

Students & Schools: Moving Forward*

(June, 2022 (Vol. 26 #9) – 36 Years & Counting)

Contents

>Using Summer to engage students in learning

>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>

>Using Summer to engage students in learning

Learning loss and increases in risky behavior are major worries related to students who aren't in school during the summer. In addition to helping students catch-up, schools (especially student and learning supports staff) can work with the community to develop summer programs that address barriers to learning, promote healthy development, and enhance equity of opportunity

From: *A Reimagined Summer School Experience*

<https://www.sdfoundation.org/grantseekers/apply-for-a-grant/level-up-sd/>

COVID-19 has profoundly impacted every single aspect of our lives. Students, our region's children and youth, have been especially impacted by the disruption to in-person learning and programs for youth. And, despite the resilience they have demonstrated during the pandemic, the COVID-19 crisis has both highlighted and exacerbated the existing inequalities challenging young students. Summertime has always been a unique opportunity to support the whole student experience. But not every student has access.

Research has historically demonstrated that unequal summertime opportunities contribute to poor academic and social-emotional outcomes for students who lack access to summertime programs. High-quality summer learning programs can accelerate learning, impart non-cognitive skills that impact academic achievement and nurture a sense of community and belonging.

As the following excerpts demonstrate, advocates have stressed for many years that summer provides important ways to enhance whole child development and advance school improvement:

(1) "All young people should have consistent access to high-quality summer enrichment programs throughout their educational careers. Programs should be proactive and offered for multiple summers.

> Elementary schools and youth development organizations should form partnerships to prevent summer loss in reading among low-income students. ...

- >Teachers and youth development professionals should use the summers to collaborate and bridge gaps between schools and youth programs. ... Summer learning should be a community-wide, inter-agency priority. There are a wide variety of roles that public agencies, community-based organizations, cultural institutions, and colleges and universities can play in improving the quality and quantity of summer learning opportunities for all young people. >Improved collaboration and leveraging of funds from multiple sources will help ensure greater levels of access to programs.
- >Program models should maintain a strong academic focus, but also acknowledge the unique role that summers play within American culture. Summer programs can demonstrate the power of informal learning experiences such as reading and discussing books for pleasure and gaining exposure to new cultures and ideas.
- > Summer programs should be used to support the recruitment, professional development, and retention of teachers and youth program staff. ... Summers should be used to encourage teachers to try new techniques, teach different subjects or grades, acquire new skills and mentor new colleagues. Simultaneously, summers could be used to attract current college students or recent graduates to internship experiences in public school classrooms and with non-profit youth development organizations. (From a document produced a few years ago entitled *Primer on Summer Learning Loss* produced by Johns Hopkins University.)

- (2) “It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of innovation and creativity in meeting the needs of struggling student. Summer school involves intensive reteaching of materials that students did not master during the school year, but those students need help that goes beyond simply reteaching the same materials in the same way...

What is the ‘something different’ that summer schools need to do? Doing ‘something different’ often means connecting subject matter to real-life situations that are relevant to students. It might mean finding books about baseball to read and using baseball statistics in math instruction for a student who lives and breathes the sport. It could involve using musical themes to engage a student who constantly drums on his desk or incorporating a lot of physical movement to reach the aspiring dancer. It might mean using technology that presents materials in a game-like format. It might mean simply giving a student the opportunity to discuss the material with teachers and peers to an extent not possible in the regular classroom...”

Summer provides an opportunity to introduce many ideas for making both the content and the process of teaching and learning more relevant to students. Active learning is especially important. There are many ways to promote active learning at all grade levels. It can take the form of class discussions, problem based and discovery learning, a project approach, involvement in learning centers, experiences outside the classroom, and independent learning in or out of school. Students may become involved in classroom, school-wide, or community service or action projects. Older students may be involved in “internships” or service learning. Service learning involves students in identifying a real community need, ties the community work with academic goals, encourages the students to reflect on and evaluate their learning, and strengthens the relationship between community and school. In general, research suggests that the quality of such interactions between teachers and students distinguishes which teachers are most effective.” (From a document produced a few years ago entitled *Summer School: Unfulfilled Promise* produced by the Southern Regional Education Board report.)

For more, see

>*Enhancing Summer Learning* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/sumlearn.pdf>

Provides examples of what communities are doing to counter summer set-backs and other problems experienced by youngster over the summer and ways communities and schools have come together to create an organized and cohesive initiative that is designed to attract and benefit youngsters who are of the greatest concern.

>The Center Quick Find on *Expanded Learning Opportunities – After-School & Summer Programs* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/afterschool.htm>

@#@#@##

With the school year soon coming to an end, we can all look to summer as the perfect time to provide additional quality learning opportunities for students impacted by the pandemic. To ensure these opportunities are engaging and successful, states need actionable research on effective strategies that leverage afterschool, summer learning, and community partners.

Paolo DeMaria, NASBE President and CEO

@#@#@##

>Quick Links to Online Resources

- Harnessing the power of after school and summer programs to support recovery and reengagement
<https://www.air.org/resource/brief/harnessing-power-afterschool-and-summer-programs-support-recovery-and-reengagement>
- How Schools Can Build a Culture of Support for Educator Mental Health
<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-04-29-how-schools-can-build-a-culture-of-support-for-educator-mental-health>
- Combating the Conspiracy of Silence: Clinician Recommendations for Talking About Racism-Related Events With Youth of Color
[https://www.jaacap.org/article/S0890-8567\(22\)00002-8/fulltext](https://www.jaacap.org/article/S0890-8567(22)00002-8/fulltext)
- Community Violence in Early Adolescence: Assessing Coping Strategies for Reducing Delinquency and Aggression
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15374416.2019.1650365>
- Equitable practices in school mental health <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/pits.22678>
- Early Adolescents' Social Goals in Peer Conflict Situations
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/02724316211064516>
- The role of family relationships in youth mentoring: An ecological perspective
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S019074092200144X>
- With So Many Kids Struggling in School, Experts Call for Revamping 'Early Warning Systems'
<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/with-so-many-kids-struggling-in-school-experts-call-for-revamping-early-warning-systems/2022/05>
- Juvenile justice reforms need coordinated school-community response
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/juvenile-justice-reforms-need-coordinated-school-community-response/623975/>
- Maximizing Student Success with Least Restrictive Environments and Appropriate Models of Inclusion
<https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/maximizing-student-success-least-restrictive-environments-and-appropriate-models-inclusion>
- New York City to screen all students for dyslexia, with specialized instruction starting in the fall
<https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/new-york-city-to-screen-all-students-for-dyslexia-with-specialized-instruction-starting-in-the-fall/>
- 'Stop measuring black kids with a white stick': How to make school assessments fairer for all
<https://phys.org/news/2022-05-black-kids-white-school-fairer.html>
- Pandemic Kindergartners Need Extra Support in First Grade
<https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/pandemic-kindergartners-need-extra-support-in-first-grade/>
- 'I'm lucky if I can get him out of bed': NYC families struggle with school refusal
<https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2022/5/17/23099461/school-refusal-nyc-schools-students-anxiety-depression-chronic-absenteeism>
- Reversing the Dehumanization of Families of Color in Schools: Community-Based Research in a Race-Conscious Parent Engagement Program
https://www.adi.org/journal/2018ss/YullEtAlSpring2018.pdf?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=213816931&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_8wb4d6V1IvxsDHgYCH8UKWYfzIWzpo236gn0kOeR8e5r3Az53MCapwebNowa70z0HtSmvFOS4YOYkuo3OdTrKjWx_HQ&utm_content=213816931&utm_source=hs_email

@#@#@##

As we work to reimagine schools equitably, we must likewise move from dreamers to doers. Acknowledging inequities is insufficient. Analyzing inequities is insufficient. Maintaining the status quo and expecting different results is insufficient.... As was the case with reopening schools, context matters—be it political context, capacity context, willpower context or disparity context. This is a time when it is better to try and fall short, than to protect the status quo.

Miguel Cardona, U.S. Secretary of Education

@#@#@##

Here’s what was discussed in the Community of Practice during May

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

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

- >More Needs Assessment -- Is it really needed?
- >Aggressively recruiting new teachers and student support staff
(Part I of a four part series on recruiting, welcoming, developing, and supporting school personnel)
- >Some Ukrainian children are still in school despite the war
- >Enhancing District & School Efforts to Address Mental Health Concerns
- >Welcoming and supporting new teachers and student support staff (Part II of 4 part series)
- >Adversity and Opportunity—The Pandemic’s Paradoxical Effect on Child Health and Well-being
- >Which schools/districts are working to transform student/learning supports?
- >Enhancing Student/Learning Supports in Classrooms (Part III of 4 part series)
- >About Teen Summer Jobs and Volunteering
- >Enhancing family engagement in schools
- >About Amending Regulations Implementing Section 504to Strengthen and Protect Rights for Students with Disabilities
- >Teachers and student support staff working together (Part IV of 4 part series)

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 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>

@#@#@#

Prevention and health promotion are connected to the preparedness of populations as they strengthen resources and build resilience. Prevention also plays a role in response, recovery and mitigation, for example by supporting adaptive coping skills, providing psychoeducation and promoting health behaviors.

Samuel Tomczyk

@#@#@#

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

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

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports

Our Center emphasizes the opportunity to start now to transform how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students. See

Transforming Student/Learning Supports: What We've Learned so Far
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/spring2022.pdf>

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

And Let Us Know:

About what ideas are being proposed for transforming schools.

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

@#@#@#

I finally figured out why it's called a cell phone – it's because it enprisons so many users.

@#@#@#

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

Buffalo shooter had mental health evaluation after threatening his high school last June. The white gunman accused of committing a racist massacre at a Buffalo supermarket made threatening comments that brought police to his high school last spring, but he was never charged with a crime and had no further contact with law enforcement after his release from a hospital, officials said. The revelation raised questions about whether his encounter with police and the mental health system was yet another missed opportunity to put a potential mass shooter under closer law enforcement scrutiny, get him help, or make sure he didn't have access to deadly firearms. Law enforcement officials revealed Sunday that New York State Police troopers

had been called to Gendron's high school last June, for a report that Gendron, then 17, had made threatening statements. Gendron threatened to carry out a shooting at Susquehanna Valley High School, in Conklin, New York, around the time of graduation. Gendron had no further contact with law enforcement after a mental health evaluation that put him in a hospital for a day and a half. New York is one of several states that have enacted "red flag" laws in recent years that were intended to try and prevent mass shootings committed by people who show warning signs that they might be a threat to themselves or others. It is unclear whether officials could have invoked "red flag" legislation after the incident at Susquehanna Valley High School.
<https://www.westernslopenow.com/news/buffalo-shooter-had-mental-health-evaluation-after-threatening-his-hi-gh-school-last-june/>

Inflation, shortages make districts pivot on ESSER spending plans. As the first Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief fund spending deadline nears, education finance experts have noticed districts are spending federal aid differently than originally planned. Those familiar with district spending habits are attributing the changes primarily to a scarce labor market with widespread shortages, hastily assembled spending plans, inflation and supply chain delays. So instead of investing in the same number of new hires as originally planned or making headway with construction projects, districts may be shifting to plug budget holes or fulfill other needs. Instead of spending on new staff, districts struggling to sign employees may have shifted funds to one-time targeted bonuses, retention pay or signing bonuses.
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/inflation-shortages-make-districts-pivot-on-esser-spending-plans/623258/>

The education culture war is raging. But for most parents, it's background noise. By wide margins – and regardless of their political affiliation – parents express satisfaction with their children's schools and what is being taught in them. The nationally representative poll of 1,007 parents of school-aged children follows up on a similar survey conducted about a year ago. In both polls, parents answered questions about the impact of the pandemic on their children, academically and socially, and about their schools' performance during this time. This year's responses showed positive trends as the nation continues to recover from the worst of the pandemic. Compared to 2021, a growing margin of parents say their child is "ahead" when it comes to math, reading, social skills, and mental health and well-being. Fewer parents say their child is "behind" in those areas. In fact, in 2022, almost half of parents, 47%, agree with the statement: "the pandemic has not disrupted my child's education." That's up from 38% in 2021
<https://www.npr.org/2022/04/29/1094782769/parent-poll-school-culture-wars>

Despite more money than ever for summer school, teacher shortages limit possibilities. One way districts plan to get around staff shortages is to recruit high school students to teach or supervise classes. In one district, student interns from the district's Career and Technical Education program will be paid to help teach students skills such as graphic design and robotics as part of a career class. Another district said they'll also pay high schoolers to staff camps and classes for elementary school students.
<https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2022/04/08/despite-more-money-than-ever-for-summer-school-teacher-shortages-limit-possibilities/>

Headcounts are down at public schools. Now budgets are too. Public school systems are beginning to feel the pinch from enrollment losses tied to the coronavirus pandemic. Money for schools is driven partly by student headcounts, and emergency provisions in many states allowed schools to maintain funding at pre-pandemic levels. But like the billions of dollars of federal relief money that have helped schools weather the crisis, those measures were not meant to last forever. Families opting for homeschooling, private schools and other options sent enrollment down sharply in the first full school year of the pandemic, and generally it has been slow to recover. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/headcounts-public-schools-now-budgets-84414848>

Los Angeles USD teacher shortage proposal. L.A. teacher shortage crisis hits poor kids hardest, forcing a last-ditch staffing effort Many of Los Angeles Unified’s highest-needs campuses remain significantly understaffed, impeding academic recovery and prompting Supt. Alberto M. Carvalho to redeploy personnel who hold teaching credentials back into the classroom. The district’s teacher shortage — a deepening problem in California and nationwide — has hit hardest at schools in parts of South L.A. and several other low-income neighborhoods... Fueled by a record \$20-billion pandemic-aid-enhanced budget this year, L.A. Unified had promised a hiring spree... The additional 6,000 hires announced last summer included psychologists and psychiatric social workers, teachers, school nurses and custodians. By November, about half of those positions were unfilled. The district has 234 of the vacant positions left to fill.
<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-04-20/lausd-teacher-shortage-proposal>

@#@#@#

It's the students, ultimately, who keep me hopeful—even last year, when we were dealing with the turbulence of being in and out of virtual and in person.... we were all in it together. When things changed, we adapted together. We knew that things were going to be difficult. They weren't going to be perfect. And we might have to make some last minute changes, but we were pursuing a common goal and trying to make the most of the situation....

Michelle Wolfe

@#@#@#



Comments and sharing from the field

Response to 4/21/22 post *Is public education in a state of crisis?*

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/4-21-22.pdf>

“I have been in service to students at school for over 20 years as an educational psychologist and special education administrator. This is what education needs.....we need to recognize that students are struggling in SO many ways, we have GOT to fund schools to bring down teacher student ratio so that kids are not swimming in a sea of input and can be helped to focus on learning.”

Response to 5/11/22 post *Mental Health in Schools: Taking Stock, Moving Ahead*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/5-12-22.pdf>

(1) “ I continue to see a piecemeal approach in our school districts that is project driven with an emphasis on Tier 3. The rationale is “we need to focus on the highest need students.” Any linkage to community-based services is only in the form of a short-term, partially funded project with no attention to or interest in a comprehensive strategy. The perception of fixing the problem is more important than a long-term comprehensive plan. Again, thank you for your expertise and insights.”

(2) From a school board member – “With all due respect, you are full of it. and so it is the person who wrote this: "But when the need directly affects learning the school must meet the challenge." It can be argued that every need affects learning, so your premise can only be solved with pure Marxism. No thanks.

Our schools were the best. Mental health issues were solved by a counselor with at least an iota of common sense. Now, with higher erudition and nuanced "experts", our schools are virtually useless, because instead of teaching useful skills, schools are obsessed with "mental" issues. Now kids have a higher suicide rate, are non-achieving, and as a substitute for feeling attached to reality, they resort to drugs, sex, sexual identity, entitlement, and victimhood. Perhaps you could redirect your efforts to real quantifiable mental problems, most of which are culture-based, instead of increasing the defective culture.”

Invitation to Listserv Participants:

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

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