

# Students & Schools: Moving Forward\*

(July, 2021 Vol. 25 #10) – 35 Years & Counting

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**\*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](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)**



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

## >Summer: *A Time to Plan Ways to Improve Student and Learning Supports*

*Hopefully, the summer provides an opportunity to move from crisis mode to proactive and significant improvements in plans for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and promoting well-being.*

Given what so many have experienced during the pandemic, schools will benefit from reorganizing student and learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system that accounts for all students, families, and school staff. Such a system has been designated in various SEAs and LEAs as a *learning supports component*. When treated as a primary facet of school improvement and effectively designed and implemented, the system not only can provide effective supports to more students, it can end fragmented and redundant activity, reduce counterproductive competition among support staff for sparse resources, and end the marginalization of student support staff.

### **Get started now by *establishing a planning team***

Assign an administrative lead and identify a set of leadership team members to develop a design and strategic plan for a *unified, comprehensive, and equitable system* of student/learning supports. For suggestions about the composition of such a planning group, see

>*What is a Learning Supports Leadership Team?*

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/resource%20coord%20team.pdf>

### **Have the team *Map and analyze existing resources***

Critical initial functions for the planning team are to map and then analyze all resources currently used for addressing barriers to barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging disconnected students. This provides a basis for making the case for reorganization and identifies existing school (and community) resources for moving forward.

Here are several mapping tools that not only can help identify existing resources, but can do so in a way that organizes planning to improve a system of student/learning supports and also clarifies critical gaps:

- > *Mapping & Analyzing Learning Supports*  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf>
- > *An Aid for Initial Listing of Current Resources Used at a School for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/listingresources.pdf>
- > *About Funding Stream Integration* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/fundinginteg.pdf>

**Next – Consider adapting the prototypes developed by the Center at UCLA**

See brief description recently published by PACE:

- > *Restructuring California Schools to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching in the COVID 19 Context and Beyond*  
<https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/restructuring-california-schools-address-barriers-learning-and-teaching-covid-19>  
(While this brief was prepared for California, it has wider relevance.)

For more details to guide planning in the context of school improvement, see:

- > *Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*
- > *Improving School Improvement*
- > *Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*

All three can be accessed from the Center's website. Go to:  
[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving\\_school\\_improvement.html](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html)

A host of other free resources are available from the Center's website

- > <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> –
- See, for example, the planning and development aids in the
- > *System Change Toolkit*  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

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Please share the above information with those who may find it helpful.

And if you have any questions or want to share something you think others might find relevant, send to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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Milne describes Winnie the Pooh's experience going downstairs as follows:

*Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he know, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it.*

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**>Quick Links to Online Resources**

Chronic absence patterns and prediction during covid 19

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence-patterns-and-prediction-during-covid-19-insights-from-connecticut/>

Pathways to Engagement: A Toolkit for Covid-19 Recovery Through Attendance

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/toolkits/pathways-to-engagement-a-toolkit-for-covid-19-recovery-through-attendance/>

Summer learning and enrichment

<https://learning.ccsso.org/2021-summer-learning-enrichment-state-guidance-for-district-and-school-leaders>

America After 3PM: Demand Grows, Opportunity Shrinks

<http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2020/AA3PM-Executive-Summary.pdf>

Summertime in America for Black Families and Communities

[http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2020/AA3PM-Black-Communities-Summer-2021-Brief.pdf?utm\\_source=sendinblue&utm\\_campaign=AA3PM\\_Summer\\_Black\\_and\\_Latinx\\_report&utm\\_medium=email](http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2020/AA3PM-Black-Communities-Summer-2021-Brief.pdf?utm_source=sendinblue&utm_campaign=AA3PM_Summer_Black_and_Latinx_report&utm_medium=email)

Summertime in America for Latinx Families and Communities

[http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2020/AA3PM-Latinx-Communities-Summer-2021-Brief.pdf?utm\\_source=sendinblue&utm\\_campaign=AA3PM\\_Summer\\_Black\\_and\\_Latinx\\_report&utm\\_medium=email](http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2020/AA3PM-Latinx-Communities-Summer-2021-Brief.pdf?utm_source=sendinblue&utm_campaign=AA3PM_Summer_Black_and_Latinx_report&utm_medium=email)

U.S. Department of Education Announces Full Agenda for Equity Summit Series

[https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-announces-full-agenda-equity-summit-series?utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_name=&utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_term=](https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-announces-full-agenda-equity-summit-series?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=)

Recovery for all of us

<https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/263-21/recovery-all-us-mayor-de-blasio-chancellor-porter-dycd-commissioner-chong-announce>

How New York State will use \$9B in federal funds to support students as schools reopen in fall

[https://www.silive.com/education/2021/06/how-new-york-state-will-use-9b-in-federal-funds-to-support-students-as-schools-reopen-in-fall.html?utm\\_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm\\_campaign=8351effa6a-ED\\_CLIPS\\_06\\_15\\_2021&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_1a2b00b930-8351effa6a-53599575](https://www.silive.com/education/2021/06/how-new-york-state-will-use-9b-in-federal-funds-to-support-students-as-schools-reopen-in-fall.html?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=8351effa6a-ED_CLIPS_06_15_2021&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-8351effa6a-53599575)

The American Rescue Plan redefines child poverty as a societal, rather than individual, challenge

<https://mailchi.mp/343d38c6d263/the-american-rescue-plan-redefines-child-poverty-as-a-societal-rather-than-individual-challenge?e=ad5ca476dc>

Should rich families be allowed to fundraise a better public school education for their kids?

<https://hechingerreport.org/should-rich-families-be-allowed-to-fundraise-a-better-public-school-education-for-their-kids/>

Is there an uncontroversial way to teach America's racist history?

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/22464746/critical-race-theory-anti-racism-jarvis-givens>

Why SEL Alone Isn't Enough

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar21/vol78/num06/Why-SEL-Alone-Isn't-Enough.aspx>

For Maryland's New Schools Chief Choudhury, State Anti-Poverty 'Blueprint' Draws on Deep Expertise Identifying, Aiding Low-Income Students in Texas

<https://www.the74million.org/article/for-marylands-new-schools-chief-choudhury-state-anti-poverty-blueprint-draws-on-deep-expertise-identifying-aiding-low-income-students-in-texas/>

The Demographic Transformation of the Teaching Force in the United States

<https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/11/5/234/htm>

Teen Vaping: What You Need to Know

<https://childmind.org/article/teen-vaping-what-you-need-to-know/>

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*My generation is just over it – over the division in politics and in the culture. We want to have movements that lift each other up, not take each other down.*

Kate Munson, 18

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**Here's what was discussed in the Community of Practice during June**  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

Note: All community of practice editions contain Links to relevant shared resources.

- >How are federal stimulus funds being used to address barriers to learning and teaching? Will the work be sustainable when the special funding ends?
- >How about using relief funds to transform the way schools address mental health concerns?
- >How committed are schools to equity, inclusion, diversity, social justice?
- >What do students and school staff need this summer?

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**Here's what was discussed in the latest quarterly ejournal from the Center**  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/summer21.pdf>

**Using Summer to Prepare Better Ways to Address Concerns about Students' Learning and Mental Health**

- Outreaching to and reengaging disconnected students
- Improving differentiated instruction
- Broadly embedding social emotional learning and development
- Reorganizing student/learning supports
- Promoting staff well-being

Archives for previous issues of the Community of Practice can be accessed at  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

Archives for previous issues of the the quarterly ejournal can be accessed at  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/news.htm>

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For an update on how the center is responding to the Coronavirus crisis, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/centercorona.pdf>

>For more resources in general, 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>

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Excerpted from Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati's speech to the graduating class of 2021:

*You had to adapt in so many ways: from the way you do school, to the way you interact with your friends, to the way you maintain your social, physical and emotional health. Since we know the only constant in life is change, the more you are equipped to deal with it, the better.... You are developing grit, resilience and determination as you struggle. Never forget that you are stronger for having experienced this moment in history together.*

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>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)

**America's Lingering Problem With School Segregation.** As the Biden administration takes aim at systemic racism and manages a pandemic that exposed racial fault lines in education, some see a chance to attack an intractable problem: school segregation. In Massachusetts, a new integration effort is underfoot in education – one that could, for the first time, shine a light on the state's hypersegregated districts and push them to change the status quo inside and outside their borders. A bill filed this month would label schools and school districts as either "diverse," "segregated" or "intensely segregated," and would institute annual reporting on a host of new data points, including the racial composition of students taking the SAT or ACT, advanced placement courses and other certain math and science classes. It would also establish a voluntary competitive grant program for districts seeking to better integrate their schools, as well as groups of school districts that partner to increase diversity across parts of Massachusetts.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2021-06-07/americas-lingering-problem-with-school-segregation>

### **Some Black parents see less bullying, racism with online learning and are keeping kids home.**

Some parents of Black Los Angeles school students opted to keep their children in distance learning after schools reopened in April because they wanted to shield them from inequitable and sometimes harsh treatment on campus, according to a report from a local advocacy group. Among Black parents surveyed, 82% cited COVID-19 as one factor for keeping their children home and 43% said they were concerned about bullying, racism and low academic standards, according to the report by Speak Up, which conducted focus groups, analyzed district data and conducted its own survey. National polls have found that Black and Latino parents — whose communities have been disproportionately hit by COVID-19 — were far more likely than white parents to keep their children in distance learning when schools reopened. In February, the district announced that \$36.5 million — with \$25 million from diverted school police funds and the remaining \$11.5 million from next school year's general fund budget — will go toward an achievement plan for Black students. Most of that money will fund the hiring of school climate coaches and other support staff, such as school nurses and counselors. The coaches will be responsible for applying de-escalation strategies for conflict resolution, eliminating racial disparities in school discipline practices and addressing implicit bias.

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-06-08/black-parents-see-less-bullying-racism-with-online-learning>

**Metro Atlanta districts launch summer school programs.** Local districts redesigned and expanded summer learning programs, hoping to help those who struggled academically or fell behind when lessons moved online. Atlanta's summer enrollment is less than half of what officials estimated. The district planned for 24,600 students learning online or in-person. After twice extending the registration deadline, 11,346 students signed up for the June session. The numbers are about 33% higher than Atlanta's 2019 summer program, pre-pandemic. And this year's count represents nearly a third of the district's traditional, non-charter school enrollment. Interest is strong in lower elementary grades, where online learning proved challenging for young children, and in ninth grade, which can be a tough transition from middle to high school.

<https://www.ajc.com/news/atlanta-news/metro-atlanta-districts-launch-summer-school-programs/XYWMBCMPCBAJ5AW72MSKYHXIOM/>

**More than 32,000 Gwinnett students are back in classrooms.** More than 32,000 students across all grade levels are taking summer classes in person in Gwinnett County Public Schools, compared to 7,000 two years ago. Almost 25,000 students are in the Summer Enrichment and Acceleration program for elementary and middle-schoolers, while more than 2,000 are in the Rising K Academy and almost 6,000 are taking high school classes. More than 2,000 teachers are working summer programs and 117 college students are serving as tutors. More than 400 bus drivers and more than 300 cafeteria workers are also supporting the program, according to school district data.

<https://www.ajc.com/news/more-than-32000-gwinnett-students-are-back-in-classrooms/3K7O2YN37FAF3AJ07JD IDC2W2M/>

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*In a lot of ways, summer is step one of our recovery efforts. What I really want is for families, kids and teachers to see summer as the beginning of next year, the start of normalcy. I think people are exhausted now, and I want summer to be a jump-start to be happy and excited again.*

Lara Ohanian, who oversees summer programs for Baltimore City schools

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As Benjamin Franklin stressed:

*We must all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.*

**This applies to improving schools. 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.**

[Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

## Comments and sharing from the field

Here a few recent thoughts (and appreciations):

1. “Your information is always timely and relevant. Thank you for that. I am a retired Principal currently working as a consultant at an Elementary School in Chicago. I am greatly concerned about the mental health of our students when they return to full in-person learning. I agree wholeheartedly that MTSS is not a sufficient intervention framework to help students. I also agree educators must avoid making assumptions as we plan to support students. Thank you again for providing this information. I will share it with other district stakeholders.”
- 2.”I much appreciate receiving the newsletter regularly. I send out a monthly electronic newsletter to around 80 countries with articles from school social workers around the world. Over the summer I would like to focus on changes in how schools address mental health. I like your approach and especially the focus you place on not over-pathologizing, but on embedding mental health in all aspects of improving schools. I think this is relevant in all countries.”
- 3.”Thank you for making these resources available, and also for your wise review of the pitfalls of jumping into "help" that may not be appropriate for general or specific use in our schools. As a former public school teacher, from a family of many generations of teachers, your work - and warnings - are appropriate and helpful. Beyond this mailing, with it's handy referral to some of your past words of wisdom, I deeply appreciate all you have done for many years to help so many of us who are concerned with the mental health of children in schools. I also appreciate your concerns for the mental health of teachers, too - a research interest that has attracted me greatly in recent terms, pushing me to complete a look at teachers' mental health across several ages of students whom they work with. The pandemic, of course, has brought

about an interruption to that work, as the needs of students, often in their family contexts has sprung forward in some new ways. I hope you will keep up your great work for a long time to come. Your work is needed as much and likely more now, than at any time in the last several decades.”

4. “I am working on a handbook to consider reengagement opportunities through community supports, beyond the school and district. I appreciate your emails full of awesome resources. I forward them to my mail-list and find the conversations we hold with our 80 districts and 350+ charters is enriched by the content and conversation starters your articles and studies have encouraged.”

Now is the time to plan ways to transform how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students. See the

***National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports***

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

***And tell us about ideas being proposed for transforming schools as they re-open.***

**Send all info to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)**

***Note: For those 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.***

**See: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/coach.pdf>**



**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](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu) or [adelman@psych.ucla.edu](mailto:adelman@psych.ucla.edu)**

**Send info to share with others or ask for specific resources by email to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)**