



ENEWS



**29 Years &
Counting**

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange

March, 2015 (Vol. 19 #6)

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.



We encourage you to forward this to others. If this has been forwarded and you want to receive it directly, contact Ltaylor@ucla.edu



For more on resources from our national Center, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

WHAT'S HERE THIS MONTH

****Continuing Challenge**

>Enhancing graduation rates

****News from around the country**

****This month's focus for schools to address barriers to learning**

>Spring can be a high risk time for students

****2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student & Learning Supports**

****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 CHALLENGE

Enhancing Graduation Rates

The political drama surrounding the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act continues to unfold. Whatever happens, school staff must continue every day to pursue better ways to enhance equity of opportunity for all students to succeed. A particular concern continues to be providing effective supports to enhance graduation rates.

While there is a congratulatory tone to the recent announcement of a 81% graduation rate for schools, uncertainty almost always enshrouds such data; and even if the data are accurate, there is the remaining challenge of addressing the 19% who are not making it.

Clearly, being in class is an essential prerequisite for learning and ultimately graduating; therefore, it is not surprising that enhancing attendance seems to be the primary strategy at most schools. However, this emphasis is hardly sufficient to prevent and respond early to learning, behavior, and emotional problems. And there is the pervasive problem of providing supports for students who need to catch up (e.g., in terms of course credits for graduation).

With spring semester comes the last hope for many students. A full array of supports are needed. Special attention must be given to helping students efficiently recover missed course credits (e.g., through new ideas about self-paced online courses, competence-based acquisition of course credits).

What can you share about how schools are addressing barriers to graduation? What are you advocating to ensure development of an effective array of student and learning supports? We look forward to hearing from you and sharing what you contribute to the discussion. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

For a range of resources related to this concern, see
2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

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If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

John Quincy

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

District hires student support staff to help with foster students. The first phase of efforts to aid foster kids is nearly finished, as Los Angeles Unified hires the last few counselors in the inaugural year of a three-year, \$32.7 million plan. While there were some delays in the district's first mass hiring in recent memory, a newly assembled force of social workers has begun counseling the 8,278 students in foster care, who are statistically more likely to struggle in school. In the initial year of plans to target disadvantaged students with increased state funding, \$9.9 million will be spent on the pupils in foster care, with a focus on reducing absenteeism and suspensions, improving state test performance and providing psychological services. (1/26/15) <http://www.dailynews.com/social-affairs/20150126/lausd-hires-social-workers-counselors-to-help-students-in-foster-care>

For dropouts, free program offers route back toward HS diploma. Eight hundred former Federal Way, WA students who never earned their high school diplomas should expect a phone call from the school district. Or perhaps a knock on the door. All are eligible for a free program to get them back on track toward earning a high school credential, and the district is in search mode. The Federal Way academy looks more like a college library than a regular school, and that's by design. Inside, any student who left school without a diploma and is at least 16 and still under 21 will meet with an adviser to determine how much course work remains and whether it can be completed before the 21st-birthday cutoff. Academy kids earn the same diploma as other Federal Way students, so the coursework will be equally challenging. The main difference is a highly personalized approach, schedule flexibility and help for young people who may have housing, employment, childcare or financial hurdles. Other than six hours required on-site each week, all of the schoolwork can be done online, at any time that works for students' schedules. Those who lack computers will get a free Kindle Fire to use for Academy work. The Federal Way academy is one of three dozen dropout re-engagement programs now operating statewide under the so-called Open Doors law, which uses regular state education dollars to pay for dropouts getting back on track. (2/2/15) <http://blogs.seattletimes.com/educationlab/2015/02/02/acceleration-academy-federal-way/>

Federal judge approves landmark special education settlement. A New Orleans federal Judge approved a landmark special education settlement Feb. 9 addressing the problems that sprung up for children with disabilities after Hurricane Katrina, when the public school system was de-centralized. The case had been pending for more than 4 years. At last count, New Orleans had more than 4,800 public school students receiving special education services. The lead plaintiffs in the class action case alleged a host of failings, including physical and emotional abuse and children being shuffled around the system, constantly being kicked out. The city has two public school systems -- one local, one state -- and almost all the schools in both are largely independent charters. Both the Louisiana Education Department and the Orleans Parish School Board were defendants. Especially in the first few years after the storm, the lack of a traditional central office made it difficult to track special education students or make sure they were getting the services they deserved. In recent years, the city has re-unified expulsion and mostly unified enrollment and transfers. Recovery School District officials, who supervise these programs, say that means schools can no longer illegally expel or "counsel out" students with disabilities. Officials have also provided more money for children with significant needs. The settlement puts in place an independent monitor to make sure New Orleans schools are following the law. Among the terms: schools will be randomly audited, the state will create a plan to ensure all children with disabilities are identified and charters must lay out special education services in their renewal applications. (2/9/15) http://www.nola.com/education/index.ssf/2015/02/federal_judge_approves_landmar.html

CO works to prevent preschool expulsions. The odds of getting expelled from preschool are higher than the odds of getting expelled from the K-12 system. And a 2014 report also revealed that minorities and boys are disproportionately expelled from preschool. It's statistics like these that prompted a recent federal push for states to address the issue, a process now unfolding in Colorado. (Chalkbeat Colorado, Feb. 19) http://co.chalkbeat.org/2015/02/19/new-push-to-quantify-prevent-preschool-expulsions-in-colorado/#.VOqTC_nF-qi

Teens story inspires. What started with a picture and a post on the popular Humans of New York blog has led to more than \$1 million in donations and now, a trip to the Oval Office. The post, featuring 13-year-old middle school student Vidal Chastanet from Brownsville, Brooklyn, has received more than 1 million likes on Facebook and more than 145,000 shares. Chastanet talks to Humans of New York about the person who has influenced him most, Ms. Lopez, his school's principal. Chastanet attends Mott Hall Bridges Academy in Brownsville, Brooklyn, the neighborhood in New York City with the highest crime rate. (2/7/15)
<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/teens-humans-york-story-inspires-president-obama/story?id=28804157>

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Quote from Teen story inspires

"When we get in trouble, she doesn't suspend us. She calls us to her office and explains to us how society was built down around us. And she tells us that each time somebody fails out of school, a new jail cell gets built. And one time she made every student stand up, one at a time, and she told each one of us that we matter."

Vidal Chastanet

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.

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

Spring Can Be a High Risk Time for Students

Excerpt from "Spring Slump" – by Amanda Gray – <http://www.ndsmcobserver.com>

"I noticed a trend lately a sleepy, tired and sad trend. We're growing, slowly but surely, more impatient and grumpy as the year progresses. I'm calling this phenomenon the 'Spring Semester Slump.' It's common sense, really. We start out the school year relatively excited to be back on campus, with friends, possibly even excited to be in class. Fall break comes, and while it's well-appreciated, we can come back to school without much coaxing. School has yet to get truly difficult ...This goes out the proverbial window, however, after Fall Break....Winter Break cannot come fast enough. Those three beautiful weeks are the shortest three weeks of my life.... After that brief respite, spring semester begins."

Accumulated stress and concern for the future can produce spring slump and exacerbate emotional problems

While spring slump may have a small effect on motivated and successful students, there is a sense of mounting frustration for students who aren't doing well (socially, emotionally, academically) that can lead to problems in attendance and effort. For some, it is just that the school year seems so long and their motivation lags. For others, it is clear that they aren't doing well and are unlikely to catch

up. For those in their last year at a school, a version of "senioritis" hits, and they hope to coast through and survive the last few months.

How do you understand the plunge in effort/energy/motivation and what do you think might counter the "slump" and maybe enhance motivation for school and for learning during spring semester?

Spring slump also may be a symptom of emotional distress and may exacerbate such distress. Schools must help address such distress, but must keep emotional problems in perspective and not overpathologize.

In any school, there are young people who are not very happy. This is quite understandable among those living in economically impoverished neighborhoods where daily living and school conditions frequently are horrendous. But even youngsters with economic advantages too often report feeling alienated and lacking a sense of purpose. Youngsters who are unhappy usually act on such feelings. Some "internalize;" some "act out;" and some respond in both ways at different times. The variations can make matters a bit confusing. Is the youngster just sad? Is s/he depressed? Is this a case of ADHD?

Individuals may display the same behavior and yet the causes may be different and vice versa. And, matters are further muddled by the reality that the causes vary. The causes of negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviors range from environment and system deficits to relatively minor group and individual vulnerabilities on to major biological disabilities (that affect only a relatively few individuals). It is the full range of causes that account for the large number of children and adolescents reported as having psychosocial, MH, or developmental problems.

Some Center Resources to address spring slump

See resources listed in the Quick Find on:

>Engagement and Re-engagement – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/motiv.htm>

See

>Student and Family Special Assistance – Chapter 9 in *Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System*, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf>

See resources listed in

>the *Practitioner Toolbox* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/toolbox.htm>

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>

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I make mistakes; I'll be the second to admit it.

Jean Kerr

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2015 NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR TRANSFORMING STUDENT & LEARNING SUPPORTS

The 2015 Initiative has generated a great deal of interest and opportunity. We have been contacted by staff in state departments of education, staff working with state boards of education, staff from national organizations concerns about school improvement, and many superintendents, principals, and school leaders.

Here are two examples of the feedback coming in from leaders across the country:

(1) "I shared your book *Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System* with our leadership highlighting the figures that show fragmentation and integrated support services. It opened a dialogue within our school leadership group about our current and future plans to become more integrated to provide transformative education for all of our students. Since I began by role of Director of Student Services, I tried to spark this conversation several times in different ways and met resistance. The resources you share, especially your book, have made a difference in my work and in our schools."

(2) "I am the legislative chair for our state Association of School Social Workers. We just had a board meeting and we agreed we'd like to support the 2015 National Initiative to Transform Student and Learning Support. What would be helpful at this point?"

In response to those wanting to help, we have started to suggest a series of action steps (see below and see entries on our website and Facebook).

Some Immediate Steps You Can Take to Build Momentum

We understand that not everybody is in a position to do the following, but if you can here are some first steps:

(1) Get the word out. Continuing to inform and encourage action by others is a critical first and ongoing step; so anything you can do along this line is fundamental.

In order to involve as many folks as feasible in taking action, we will regularly be outlining specific steps that can be taken (e.g., the emails we send out go directly to about 100,000 folks across the country who then forward them to others). Please take a few minutes to suggest to others that they at least look at the website for the initiative (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>). You might also suggest that those who are not signed up to receive information directly from the Center may want to do so by sending a sign-up request to Ltaylor@ucla.edu .

(2) Send info about ending the marginalization of student and learning supports to policy makers. We have sent a mailing to the Congressional education committees. It included the letter that is now on the initiative's webpages (direct URL to the letter is <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/congletter.pdf>). Included with the letter was a copy of the initiative announcement and first press release (see initiative webpages for these). Encourage anyone who can to send similar letters and enclosures not only to the Congressional committees, but also to state legislative committees, school boards, and any others who can affect current school improvement policy and practice.

(3) Get the message to those out advocating for school improvement and equity of opportunity. We also have sent and will continue to send a special message to those who are testifying to the Senate committee (and we are adapting this message and also sending it to those who are scheduled to make live and webinar presentations related to student and learning supports). The message stresses that everyone needs to include discussion about the imperative for taking steps to end the marginalization of student and learning supports in school improvement policy and practice.*

*Note: The message we are sending is on our Facebook page -- <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Los-Angeles-CA/Center-for-Mental-Health-in-Schools-at-UCLA/263769961783>. Feel free to adapt and share the points to encourage greater attention to the problem of ending the marginalization and the need to transform student and learning supports.

Please let us know if you have ideas about other immediate actions that should be taken (send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.ucla.edu).

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

If anyone would like us to elaborate on these talking points, we can be reached at adelman@psych.ucla.edu or Ltaylor@ucla.edu .

***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 .

School improvement is a paradox.

That's right. Everyone is going down the same road in different directions.



UCLA CENTER DEVELOPED RESOURCES – UPDATE

New

Practice Notes

- >**Agencies Addressing Problems of Children and Youth: Pursuing a Continuum of Interventions and Working with Schools**
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/agenciesschools.pdf>

Quick Find

- >**Misdiagnosis** – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/misdiagnosis.htm>

Commentaries section of Hot Topics/Issues (On the home page, click the *Hot Topics* icon)

- >**School Reform is Failing to Address Barriers to Learning**
- >**Getting Back to Real Policy Basics: Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child**
- >**Improving Schools? Not Another Special Initiative!**
- >**What is Personalized Learning?**

School Practitioner Community of Practice Interchange: Weekly Listserv

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

Topics explored in the last month included requests about:

- Feb 9: Telling families students need counseling without endangering working relationships; Impact of poverty on school and students success
- Feb 16: School problems that stem from factors in the home environment
- Feb 23: Tools to identify and monitor at risk students; New ways to address concerns of “at risk” students

Note: The latest interchange is 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>

Center Featured Resource

Focus on Agency and School Collaboration

Connecting community, school, and home resources is essential to the well-being of children and youth and to enhancing equity of opportunity for them to thrive.

Every community has some agencies whose mission includes concern for the problems of children and youth. Their effectiveness is enhanced when they are able to (1) pursue a full continuum of interventions and (2) work collaboratively with schools. The Center's new set of Practice Notes entitled *Agencies Addressing Problems of children and Youth: Pursuing a Continuum of Interventions and Working with Schools* is the latest in our collection of resources intended to provide a stimulus for discussion between school personnel and community agency staff related to collaborating to work together on shared concerns. Our resources highlight how we frame the continuum of interventions as a comprehensive and integrated system, formulate the arenas for agencies and schools to focus on in working together, and how to develop and effective operational infrastructure.

For a variety of resources related to this, see our Online Clearinghouse Quick Find on:

- >*Collaboration - School, Community, Interagency; community schools*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p1201_01.htm

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

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES ACCESSIBLE FROM THE INTERNET

- >Activating Empathy: A roadmap to changemaker classrooms – <http://startempathy.org/blog/2013/03/what-works-road-map-unleashing-empathy-schools>
- >Multiple measures of college readiness – <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/17/37/11737.pdf>
- >A practitioner's guide to implementing early warning systems – <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/project.asp?ProjectID=396>
- >Colorin' Colorado: Bilingual site for families and teachers of English Language Learners – <http://www.colorincolorado.org/index.php?langswitch=en>
- >School Improvement Grants: Progress report from America's great cities schools – <http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/87/SIG%20Report%202015.pdf>
- >Early high school dropouts: What are their characteristics – <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2015066>
- >Evidence based practice summaries – http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/ebp_summaries/
- >School practices and accountability for students with disabilities – <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20154006/pdf/20154006.pdf>
- >Time for Equity: Expanding access to learning – <http://annenberginstitute.org/?q=publication/time-equity-expanding-access-learning-voices-urban-education-40>

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What do you get when you cross a computer with an elephant?

... A 1000 pound know-it-all.

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ADDITIONAL RECENT PUBLICATIONS

(in print and on the web)

School, Family & Community

>Changes in parent, sibling, and peer support during the transition to young adulthood. Guan, S. & Fuligni, A. (2015) *The Journal of Research on Adolescence* epub <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jora.12191/full>

>*Resilience building schools for at risk youth: Developing the social, emotional, and motivational foundations of academic success.* Mulloy, M. (2015) Civic Research Institute. <http://www.civicresearchinstitute.com/order/rbsypb08r.html>

>Being out at school: The implications for school victimization and young adult adjustment. Russell, S.T., Toomey, R.B., Ryan, C., Diaz, R.M. (2014). *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 84, 635-643. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000037>

>Disaster preparedness education in South Los Angeles faith-based organizations: A pilot study in promoting personal and community preparedness and resiliency. Lin, A.C., Burke, R.V., Berg, B.M., Muller, V.M., & Upperman, J.S. (2014). *American Journal of Disaster Medicine*, 9, 287-296. <http://www.pnpco.com/pn03000.html>

Policy, systems, law, ethics, finances & statistics

>Advancing child protection through respecting children's rights: A shifting emphasis for school psychology. Fiorvanti, C. & Brassard, M.R. (2014). *School Psychology Review*, 43, 349-366.

>Developing a comprehensive school connectedness scale for program evaluation. Chung-Do, J.J., Goebert, D.A., Chang, J.Y., & Hamagani, F.J. (2015). *School Health*, 85, 179-188.

>Maternal attachment buffers the association between exposure to violence and youth attitudes about aggression. Houston, J., Grych, J. (2015). *Journal of Clinical and Child Adolescent Psychology*. ePub <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15374416.2014.987380#.VOOrBU05DQM>

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

>Friends First? The peer network origins of adolescent dating. Kreager, D., et al.(2015) *The Journal of Research on Adolescence* epub <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jora.12189/full>

>Effect of housing relocation and neighborhood environment on adolescent mental and behavioral health. Byck GR, Bolland J, Dick D, Swann G, Henry D, Mustanski B. J. *Child Psychol. Psychiatry* 2015; ePub <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jcpp.12386/abstract;jsessionid=DEB6AEAB116A5D5F882F4B38CA398D2E.f04t02>

>Prevalence and determinants of resistance to use drugs among adolescents who had an opportunity to use drugs. Lopez-Quintero, C., Neumark, Y. (2015). *Drug and Alcohol Dependency*. ePub <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0376871615000356> <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/josh.12237/abstract;jsessionid=2FFDA99DA41AAD4967487230B94C6BC9.f03t02>

>Empirically derived subtypes of serious emotional disturbance in a large adolescent sample. Peiper, N., Clayton, R., Wilson, R., Illback, R., O'Brien, E., Kerber, R., Baumgartner, R., Hornung, C. (2015). *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. ePub <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs00127-015-1017-2>

FYI: Safety Lit is a useful resource for abstracts related to injury prevention policy and practice. [Http://www.safetylit.org](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](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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Q: How many programmers does it take to change a light bulb?

A: None. It's a hardware problem.

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COMMENTS AND SHARING FROM THE FIELD

Feedback on 2015 initiative to transform student and learning support

(1) "I have very strong feelings about this initiative. I work in a district where we are at a 94% free and reduced lunch rate, 35% of our students qualify as being homeless and then you add all the other things taking place in our students' lives. Daily there are students who cannot get work done because they are worried about having food to eat, a warm place to sleep, whether or not they will be living with their mom/dad, and mental health issues (eating disorders, suicide attempts, rape, etc.). I think it would be horrible to expect teachers to do all of this on their own, while having to teach state standards."

(2) "This is in response to your email on congressional hearings for ESEA and idea that teachers can do it alone. Society has changed but education is still pretending it hasn't. With poverty, drug addiction, gang involvement, trauma, abuse...Teacher are expected to stay on topic (common core objectives) ignoring these problems. They are to put the objective on the board and never stray from it. And kids? They are expected to leave all their issues at the door and perform as well as students that have not been exposed to these issues. They are supposed to magically obtain social skills, do homework in the midst of chaos, etc. We don't have money for counselors, librarians, etc. So who is there to help them find services and even care in the first place to draw them out to see what the issues and needs might be? Crazy. Naive. It's living in the past where communities kew all the families that lived within and supported one another. Just not so any more. We are in the trenches. Teachers are discouraged and leaving the profession because their drams of teaching children who are ready to learn are being stolen. We are in trouble. We need to wake up."

(3) "Today I received a text from my daughter who is a special education teacher at a middle school. She vented to me about her testing schedule for the students in her classroom. She has 43 hours of testing she, alone, must conduct, most of it individually with her students. She will not have a substitute teacher nor any volunteer to help her. She and her aide will conduct class, grade papers, support students and find 43 hours for her to test her students. During that time she will also be responsible for the normal support she gives her special education students. Her final sentence to me was, "How is this Okay?" The answer is "It is Not Okay." Someone must stand up and begin to make reasonable, good policy decisions soon. (From a mother and a district superintendent)

(4) " As I read your latest newsletter a couple of thoughts occurred to me that I wanted to share.

One is the idea of 'organizing' people to take action – just as your message is doing. What if there was a more formal organization? Could there be a professional organization for Learning Supports? Could people be organized more formally to take on some of the work that your Center has done for years in trying to advocate for these concepts? I know that you're already networking people across the country. Could that be the basis for something that is membership based and takes on an advocacy life of its own?

The other idea concerns what I've learned working at a University research center. I've watched lots of initiatives come and go and have noticed that the ones that last have regular and proactive technical assistance. Again, you've done this for years in several ways but I know that the most traction we ever got in our state was when your Center staff made regular visits to the state. For our project, we have regularly scheduled monthly calls with our state contacts and they, in turn, have bi-weekly calls with their coaches and teams. That seems to keep everyone on track. Naturally, that takes manpower and we have to charge for these services as we're 100% grant funded. I'm guessing that you're in a similar position. But I have to wonder if there's another option to keep folks moving ahead?

My wish for Learning Supports is to have a well-established/systematic way to engage and support folks and to keep them moving ahead. I hope you take these ideas as a tribute to your work – your Center has made an incredible impact on my professional life that I wish for others. Let me know if/how I can help."

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS

Who Are We? The *national Center for Mental Health in Schools* 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 Project and Center are 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