



**30 years
& counting**

**School Practitioner
Listserv**

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



July 18, 2016

Concerns from the Field:

**>What is the Role of Technology in
Addressing Barriers to Learning?**

For Your Information:

>ESSA & the National Education Technology Plan

Follow-up on Welcoming New Students & Families

>Dallas Schools Focus on School Readiness

Featured Set of Center Resources:

**>Personalizing Instruction & Learning:
Much More than Technology**

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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 *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: “What role do you see technology playing in addressing barriers to learning and development, if any? In some ways I can see technology as a tool for chipping away at barriers because it can provide free and quick access to information. With computers at school or in the public library, free internet access is readily available. With the internet, a parent has easier time identifying community resources, or translating important material into his native language, or accessing information about physical and mental health. Instrumental use of technology could greatly influence the environment in which a child is brought up. In other ways, I can see technology enhancing these barriers. The child whose family can afford a home computer has an automatic advantage over her peers whose families can't. Perhaps technology is only helping those who already have a set of protective buffers.”

Center Response: Indeed, the discussions about the role of technology in supporting learning and providing equity of opportunity has stressed both the potential benefits and the concerns. These discussions are covered in many of the resources included in the Center's online clearinghouse Quick Find on *Technology as an Intervention Tool* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/techschool.htm>

For example, as the following outline from a Center sampler indicates, we have explored a range of ways technology might strengthen student and learning supports.

Using Technology to Address Barriers to Learning
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/sampler/technology/techno.pdf>

- I. Technology for Addressing Barriers to Learning
 - A. Technology & Education
 - B. Technology & Mental Health
 - C. Caveats and Cautions
- II. Technological / Multimedia Aids to Facilitate Intervention Activities
 - A. Assessment
 - B. Clinical Activity in Schools
 - 1. Triage and Referral
 - 2. Care Monitoring and Therapy
 - C. Promoting Healthy Social and Emotional Development (MH, education, & enrichment)
 - D. Supporting Special Education with Assistive Technology
- III. Ongoing Learning: In Situ & Distance Learning
 - A. Preservice
 - B. Continuing Education
 - 1. Learning with Others
 - 2. Self-directed Learning
 - C. Consultation
- IV. Systems to Manage Systems & Info (including Accountability/Quality Assurance/Evaluation)
 - A. Systems to Connect Services and Agencies
 - B. School-wide Systems
 - 1. Central Administrative System (e.g. accounting, finance, payroll)
 - 2. Student Services (e.g. Student records, bus schedules, food service, etc.)
 - 3. Infrastructure (e.g. heating, security, telecommunications, building, etc.)
 - C. Classroom Level Systems
- V. Additional References to Books, Chapters, Articles, Reports
- VI. Examples of Programs and Guides
 - A. Education
 - B. Telemedicine/Telehealth
 - C. Guides
- VII. Educational Technology Organizations

We also have joined others in raising concerns about the recent trend to equate technology with personalized learning. For a sense of the problem, contrast the following statements:

- (1) “The buzz about personalized learning as a strategy for improving education systems seems to grow by the day. Recently, Priscilla Chan and Mark Zuckerberg announced they were donating their shares in Facebook (worth an estimated \$45 billion) to support personalized learning. Research from RAND makes a useful contribution to the literature on this issue.

Personalized learning describes Internet based learning platforms that respond to the user’s learning style, interests, and pre-existing knowledge. The RAND study describes five personalized practices from the schools in their study: learner profiles, personal learning pathways, competency-based progression, flexible learning environments, and emphasis on college and career readiness. There is no consensus definition of personalized learning, but a central component is education technology....”

Excepted from a recent blog from the Brown Center

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/brown-center-chalkboard/posts/2016/04/13-personalized-learning-bleiber>

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- (2) A review of the RAND report concludes that “readers should be skeptical of what promise the report’s evidence actually provides for any given model of personalized learning being promoted or considered. The study does suggest that some practices are associated with some test score gains, but those practices may be quite different from those promoted under the flag of personalized learning.”

Penuel & Johnson (2016) review for the National Education Policy Center’s Think Twice Think Tank Review Project – <http://nepc.colorado.edu/thinktank/review-personalized-learning>

- (3) Our Center has a long history of focusing on personalizing learning. We are concerned with the way the construct of personalization in classrooms has morphed and been co-opted, especially by those involved with bringing technology into the classroom. We think it is essential at this juncture to engage folks in a broader discussion than is captured by those currently advocating for personalization in the classroom by focusing on technology.

Unfortunately, discussions of personalized learning often do not distinguish personalized learning from personalized instruction and usually fail to place such learning and instruction within the context of other conditions that must be improved in classrooms and school-wide to address factors interfering with student learning and performance.

Our Center has focused on personalization for decades. Currently, it is a major facet of our *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports** (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>).

We stress that personalized instruction, in contrast to individualized instruction, strives to meet learners where they are - not only with respect to current capabilities, but critically with respect to motivational considerations. Moreover, even personalized instruction is insufficient for addressing common barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. Such matters usually also require providing special assistance for students and the collaboration of teachers with student and learning support staff. Learning is a nonlinear, dynamic, transactional, and spiraling process, and so is teaching. And when it comes to addressing student learning, behavior, and emotional problems, teachers can’t do it alone.

We hypothesize that properly conceived and implemented personalized instruction and student and learning supports are essential to enabling equity of opportunity, closing the achievement gap, assuring civil rights, promoting whole child development, and fostering a positive school climate.

For more on this, see the section of this Practitioner that features center resources.

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Invitation to listserv participants: *What’s your take on all this?* How do you see technology helping to address barriers to learning and providing learning supports. Do you have concern about the use of technology in classrooms? Any lessons learned you can share? Comments? Recommendations? What’s happening locally?
Send your responses to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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For Your Information

>**ESSA & the National Education Technology Plan** <http://tech.ed.gov/netp/>

(excerpt)

“The National Education Technology Plan is the flagship educational technology policy document for the United States. The 2016 Plan, Future Ready Learning: Reimagining the Role of Technology in Education, articulates a vision of equity, active use, and collaborative leadership to make everywhere, all-the-time learning possible. While acknowledging the continuing need to provide greater equity of access to technology itself, the plan goes further to call upon all involved in American education to ensure equity of access to transformational learning experiences enabled by technology. The principles and examples provided in this document align to the Activities to Support the Effective Use of Technology (Title IV A) of Every Student Succeeds Act as authorized by Congress in December 2015...”

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Follow-up on Welcoming New Students & Families

>**Dallas Schools Focus on School Readiness**
<https://thehub.dallasisd.org/2016/06/23/mayors-back-to-school-fair-to-celebrate-20th-anniversary/>

This summer, Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings and dozens of community partners and organizations will celebrate a major milestone in one of the city’s most popular and beneficial school-readiness programs. The 20th anniversary of the Mayor’s Back to School Fair...With an expected attendance of 40,000 this year, the Fair is a one-stop-shop complete with all the back-to-school basics. Parents and children can find everything they need to prepare for the school year – from free school supplies for Dallas schoolchildren (who meet eligibility requirements); to free health, dental and vision screenings; to immunizations and haircuts plus the latest information on education, health and social services. The Fair also will feature musical entertainment, kids activities, games, interactive demos and more. New this year, families who pre-register... There will be free vision screenings and general health screenings, including blood pressure and glucose checks, for all family members. Texas A&M Baylor College of Dentistry will provide free dental screenings and oral health information for everyone, plus fluoride applications, toothbrushes and toothpaste to students. Dallas County Health & Human Services will provide free immunizations. And Cedric B’s Barber and Beauty Salon and Ogle School of Hair, Skin and Nails will offer free haircuts to students. In addition, Half Price Books will give away 7,000 books. Dallas ISD will have a large area with bilingual staff on hand to provide information on magnet schools, scholarship and alternative programs, psychological and social services, parenting, and family literacy. Additionally, educational information and services, in English and Spanish, will be offered at hundreds of community resource booths on crime prevention, fire safety, college readiness, housing, transportation, personal finances, health, nutrition and literacy.

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Featured Set of Center Resources

> *Personalizing Instruction & Learning: Much More than Technology*

The Center has developed resources to enhance understanding of and guide personnel development related to personalizing instruction and learning. See the following continuing education modules:

Personalizing Learning and Addressing Barriers to Learning

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

Module I: *Personalizing Learning*

Module II: *More is Needed to Address Barriers to Learning*

These continuing education modules are designed to help schools move forward in personalizing instruction and learning as an approach that reflects the reality that learning is a nonlinear, dynamic, transactional, spiraling, and psychological process, and so is teaching.

And, while personalization is an essential step in differentiating instruction, it is not enough to address factors interfering with some students' learning and performance. For that reason, personalized instruction is discussed within the context of other conditions that must be improved in classrooms and school wide.

*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/>)