

Students & Schools: Moving Forward*

July, 2020 (Vol. 24 #10) – 34 Years & Counting

Contents

- >About Screening for Trauma and Implementing Social Emotional Learning Programs
- >What should schools say about social justice?
- >What about school police?
- >Supporting school staff to enhance their motivation and capacity during this difficult time.
- >Quick links to online resources
- >A few news stories
- >Comments and sharing from the field

**Concerned about addressing barriers to student learning and teaching & re-engaging disconnected students? about equity of opportunity? about whole child development? about school climate? All that and more is our focus.*



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>

>About Screening for Trauma and Implementing Social Emotional Learning Programs

As plans for schools to re-open progress, discussion is increasing about the mental health needs of students. Some Departments of Education have placed a high priority on the matter - even to the point of noting that attention to mental health should come first.

At the same time, advocates around the country are calling for schools to do trauma screening and implement programs for social emotional learning.

We know that there will be an increase in students manifesting learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Teachers will be referring many more to variously named student support teams, and they won't need a first level screening device to do so. And, as in the past, such teams will be overwhelmed and unable to process more than a small number of the referrals.

That is why schools should not add yet another first level screening survey. Rather schools need to devote their limited time and sparse resources to transforming student/learning supports to better address barriers to learning and teaching.

As to social emotional learning, one facet of proactively promoting mental health is promoting healthy social and emotional development. This meshes well with a school's goals related to

enhancing students' personal and social well-being. It also supports efforts to transform classrooms and schools by creating an atmosphere of *caring, cooperative learning, and a sense of community*. At this juncture, we suggest that the emphasis can be on classroom and schoolwide practices doing more to (1) capitalize on *natural* opportunities at schools to promote social and emotional development and (2) minimize transactions that interfere with positive growth in these areas. Natural opportunities are authentic examples of "teachable moments" (see *Natural Opportunities to Promote Social-Emotional Learning and MH* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/fall03.pdf>).

Our position is that *at this time* the work ahead for all of us in addressing the problems experienced by students, their families, and staff is to focus on broad and fundamental changes in how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

As we noted in our spring ejournal <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/spring20.pdf>

It is anticipated that the unique circumstances surrounding this return to school will be particularly difficult for some. Everyone, (students, families, staff) will have experienced considerable stress, some will have been ill, some will be grieving for a relative or friend who died. And transition-back stressors are likely to exacerbate other factors that interfere with school adjustment and thus with learning and teaching....

When schools re-open, students, as well as families and staff, who are having trouble recovering from recent events will have difficulty readjusting to school. A first focus ... is on how to maximize perceptions of the school as friendly, inviting, helpful, and caring. Each initial encounter between school staff and students and their families presents an opportunity and a challenge for welcoming and providing supports....

And remember the first to be welcomed back are school and district staff – see

Promoting Staff Well-being and Preventing Burnout as Schools Re-open
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/staffwellbeing.pdf>

As schools re-open, promoting staff well-being and preventing burnout call for ensuring a school climate that is experienced by staff and students as a caring environment in which there is a strong collegial and social support structure, personalized opportunities for growth, and meaningful ways to participate in decision making....

Soon, we will be circulating a new book from the Center entitled:
>*Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change* – watch for it.

>What should schools say about social justice?

From a Colleague:

"School leaders will need to tell the students where they stand—hopefully that racism and discrimination of all kinds is wrong and that the community they are building for education will not tolerate it. They also have to spend time creating safe spaces to listen to students and to navigate discussions that are grounded in respectful communication. Finally, they will have to formally integrate these issues into the curriculum so that the students have informed perspectives on these issues. Mixed humanities, social studies, US history and literature classes are a great place to start. I would also suggest that they really lean on the existing curriculum developed by the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching tolerance Program. They have classroom as well as professional development resources available. They have also developed materials specifically on teaching about race, racism, and police violence." <https://www.tolerance.org/>

>What about school police?

Excerpt from: Portland superintendent says he's 'discontinuing' presence of armed police officers in schools <https://www.oregonlive.com/>

Portland Public Schools will no longer have city police officers patrol the halls of its nine high schools, nor will the other two school districts inside Portland city limits. He intends to increase spending on social workers, counselors and culturally specific supports for students.

Excerpt from: *Denver school board votes to phase police out of schools*
<https://co.chalkbeat.org/2020/6/11/21288866/denver-school-board-votes-remove-police-from-schools>
Police officers will be phased out of working in Denver's public schools over the next year, with all school resource officers gone from middle and high schools by June 2021.

The Denver school board voted unanimously to end Denver Public Schools' contract with the Denver Police Department to provide school resource officers.... State data shows Denver's Black students are disproportionately referred to law enforcement, ticketed, and arrested at school.

"We have the capacity to respond, not just with a raised fist or a cardboard sign," said board member Brad Laurvick, "but as an institution, we can respond with policy for change."

@#@#@##

"We have confused the idea that to achieve safety, you put more cops on the street instead of understanding to achieve safe and healthy communities, you put more resources into the public education system of those communities, into affordable housing, into home ownership, into access to capital for small businesses, access to health care regardless of how much money people have. That's how you achieve safe and healthy communities." Kamala Harris

@#@#@##

>Supporting school staff to enhance their motivation and capacity during this difficult time

Pre-pandemic, the summer was a time for school staff to rest, restore, and experience some new learning through professional development conferences and district enrichment courses. This year, it is more likely to be collapse and look back in wonder at the experiences of teachers, support staff, students, and families.

The coming months provide an opportunity to celebrate school staff accomplishments, understand concerns, provide personnel development, and increase optimism for the upcoming year. In doing so, we need to appreciate how many teachers experienced the last months of this school year.

Excerpt from? ...*Teachers are struggling*

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2020/05/26/coronavirus-schools-teachers-poll-ipsos-parents-f-all-online/5254729002/>

Almost all of them, 83%, say they are having a harder time doing their job, and two-thirds say they have had to work more than usual. Two-thirds say they haven't been able to do their job properly since starting to teach remotely, a task that most say they hadn't been prepared well by the district to do.

The newest teachers, those who have been on the job for five years or less, struggle the most with distance teaching; 6 in 10 say they hadn't been trained well for the task. The oldest teachers have the most difficulty dealing with technology. Among teachers 55 and older, 1 in 4 say it hasn't been easy for them to use the technology required. ...

Roughly two-thirds of teachers and parents support the idea of returning to the classroom for two or three days a week and using distance learning the other days. About two-thirds of both groups endorse having teachers considered at high risk for the illness continue to teach online, while teachers at low risk teach in person...."

At this time, a good starting point in supporting staff is to form small online groups to (a) share their successes/challenges and (b) involve them in planning how to make the coming year less stressful and more successful.

@#@#@##

Quote from the above USA Today story:

"For the first time ... these last three months have felt like I've been doing a job, doing this to earn a paycheck. The engagement level with the students hasn't been there, and that's the reason I got into this career – the interaction and the engagement and the seeing and feeling their excitement." Andy Brown, teacher

@#@#@##

Let Us Know So We Can Share:

Your views about the above matters

Ideas and plans for summer learning for students and staff

Ideas being proposed for transforming schools as they re-open.

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/learning supports, we can help. Send all info to ltaylor@ucla.edu

>Quick Links to Online Resources

Equity in the Center. AWAKE to WOKE to WORK: Building a Race Equity Culture

<https://www.equityinthecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Equity-in-Center-Awake-Woke-Work-2019-final-1.pdf>

Addressing Implicit Bias, Racial Anxiety, and Stereotype Threat in Education and Health Care

<https://equity.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Science-of-Equality-Vol.-1-Perception-Institute-2014.pdf>

Resources to Support Children's Emotional Well-Being Amid Anti-Black Racism, Racial Violence, and Trauma

<https://mailchi.mp/1230b56d3db2/resources-to-support-childrens-emotional-well-being-amid-anti-black-racism-racial-violence-and-trauma?e=ad5ca476dc>

Talking About Race and Privilege: Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity/social-justice/social-justice-lesson-plans/talking-about-race-and-privilege-lesson-plan-for-middle-and-high-school-students>

For more teaching resources on these equity and societal justice concerns, see

Teaching Tolerance <https://www.tolerance.org/>

The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) <https://www.glsen.org/>

Planning Your 2020-21 School Year? Use Our 'Guide to the Guides' on Reopening

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/District_Dossier/2020/06/curated_K12_guides_to_reopening.html

Telehealth for Transition Age Youth and Young Adults: Privacy, Emotional Safety and Welfare During Covid-19 and Beyond

<https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/telehealth-tip-sheet.pdf>

Tele Health Toolbox for School Personnel

<https://mhccnetwork.org/centers/mid-america-mhcc/telehealth-toolbox-school-personnel>

Growing Friendships During the Coronavirus Pandemic: A Kids' Guide to Staying Close to Friends While Being Apart – a free ebook for ages 6-12

<https://eileenkenedymoore.com/growing-friendships-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

School Reentry Considerations Supporting Student Social and Emotional Learning and Mental and Behavioral Health Amidst COVID-19

<https://schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Publications/SchoolReentry.pdf>

Summer and ADHD: A Survival Guide

https://childmind.org/article/summer-and-adhd-a-survival-guide/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Summer%20and%20ADHD%3A%20A%20Survival%20Guide&utm_campaign=Weekly-06-23-20

Teenagers and Reopening

https://childmind.org/article/teenagers-and-reopening/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Teenagers%20and%20Reopening&utm_campaign=Weekly-06-23-20

Trauma-Informed School Strategies during COVID-19

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/trauma-informed-school-strategies-during-covid-19>

Inclusive School Physical Education and Physical Activity from CDC

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/inclusion_pepa.htm

Webinars

- >A series from the National Youth League Council https://www.nylc.org/events/event_list.asp
- >*The Well-Being Series: Connections During COVID-19: Mental Wellness Webinars For Families & Educators* <https://mhttcnetwork.org/centers/northwest-mhbbc/well-being-series>
- >6/30 – *Supports for Students and Families Experiencing Homelessness During the COVID-19 Pandemic*
- >7/15 – *Building Peace through Service-Learning*
- >7/30 – *Safety Matters: Helping Families Affected by Substance Use Disorders and Domestic Violence*
- >8/19 – *Addressing Environmental Challenges through Service-Learning*
- >9/17 – *Meeting the Needs of Adolescent Youth*

For more webinars, go to the our Center's links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

In case you missed it, the latest Quarterly ejournal is now online. See

- >*Schools Re-opening: Safety Plus Enhancing Equity of Opportunity and Social Justice*
- >*The Role of Schools in Promoting Whole Child Development and Learning?*

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

School Practitioner Listservs in June*

6/17/20

- >Youth speak out on social injustice
- >Teachers' reactions to changes in interacting with students online
- >How the current crisis can lead to burnout
- >Letter of appreciation from a superintendent

6/10/20

- >About Innovative summer enrichment programs
- >Q&A about mental health support by schools in light of the pandemics
- >Setting up a grass roots mental health network

6/4/20

- >Issues being raised about how schools relate to local police
- >Issues about re-opening schools equitably
- >One student's reaction and his grandfather's response
- >A superintendents message

6/3/20 The Two Pandemics

- >What are schools doing and planning to address the racial pandemic?
- >What Some Students are Experiencing>What works in online counseling/teaching
- >About professional development for student/learning support during the pandemic
- >Student and retired teachers are volunteering during the pandemic

6/2/20 About how schools are and plan to address the racial pandemic

- >First response and some resources

6/1/20

- >The murder of George Floyd and the events that have and will continue to follow

*All offer links to a few other relevant shared resources

If you missed the resources and news in the Special Editions of the Community of Practice prepared in relation to the crisis, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

>For more resources, see our website <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

>For info on the status of upcoming conferences <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm>

>For info on webinars <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

@#@#@#

"..educators often teach SEL absent of the larger sociopolitical context, which is fraught with injustice and inequity and affects our students' lives...Why teach relationship skills if the lessons do not reflect on the interpersonal conflicts that result from racism? Why discuss self- and social awareness without considering power and privilege, even if that means examining controversial topics like white supremacy?... We can no longer avoid discussing topics that make us uncomfortable. ..." Dena Simmons

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

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

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

Survey Shows Big Remote Learning Gaps For Low-Income And Special Needs Children. Four out of 10 of the poorest U.S. students are accessing remote learning as little as once a week or less, according to a new survey from ParentsTogether, an advocacy group. By contrast, for families making more than \$100,000 a year, 83% of kids are doing distance learning every day, with the majority engaged over two hours a day. From the beginning, experts in distance learning warned that it can magnify inequities, with the most able and highly advantaged learners humming along while learners who need more support fall far behind." <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/05/27/862705225/survey-shows-big-remote-learning-gaps-for-low-income-and-special-needs-children>

L.A. County Releases Framework For Reopening Schools. A task force of school district leaders from around Los Angeles County has released a framework for reopening campuses. The guidelines are just that – guidelines, not directives or orders. Ultimately, it's up to each of the 80 school districts in L.A. County to use the framework as they see fit as they each make their decisions about when and how to reopen. Still, the framework paints a picture of school environments that could look very different from what we are used to, with screenings before boarding school buses, outdoor classes, "floor markings to illustrate social/physical distancing," students placed in "small, 'stable'" groups, classrooms with 16 students at most, staggered schedules – including lunch and recess, and face coverings for everyone. <https://laist.com/latest/post/20200527/LA-county-schools-reopening-framework-task-force-report>

>**Back to school? 1 in 5 teachers are unlikely to return to reopened classrooms this fall.** 1 in 5 teachers say they are unlikely to go back to school if their classrooms reopen in the fall, a potential massive wave of resignations. Though most teachers report working more than usual, nearly two-thirds say they haven't been able to properly do their jobs in an educational system upended by the coronavirus. A separate poll of parents with at least one child in grades K-12 finds that 6 in 10 say they would be likely to pursue at-home learning options instead of sending back their children this fall. Nearly a third of parents, 30%, say they are "very likely" to do that.
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2020/05/26/coronavirus-schools-teachers-poll-ipsos-parents-fall-online/5254729002/>

>**Governor suspends California teacher testing requirements for candidates impacted by coronavirus closures.** Gov. Gavin Newsom has suspended state testing requirements for teacher candidates impacted by the coronavirus pandemic in an executive order. The order allows eligible teacher candidates to earn preliminary credentials without taking either the California Teaching Performance Assessment or the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment. It also allows students to enter teacher preparation programs without passing the California Basic Education Skills Test and teacher candidates to enter internship programs without passing required tests in the California Subject Examinations for Teachers. The order allows more than 10,000 prospective teachers to enter the preparation pipeline next year, enabling the state to continue making progress on shoring up its teaching ranks and addressing chronic shortages.
https://edsources.org/2020/governor-suspends-california-teacher-testing-requirements-for-candidates-impacted-by-coronavirus-closures/632780?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=8ca37fcc82-ED_CLIPS_06_03_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-8ca37fcc82-53611723

U.S. schools lay off hundreds of thousands, setting up lasting harm to kids. A staggering number of public school personnel across the United States have lost their jobs in the wake of school closures amid the Covid-19 pandemic. In April alone, 469,000 public school district personnel nationally lost their jobs, including kindergarten through twelfth-grade teachers and other school employees, a Labor Department economist told Reuters.
<https://news.yahoo.com/u-schools-lay-off-hundreds-210156332.html>

@#@#@#

Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals. Martin Luther King, Jr

@#@#@#

Comments and sharing from the field

(1) From *Advocacy for Children* – a parent-led nonprofit located in Hartford, CT

“AFCAMP operates a Community Parent Resource Center funded under the IDEA. Through this and other programs we serve parents and caregivers of children with disabilities and others at-risk of poor educational outcomes, juvenile justice involvement, and inequity within other child-serving systems. Our Governor has convened a Reopen Task Force that is making recommendations for the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions and protocols. AFCAMP has a particular interest in the impact of policies in the area of education and children’s well-being, especially with regard to children of color and those from families with low-income. Decisions are being made now by state and local school policy makers. I have found the Center’s resources to be helpful in my work...”

(2) From *the Douglas County Behavioral Health Prevention Summit*

“The virtual summit will take place July 27 – August 7, one session per day from 12-1 each day. The event is designed to engage participants in the consideration of practical strategies centered around behavioral prevention within their communities. The summit will be full

of sessions on a wide array of pertinent behavioral health topics. We believe your knowledge and expertise would be of great benefit to the participants of the summit and we would be thrilled to have you join us to present on planning ahead to support the transition-back of students, families, and staff..."

(3) Here's a sample of requests we receive about circulating our work:

"I'm a writer with American School Board Journal, published by the National School Boards Association. I'm working on a story about school districts' efforts to prepare for the re-opening of schools in the fall (hopefully) and what needs to be done to support student and staff mental wellness. From your website, you and the team at CMHS have already given this issue much thought. Your last quarterly ejournal provided a lot of food for thought. Thanks for directing to me. Could American School Board Journal have your permission to reprint the exhibit: Some Resources to Aid in Planning Transition-Back ? We would of course give credit to the Center for Mental Health in Schools and include the link: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/spring20.pdf>

"I have been receiving your emails and appreciate the information you share. I wanted to know if it would be OK to share some of the links via Social Media and a web page for the Utah School Counselor Association."

"I'm a teacher from Brazil and would love to receive all your resources. As many of my colleagues can't speak English I translate and share again. Thanks."

Will you be happy when school re-opens?



Oh, so happy!

DEAR READER:

Everyone has a stake in the future of public education. This is a critical time for action. Send this resource on to others. Think about sharing with the growing number who are receiving it. AND Let us know about what we should be including.

For those who are employed by state and local education agencies and schools, we know you are busy. It would be great to share what actions you are taking to address immediate concerns and how you are anticipating the problems that will arise when schools reopen.

For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports

go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>
Also online are two related free books

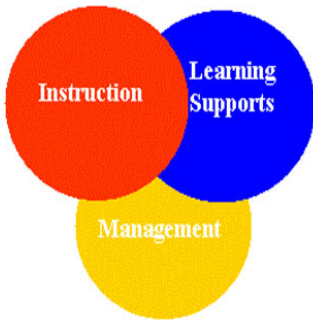
Improving School Improvement

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

*



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

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS

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

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

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