

**School Practitioner Community of Practice**  
(A network for sharing & exchange)

**October 25, 2017**

**Topic: *The transition to middle and high school***

**Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives**

**Featured Center Resources**

*>for supporting the many transitions that schools must address*

**Note: Go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla> for links to other resources including**

- >Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops**
- >Calls for grant proposals, presentations, and papers**
- >Training and job opportunities**
- >Upcoming webcasts & other professional development opportunities**

This resource is from the  
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

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**Given shrinking education budgets, we have been asked to increase our outreach to make our free resources more available (e.g., for planning, professional development, etc.).**

***So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).***

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**For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)**

**For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>**

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*Note: In keeping with the National Initiative for Transforming Student & Learning Supports, this is being sent to and forwarded by over 100,000 school and community stakeholders concerned about (1) daily matters confronting schools, (2) promoting whole child development and positive school climate, and (3) the transformation of student and learning supports.*

## The transition to middle and high school

**R**ecieved this week: “I have a report you wrote on *Addressing Barriers to successful middle school transition* (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/middlesch.pdf>) and will be sharing it. Before I do, could you respond briefly to the following: *What 2 or 3 reasons are there for school administrators to make transition planning (into middle school and into high school) a priority? Why is this so important to schools? Are they making it a priority? If not, why?”*

**C**enter Response: Successful transition to the next grade and/or to a new school involves more than a few “articulation” transition activities. This is especially the case for students who their current teacher has identified as having learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

Focusing on improving supports for transitions is a good way to highlight the need for schools to move forward in transforming how barriers to learning and teaching are addressed. For an outline of the imperative reasons for such a focus, see the book from the Center entitled: *Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide* -- available at this time as a free resource – download by going to the Center homepage (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>) and clicking on the title.

Here’s a bit of what we stress to administrators and all other stakeholders:

Transitions are critical times; addressing transitions present opportunities to prevent problems and enable learning. Starting school, changing schools, moving to the next grade level, encountering hassles before and after school, during lunch – students (and their families) are confronted with a variety of transitions every day and throughout each year of schooling. Many schools pay too little attention to providing supports for transitions. When this is the case, opportunities are missed for promoting healthy development, addressing barriers to learning, and preventing learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

Transition stressors can be barriers to school adjustment and thus learning and teaching; they also can exacerbate other factors that interfere with learning at school. Such stressors can lead students and their families, especially those who are particularly vulnerable, to behave in counterproductive ways and can have life-shaping consequences.

Reports of early outcomes from transition interventions indicate reductions in tardies, vandalism, and violence at school and in the neighborhood. Over time, transition programs reduce school avoidance and dropouts, as well as enhancing school adjustment and increasing the number who make successful transitions to higher education and post school living and work. And, initial studies of programs for transition in and out of special education suggest the interventions can enhance students’ attitudes about school and self and can improve their academic performance. It also is likely that transition supports add to perceptions of a caring school climate. All this can play a significant role in a family’s decision about staying or changing schools.

As to who includes all this as a priority, we can only point to the efforts of those who are trailblazing the transformation of student and learning supports. See *Where’s It Happening?* at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing.htm> for a sample of such work. Also note that increasing the priority of such efforts is the intent of the Call to Action related to the National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/call.htm> .

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### Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives

*What can you share?*

Send your responses about supports for transitions and efforts to increase the priority for transforming student and learning supports to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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# Featured Center Resources

*>for supporting the many transitions that schools must address*

In addition to smoothing the transition into middle and high school, providing supports for a broad range of transitions represents an opportunity to ensure more students succeed. The Center's online clearinghouse Quick Find on *Transition Programs* is a good place to start accessing a range of resources from our Center and from others – go to [http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101\\_01.htm](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101_01.htm) .

(1) Specific to transitions from elementary to middle and from middle to high school, see:

*>Supporting Successful Transition to Ninth Grade*

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

Starting ninth grade is not just another grade transition. For most students it is a major life change. Some don't even survive the transition and become early "push outs." For too many other, the emotional toll is high, and this exacerbates behavior and learning problems. Thus, from a development and motivational perspective, eighth and ninth grades are critical times for transition support designed to assure all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

*>Drop outs and the ninth grade bulge* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/9thgrade.pdf>

Over the past two decades, a great deal of concern has been expressed over the number of students who do not make a successful transition to high school. The consensus is that such students are particularly at risk for dropping out.

*>Transitions to and from Elementary, Middle, and High School*

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

We asked several school districts what they had in place to assist students as they moved from one level of schooling to the next. This document (1) shares their responses and highlights some relevant resources, (2) clarifies where this subset of transition interventions fit with respect to the full range of support for transitions, and (3) delineates where Supports for Transitions fit in a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports.

(2) Here is a sample of some general resources from our Center about Supports for Transitions:

*>Transitions: Turning Risks into Opportunities for Student Support*

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

This Introductory Packet provides readings and related activities on support for transitions to address barriers to student learning covering both research and best practices. It explores why transitions are dangerous opportunities that can disrupt or promote development. Key transitions and related intervention strategies are presented for starting school; daily transitions including before and after school as well as recess and lunch; year transitions such as beginning a new school year; moving to a new school/new country; transitions for special needs students; and transitions from high school. The importance of support staff, families and students planning for transitions is accompanied by suggestions and models. Resources include references, organizations, website, and Center materials related to transitions. We have also included an endnote on sustaining innovations.

*>Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families*

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

Guidelines, strategies, and resource aids for planning, implementing, and evolving programs to enhance activities for welcoming and involving new students and families in schools.

*>Welcoming Strategies for Newly Arrived Students and Their Families*

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

*>Self-Study Survey on Supports for Transitions*

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/surveys/set1.pdf>

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**Upcoming Webinar – Featuring How Scholastic, Inc. is Using the Center’s Work**

**Ensuring All Students Succeed: The Imperative for a Learning Supports Framework**

<http://dropoutprevention.org/webcast/ensuring-all-students-succeed/>

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2017,

Presenter: Rhonda Neal Waltman, EdD, senior director of Consultancy Services -- Learning Supports, Scholastic, Inc.

“For all students to have the opportunity to succeed, what has to be done in schools to reduce student barriers to learning and to re-engage them in the learning process? The Learning Supports Framework demonstrates how the provision of a wide range of learning supports, coupled with effective instruction, is the recipe for ensuring all students succeed.

Informed by the research of Drs. Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor from the UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools, this webcast will feature Scholastic Education’s Learning Supports staff who will share the school improvement model that has significant results in schools and districts across the nation.

This Solutions to the Dropout Crisis webcast will look at

- Why a system of learning supports is an imperative for advancing school improvement and re-engaging students.
- What are learning supports and how are they typically deployed in school?
- How can learning supports be delivered in an organized comprehensive manner?
- The importance of building a school improvement plan that includes learning supports, along with instruction and management.
- Key results that indicate a systems approach can directly impact positive outcomes for students.

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**Did you miss the quarterly ejournal for fall 2017? It had articles on:**

*EXPANDING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UNDER ESSA*

*>Revitalizing Local Control: Transforming Student/Learning Supports and Enhancing Equity of Opportunity*

*>Escaping Old Ideas to More Effectively Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching*

*>Saving Starfish Is Not Enough!*

**Did you miss the monthly ENEWS? Includes discussion of**

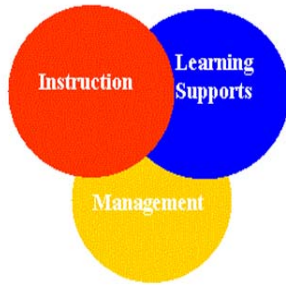
*>Enhancing Student Engagement*

as the special focus for addressing barriers to learning in October.

**You can access both these resources and more from the Center’s homepage**

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

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Information is online about the

**National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports**

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

**THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND  
INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES!**

**For new sign-ups – email [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)**

**Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing.**

**We post a broad range of issues and responses to the *Net Exchange***

**on our website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm>**

**and on *Facebook* (access from the Center’s home page <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> )**