

Students & Schools: Moving Forward*

May, 2021 (Vol. 25 #8) – 34 Years & Counting

Contents

>>End-of-the-Year School Celebrations:
Hope, Congratulations, Safe Exuberance

Also

>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>

>>End-of-the-Year School Celebrations:
Hope, Congratulations, Safe Exuberance

While the pandemic has taken a great toll, the end of the school year remains a special time for everyone.

For most students, it is a time to be congratulated and to celebrate. For some, it is a temporary reprieve from problems experienced at school. For everyone, it is a time when we all need to help each experience hope for the future and feel a sense of having accomplished something of value.

For students, their families, and school personnel, keys to enhancing feelings of hope and accomplishment include taking time to explore in *a personalized way* (a) personal and societal accomplishments made over the year, especially given all the challenges that had to be dealt with and (b) how what was accomplished can be built on in the coming year. Drawing on what we know about *intrinsic* motivation, we emphasize focusing on specific matters that can enhance feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness to significant others (and minimizing messages that threaten such feelings).

Given the impact of school closures/reopenings and restrictions, the following might provide some ideas for celebrating this incredible year not just for graduates, but for all students, families, and school staff.

From: *How to Honor and Celebrate the Class of 2021 (No Matter What): 21 Ideas*
<https://grownandflown.com/how-to-celebrate-your-high-school-graduate/>

“Here, in summary, are test-driven ideas for honoring and recognizing our students. No matter what.

>We can get on board with nontraditional ways of celebrating. We can try to help our students (and ourselves) see that different does not have to automatically mean not as good.

- >We can set up online forums to connect us with other friends and families. Through them, we can brainstorm event ideas, coordinate local plans, encourage each other, and share good news about our kids.
- >Last spring, schools, churches, parent groups, and individual families ordered up school-color signage displaying everything from students' names to their pictures. Some local businesses or booster clubs paid for the signs and displayed them collectively in a town square or other high-traffic location
- >School districts took over local billboards, posting class groups and individual photos, and many high schools hung banners
- >Parades were far and away the most popular vehicle for honoring students, and understandably so. Students (many of them capped-and-gowned) walked down blocked-off streets or rode in decorated cars led by police or first-responder escorts, while socially distanced cheering supporters stood along the routes with signs and banners.
- >Drive-in theaters became graduation stadiums in many communities last spring and summer. Socially distanced ceremonies held ahead of time in other locations—often with individual graduates and their families assigned specific time slots when they were handed diplomas and given photo ops—were compiled into full videos shown on the big screen.
- >Other schools set up stages in their parking lots and held drive-in live graduation ceremonies. Attendees stayed in their cars but were in many cases allowed family-unit photos by the stage with their individual graduates, diplomas in hand.
- >School websites, along with Instagram and Facebook pages, highlighted members of classes one at a time, including photos, biographies, and future plans summaries. And live-streaming filled in some gaps at Covidized academic, athletic, and arts senior nights and award ceremonies.
- >We can remember that our kids earned this time to be celebrated, and so we can do our best to celebrate everything....”

Share with us how your local schools are planning to celebrate this extraordinary school year. We will share what you send with others. Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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I urge school system leaders to reject the typical, knee-jerk reaction of remediate, drill-and-kill, and intervention solutions that have long sabotaged educational equity well before this pandemic. I urge you to shirk these traditional “solutions” that position students at a deficit in terms of learning. Instead, look for real solutions that acknowledge students’ gifts and assets.

Colin Seale

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>Quick Links to Online Resources

K12 Covid mitigation toolkit

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/FINAL-0321420_B_K-12_Mitigation_Toolkit508.pdf

Education Secretary Miguel Cardona Says Schools Have to Be 'Redesigned' Post-Pandemic

<https://www.newsweek.com/education-secretary-miguel-cardona-says-schools-have-redesigned-post-pandemic-1583580>

U.S. Education Department Releases State Plan Template for the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-education-department-releases-state-plan-template-american-rescue-plan-elementary-and-secondary-school-emergency-relief-fund?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

Talking to Kids About Racism and Violence

<https://childmind.org/article/racism-and-violence-how-to-help-kids-handle-the-news/>

42 Percent of Principals Want to Leave Their Position. Will You Let Them?

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/opinion-42-of-principals-want-to-leave-their-position-will-you-let-them/2021/04>

Online school. Poor technology. Declining enrollments

<https://www.politico.com/news/2021/04/15/online-school-technology-enrollment-479340>

Remote and Hybrid Learning May Be a Permanent Strategy: How Will We Know Whether It Is Successful?

https://region9cc.org/blog/remote-and-hybrid-learning-frameworks?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

Recent research suggests students' environments affect academic success

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/2021/4/14/22384257/biden-schools-infrastructure-research-environment>

Integrating Social and Emotional Learning throughout the School System: A Compendium of Resources for District Leaders

https://selcenter.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/09/SELCenter_CompndiumofResources.pdf?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

Forum for Children's Well-Being: Promoting Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Health for Children and Youth

<https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/forum-for-childrens-well-being-promoting-cognitive-affective-and-behavioral-health-for-children-and-youth>

Gifted programs provide little to no academic boost, new study says

<https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-gifted-programs-provide-little-to-no-academic-boost-new-study-says/>

How can we design learning settings so that all students thrive

<https://www.soldalliance.org/post/how-can-we-design-learning-settings-so-that-all-students-thrive>

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I think K-2 teachers should expect kids happy to be back and a bit rambunctious. I would recommend beginning with lots of games and activities to establish a community and a sense of belonging and ease into academics as kids get used to being back in the classroom.

Deborah Stipek

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Here's what was discussed in the Community of Practice during (April)

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

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

Topics:

- >About Resources to Address Racism Against Asians, Asian-Americans, and Pacific Islanders in the U.S.
- >Lessons learned as students return to school
- >Resilience and the Pandemic
- >Moving forward with a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports
- >About community mental health agencies working in schools
- >Learning from school reopenings
- >One year of school closures: What's next?

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>

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Students are so phenomenal in terms of the way that they continue to move forward and adapt and grow during difficult circumstances. There was nothing miraculous that we were doing as a support team. Often it was really just helping the students to tap in to that inner strength and keep pressing on even when it was really difficult.

Rayne Cedergreen, student success instructor at Bend Senior High, OR

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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>

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 the information at

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

Let Us Know:

About what ideas are being proposed for transforming schools as they reopen.

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

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I suppose it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail.

Abraham Maslow

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

Creating a City Youth Development Dept.. Young people representing more than fifty (50) youth groups and community-based organizations from every corner of Los Angeles call on the Los Angeles City Council to support the creation of the first ever City Youth Development Department. Such a department would provide services to youth aged 10-25 that focus on violence prevention, youth counseling, financial literacy, job preparation skills, technology assistance and other services that will better prepare them for the future.

<https://silverlandia.com/mayor-eric-garcetti-join-councilwoman-monica-rodriguez-and-youthgroups/>

Homeschooling Doubled During The Pandemic. In a year when so much about schooling has changed, add this to the list: A significant increase in the number of households where students were homeschooled. That's according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey. When the survey began, the week of April 23-May 5, 2020, 5.4% of U.S. households with school-aged children reported homeschooling. By the fall, that number had spiked: 11.1% of households with school-age children reported homeschooling in the Sept. 30-Oct. 12 survey. The Census Bureau says that figure is twice the number of households that were homeschooling at the start of the 2019-2020 school year. Homeschooling rates increased most dramatically among respondents who identified as Black. Black homeschoolers increased fivefold, from 3.3% in late spring to 16.1% in the fall.

<https://www.npr.org/2021/03/22/980149971/homeschooling-doubled-during-the-pandemic-u-s-census-survey-finds>

Hackers breach Broward schools' computer system. Hackers breached the Broward County Public Schools' computer system earlier this month and threatened to release sensitive information, including students' and teachers' personal data, unless the district paid \$40 million. The district told parents about an internet outage on March 7 that disrupted online learning, but it appears the incident was far more serious than first reported and that it remains ongoing. The district released a statement Thursday saying that it has hired a cybersecurity firm to investigate the attack. It also said it's working on getting back all of its files and that it has "no intention of paying a ransom." The statement also cast doubt on the hackers' claim that it had student and employee personal data.

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/broward/article250344061.html>

L.A. Unified to provide \$500 monthly child care subsidy to some employees. The Los Angeles Unified School District will provide the subsidy to full-time employees with children ages 5 and under who are enrolled in a child care program. The subsidy will be available through the rest of the current semester. Employees who work during summer school will receive the subsidy through July.

<https://edsources.org/news-updates>

NYC to pay \$500 to nearly 1,000 parents to address mental health needs at their schools. The education department is launching a training program next month for parents, paying them \$500 to become "wellness ambassadors" addressing mental health needs in their school communities. Parent association leaders will be responsible for participating or selecting another parent to complete a four-part training. The initiative will pay the stipend to parent leaders from roughly 950 schools in neighborhoods hardest hit by the coronavirus.

<https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2021/4/9/22376133/parent-ambassador-mental-health-stipend-nyc>

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There is simply no substitute for in-person learning. But as schools reopen their doors, we must also make sure that we are meeting students' social, emotional, physical, mental-health, and academic needs, and addressing gaps that existed before—and were exacerbated by—the pandemic. This is an opportunity for us to not only reopen our schools safely, but to make sure our education systems are truly serving all our nation's students.

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona

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Comments and sharing from the field

- (1) Re: message about using federal stimulus funds to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/3-24-21.pdf>

"I couldn't agree more, especially with the segment I highlighted (below). Flash-in-the-pan efforts are the easiest to adopt and typically also the least effective. Often those kinds of 'solutions' are aimed at symptoms, rather than underlying causes...and the improvements that are needed to have a lasting impact on students and the K-12 system itself. The feast or famine funding scenario you mentioned (zero, full, full, full, zero....) is the Achilles Heel of many federal and state programs for K-12. Such funding can get the pendulum moving, but once the funding 'push' ends, movement quickly settles back to zero, frequently ending in the same place it started...no net or sustained change. Take care and thanks for your ongoing efforts to make us all think..."

- (2) "I just finished reading your article entitled: "Mental health Concerns are Becoming a School Priority: But How Best to Address the Priority Remains Controversial."
(<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/4-15-21.pdf>)

I could not agree with you more! I was preparing to write an op-ed article on this topic to my local newspaper. I am the supervisor of a Child Study Team and while my heart believes without bounds that mental health issues must be addressed in a timely manner, I am seeing that the funds should not be placed in the hands of well meaning educators who truly don't understand mental health issues.

Although I am a school psychologist, my fellow colleagues and I don't have the final say on how funds should be spent. My rational being instructs that my children and grandchildren will be paying for projects that are well intended, ill managed and that really will not make a difference."

- (3) About the 3/3/21 school practitioner:

"I serve as the Executive Director for the Department of Social Sciences with our County Public Schools. I am writing to thank you for sending the School Practitioner Community of Practice comments and links provided to assist school districts in preparation for potential demonstrations related to the trial of the officer charged in George Floyd's death. We are reviewing said resources and will share with the appropriate school personnel in our schools accordingly. Again, we thank you for sharing the compiled resources."

- (4) And for the record, we do appreciate the many thank you messages we receive, Here's one:

"Thank you for these emails with the valuable resources. They are so helpful in my work. I've been receiving them for a few months, and just wanted to say Thank you!"



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