



Continuing Education Units

Engaging and Re-engaging Students and Families: Four Units for Continuing Education

Unit IV: Embedding Engagement and Re-engagement into a Unified and Comprehensive System of Student and Learning Supports

(May, 2012)

Unit I: Motivation: Time to Move Beyond Behavior Modification

Access at: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/enagei.pdf>

Unit II: Strategic Approaches to Enhancing Student Engagement and Re-engagement

Access at: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engageii.pdf>

Unit III: Enhancing Family Engagement and Re-engagement

Access at: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engageiii.pdf>

Unit IV: Embedding Engagement and Re-engagement into a Unified and Comprehensive System of Student and Learning Supports

Access at: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engageiv.pdf>

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Preface

Our Center is committed to enhancing continuing education in general and professional development in particular. At this time, we are primarily designing content and tools to aid districts and schools as they address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. We provide these resources at no cost through our website.*

Eventually, we will explore ways to provide continuing education credit. For now, our hope is that locals will be able to build the resources into their professional development and provide "credit" as appropriate.

We view all our efforts as works in progress and invite you to share your ideas about how to improve our existing resources and feel free to suggest additional resources you would like to see us develop.

*See our Center's resources and materials at
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/materials/resources.htm>
Everything on the site is free for downloading.

Engaging and Re-engaging Students and Families: Four Units for Continuing Education

Moving into Unit IV

As the first three units clarify, engagement and disengagement are of central concern related to students and their families (and school personnel). Understanding intrinsic motivation underscores matters of fundamental relevance to engaging and re-engaging one and all. Practices for enhancing engagement, preventing disengagement, and efforts to re-engage those who have become disconnected require minimizing conditions that negatively affect intrinsic motivation and maximizing those that enhance it.

Unit I presented a perspective on motivation that goes beyond the application of reinforcers. It emphasized the importance of expanding your understanding of engagement, re-engagement, and intrinsic motivation in the context of school improvement. It also highlighted implications for school climate.

Unit II highlighted strategic approaches to engaging and re-engaging students. Also covered are why it is important to avoid over-relying on extrinsic reinforcers and minimize practices that can produce reactance.

Unit III provided applications designed to engage and re-engage families. It focused on differences among families and other primary care-takers with respect to resources, motivation and needs, and barriers to involvement with the school.

This unit stresses that teachers can't and should not be expected to do it all alone. Rather, their work needs to be embedded into a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports and that system should be built with a view to engaging and re-engaging students, families, and all the professional who have a stake in improving schools.

As aids for personnel development, each unit begins with a set of questions that can be used to guide independent study and community of learners' discussions. A few topics are amplified with brief supplementary readings; others that can deepen learning and provide specific resource aids are referenced throughout and listed at the end of each unit. A description and examples of a set of self-study surveys also is appended.

Unit IV: Embedding Engagement and Re-engagement into a Unified and Comprehensive System of Student and Learning Supports

A. A Continuum of Intervention: Moving Beyond the Three Tier Intervention Pyramid

B. Six Arenas of Learning Supports Intervention

C. Continuum + Content = An Enabling Component

D. Where Does RTI and PBIS Fit In

Study and Discussion Questions

- (1) What is a comprehensive system of student and learning supports?
- (2) How does response to intervention fit into a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports?
- (3) Why should teachers be involved in developing a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports?

Unit IV: Embedding Engagement and Re-engagement into a Unified and Comprehensive System of Student and Learning Supports

If response to intervention is pursued simplistically as a matter of providing more and better instruction, it is unlikely to be effective for a great many students. Instruction must be supported by a broad-range of student and learning supports focusing on factors interfering with good instruction and productive learning.

If response to intervention is understood as one strategy in a comprehensive system of classroom and school-wide learning supports, schools not only can more effectively address problems early after onset, but can prevent many from occurring. Thus, referrals for special education assessment decrease and come only after a broad-range of student and learning supports prove inadequate in enabling learning.

From this perspective, the primary context for response to intervention is a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system to reduce learning, behavior, and emotional problems, promote social/emotional development, and effectively re-engage students in classroom learning. Such a system should not only reduce the number of students inappropriately referred for special education or specialized services, but also should enhance attendance, reduce misbehavior, close the achievement gap, and increase graduation rates.

As illustrated in Guide IV-a, school improvement must encompass an enabling/learning supports component if it is to effectively address interfering factors and re-engage disconnected students. Work related to pioneering initiatives around the country is providing realistic and cost-effective guidance for fully integrating the component into school improvement policy and practice. The aim is to coalesce and enhance student and learning supports in ways that can enable all students to have an equal opportunity for success at school. The work is especially critical where large numbers of students are affected and at any school that is not yet paying adequate attention to equity and diversity concerns.

As indicated in Guide IV-a, an enabling component involves first addressing interfering factors and then (re)engaging students in classroom instruction. The reality is that interventions that do not stress engaging students fully in classroom learning generally are insufficient in sustaining, over time, student involvement, good behavior, and effective learning at school.

In essence, beginning in the classroom with differentiated classroom practices and by ensuring school-wide learning supports, an Enabling or Learning Supports Component

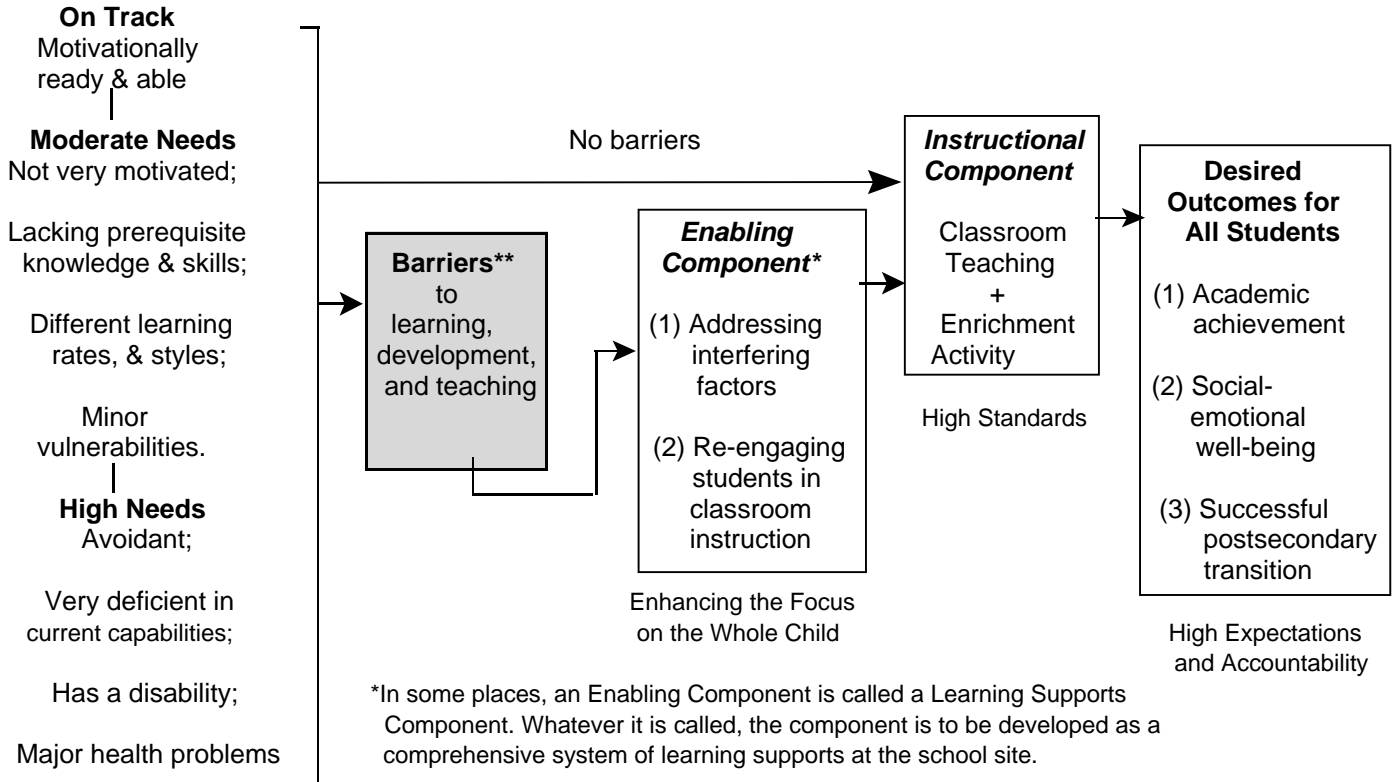
- addresses barriers through a broader view of “basics” and through effective accommodation of individual differences and disabilities
- enhances the focus on motivational considerations with a special emphasis on intrinsic motivation as it relates to individual readiness and ongoing involvement and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

Guide IV-a

An Enabling or Learning Supports Component to Address Barriers and Re-engage Students in Classroom Instruction

Range of Learners

(based on their response to academic instruction at any given point in time)



****Examples of Risk-Producing Conditions that Can be Barriers to 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>
>extreme economic deprivation >community disorganization, including high levels of mobility & unemployment >violence, drugs, crime, etc. >minority and/or immigrant isolation >Lack of positive youth development opportunities	>chronic poverty >domestic conflict/ disruptions/violence >parent/sibling substance abuse or mental illness >modeling problem behavior >abusive caretaking >inadequate provision for quality child care	>poor quality school >negative encounters with teachers >negative encounters with peers &/or inappropriate peer models >many disengaged students	>medical problems >low birth weight/ neurodevelopmental delay >psychophysiological problems >difficult temperament & adjustment problems >inadequate nutrition and health care

Note: A reciprocal determinist view of behavior recognizes the interplay of environment and person variables with negative environmental conditions exacerbating person factors.

A. A Continuum of Intervention: Moving Beyond the Three Tier Intervention Pyramid

A comprehensive system of student and learning supports involves more than a multi-level or multi-tiered continuum of interventions

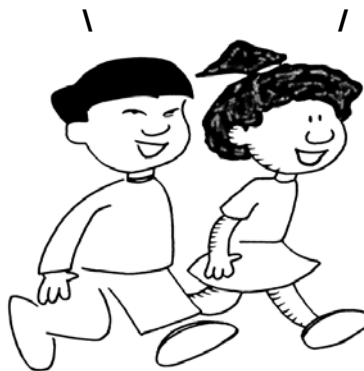
Current conceptualizations of response to intervention embrace a continuum of interventions and refer to the continuum as a multi-level or multi-tiered model. Few will argue against the notion that conceptualizing levels of intervention is a good starting point for framing the nature and scope of interventions needed to ensure all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. However, as our center has stressed over the years, the levels of the continuum need to be conceptualized in terms of what they aim to do and as interrelated and overlapping intervention subsystems focused on (1) promoting development and preventing problems, (2) responding to problems as early-after-onset as feasible, and (3) treating severe, pervasive, and chronic problems. Moreover, each subsystem is seen as needing to link school and community interventions in ways that integrate, coordinate, and weave resources together. As graphically illustrated in Guide IV-b, (a) each level represents a subsystem, (b) the three subsystems overlap, and (c) all three require integration into an overall system that encompasses school and community resources.

A comprehensive system of student and learning supports, however, involves more than a continuum of interventions. There is the pressing matter of coalescing the laundry list of fragmented programs and services designed to promote healthy development and address barriers to learning and teaching. This requires a formulation to guide organizing programs and services into a circumscribed set of arenas reflecting the content purpose of the activity.

Why does history keep repeating itself?

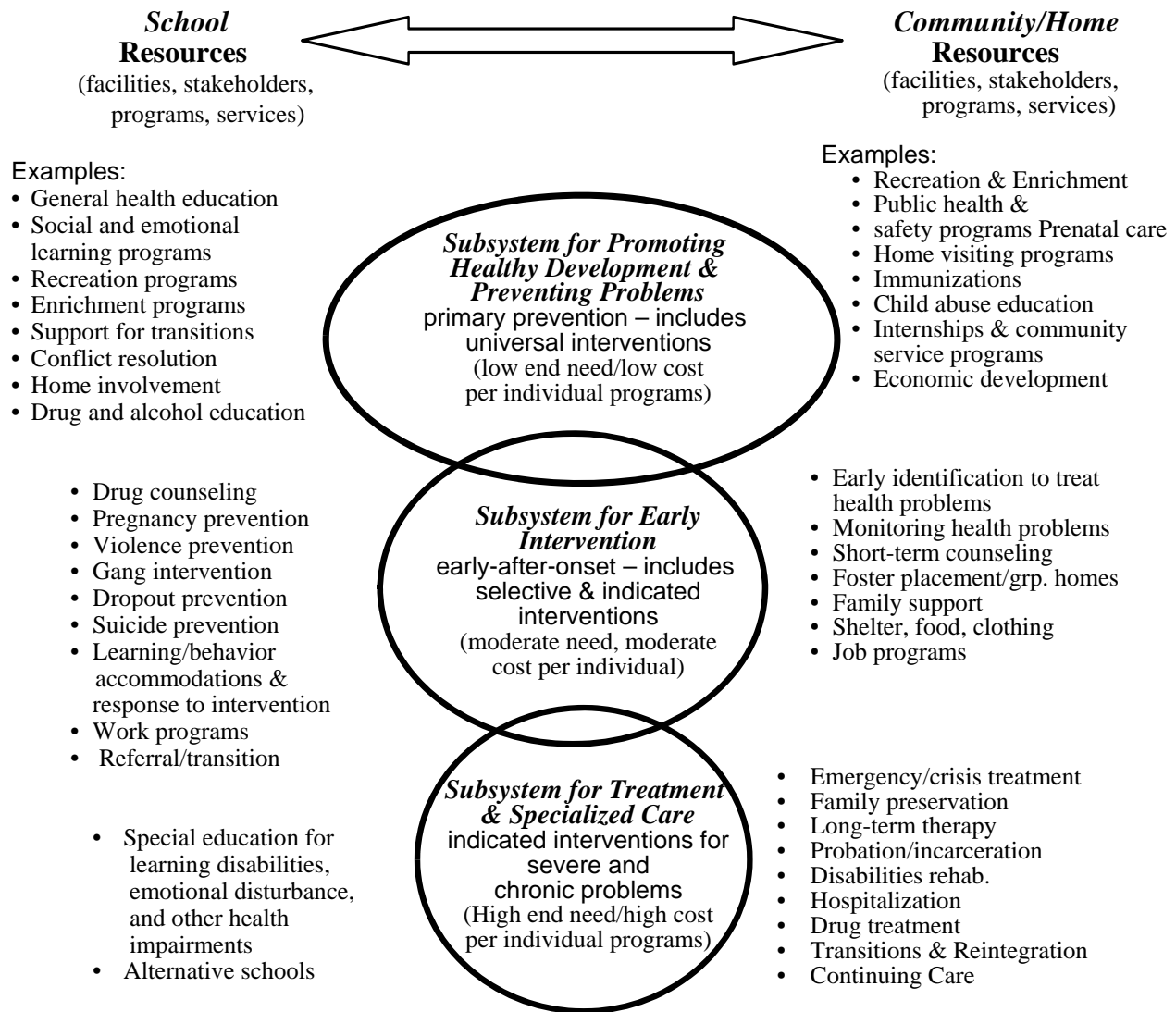
time!

Because we weren't listening the first



Guide IV-b

A Full Continuum of Interconnected Intervention Subsystems*



Systematic school-community-home collaboration is essential to establish cohesive, seamless intervention on a daily basis and overtime within and among each subsystem. Such collaboration involves horizontal and vertical restructuring of programs and services.

*Various venues, concepts, and initiatives permeate this continuum of intervention systems. For example, venues such as day care and preschools, concepts such as social and emotional learning and development, and initiatives such as positive behavior support, response to intervention, and coordinated school health. Also, a considerable variety of staff are involved. Finally, note that this illustration of an essential continuum of intervention systems differs in significant ways from the three tier pyramid that is widely referred to in education circles in discussing universal, selective, and indicated interventions (see the Center 2011 report entitled “Moving Beyond the Three Tier Intervention Pyramid Toward a Comprehensive Framework for Student and Learning Supports” at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/threetier.pdf>).

B. Six Arenas of Learning Supports Intervention

Our work emphasizes six arenas encompassing interventions to:

- Enhance regular classroom strategies to enable learning (e.g., improving instruction for students who with mild-moderate learning and behavior problems and those have become disengaged from learning at school; includes a focus on prevention, early intervening, and use of strategies such as response to intervention)
- Support transitions (i.e., assisting students and families as they negotiate school and grade changes and many other transitions)
- Increase home & school connections & engagement
- Respond to, and where feasible, prevent crises
- Increase community involvement and support (outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers)
- Facilitate student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed.

Some version of the six basic arenas has held-up over the last decade in a variety of venues across the country.

C. Continuum + Content = An Enabling Component

The continuum and six content arenas can be formed into an intervention framework for a comprehensive system of learning supports (see Guide IV-c). Such a framework can guide and unify school improvement planning for developing the system. The matrix provides a unifying framework for mapping what is in place and analyzing gaps.

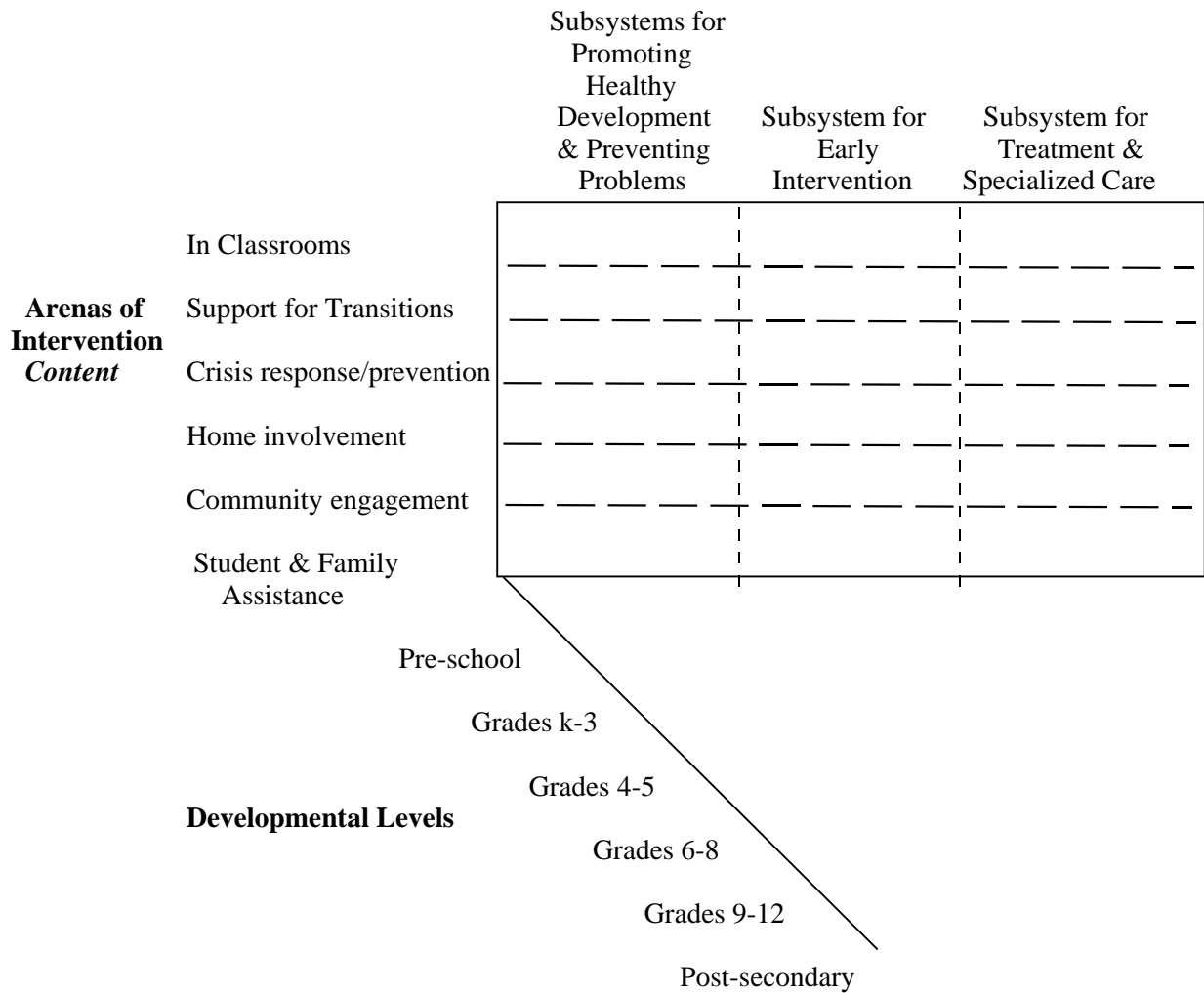
Overtime, this type of mapping and analyses are needed at the school level, for a family of schools (e.g., a feeder pattern of schools), at the district level, community-wide, and at regional, state, and national levels. We have presented all this in detail elsewhere and need not do so here (e.g., see reference list). Suffice it to note that developing a comprehensive system of student and learning supports involves reworking policy (including accountability) and operational infrastructure, ensuring strong leadership and commitment, revising leader and staff job descriptions, and braiding together school and community resources.

The matrix in Guide IV-c highlights the range of interventions relevant to fully pursuing response to intervention strategies. Placing response to intervention in such a context clearly will require fundamental systemic change and considerable capacity building. Of particular concern is increasing teacher and support staff capacity for implementing the Step 1 and 2 interventions described above and illustrated in Guide 6 and for playing a role in developing a comprehensive system of student and learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching. Another concern is facilitating development of the type of collaborative classrooms and grouping strategies that have the effect of turning big classes into smaller units (see Brief Readings that accompany these continuing education units).

Guide IV-c

A Unifying Intervention Framework to Aid Schools, Families, and Neighborhoods in Providing a Comprehensive and Cohesive System of Supports

Integrated Intervention Subsystems



Can you tell me what “status quo” means?



Sure. It’s a fancy name for the mess we’re in.



D. Where Does RTI and PBIS Fit In

A question frequently asked of our Center is: Where does some specific initiative, such as RTI and PBIS, fit into a comprehensive system of student and learning supports? With reference to the matrix in Guide IV-c, well-conceived approaches to RTI and PBIS fit into every cell. And, from our perspective, most such initiatives not only fit, they provide an opportunity to move forward in fully integrating a comprehensive system of supports into school improvement policy and practice.

It is necessary, however, to understand that there is considerable variability in how RTI and PBIS are currently operationalized across the country. The tendency in some places is to proceed as if more and better instruction and more positive social control related to undesired behavior is all that is needed. Clearly, good instruction and positive ways of dealing with behavior problems are necessary, but often are insufficient. From various reports, it seems clear that RTI and PBIS frequently are not conceived or implemented in ways that (1) address major barriers to learning and teaching and also (2) re-engage disconnected students in actively pursuing classroom instruction.

If RTI is treated simply as a way to provide more and better instruction and PBIS focuses only on positively addressing undesired behavior, the interventions are unlikely to be effective over the long-run for a great many students. However, if RTI and PBIS are understood as part and parcel of a comprehensive system of classroom and school-wide student and learning supports, schools will be in a better position not only to address problems effectively early after their onset, but will prevent many from occurring.

Implied in all this is that (1) staff are designated specifically to work on ensuring development of an optimal learning environment in classrooms and schoolwide, (2) classroom teachers are learning how to implement "well-designed early intervention" in the classroom, and (3) support staff are learning how to play a role, often directly in the classroom, to expand intervention strategies as necessary.

Our Center has delineated a set of seven basic steps for how to proceed in developing a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports. See:

*Establishing a comprehensive system of learning supports at a school:
Seven steps for principals and their staff*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/7steps.pdf>

The steps include specific ways to mobilize school stakeholder commitment and how to organize staff to rethink, design, and implement the changes over the next few years as an essential and integrated component of school improvement.



Unit IV – Reflection & Stimulus for Discussion

Key Insights about: *Establishing a School-wide Enabling or Learning Supports Component*

Based on what you learned so far:

Identify (and discuss) what is meant by an enabling component and outline the major arenas the component encompasses.

If there is an opportunity for group discussion, you may find the following group process guidelines helpful:

- Start by identifying someone who will facilitate the group interchange
- Take a few minutes to make a few individual notes on a worksheet
- Be sure all major points are compiled for sharing with other groups.
- Ask someone else to watch the time so that the group doesn't bog down.



Unit IV – Activity

- Using large sheets of paper, draw the matrix illustrated below (adapted from Guide 14) and “map” the existing programs and services at your school.
- Note which cells in the matrix are “impoverished.”
- What are your conclusions about the school’s approach to enabling learning by providing comprehensive learning supports?

Integrated Intervention *Subsystems*

		Subsystems for Promoting Healthy Development & Preventing Problems	Subsystem for Early Intervention	Subsystem for Treatment & Specialized Care
Arenas of Intervention Content	In Classrooms			
	Support for Transitions			
	Crisis response/prevention			
	Home involvement			
	Community engagement			
	Student & Family Assistance			

Concluding Comments

The complex set of factors causing poor student performance call for a comprehensive and systemic set of interventions. This is particularly essential in school settings where a large proportion of the student body are not performing well. In such schools, the effectiveness of response to intervention strategies will be dependent on how well the school addresses barriers to learning and teaching.

As another stand-alone initiative, response to intervention risks becoming just one more fragmented and marginalized approach to addressing learning and teaching problems. At the same time, the interest and resources being devoted to the initiative present an opportunity to catalyze and leverage the type of systemic change that can help transform how schools go about ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

Schools can use the opportunity to embed all stand-alone initiatives, such as response to intervention, positive behavioral interventions, dropout prevention programs, and so forth, into a design for developing a comprehensive system of student and learning supports. Development of such a system and fully integrating it into school improvement policy and practice enhances a school's focus on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. Such a system is key to promoting the well-being and intrinsic motivation for school success of all students, their families, and the school staff and is a key element in facilitating emergence of a positive school climate.

It is the response to such a comprehensive set of interventions that will provide the type of data necessary for sound decision making about how best to enable learning and reduce misdiagnoses of widespread learning and behavior problems as LD and ADHD.

Source References and a Few Additional Resources

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>New Directions for Student and Learning Supports

See the toolkit for Rebuilding Student Supports into a Comprehensive System for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

About the Center's Self-Study Surveys

Surveying and Planning to Enhance Efforts to Address Barriers to Learning at a School Site

The Center has developed a set of self-study surveys to aid school staff as they try to map and analyze their current programs, services, and systems with a view to developing a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to addressing barriers to learning.

In addition to an overview Survey of Learning Supports System Status, there are self-study surveys to help think about ways to address barriers to student learning by enhancing

- Classroom-based Approaches to Enable and Re-engage Students in Classroom Learning
- Crisis Assistance and Prevention
- Support for Transitions
- Home Involvement in Schooling
- Community Outreach for Involvement and Support
- Student and Family Assistance Programs and Services
- School-Community Collaboration

The entire set are online at:

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Surveys/Set1.pdf>

*About the Self-Study Process to Enhance
the Component for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning*

This type of self-study is best done by teams.

However, it is *NOT* about having another meeting and/or getting through a task!

It is about moving on to better outcomes for students through

- working together to understand what is and what might be
- clarifying gaps, priorities, and next steps

Done right it can

- counter fragmentation and redundancy
- mobilize support and direction
- enhance linkages with other resources
- facilitate effective systemic change
- integrate all facets of systemic change and counter marginalization of the component to address barriers to student learning

A group of school staff (teachers, support staff, administrators) could use the items to discuss how the school currently addresses any or all of the areas of the component to address barriers (the enabling component). Members of a team initially might work separately in responding to survey items, but the real payoff comes from group discussions.

The items on a survey help to clarify

- what is currently being done and whether it is being done well and
- what else is desired.

This provides a basis for a discussion that

- analyzes whether certain activities should no longer be pursued (because they are not effective or not as high a priority as some others that are needed).
- decides about what resources can be redeployed to enhance current efforts that need embellishment
- identifies gaps with respect to important areas of need.
- establishes priorities, strategies, and timelines for filling gaps.

The discussion and subsequent analyses also provide a form of quality review.