

# Students & Schools: Moving Forward\*

(June, 2021 Vol. 25 #9) – 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>

## >How is the Summer being used to Support Students and Enhance Learning?

After the challenges of the past school year, the summer will be used to (a) help students start the next academic year successfully and (b) plan ways to address the predictable demands of the coming school year.

Learning loss and increases in risky behavior have long-been major worries when students aren't in school. Schools (especially student and learning supports staff), working with the community, need to help develop summer programs that address barriers to learning, promote healthy development, and enhance equity of opportunity.

This is a critical time for schools and youth development organizations to partner to fill program gaps and ensure high-quality learning and enrichment programs for the summer and beyond. Federal relief funds and collaboration of schools with community-based organizations, libraries, parks and recreation, cultural institutions, colleges/ universities, and more can blend and leverage funds.

Here are a few excerpts from articles and resources discussing these matters:

From: *Summer Learning to Help Students Most Impacted by the Pandemic*

<https://www.language magazine.com/2021/05/07/summer-learning-to-help-students-most-impacted-by-the-pandemic/>

At the end of April, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) launched the Summer Learning & Enrichment Collaborative, providing support to 46 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Bureau of Indian Education, and three territories working together to use American Rescue Plan and other federal pandemic relief funding to support as many students as possible through enriching and educational summer programming.

The Collaborative—a partnership between ED, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Governors Association, and other national partners—followed President Joe Biden's call to action at ED's National Safe School Reopening Summit to, "work together to ensure that all children have access to high quality summer learning and enrichment opportunities this summer and beyond."

[https://youtu.be/ZFLuX74yPbY?utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_name=&utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_term=](https://youtu.be/ZFLuX74yPbY?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=)

Biden added that, "This is essential for all students, particularly those disproportionately

impacted by the pandemic, students of color, English learners, students with disabilities, homeless students, and all those who went without in-person instruction this year.”

From: *Why Summer Learning Programs Are Pushing More Fun Than Academics*

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2021-05-12-why-summer-learning-programs-are-pushing-more-fun-than-academics>

“...After more than a year of teaching under quarantine, school districts have big plans for summer learning. It’s a time to bring kids back together in person, try to address at least some academic stagnation due to COVID-19, and maybe most importantly, have fun. Thanks to the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) and its \$6.1 billion allocated specifically to address learning loss, district leaders are coming up with programs that far exceed the dull image of traditional summer schooling.

“‘If we can help our students get back to feeling good about themselves, feeling good about school, good about learning, that will probably be the most important support that we can create for them in order to accelerate their academics,’ says Richard Barrera, president of the San Diego Unified school board.”

From: *Keep Schools Open All Summer, And Other Bold Ideas To Help Kids Catch Up*

<https://www.npr.org/2021/02/08/964524688/keep-schools-open-all-summer-and-other-bold-ideas-to-help-kids-catch-up>

Education experts, parents and students are thinking about what is going to be necessary to recover — and at the same time the things that are not worth returning to. Here are four key ideas.

1. "Acceleration academies" — aka summer school ... Some small, pilot programs that supported student learning this past summer found success, such as the National Summer School Initiative, (which used certified teachers), Springboard Collaborative, (which enlists parents as coaches) and the Oakland REACH (which had staff and volunteers). The White House proposal specifically mentions that K-12 schools would be able to use aid for "summer school or other support for students that will help make up lost learning time this year."

2. Tutoring ... But not just any tutoring. Models that have been validated by research include careful training and support for tutors, plus software or other materials; a total of at least 60 sessions, three to five days a week; and groups of no more than four students to a tutor. Most of the evidence backs this kind of tutoring to help readers in elementary school, with some in math as well.

3. Safer and more equitable schools; "Never going to go back to normal" – Making sure every child can read and do math is not the only purpose of school. ... parent and student groups said they want schools to become more safe, supportive and just. This encompasses many things: support for mental health and needed accommodations, strong relationships with caring adults. Biden's rescue package currently includes funds for hiring more school counselors and for expanding the "community schools" model where schools are set up to connect families with housing help and other social services.

4. Invest in a Moon Shot – "Tutoring and summer learning are not magic pixie dust," cautions Socol, at EdTrust. ... Mark Schneider at the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences thinks the U.S. needs a lot more investment in research and evaluation of what really works in education. ... In fact, his office has a grant out right now of up to \$3 million for "transformative research in the education sciences."

For more, see

COVID-19 Guidance for Schools and Districts, April 12,2021, Kentucky Department of Education *Accelerating Student Learning During Summer Learning Programs and Through the Academic Year*

<https://education.ky.gov/comm/Documents/Summer%20Learning.pdf>

Summer Technical Assistance Hub <https://www.partnerforchildren.org/summer>

*Enhancing summer learning* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/sumlearn.pdf>

*Potential Beneficial Effects of Summer Programs for Children from Low Income Families*  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/summer.pdf>

We want to share what local schools and communities are doing to enhance the well-being of youngsters – let us hear from you. Send to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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*Too many students have experienced interruptions in learning and negative effects on their social and emotional wellbeing due to time apart from friends and community. Summer presents a key opportunity for school districts and community partners to accelerate learning and provide new avenues for students to safely engage with each other in fun activities. Let's use this moment to reimagine what fun, engaging summer programming can look like, make it accessible for all students, and work together to make sure our communities recover and rebuild stronger than they were before the pandemic.* Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona

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## >Using the Summer to Prepare Better Ways to Address Students' Needs

### Five critical concerns to plan for before the next school year:

- *Outreaching to and reengaging disconnected students*
- *Improving differentiated instruction*
- *Broadly embedding social emotional learning and development*
- *Reorganizing student/learning supports*
- *Addressing the needs of staff*

Watch for the Center's ejournal out in a couple of weeks. It highlights the above matters that warrant particular attention in preparing staff for 2021-2022 in schools. Here's the intro:

After a year and a half of challenges, many probably would just like to take the summer off. But after extending well-deserved congratulations to all (including students and families), the widespread call is for using the summer to help students recover and "catch-up." And it is viewed as a crucial time to plan how to use the coming year for renewal and innovation, especially for students experiencing learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

While so many have been in crisis mode during the pandemic, it is widely recognized that crises also can generate opportunities. With the federal and state stimulus money, we need to take advantage of the current opportunity.

This issue of the Center's ejournal highlights the following matters that warrant particular attention in preparing staff for 2021-2022 in schools. It is important to embed these in ways that do not overwhelm school staff. Student/learning support staff can be mobilized to help with planning and ease the load on teachers.

With sufficient planning, teachers and support staff can team with families to:

- ***Outreach and reengage disconnected students*** – Besides finding and reengaging missing students, the team can work on improving ways to address chronic absenteeism
- ***Improve differentiated instruction*** – Superintendents and principals can use relief funding to support teaming in classrooms to enable personalized instruction and offer more classroom-based special assistance
- ***Broadly embed social emotional learning and development***: Most schools are planning to emphasize social and emotional learning. The prospect ahead is for ensuring a focus on the whole school and everybody in it to strengthen a school climate that is rich with natural opportunities to foster positive social and emotional development
- ***Reorganize student/learning supports***. At the central office and at schools, the opportunity is to revamp student/learning supports (including upgrading the MTSS framework) in order to develop a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports to ensure that learning, behavior, and emotional problems are effectively addressed

***And don't forget staff well-being!***

## >Quick Links to Online Resources

Considerations for Graduation Ceremonies and Other End-of-Year School Events 2020-2021  
<https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/boardops/commencement.shtml>

MA COVID-19 Safety Standards for Commencement and Graduation Ceremonies Held by Colleges and Universities, K-12 Public and Private Schools  
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/commencement-guidance/download>

Proposed Guidance for Prom, Graduation, and other Spring Events in the 2021 School Year  
<https://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/COVID19/K12SpringEventsPlaybook.pdf?ver=2021-04-30-153641-497>

Guidance for the Prevention of COVID-19 Transmission for Commencement Ceremonies  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID19-Graduation-Guidance.aspx>

Restructuring California Schools to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching in the COVID 19 Context and Beyond (Note that this is not just relevant to California)  
<https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/restructuring-california-schools-address-barriers-learning-and-teaching-covid-19>

Restorative Restart: The Path Towards Reimagining and Rebuilding Schools  
<https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/restorative-restart>

Reimagine and Rebuild Schools: Restarting School with Equity at the Center  
<https://reimaginecaschools.org/>

Utilizing COVID-19 Recovery Funds to Serve English Learners  
<https://edpolicyinca.org/newsroom/utilizing-covid-19-recovery-funds-serve-english-learners-california>

An improvement plan is not enough—you need a strategy.  
<https://kappanonline.org/school-improvement-plan-not-enough-you-need-strategy-stevenson/>

Strategies for Building More Equitable Schools When Returning to the Classroom  
<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/strategies-for-building-more-equitable-schools-when-returning-to-the-classroom>

Planning Strategically for a Post-COVID World  
<http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol16/num15/planning-strategically-for-a-post-covid-world.aspx>

Who Do You Call On? Rooting Out Implicit Bias  
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/who-do-you-call-rooting-out-implicit-bias>

Foster Care, LGBTQ Youth & Increased Suicide (Infographic)  
[https://nihcm.org/publications/foster-care-lgbtq-youth-increased-suicide?utm\\_source=NIHCM+Foundation&utm\\_campaign=6cd69a3caa-Trevor\\_Project\\_Infographic\\_052521&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_6f88de9846-6cd69a3caa-167730924](https://nihcm.org/publications/foster-care-lgbtq-youth-increased-suicide?utm_source=NIHCM+Foundation&utm_campaign=6cd69a3caa-Trevor_Project_Infographic_052521&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_6f88de9846-6cd69a3caa-167730924)

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*Kids have had extended exposure to chaos, crisis and uncertainty... If kids don't return to school and get a lot of attention paid to security, safety, predictability and re-establishing of strong, secure relationships, [they] are not gonna be able to make up ground academically. All of the best evidence-based practices in the world are not going to have the desired effect if that child is living in a family that's overwhelmed by stress.*

Matt Biel, a child psychiatrist at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital

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**NEW REPORT FROM CENTER AT UCLA**

**Implementation Science and Complex School Changes**

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

As schools reopen after the COVID 19 disruption, system change is the order of the day. A particular concern is for addressing the needs of an increased number of students manifesting behavior, learning, and emotional problems. Appropriate and effective handling of these students will require a major transformation in how student and learning supports are provided. Attaining more than cosmetic changes will require understanding how major systemic changes are accomplished and how to deal with the inevitable challenges that arise.

In this report, we outline what we have learned and formulated conceptually and in practice about pursuing multifaceted and complex changes in school systems. We offer specific examples from our work to illustrate lessons learned in making substantive and sustainable changes in organizations such as a school system.

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Also from the Center, three detailed resources on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging disconnected students and embedded MH in schools, see:

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

All three can be accessed for free at

[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving\\_school\\_improvement.html](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html)

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Our Center emphasizes the opportunity to start now 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 Let Us Know:**

***About what ideas are 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](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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**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.*

- > Developing an infrastructure for social and emotional development
- > Averting Targeted School Violence: Secret Service Analysis
- > More about outreaching to those who have not returned and also addressing chronic absenteeism
- > Opportunities for summer learning
- > How are schools helping students return to normal?
- > Homeless students: Using stimulus funds to address the challenge
- > Now what for students who didn't participate in online learning?
- > School Districts are Helping Increase Access to COVID-19 Vaccinations
- > New Report: Implementation Science and Complex School Changes

**For previous resources** prepared in relation to the pandemic, see

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



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

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

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What a Computer Science Teacher in Fort Worth, TX reports learning during the pandemic:

*We've learned the power of digital tools is only as good as the buy-in teachers and students develop to include them. With hard-to-reach students, we've been gobsmacked with how true that is.*

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

**U.S. schools fight to keep students amid fear of dropout surge.** U.S. educators are doing everything they can to track down high school students who stopped showing up to classes and to help them get the credits needed to graduate. But soaring numbers of students who are failing classes or are chronically absent have experts fearing the worst, and schools have been busy tracking down wayward seniors through social media, knocking on their doors, assigning staff to help them make up for lost time and, in some cases, even relaxing graduation requirements. A National Dropout Prevention Center report predicted a doubling or tripling of the number of students who were at risk of falling behind academically and not graduating.  
[https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/us-schools-fight-students-amid-fear-dropout-surge-77617926?cid=clicksource\\_4380645\\_1\\_heads\\_hero\\_live\\_headlines\\_hed](https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/us-schools-fight-students-amid-fear-dropout-surge-77617926?cid=clicksource_4380645_1_heads_hero_live_headlines_hed)

**Survey shows distress of k-12 parents,** Los Angeles County residents rate education among the worst of several factors affecting their quality of life, displaying one of the biggest drops in recent years among parents of children in public schools. More than three-quarters of parents in the county with children ages 5 to 18 believe their children have been “substantially hurt” academically or socially by being away from school and taking part in distance learning. Parents of children in public schools gave education an overall score of 52, compared with 58 past year, one of the largest decreases in any category in the index’s six-year history. Detailed findings from the survey showed that the group that lost significant income experienced compounding effects from the pandemic. They were more likely to know somebody who had tested positive for the coronavirus, to say their kids were negatively affected by distance learning and to say the response to the pandemic was unfair to people like them.  
<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-04-19/satisfaction-with-public-education-low-among-l-a-county-residents-ucla-survey-finds>

**Minnesota Students Walk Out Of School To Protest Racial Injustice.** Students in dozens of Minnesota schools signed on to lead marches and rallies to protest racism. They organized on social media. In Oakdale, hundreds of students — more than a third of the school's in-person student body — went out the front entrance and around the football field.

A senior at St. James, sent emails to all the members of their school's social justice club that let them know about the walkout. Just last summer, students organized a community demonstration. Since then, they've established a social justice club on their campus.  
<https://www.npr.org/2021/04/20/989074842/1-000s-of-minnesota-students-walk-out-of-school-to-protest-racial-injustice>

**Arts Education Should Be Emphasized As Students Return To Classrooms.** It's about helping students re-discover a love of being at school. "We have to understand that when kids come back to school, they're not only bringing academic challenges, but they've also had a wide range of emotional experiences," Gallagher said. "Their socio-emotional wellness definitely needs to be addressed." "Things like the arts, band, dance, sports, those activities that are more often off to the side, are actually places where students can bring their whole selves and find meaning and develop the relationships and connectivity to school that help them get through school and ultimately thrive as well-rounded human beings."

<https://www.kpbs.org/news/2021/may/14/experts-say-arts-education-should-be-emphasized-st/>

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From the Minnesota news story

*The walkout's happening because we've already asked, we've already done the nice things, the like sitting down and talking and being told, "We see you, we hear you." But sometimes taking it into your own hands is the only way we'll see justice.*

Semhar Solomon, a 17-year-old senior

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### **Comments and sharing from the field**

(1) "I am worried that, as often happens in educational policy, issues of discipline and school climate are being for the most part neglected as we move towards re-opening. The Biden Administration's national forum on the re-opening was a textbook example. As you well know, many students will return to school after an extended break with significant emotional needs. Schools that had begun a transition towards having a wide variety of methods for addressing student emotional and behavioral needs, and a climate that helps keep those needs from escalating into behavior, may well do ok, although it may be hard. But schools that have held on to an enforcement model of discipline will, I firmly believe, have a very hard time trying to force student compliance, and will be likely to escalate student needs into full-fledged disciplinary conflicts. I hope I'm wrong, but I'm expecting that we'll see a significant bump in the use of exclusionary discipline and school policing incidents in many schools, if there is not some strong national guidance on that.

I know I'm preaching to the choir about the social emotional needs of students returning to school: in particular, that schools need to be prepared for that, lest they fall back to enforcement-based approaches that will exacerbate their problems, and make students' lives a whole lot worse."

2. "I appreciate the information and resources you've shared re: community mental health and believe that the Tribal communities my organization serves will greatly benefit from being added to your email list. I am working to provide services (family violence prevention, childcare, education, mental health awareness, and more.) to 52 California tribes. I look forward to your emails. Feel free to reach out with any questions or suggestions."

3. "At the very beginning of our work, someone put one of your books on student learning supports into our hands, and it has guided our work ever since. The idea of barriers to learning has been an incredible organizing principle in our work with schools. I read your emails weekly and pass them on to our staff, and we have been able to help schools and districts improve their systems. It really does work!"

### **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](mailto: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](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)**