



**29 years
& counting**

**School Practitioner
Listserv**

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



May 25, 2015

Dialogue
**>Impact of Learning Supports Frameworks on SEL,
Teacher Motivation, Equity**

Featured Set of Center Resources
**>Continuing Education for Teachers &
Student Support Staff**

A Gentle Perspective Being Circulated by Some Teachers
>About Student High-Stakes Testing

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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**

**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 2015 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.

Initial Request: “I am looking at how SEL approaches improve educational equity and influence teacher development. I read about your frameworks for learning and support and spoke to Gainesville City, GA's learning supports director about how they use the frameworks. I'm interested in knowing more about best practices in other districts on how the frameworks translate into teacher motivation, whether that's intrinsic, extrinsic, or through evaluations. What have you seen in your work? I have a related question about the extent to which schools using this framework are attempting to evaluate students' SEL growth, and how they are capturing that.”

Center Response: The questions you ask involve complex answers. Here's a start.

(1) SEL is part of both the instructional and learning supports component.

SEL can be (a) part of the regular curricula, (b) part of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students, and (c) pursued as part of natural opportunities throughout the school day to facilitate development and respond to problems.

We have discussed matters related to SEL and our frameworks in many documents. See our Quick Find on SEL at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2102_05.htm

As we note in the Center document entitled: *Embedding Bullying Interventions into a Comprehensive System of Student and Learning Supports*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/embeddingbullying.pdf> :

“Ragozzino and O’Brien (2009) state: ‘While bullying is a pervasive problem in many schools, schools can take specific steps to improve the school climate and encourage positive interactions designed to reduce or prevent bullying. Schools using a social and emotional learning (SEL) framework can foster an overall climate of inclusion, warmth, and respect, and promote the development of core social and emotional skills among both students and staff. Because bullying prevention is entirely congruent with SEL, it can be embedded in a school’s SEL framework.’

The SEL framework is described as having the following ‘five core categories of social and emotional skills:

- Self -awareness – accurately assessing one’s feelings, interests, values, and strengths/abilities, and maintaining a well -grounded sense of self -confidence
- Self -management – regulating one’s emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting personal and academic goals and then monitoring one’s progress toward achieving them; and expressing emotions constructively

- Social awareness – taking the perspective of and empathizing with others; recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; identifying and following societal standards of conduct; and recognizing and using family, school, and community resources
- Relationship skills – establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; and seeking help when needed
- Responsible decision -making – making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate standards of conduct, respect for others, and likely consequences of various actions; applying decision -making skills to academic and social situations; and contributing to the well -being of one’s school and community.’”

Ragozzino and O’Brien describe these skills as enabling children to “calm themselves when angry, initiate friendships, resolve relationship conflicts respectfully, and make ethical and safe choices. To develop these capacities, children need to experience safe, nurturing, and well -managed environments where they feel valued and respected; to have meaningful interactions with others who are socially and emotionally competent; and to receive positive and specific guidance”

Comprehensive System to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching

Our Center goes a step beyond the SEL efforts by advocating for embedding all efforts to provide student and learning supports into a system to address barriers to teaching and learning. Rather than establishing so many separate initiatives and enacting so many piecemeal and fragmented policies for specific subgroups of students and problems, we highlight the commonalities in the underlying dynamics causing behavior, emotional, and learning problems. Our intent is to fully embed the concerns about behavior, learning, and emotional problems into a system of student and learning supports designed for all students. And we see the growing emphasis on school bullying as an opportunity to accelerate development of such a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system.

>Also see *Natural Opportunities to Promote Social -Emotional Learning and MH* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/fall03.pdf>

>For more information on our approach, see *the 2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html> & the listed new book.

Follow up question from the colleague: “Thank you so much for this thoughtful reply. I appreciate the comprehensive framework that you are offering for schools. One of the reasons why I've chosen to take on this topic is that many folks are interested in more comprehensive approaches in districts and statewide I'm taking a look at LA, Gainesville City, and Alabama to get a sense of how cities have approached these issues.

I'm still trying to figure out how districts are making this framework (and others that are less comprehensive) part of teacher evaluation and professional development. The Learning Supports Director in Gainesville was generous in explaining their team model and how the framework has helped them to have an integrated approach to serving the whole student and ready a continuum of services that are driven by data. How has your comprehensive framework trickled down or influenced directly teacher evaluation in some of the other districts that you have worked with? I'm specifically interested in how teachers buy into learning supports coordination re-envisioned; SEL is one piece, but your model goes further. I know that evaluation might be hard to reach because of a number of factors, but if you have an example of what that looks like when it's done well, I'd love to know more.”

Center follow up reply: Good questions. In our work with Iowa, the SEA developed a variety of tools to help move the work forward. See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing2.htm#iowa>

One was an accountability framework —

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

Changes in the staffing have reduced the implementation in Iowa, but there are still remnants and the products have been useful to others.

Right now the most ambitious work is being done in Alabama. See

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing2.htm#alabama>

Peruse their design document and their most recent progress report. They started with 10 districts last year added 30 more this year and plan to add that many next year.

Colleague's Response: “Thanks so much for being responsive and helpful. I'll take a look at Iowa and Alabama. I will start with a larger look at how SEL and learning supports get into the classroom. One focus will be on how these larger policies get to the instructional core and are reinforced. I'm a former law professor who is making the transition to ed policy. I have the opportunity to continue to work on SEL for our state and they can benefit from looking at how policy is operationalized in other states and districts.”

Listserv Participants: Join in the dialogue; send comments to Ltaylor@ucla.edu .

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Featured Center Resources

>Continuing Education for Teachers & Student Support Staff

The request above asks how to bring greater understanding and application of learning supports into the classroom. One way is through professional development. Districts host a variety of such efforts throughout the school year and some during the summer.

Here is a sample of some Continuing Education materials developed by the Center to enhance how school staff address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

- >Engaging and Re-engaging Students and Families –
- >Personalizing Learning and Addressing Barriers to Learning Education
- >Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning
- >RTI and Classroom & Schoolwide Learning Supports
- >Revisiting Learning & Behavior Problems: Moving Schools Forward
- >Leadership Training: Moving in New Directions for Student Support
- >Developing Resource-Oriented Mechanisms to Enhance learning Supports

All can be accessed for free; connect using links at “Training & Presentation Resources”
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/materials/trainingpresentation.htm#ce>

For more free resources that can be used for professional development, go to our website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> and in the left column, click on “Resources.”

Listserv Participants: What’s planned locally for professional development over the summer? Let us know so we can share with others. Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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A Gentle Perspective Being Circulated by Some Teachers

>About Student High-Stakes Testing

One of our university students found the following online and thought it should be shared.

“To our students in grade 3

Next week you will take the state test. Before you take this test there is something very important for you to know:

This test does not assess all of what makes each of you exceptional and unique. The people who score these tests don't know that some of you love to sing, are good at drawing or can teach others how to use a computer program. They have not seen the way that some of you can dance with grace or speak confidently to a large group. They do not know that your friends count on you to be there for them when they are sad. They do not know that you participate in sports, help your family or play with you little brother, sister or cousins. They do not know that you are caring, thoughtful and that every day you do your best. Because these attributes cannot be tested.

The scores you get from this test will tell you how you did on that day, but they will not tell you everything. They can't tell you that you have improved on something that you once found difficult. They can't tell you that you brighten up your teacher's day. They can't tell you how amazingly special you are.

So come to school ready to do your best on the test and remember there is no one way to 'test' all of the wonderful things that make you, YOU!

Kind regards,
Your teachers"

Please share relevant resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences! Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

Note: Responses come only to our Center 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 *Facebook* -- access from the Center's home page

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