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**School Practitioner
Listserv**

**A Weekly Community of Practice Network
for Sharing and Interchange**



April 21, 2014

Ongoing Concern

>Sustaining progress and momentum for moving in new directions during *personnel changes & transitions*

For Your Information

>New data on student engagement underscores the imperative for learning supports

Featured Center Resource

>Resources for Enhancing Student Engagement

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Please forward this to a few colleagues you think might be interested. The more who join, the more we are likely to receive to share.

For those who have been forwarded this and want to be part of the weekly exchange, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Ongoing Concern: The end of the year brings leadership and key staff changes and transitions. This can profoundly affect progress and momentum related to major innovations undertaken to move in new directions for improving learning supports. It is important to approach the change as a *transition* concern. Minimally, this means planning ways to ensure new leaders are informed about (a) the work and its benefits for students, families, staff, (b) progress to date, and (c) next steps that are in the works.

For those of you preparing to engage new leaders with respect to continuing to develop and strengthen a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports, below are some resources that have been useful. *And send us an email if you think we can be helpful.*

- > *Leadership Changes: Minimizing the Downside* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newleader.pdf>
- > *Introduction to a Component for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/introductionbrief.pdf>
- > *What Every Leader for School Improvement Needs to Know About Student and Learning Supports* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whateveryleader.pdf>
- > *Introducing the Idea of Developing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports to a New Superintendent or to One Who May Be Ready to Move Forward* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/introtosups.pdf>
- > *Developing a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: First Steps for Superintendents Who Want to Get Started* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/superstart.pdf>
- > *Establishing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports at a School: Seven Steps for Principals and Their Staff* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/7steps.pdf>
- > *Beginning Steps in Personnel Development Related to Establishing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/personneldevelopment.pdf>

Listserv Participants: What can you share about making an effective transition to new leaders and staff? Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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For Your information:

>New data on student engagement underscores the imperative for learning supports

Excerpt from a news release about a Gallup poll and report (online at <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/04/09/28gallup.h33.html>)

"Students who have teachers who make them 'feel excited about the future' and who attend schools that they see as committed to building their individual strengths are 30 times more likely ... to show other signs of engagement in the classroom -- a key predictor of academic success, according to a report released by Gallup Education.

School leaders should not neglect the social and emotional factors that help students thrive, and they should empower teachers so that they are more engaged and effective in the classroom, says the 'State of America's Schools' report, a synthesis of polling data and research from the international Gallup organization.

'The right leadership and the engagement of teachers and students are all one very important ecosystem,' said Brandon H. Busted, the executive director of Gallup Education, based in Washington. 'Any link broken in that chain, and you're undermining the importance of an entire school.'

A broad focus on testing and new standards can lead schools to neglect the individualized needs of students, the report's authors say.

'These elements are often overlooked in the effort to 'fix' America's education system, but there is growing recognition that unless U.S. schools can better align learning strategies and objectives with fundamental aspects of human nature, they will always struggle to help students achieve their full potential,' the report says. ...

In questions related to hope, 54 percent of 2013 respondents were deemed 'hopeful' under the analysis, 32 percent were deemed 'stuck,' and 14 percent were deemed 'discouraged.'

In response to survey items related to engagement, questions about friendships, a feeling of safety, praise for good work, researchers classified 55 percent of students as 'engaged,' 28 percent as 'not engaged,' and 17 percent as 'actively disengaged.'

Emotional engagement at school is the noncognitive factor that most directly correlates with academic achievement, the report says.

In a finding described by the organization as highly significant, students surveyed in 2013 who said they strongly agreed with two statements, 'My school is committed to building the strengths of each student,' and 'I have at least one teacher who makes me excited about the future,' were 30 times more likely to be classified as 'engaged' than students who strongly disagreed with those statements on the 1-to-5 scale.

To build engagement, districts should encourage students to discover and apply their strengths, Gallup says, and teachers should take a differentiated approach to building hope, focusing on what motivates each student as an individual....."

Listserv Participants: What do local schools use to assess motivation for learning and how do they work to enhance engagement? Send info to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Center Featured Resource: >Resources for Enhancing Student Engagement

Engagement is associated with positive academic outcomes, including achievement and persistence in school; and it is higher in classrooms with supportive teachers and peers, challenging and authentic tasks, opportunities for choice, and sufficient structure. Conversely, for many students, disengagement is associated with behavior problems, and behavior and learning problems may eventually lead to dropout.

It is a given that teachers and student support staff are faced with a complex continuum of learner motivation. This fact requires schools to provide a range of ways to enhance engagement. Student engagement involves not only engaging and maintaining engagement, but also re-engaging those who have disconnected from classroom instruction.

It is helpful to use reports and related news stories such as that cited above to draw attention to the need to strengthen engagement. Then, it is important to draw on available resources that can be used in daily practice and for professional development.

Our Center views enhancing intrinsic motivation for and engagement in school learning as a key facet of increasing equity of opportunity for success at school and beyond and for improving general well-being. Therefore, we continue to develop a range of resources that can readily accessed from our website.

See our Online Clearinghouse Quick Find on
>Motivation, Engagement, and Re-engagement –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/motiv.htm>

This is a starting place for free resources that can be shared with school leaders, colleagues, families, and students. Here are some examples of Center developed resources listed there.

>Engaging and Re-engaging Students in Learning at School –
<http://www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engagingandre-engagingstudents.pdf>

>Engaging and Re-engaging Families When a Student is Not Doing Well –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/familyengage.pdf>

>Disengaged Students – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/disengpn.pdf>

>School Engagement, Disengagement, Learning Supports, & School Climate –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/schooleng.pdf>

In addition to the above, the Center has resources specifically designed for professional development/continuing education. With respect to enhancing the focus on engagement and re-engagement, we have developed a four unit set. These units provide a perspective on motivation that goes beyond mainly reinforcing and enforcing behavior. The emphasis is on expanding understanding of engagement, re-engagement, and intrinsic motivation in the

context of school improvement and school climate. Strategic approaches are highlighted for engaging and re-engaging students, with special attention to avoiding over-reliance on extrinsic reinforcers and minimizing practices that can produce reactance. Also emphasized is engaging and re-engaging families by attending to differences among families and other primary caretakers. See:

>Engaging and Re-engaging Students and Families

Unit I: Motivation: Time to Move Beyond Behavior Modification –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engagei.pdf>

Unit II: Strategic Approaches to Enhancing Student Engagement and
Re-engagement – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engageii.pdf>

Unit III: Enhancing Family Engagement and Re-engagement –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engageiii.pdf>

Unit IV: Embedding Engagement and Re-engagement into a Unified and
Comprehensive System of Student and Learning Supports –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engageiv.pdf>

Please share relevant resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences!

Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

Note: Responses come only to the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA for possible inclusion in the next week's message.

We also post a broad range of issues and responses to the *Net Exchange* on our website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm> and to the *Facebook* site (which can be accessed from the Center's website homepage <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>