School Practitioner Community of Practice

(A network for sharing & exchange)

September 20, 2017

Topic: *Redesigning School, District, and State Websites to Highlight School Improvement Efforts for Addressing Barriers to Learning & Teaching*

Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives

Featured Resources for

>*Strengthening crisis planning and response, including hurricane/storm/flooding aftermath resources*

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**

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.

Redesigning School, District, and State Websites to Highlight School Improvement Efforts for Addressing Barriers to Learning & Teaching

G iven the various threats to public education, there is widespread agreement about the need to do more in widely conveying the major efforts being carried out to improve schools. Websites are an important tool for this.

In sampling state department, district, and school websites, we find mostly fragmented and disjointed sets of information (e.g., news, events, lists of departments, programs, services, personnel, initiatives, features, etc.). Missing is a lack of a coherent presentation of all that is being done for school improvement. That is, rather than highlighting a rich vision and a strategic system approach for continuous school improvement, the emphasis mainly is on activities and bureaucratic concerns.

Here are four practices to work toward:

(1) *Website design*. Now is the time for schools, districts, regional units, and state agencies to rethink and redesign their websites to convey the message about school improvement. In doing so, a key aspect involves conveying a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

We have a brief set of guidance notes that illustrate this, see:

>*Rethinking websites in conveying school improvement efforts*
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/webguide.pdf

(2) *Special online messages.* In addition to redesigning the site, frequent opportunities should be taken to send message about efforts being implemented to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. Here's how one principal just used his website to send such a message in the school's online welcoming letter.*

"Dear Parents, Guardians, Community Members and Leaders,

... our mission is the promotion and development of the whole child as we strive toward equity of opportunity. ... For some of our students, improvements in instruction and curricula are not enough to meet student needs. We recognize that the economic, neighborhood, family, school, peer, and personal circumstances students face on a daily basis can create barriers to teaching and learning. Crosswell Drive Elementary's purposeful direction toward addressing barriers to teaching and learning is to create a Multi -Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) through a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of supports, referred to as a learning supports component, that is fully interwoven and directly impacting our site level school improvement efforts.

... school, home, and community resources combined together and developed into a comprehensive system can support development of the whole child, can address barriers to learning and teaching, and re -engage disconnected students. All children, youth, and families members should have equal access to interventions and resources in proportion to their needs. The successful development of such a multitiered system is essential to efforts to improve school climate, school culture, and raising student and staff expectations. With this welcome letter, I/we commit to developing a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and multi -tiered systematic support framework. Such a framework joins the instructional and management/governance components with a learning supports component as the third primary and essential facet of our school improvement efforts...."

The letter goes on to spell out the scope of the learning supports component (see the complete letter at https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_ywiKl36Jw4Mm5oVnNhUTU1cms/view
        *Dr. Shawn Hagerty, principal of Crosswell Drive Elementary in the Sumter (SC) School District

(3) *Learning supports subsection.* We advocate that every website have a section on School Improvement "Progress and Next Steps" with a specific subsection on *Learning Supports*. That subsection can highlight what is being done to improve and transform student/learning supports.

> (See ideas and resources for transforming sudent/learning supports at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html .)

This part of the website is also where information is provided about who and how to contact student/learning support staff (administrators, counselors, school psychologists/social workers/school nurses) to discuss questions or concerns.

This section also can offer a range of relevant information and resources for staff, families, students. We advocate framing info/resources in terms of a unified and comprehensive system. (See intervention framework in *Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide* -- download from the Center's homepage -- http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/ .)

(4) *Links to other sites offering valuable resources.* Given the invaluable information and aids site around the world offer, identify and post relevant major links for staff, families, and studies to access. For example, our site provides a wealth of resources and is a gateway to others. See:
> >Topical Quick Find Menu – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/quicksearch.htm
>
> >Gateway to a World of Resources – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/gateway/gateway_sites.htm

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Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives

What advice or suggestions do you have about re-designing school/district/state websites to highlight school improvement efforts for addressing barriers to learning & teaching?

What specific websites have you seen that are good examples?

Send your responses to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Featured Resources for
>>Strengthening crisis planning and response, including hurricane/storm/flooding aftermath resources

Planning Resources

See a range of resources from our Center and from others, see our online clearinghouse Quick on
> *>Crisis Prevention and Response –* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2107_01.htm

This Quick Find provides links to these Center resources:

> *>>Crisis Assistance and Prevention: Self-study Survey*
> *>>Responding to Crisis at a School*
> *>>Crisis Response Checklist*
> *>>Psychological First Aid*
> *>>Major Facets of Crisis Response*
> *>>Responding to a Crisis: A Few General Principles*
> *>>The School's Role in Addressing Psychological Reactions to Loss*
> *>>Planning and Action for the MH Needs of Students & School Staff after a Major Disaster*
> *>>Schools Helping Students Deal with Loss*
> *>>The School's Role in Addressing Psychological Reactions to Loss*
> *>>School Responses to Natural Disasters*

The National Center on Homeless Education provides examples of aids for addressing special planning concerns. See

>*Connecting Schools and Displaced Students series* (briefs) – https://nche.ed.gov/briefs.php
Covers:
>>Meeting the Educational Needs of Students Displaced by Disasters: Youth on Their Own
>>What Relief Agencies Should Know About the Educational Rights of Children Displaced by Disasters
>>What School District Administrators Should Know About the Educational Rights of Children Displaced by Disasters

>*Connecting Schools and Displaced Students Handbook Series* – https://nche.ed.gov/pr/dis_hb.php
Covers:
>>After the Storm: Information for Parents on How Schools Can Help After Disasters (A Handbook for Parents)
>>Disaster Relief Agencies and Schools: Working Together to Ensure School Enrollment and Success* (A Handbook for Local Liaisons and State Coordinators)
>>From the School Office to the Classroom: Strategies for Enrolling and Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness (A Handbook for Local Liaisons, Enrollment Staff, and District Administrators)
>>School as a Safety Net: Connecting Displaced Children With Educational and Support Services (A Handbook for Relief Agency Staff and Volunteers)

From FEMA:

>Multihazard Emergency Planning for Schools Site
>Community Preparedness Toolkit
>Student Evacuation (part of Community Preparedness Webinar Series)
>Sample Forms, Checklists, and Exercises
>FEMA facts and info on floods

From education agencies:
>*Disaster Recovery Policy and Systems Guidance* (Louisiana Dept. of Education)
http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/louisiana-believes/lde-disaster-recovery-guidance.pdf?sfvrsn=8
>*Dealing with Disasters: Frequently Asked Questions* (Texas Education Agency)
http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Other_Services/Weather_and_Disaster/Dealing_with_Disasters__Frequently_Asked_Questions/
>*Lessons Learned from School Crises and Emergencies* (U.S. Dept. of Education)
https://rems.ed.gov/docs/LL_Vol2Issue5.pdf

Hurricane/Storm/Flooding Aftermath Resources

A crisis plan should provide for posting links to national organizations that have information about resources for students and families (and school staff). Here is an example of what we have posted related to the recent emergencies. All these and more are included on the "Responding to Crisis" feature accessed from our homepage – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu .

From our Center:

>>*Responding to a Crisis** – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/crisisresp.htm
>>*Crisis Quick Find* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2107_01.htm

From National Child Traumatic Stress Network:

>>*Parent Guidelines for Helping Children after Hurricanes* (English) or *Guia para los padres para ayudar a los niños despues de un hurricane*

>>*After the Hurricane: Helping Young Children Heal* (English)

>>*Helping Young Children and Families Cope with Trauma* (English) or *Ayudando a Niños(as) y Familias a Enfrentarse con el Trauma* (Spanish)

>>*Teacher Guidelines for Helping Children after Hurricanes* (English)

>>*Psychological First Aid Guide* (English) or *Primeros Auxilios Psicológicos* (Spanish);

>>*Psychological First Aid for Schools*

>From the American Psychological Association:

>>*Mental Health Resources for Hurricanes/Floods*
http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/index.aspx

Send us links to any school Emergency/Crisis Plans that are models we should share with others.

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If you missed the quarterly ejournal for fall 2017 or the monthly ENEWS, you can access them 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
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/)