<br>Assistance &<br>Prevention |   |  |  |
|                | Supports for<br>transitions                                |   |  |  |
|                | Engaging the<br>Home                                       |   |  |  |
|                | Engaging the<br>Community                                  |   |  |  |
|                | Individual<br>Student and<br>Family<br>Supports            |   |  |  |
|                |  | Accommodations for differences & disabilities                         |  | Specialized assistance<br>& other intensified<br>interventions<br>(e.g., Special Education<br>& School-Based<br>Behavioral Health) |

The matrix can be used to map what is in place and analyze gaps. Overtime, such mapping and analyses are needed at the school level, for a family of schools (e.g., a feeder pattern of schools), at the district level, community-wide, and at regional, state, and national levels.

The framework in Exhibit 4 graphically illustrates the type of intervention component that can unify student and learning supports and guide development of a comprehensive system. We call such a component an *enabling* component. By *enabling*, we mean to stress that the intent is to enable *all* students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school by addressing barriers and re-engaging disconnected students.

This framework currently is being incorporated by pioneering state and district initiatives into their designs for a comprehensive system of learning supports (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2009).

In essence, an enabling component

- addresses barriers through effective accommodation of individual differences and disabilities
- enhances the focus on motivational considerations with a special emphasis on intrinsic motivation as it relates to individual readiness and ongoing involvement and with the intent of fostering intrinsic motivation as a basic outcome
- adds remediation, treatment, and rehabilitation as necessary, but only as necessary.

## **Concluding Comments**

While the argument over charter schools will continue for some time, it can no longer be allowed to overshadow the more fundamental concern about what is missing in school improvement policy and practices. Few of the current improvement efforts at schools serving students from families suffering from significant economic disadvantage are likely to substantially increase the percentage of youngsters who engage and succeed at school over the long run. Currently, missing is a *primary* policy and practice emphasis on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students by replacing the prevailing piecemeal and marginalized approach to student and learning supports.

If schools are to ensure equity of opportunity, school improvement policy and practice must reflect the full implications of a commitment to *all* students. Clearly, *all* includes more than students who are motivationally ready and able to profit from demands and expectations for “high standards.” Promises such as “we will leave no child behind” call for addressing the problems of the many who aren’t benefitting from instructional reforms because of a host of

*external* and *internal* barriers interfering with their development and learning (see Exhibit 5). School improvement policy and practice must articulate a clear commitment to addressing factors interfering with learning and offer specifics for how schools can effectively address such barriers and re-engage disconnected students at every stage from prekindergarten through postsecondary. This is especially important where large numbers of students are experiencing barriers and where inadequate attention is being paid to equity and diversity concerns.

Our analysis indicates that a comprehensive, cohesive, and coherent *system* of learning supports is essential to reducing dropout rates, narrowing the achievement gap, and strengthening school improvement. Every school needs to begin developing and fully integrating a learning supports component by weaving together the resources of school, home, and community into a full continuum of integrated systems of intervention. In moving forward to develop such a system, the need is for a unifying concept, expanded policy, and a comprehensive intervention framework to guide creation of and capacity building for such a system.

### Exhibit 5

#### Examples of Risk-Producing Conditions that Can be Barriers to Development and Learning

| E n v i r o n m e n t a l   C o n d i t i o n s*  |   |   | Person Factors*   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <i>Neighborhood</i>   | <i>Family</i>   | <i>School and Peers</i>   | <i>Individual</i>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;extreme economic deprivation</li> <li>&gt;community disorganization, including high levels of mobility</li> <li>&gt;violence, drugs, etc.</li> <li>&gt;minority and/or immigrant status</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;chronic poverty</li> <li>&gt;conflict/disruptions/violence</li> <li>&gt;substance abuse</li> <li>&gt;models problem behavior</li> <li>&gt;abusive caretaking</li> <li>&gt;inadequate provision for quality child care</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;poor quality school</li> <li>&gt;negative encounters with teachers</li> <li>&gt;negative encounters with peers &amp;/or inappropriate peer models</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;medical problems</li> <li>&gt;low birth weight/ neurodevelopmental delay</li> <li>&gt;psychophysiological problems</li> <li>&gt;difficult temperament &amp; adjustment problems</li> <li>&gt;inadequate nutrition</li> </ul> |

\*A reciprocal determinist view of behavior recognizes the interplay of environment and person variables.

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- Note: Our Center has compiled a variety of resources, including a *toolkit*, to provide ready access to a set of resources for developing a comprehensive system of student/learning supports. See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>



## Appendix

### Examples for Each Content Arenas of a Component to Address Barriers to Learning

#### (1) Classroom-Based Approaches encompass

- Opening the classroom door to bring available supports in (e.g., peer tutors, volunteers, aids trained to work with students-in-need; resource teachers and student support staff work in the classroom as part of the teaching team)
- Redesigning classroom approaches to enhance teacher capability to prevent and handle problems and reduce need for out of class referrals (e.g. personalized instruction; special assistance as necessary; developing small group and independent learning options; reducing negative interactions and over-reliance on social control; expanding the range of curricular and instructional options and choices; systematic use of prereferral interventions)
- Enhancing and personalizing professional development (e.g., creating a Learning Community for teachers; ensuring opportunities to learn through co-teaching, team teaching, and mentoring; teaching intrinsic motivation concepts and their application to schooling)
- Curricular enrichment and adjunct programs (e.g., varied enrichment activities that are not tied to reinforcement schedules; visiting scholars from the community)
- Classroom and school-wide approaches used to create and maintain a caring and supportive climate

Emphasis at all times is on enhancing feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to others at school and reducing threats to such feelings.

#### (2) Crisis Assistance and Prevention encompasses

- Ensuring immediate assistance in emergencies so students can resume learning
- Providing Follow up care as necessary (e.g., brief and longer-term monitoring)
- Forming a school-focused Crisis Team to formulate a response plan and take leadership for developing prevention programs
- Mobilizing staff, students, and families to anticipate response plans and recovery efforts
- Creating a caring and safe learning environment (e.g., developing systems to promote healthy development and prevent problems; bullying and harassment abatement programs)
- Working with neighborhood schools and community to integrate planning for response and prevention
- Capacity building to enhance crisis response and prevention (e.g., staff and stakeholder development, enhancing a caring and safe learning environment)

#### (3) Support for Transitions encompasses

- Welcoming & social support programs for newcomers (e.g., welcoming signs, materials, and initial receptions; peer buddy programs for students, families, staff, volunteers)
- Daily transition programs for (e.g., before school, breaks, lunch, afterschool)
- Articulation programs (e.g., grade to grade – new classrooms, new teachers; elementary to middle school; middle to high school; in and out of special education programs)
- Summer or intersession programs (e.g., catch-up, recreation, and enrichment programs)
- School-to-career/higher education (e.g., counseling, pathway, and mentor programs; Broad involvement of stakeholders in planning for transitions; students, staff, home, police, faith groups, recreation, business, higher education)
- Broad involvement of stakeholders in planning for transitions (e.g., students, staff, home, police, faith groups, recreation, business, higher education)
- Capacity building to enhance transition programs and activities

(cont.)

#### (4) Home Involvement in Schooling encompasses

- C Addressing specific support and learning needs of family (e.g., support services for those in the home to assist in addressing basic survival needs and obligations to the children; adult education classes to enhance literacy, job skills, English-as-a-second language, citizenship preparation)
- C Improving mechanisms for communication and connecting school and home (e.g., opportunities at school for family networking and mutual support, learning, recreation, enrichment, and for family members to receive special assistance and to volunteer to help; phone calls and/or e-mail from teacher and other staff with good news; frequent and balanced conferences – student-led when feasible; outreach to attract hard-to-reach families – including student dropouts)
- C Involving homes in student decision making (e.g., families prepared for involvement in program planning and problem-solving)
- C Enhancing home support for learning and development (e.g., family literacy; family homework projects; family field trips)
- C Recruiting families to strengthen school and community (e.g., volunteers to welcome and support new families and help in various capacities; families prepared for involvement in school governance)
  
- C Capacity building to enhance home involvement

#### (5) *Community Outreach for Involvement and Support* encompasses

- C Planning and Implementing Outreach to Recruit a Wide Range of Community Resources (e.g., public and private agencies; colleges and universities; local residents; artists and cultural institutions, businesses and professional organizations; service, volunteer, and faith-based organizations; community policy and decision makers)
- C Systems to Recruit, Screen, Prepare, and Maintain Community Resource Involvement (e.g., mechanisms to orient and welcome, enhance the volunteer pool, maintain current involvements, enhance a sense of community)
- C Reaching out to Students and Families Who Don't Come to School Regularly – Including Truants and Dropouts
- C Connecting School and Community Efforts to Promote Child and Youth Development and a Sense of Community
- C Capacity Building to Enhance Community Involvement and Support (e.g., policies and mechanisms to enhance and sustain school-community involvement, staff/stakeholder development on the value of community involvement, “social marketing”)

#### (6) Student and Family Assistance encompasses

- C Providing extra support as soon as a need is recognized and doing so in the least disruptive ways (e.g., prereferral interventions in classrooms; problem solving conferences with parents; open access to school, district, and community support programs)
- C Timely referral interventions for students & families with problems based on response to extra support (e.g., identification/screening processes, assessment, referrals, and follow-up – school-based, school-linked)
- C Enhancing access to direct interventions for health, mental health, and economic assistance (e.g., school-based, school-linked, and community-based programs and services)
- C Care monitoring, management, information sharing, and follow-up assessment to coordinate individual interventions and check whether referrals and services are adequate and effective
- C Mechanisms for *resource* coordination and integration to avoid duplication, fill gaps, garner economies of scale, and enhance effectiveness (e.g., braiding resources from school-based and linked interveners, feeder pattern/family of schools, community-based programs; linking with community providers to fill gaps)
- C Enhancing stakeholder awareness of programs and services
- C Capacity building to enhance student and family assistance systems, programs, and services