30 Years & Counting

ENEWS

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange

Mental Health in Schools UCLA Center program and Policy Analysis

April, 2016 (Vol. 20 #7)

Concerned about addressing barriers to student learning and teaching & re-engaging disconnected students? Concerned about equity of opportunity? Concerned about whole child development? This newsletter focuses on relevant policies and practices.

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We encourage you to forward this to others. If this has been forwarded and you want to receive it directly, contact Ltaylor@ucla.edu
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For more on resources from our national Center, see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

WHAT'S HERE THIS MONTH

**Continuing Issue
>*What is the school's role in ensuring equity of opportunity?*

**News from around the country

**This month's focus for schools to address barriers to learning
>*Helping Students & Families Transition to a New Grade/New School*

**National Initiative for Transforming Student & Learning Supports in 2016

**UCLA Center Resources Update

**Access links about:

>**Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops**

>**Upcoming and archived webcasts, video, and online professional development**

>**Calls for grant proposals, presentations & papers**

>**Training and job opportunities**

**A few other helpful resources accessible from the internet

**Additional recent publications relevant to

>**School, family, & community**

>**Policy, systems, law, ethics, finances & statistics**

>**Child, adolescent, and young adults' mental and physical health**

**Comments, requests, information, questions from the field

CONTINUING ISSUE
What is the School's Role in Ensuring Equity of Opportunity?

The names and initials may change (NCLB to ESSA) but the hope that education can solve complex social problems remains. At a national education conference at the White House on March 17 titled "Beating the Odds: Successful Strategies from Schools & Youth Agencies that Build Ladders of Opportunity," the First Lady said

> "I believe that education is the single -most important civil rights issue that we face today, because in the end, if we really want to solve issues like mass incarceration, poverty, racial profiling, voting rights, and the kinds of challenges that shocked so many of us over the past year, then we simply cannot afford to lose out on the potential of even one young person. We cannot allow even one more young person to fall through the cracks."

Few would disagree. What continues to be at issue is the school's role in addressing the problem of enhancing equity of opportunity. Schools certainly have a critical role to play, but as we stress, teachers can't do it alone (see our discussion of this at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/winter13.pdf).

So our position is that any discussion of school strategies to enhance equity of opportunity must include transforming student and learning supports (see our recent policy report at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf).

We definitely agree that equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights. We also think it is time for policy makers to recognize that transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to enabling equity of opportunity and promoting whole child development.

> **What's your view of the most effective strategies for schools to play a role in enhancing equity of opportunity? At this time of transition from national to state and district leadership, what are you advocating to ensure every student succeeds?**

We look forward to sharing your views with a wide spectrum of leaders concerned with improving how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students and families.

Send your comments for sharing to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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For a range of resources related to this matter, see
National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

Spring budget cuts impact SC schools. Charleston County School District voted to eliminate 117 teaching positions across the district, marking the board's first significant round of budgets cuts for 2016-2017 school year. ... The budget constraints come after an $18 million deficit was reported ... last Sept. The cuts would be divided across 86 Charleston County schools. More than 80 positions will also be cut from district office staff. The board will evaluate further budget cuts.... 3/14/16 http://www.live5news.com/story/31466226/charleston-county-school-board-cuts-117-teaching-jobs-saves-73-million

Education Commissioner plans town hall meetings across the state. KY State Education Commissioner Stephen Pruitt wants to know how Kentuckians define school success. So he's planning a series of town hall meetings starting next week to gather comments. The suggestions will be used by state education officials in developing a new accountability system. ... Pruitt says he wants an accountability system that's fair, reliable and easier to understand. The state's work stems from congressional passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act. That law shifts much of the oversight and responsibility for schools from the federal government to the states. That includes how accountability is determined and how to define and improve low-performing schools. 3/8/16 http://www.richmond.com/news/ap/article_8899dc78-8abb-50f6-b033-3689456870cf.html

SC Superintendent says officers should not handle minor discipline. Superintendent Molly Spearman said her Safe Schools Taskforce tried to take a commonsense approach to student discipline, while stressing officers' roles as mentors and role models to students. Educators should ask officers to intervene only when students are being violent, not for minor classroom misconduct. Spearman created the study group after a Richland County deputy yanked an 18-year-old student from her desk and threw her to the floor. ... Spearman said both officers and educators need training on how to de-escalate situations. In an ideal situation, she said, the teacher would understand the underlying causes of such misbehavior and deal with the student individually, rather than in front of the whole classroom. Under the taskforce's recommendations, districts would classify misconduct in three categories. Officers generally wouldn't get involved until the third level, defined as activities posing a "direct and serious threat" to student safety, such as arson, assault and gun possession. The guidelines put using a cellphone in class among the lowest-level offenses, with possible punishments including after-school detention and demerits. Repeated refusal to comply with school personnel would be a level-two offense, with possible punishments ranging from temporary removal from class to expulsion. 3/8/16 http://www.richmond.com/news/ap/article_d63b0fbd-d4df-5b6c-9088-715a8cab71d8.html

TX Teens taste joys, challenges of teaching. Cy-Fair Independent School District is giving juniors and seniors a head start on careers in education through courses that provide hands-on experience in elementary school classrooms. As part of the curriculum, they are transported to nearby elementaries, where they work beside instructors and even create lesson plans. The three-part series of classes is also available at six other district high schools. Students spend the first six weeks studying aspects of education. Then the teens start spending time helping teach in elementary school classrooms. The program gets regular feedback from graduates of the program who are now in college. The students tend to have an easier time with university admission and with employment after college. Many former students, upon graduation from college, come back to teach full-time in Cy-Fair ISD. In fact, every graduate from the program is given a letter of intent with a pledge from the district that there will be an interview waiting for them if they want to come back. 3/1/16 http://www.chron.com/neighborhood/cyfair/news/article/Cy-Fair-teens-taste-joys-challenges-of-teaching-6863800.php

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Note: Each week the Center highlights newsworthy stories online at
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/linkstolatest.htm

If you see a story that should be included, let us know. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu.

***In matters of style, swim with the current,
in matters of principle, stand like a rock.***
Thomas Jefferson

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS FOR SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LEARNING

Helping Students & Families Transition to a New Grade/New School

As students end a school year, additional intervention needs arise. Special focus for this month is on planning ways to assist students and their families in the move to the new teacher(s), new settings, and the next stage of life. Ideally, efforts are made to facilitate positive expectations and the beginnings of strong working relationships.

[Note: Articulation transitions arise related to each new step in formal education and in moving to and from special programs and to post school living and work. For those making such transitions, well-designed support during the period of transition can make a great difference in their lives. From the first grade-to-grade transition to the move to middle school and high school and every other move to a new school, all call for well-conceived programs designed to support transitions.]

Planning focuses on preparing students and their families for the transitions and for follow-ups to ensure a successful transition. Interventions are designed to

- provide closure related to what the student is leaving behind
- enhance articulation between the old and the new
- welcome newcomers and ensure they have the type of social support that facilitates positive acceptance and adjustment in the new setting
- assess transition success
- implement timely corrective interventions when transitions are not successful

Schools need to build their capacity to address transitions proactively and in the process to be guided by their goals for enhancing personal and social functioning. A comprehensive focus on transitions requires school-wide and classroom-based systems and programs designed to (a) enhance successful transitions, (b) prevent transition problems, and (c) use transition periods to reduce alienation and increase positive attitudes toward school and learning. Examples of programs include school-wide and classroom specific activities for welcoming new arrivals (students, their families, staff) and rendering ongoing social support. Anticipated overall outcomes are reduced alienation and enhanced motivation and increased involvement in school and learning activities. Over time, articulation programs can play a major role in reducing school avoidance and dropouts, as well as enhancing the number who make successful transitions to higher education and post school living and work. It is also likely that a caring school climate can play a significant role in reducing student transiency.

***Every transition can exacerbate problems or be used as a natural opportunity
to promote positive learning and attitudes and reduce alienation.***

*See the *Support for Transitions Self-study Survey* online at:
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/toolsforpractice/transitionssurvey.pdf

For more resources, see:
>*Transitions to and from Elementary, Middle, and High School* –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/transitionstoandfrom.pdf

and the Center Online Clearinghouse Quick Finds on:
>*Transition Programs/Grade Articulation/Welcome* –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101_01.htm
>*Transition to College* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/Transitiontocollege.htm

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Note: Integrating support for learning and teaching into the natural opportunities and phases of the school year provide unlimited opportunities. For a range of ideas organized by each month, see *Ideas for Enhancing Learning Supports at your school this month* on the homepage at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

What is now proved was once only imagined.

William Blake

*NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR TRANSFORMING STUDENT & LEARNING SUPPORTS**

In an effort to mobilize colleagues at the school, district, and state levels with regard to the challenges and opportunities of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), we widely distributed the Center brief – *ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf .

We are pleased to hear how well it is being received and shared. Here is a sample of the many responses we are receiving:

(1) "Thanks for sharing this resource. It is very helpful given that ESSA has been an emerging discussion throughout the state especially given the struggles between the State Dept of Ed and the local districts. I will pass it on to our partners at the State DoE and our partnering districts."

(2) "Thank you for sending me this important policy brief. I agree with the conclusions and I appreciate the information on thinking outside of the box. This is exactly the document I have been searching for to share with my students at the University."

(3) "Thank you! Yes, we really appreciate having this resource. We will be identifying appropriate ways to advise and build support for a revised accountability system. We are also completing an initial report with recommendations to close the achievement gap. This resource is a helpful for both or these efforts."

(4) "I do plan to attend the commissioner's town hall meeting tonight. Thank you for this information. I came in handy when planning a few of my talking points. I will share this doc with my KY colleagues." [The response refers to the State Commissioner's town hall meetings that are mentioned in the ENEWS section on news from across the country.]

There were also comments about the need to understand the limitations of ESSA:
"I am watching this very carefully and I appreciate your analysis. My sense is that the leaders in the USDOE are tuned into some buzz words, and they are at least acknowledging that schools' sociopsychological variables are contributing significantly to student success. Still, their efforts feel like lip service, and they're trying to maintain their primary focus on academic test scores and poorly-constructed measures of learning. I am hopeful that we can leverage some of the new legislation into a noticeable shift in policy and practice."

*For more information on all this, we refer folks to the webpages for the initiative – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html .

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU SEE HAPPENING TO TRANSFORM STUDENT AND LEARNING SUPPORTS

And if anyone is thinking about increasing the capacity of a district or school with respect to developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student supports, ***we can help***. Send all info to ltaylor@ucla.edu .

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A vision without a plan is only a dream.

Joel Barker

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UCLA CENTER DEVELOPED RESOURCES – UPDATE

Much Discussed

Policy Brief
>*ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf

New

Quarterly e-journal:
>*Absenteeism: Beyond Reporting and Beyond Another Special Initiative*
>*Concerns about Personalized Learning*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/spring16.pdf

School Practitioner Community of Practice Interchange: Weekly Listserv
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

Topics:
>Compartmentalized and territorial turf battles.
>Creating readiness for collaborative development of a unified learning supports component
>Anticipating the shortfall from ESSA's Block Grant
>On financing and funding a system of learning supports

Note: The latest School Practitioner and archived previous ones are on our website at
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm (Also on our Facebook page)
Follow-up exchanges are posted on the Center website's Net Exchange –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm

Recently Featured Center Resources

About creating readiness for collaborative development of a unified learning supports component

>*Enhancing Readiness, Commitment, and Engagement for Transforming Learning Supports: An Ongoing Process* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/readiness.pdf
>*Organization Facilitators: A Key Change Agent for Systemic School and Community Changes* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/report/orgfacrep.pdf
>*Guide for Planning Coaching for SEAs/LEAs to Establish a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/coaching.pdf

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ACCESS LINKS ABOUT:

>**Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops** –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm

>**Calls for grant proposals, presentations, and papers** –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm

>**Training and job opportunities** – **http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm**

>**Upcoming and archived webcasts and other professional development opportunities** – **http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm**

Note: These links are on our homepage for easy access. Each is updated regularly. Just click on the indicated URL or go to our homepage at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

If you would like to add information to these, send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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A plan without a vision can become a nightmare.

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OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES ACCESSIBLE FROM THE INTERNET

>*Using Federal Education Formula Funds for School Turnaround Initiatives –*
   http://www.schoolturnaroundsupport.org/sites/default/files/resources/CST_Using_Fed_Funds_Final2.pdf

>*Blending And Braiding Funds And Resources: The Intermediary As Facilitator*
   http://www.ncwd-youth.info/information-brief-18

>*Youths' Perspectives on the Reasons Underlying School Truanc and Opportunities to Improve School Attendance –* http://nsuworks.nova.edu.tqr/vol21/iss2/8

>*Connecting with Families to Improve Students School Attendance: a Review of the Literature –*
   http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1045988X.2013.821649

>*Adding It Up: A Guide for Mapping Public Resources for Children, Youth and Families –*
   http://www.readyby21.org/sites/default/files/Adding%20It%20Up%20Guide.pdf

>Indicators of school crime and safety;2014 – http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015072.pdf

>*Chronic Absenteeism: Summarizing What We Know from Nationally Available Data –*
   http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/FINALChronicAbsenteeismReport_May16.pdf

>*Indicated Truancy Interventions: Effects on School Attendance among Chronic Truant Students*
   http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED535217.pdf

>*Gallup Student Poll 2015 Results –*
http://www.gallup.com/services/189926/student-poll-2015-results.aspx?g_source=CATEGORY_EDUCATION&g_medium=topic&g_campaign=tiles

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*How come the History Channel is so interesting
and my history class is so boring?*

Aaron Bacall

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ADDITIONAL RECENT PUBLICATIONS

School, Family & Community

>The promotive and protective effects of family factors in the context of peer and community risks for aggression. Kramer-Kuhn, A.M., & Farrell, A.D. (2016). *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, ePub http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10964-016-0438-x

>Feelings of safety at school, socioemotional functioning, and classroom engagement. Lussier, C., & Fitzpatrick, C. (2016). *Journal of Adolescent Health*, ePub
   http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X16000203

>Community engagement in youth violence prevention: Crafting methods to context. Morrel-Samuels, S., Bacallao, M., Brown, S., Bower, M., & Zimmerman, M.(2016). *Journal of Primary Prevention*, ePub http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10935-016-0428-5

Policy, systems, law, ethics, finances & statistics

>Prevention of youth violence: A public health approach. Sood, A.B., & Berkowitz, S.J. (2016). *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinic of North America, 25*, 243-256.
   http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1056499315001091

>A meta-review of school-based disaster interventions for child and adolescent survivors . Fu, C., & Underwood, C. (2015). *Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health 27*, 161-171. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.2989/17280583.2015.1117978#.VtSe8KPTncs

>What is positive youth development and how might it reduce substance use and violence? A systematic review and synthesis of theoretical literature. Bonell, C., Hinds, K., Dickson, K., Thomas, J., Fletcher, A., Murphy, S., Melendez-Torres, G.J., Bonell, C., & Campbell, R. (2016). *BMC Public Health, 16,* e135. http://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-016-2817-3

Child, adolescent, and young adult's mental and physical health

>School-based interventions to promote empathy-related responding in children and adolescents: a developmental analysis. Malti, T., Chaparro, M.P., Zuffiano, A., Colasante, T. (2016). *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, ePub(ePub): 1-14. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15374416.2015.1121822#.Vt8NT6PTncs

>Positive youth development programs to reduce substance use in young people: Systematic review. Melendez-Torres, G.J., Dickson, K., Fletcher, A., Thomas, J., Hinds, K., Campbell, R., Murphy, S., & Bonell, C. (2016). *International Journal of Drug Policy*, ePub. http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S095539591600030X

>Does self-efficacy mediate the association between socioeconomic background and emotional symptoms among schoolchildren? Meilstrup, C., Thygesen, L.C., Nielsen, L., Koushede, V., Cross, D., & Holstein, B.E. (2016). *International Journal of Public Health*, ePub.http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs00038-016-0790-3

FYI: Safety Lit is a useful resource for abstracts related to injury prevention policy and practice. Http://www.safetylit.org

   Note: The Center's Quick Find online clearinghouse at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu is updated regularly with new reports and publications such as those listed above. Currently there are over 130 alphabetized topics with direct links to Center materials and to other online resources and related centers. Let us know about publications and reports that should be included in this dedicated online clearinghouse. Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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**A buddy of mine was always in trouble.
His parents were called to the school so often,
they had a better attendance record that he did.**
Gene Perret

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COMMENTS AND SHARING FROM THE FIELD

A Gallup Student Poll released last week shows that only half of American students are "hopeful" or "engaged" in school, while the rest are either not engaged or actively disengaged. Evidence suggests that hope is a stronger predictor of academic success, including graduation from college, than ACT and SAT scores and high school GPA (Abdul-Alim – http://diverseeducation.com/article/82431/?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=)

Here's a couple quotes that warrant sharing:

(1) Mary Battenfeld & Felicity Crawford from Wheelock College caution:

As long as attention remains on testable accountability in K-12 schools rather than on poverty, inequality and early education, "every student succeeds," like "no child left behind," will continue to be an unfulfilled promise.

(2) What Martin Luther King Jr. stressed in 1963 still remains the case:

This is not the time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promise of Democracy.

(3) Anti-slavery activist Rev. Edward Everett Hale reminded folks that everyone can contribute:

I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.

(4) Cesar Chavez stressed:

You are never strong enough that you don't need help.

<p style="color:red; text-align:center">***</p>

Finally, here's a bit more feedback regarding the Center's brief on: *ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning* –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf

> "I will make sure to share this widely with our districts as the opportunity for a more cohesive approach is one that we've been trying to stimulate."

> "Thank you so much for sharing this awesome information. Here at Mental Health America's national office right outside DC, we are partners with a number of leaders and researchers from across the country working from a policy standpoint on mental health in schools."

> "Thanks for sending this! It's an impressive piece of work with exciting promise. I will distribute to my Center as well as to my Coalition listserv.... We could use members in our Coalition with your expertise and that of your colleagues. Although we have representatives from the Dept of Ed and a few school-based intervention researchers, we are missing the educational policy aspect."