
Which Schools are Taking Equity Seriously?

We were struck by a recent article on Education Dive entitled:

“I don't know how to lead for equity; that was not part of my program.”

We also note that equity was a central theme for conversations at the recent Education Commission of the States' National Forum on Education Policy.

So clearly the matter is of growing concern.

As those familiar with our work know, equity is at the foundation of our Center's research and development.*

Note the theme for our National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports is

Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights; transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to enabling equity of opportunity and promoting whole child development.

From this perspective, we review school improvement policies and plans. And, we stress that, if efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students are not a primary agenda item, then neither is enhancing equity.

A central planning need is to focus on transforming current marginalized and fragmented student and learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.

Our analysis of available state plans for ESSA find that, so far, all continue to marginalize their approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

As long as this is the case, references to enhancing equity and ensuring every student succeeds simply become more political buzzwords.

At this time, we are asking anyone and everyone:

If you know of any school improvement plan that includes an approach for ending the marginalization of student and learning supports by developing them into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system, send us the link so we share it widely. Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

*Note: As an aid for school improvement planning, we have recently pulled together much of the Center's work into two books:

(1) Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide
(access free through link on the Center's homepage – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>)

(2) Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System.

<https://titles.cognella.com/transforming-student-and-learning-supports-9781516512782.html>