



**School Practitioner
Listserv**



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

April 25, 2016

Concern from the Field:

- >Will “free” tuition really address equity of opportunity?**
 - Responses from Colleagues in the Field
 - Center Response

Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives

For Your Information

- >CDC highlights factors associated with early childhood mental, behavioral, developmental problems**

Featured Set of Center Resources:

- >About promoting development and preventing problems**

**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**

**For previous recent postings of this community of practice, 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 community of practice network has expanded in number of participants and topics discussed. The thematic emphasis is on (1) daily concerns confronting those working in and with schools, (2) the transformation of student and learning supports, and (3) promoting whole child development and positive school climate.

Concern from the Field: “I’ve been following the promises being made about ‘free college tuition for students who study hard’ and it is creating an itch that I feel needs to be scratched. On the surface, this promise sounds great. Study hard. Get good grades. Get reduced college costs. However, many students won’t qualify for this because for many different reasons they don’t have good study habits, don’t get good grades, and thus still won’t be able to get into and/or through college. From the studies I’ve seen this will affect students of color and students living in high poverty areas, who are the ones who have the most difficulty paying for college. Thus if the goal is to reduce inequality, the promise of free college tuition, while a benefit to many, is off target for many others. Are people in your network looking at this and/or writing about it? Can you point to a few articles.”

Responses from Colleagues in the Field: We shared this request with several colleagues, here are a few reactions.

- (1) Is free tuition really free if access to it is impossible because of one's ethnicity or economic status? The Education Commission of the States posted an article about equity issues in broadband access to online learning, and access is a critical factor that impacts equity for those who live in rural areas and those whose income is less than \$50K a year. More importantly, “broadband adoption patterns differ by race and ethnicity even within low-income households: lower-income black and Hispanic households adopt broadband 10 percent less frequently than white low-income households.”
Access to quality free public preK-12 education is dependent on the neighborhood in which the students live, thus the equity gap grows larger and larger for students of color or for those from diverse cultures. Free college tuition will most likely be more accessible to upper and middle class white students and not very accessible to students of color or from different cultures who live in low income, high poverty communities.
Paul Gorski at Hamline University focuses on social justice and equity issues in education. See his website <http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/>
- (2) The question brings up several concerns. One is the relationship between trauma and the impact on learning and its intersect with children of poverty. I would dare say many of the students that fall in the category of "students who need it most" as referenced are some of those same students. If you are not self-regulated toward a task, there is a likelihood that the task is not involving something you find interest in or are focused on. We see students get to high school's end or college entry and wonder why students are not self-regulated when we indeed never taught them such things (again, particularly those in the "those who need it most" category). The fact that we so many students enter college requiring remedial education and the fact that we talk about it such a desensitized manner is truly an indictment on public education. Now you see articles on Reforming Remedial Education (WHAT??!) and contest for reimagining high school, for example. How about take all this money that they are going to sink into paying off student loans (which in the email does not seem to address the students that actually need the help) and pour it into disrupting the tragedy of students of trauma being misdiagnosed with learning disabilities and put on a path of no return? Can you imagine if we could interrupt a child from crossing over the threshold of developmentally delayed to intellectually disabled??!! These questions demand answers and solutions.

Center Response: The overriding concern here is that of strengthening pathways for students living in poverty to access post secondary opportunities. For more on this, see our online clearinghouse Quick Finds on:

> *Transitions to College* -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/transitiontocollege.htm>

> *Transition from Adolescence* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/transition_from_adolescence.htm

Here are a couple of our thoughts on the free tuition matter:

First, for more economically starved students to take advantage of cost free secondary education (college or career training), schools must provide much more comprehensive supports for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. See the Center's equity of opportunity policy and practice analysis entitled:

>*Interventions to Support Readiness, Recruitment, Access, Transition, and Retention for Postsecondary Education Success* --

*two page overview at – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/intsupportread.pdf>

*full report at – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/postsecondary.pdf>

Intro to the report: Recognition is growing about the public health and civil rights imperative for reducing the high rate of school dropouts. However, too little policy attention is paid to enhancing equity of opportunity for those transitioning from adolescence to young adulthood by increasing enrollment and success in postsecondary education. This report extends to postsecondary education previous policy and practice analyses from the Center about reducing dropouts, increasing graduation rates, and closing the achievement gap. Given concerns about diversity and the degree to which some subgroups are underrepresented in postsecondary education, the report stresses that it is essential to use the lenses of equity of opportunity and social justice in rethinking postsecondary education policies and practices. Using these lenses, we focus on interventions for improving K-12 in ways that reduce dropouts and improve readiness for postsecondary education, programs for bolstering recruitment and access, and efforts to facilitate transition and retention; recommendations for a shift in policy to enhance equity of opportunity are offered. The work is timely given the increasing calls for enhancing enrollment in and completion of postsecondary education programs and for ensuring inclusion of more and more students from subgroups that have been underrepresented for too long.

For a broad perspective on the research related to enhancing postsecondary education, see

>*What Researchers are Saying About Enhancing Early Attitudes and Readiness*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/enhancingearly.pdf>

Excerpt: Hooker & Brand (2009) reviewed 23 wide ranging intervention programs that have been proven to help young people successfully complete high school and be prepared for success in postsecondary education and careers. The programs included school-wide reform initiatives, community-based afterschool services, work-based learning opportunities, and college access programs.

Second, those advocating for free college need to expand their message for free postsecondary opportunities to include all higher education institutions, professional/occupational training, and other alternative pathways to enhancing access to position requiring more than a high school degree. See:

>*Creating postsecondary pathways to good jobs for young school dropouts* –
<http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/publication-1/0438.pdf>

This paper looks at strategies for connecting high school dropouts between the ages of 16 and 24 to pathways to postsecondary credentials that have value in the labor market. It highlights examples of innovations in policy, program delivery, pedagogy in adult education, youth development and dropout recovery, and postsecondary education. It advocates for expanded adoption of best practices, and ways these policies and practices, if better integrated and funded, can bring about more robust and successful dropout recovery and postsecondary education to address this challenge.

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Invitation to listserv participants: *What’s your take on all this?* Any recommendations for strengthening postsecondary pathways to enhance equity of opportunity? What are local schools/districts/communities doing related to this major concern? Send your responses to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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For Your Information:

>CDC highlights factors associated with early childhood mental, behavioral, developmental problems

As suggested above, enhancing equity for access to postsecondary opportunities is dependent on previous readiness-building experiences (e.g., preK-12). And related to this are a continuum of interventions that address barriers to learning and teaching by promoting healthy social emotional development, preventing problems, responding quickly when problems arise, and contributing effectively to helping with if there are severe and chronic problems. The following from CDC’s *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR) discusses research underscoring factors that need to be addressed by school, home, and community as youngsters develop and are taught.

>Health Care, Family, and Community Factors Associated with Mental, Behavioral, and Developmental Disorders in Early Childhood

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6509a1.htm?s_cid=mm6509a1_w

Excerpt: “Sociodemographic, health care, family, and community attributes have been associated with increased risk for mental, behavioral, and developmental disorders in children. For example, poverty has been shown to have adverse effects on cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development. A safe place to play is needed for gross motor development, and accessible health care is needed for preventive and illness health care. Positive parenting and quality preschool interventions have been shown to be associated with prosocial skills, better educational outcomes, and fewer health risk behaviors over time. Considered together these protective factors could inform collaborative, multidisciplinary prevention strategies. Factors associated with having any mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder included inadequate insurance, lacking a medical home, fair or poor parental mental health, difficulties getting by on the family’s income, employment difficulties because of child care issues, living in a neighborhood lacking support, living in a neighborhood lacking amenities (e.g., sidewalks, park, recreation center, and library), and living in a neighborhood in poor condition. There was significant variation in the prevalence of these and the other factors by state, suggesting that programs and policies might use collaborative efforts to focus on specific factors....”

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Featured Set of Center Resources

>About promoting development and preventing problems

As schools play their role in strengthening students’ development, the Center’s Online Clearinghouse Quick Finds provide direct links to many resources developed by our Center and to resources from

others that can be accessed directly online. For example, with respect to early development and education, see the Quick Find entitled:

>Early childhood development and education –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/earlychildhood.htm>

Included are such resources as the Center’s brief and introductory packet on:

>Early Development and School Readiness from the Perspective of Addressing Barriers to Learning
>>URL for the brief – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/earlydevbrief.pdf>
>>URL for the packet– <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/earlydevelop/earlydev.pdf>

A sampling of resources from others include links to:

- >Community Interventions to Promote Healthy Social Environments
- >School Readiness Tips and Tools. Zero to Three
- >Facts/Statistics
- >Funding and Policy Discussions
- >A Practical Guide for Improving Child Development
- >Bright Futures: Early Childhood Tools. Parent Education Handouts
- >Bright Futures Tool and Resource Kit
- >Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How
- >From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development
- >Linking Social Development and Behavior to School Readiness
- >Losing Ground in Early Childhood Education
- >Readiness: School, Family & Community Connections
- >School Readiness Indicators Initiative
- >The Science (and Art) of Youth Readiness
- >Stages of Adolescent Development
- >Transition and Alignment: Two Keys to Assuring Student Success

Links to relevant agencies and centers include *Ready by 21* -- <http://www.readyby21.org/>

Other Quick Finds cover subsequent stages of development, transitions, and various barriers to learning and teaching. See the menu of over 130 topics at –

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

*For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports, see
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND INTERESTING THIS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE BECOMES!

Send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences to ltaylor@ucla.edu
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 to *Facebook* (access from the Center’s home page <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>)