



**29 years
& counting**

**School Practitioner
Listserv**

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



July 20, 2015

Special Edition on Professional Development

Requests from Colleagues

>Professional development for learning supports staff

Example

>Learning supports professional development conference

Featured Center Resources

>For professional development related to learning supports

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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.

Requests from colleagues: We get frequent requests about planning continuing professional development for student/learning supports professionals and also for covering learning supports for all school staff (e.g., at schools, at conferences, etc). Below are a few ideas we regularly share.

Center Response: Continuing professional development about student/learning supports needs to address both current concerns and encourage leadership in moving toward a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. Moreover, all staff need to know more about how to help schools develop learning supports so that teachers are no longer expected to carry so much of the burden for enhancing equity of opportunity for students who are not doing well at school.

Here are some suggestions for a keynote and sessions (e.g., for a conference, for a year long professional development).

Keynote: *Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching.* Overview of the imperative for improving student/learning supports in every school and the leadership actions needed to move forward at every level.

Sessions:

- (1) *Establishing a Learning Supports Leadership.* Creating a learning support leadership team and an administrative leader at a school and at the district to focus on enhancing the way available resources are used and to move toward developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports. (Stressing how to rethink operational infrastructure at all levels and clarifying the difference between a leadership development team and a case study-oriented workgroup.)
- (2) *Weaving Resources Together.* How to map, analyze, and blend school resources and weave in community resources at school, complex, and district levels to improve student/learning supports through *system development*. This includes mapping and analyzing current resources, identifying gaps, establishing priorities for system improvements, enhancing school-community collaboration, and capitalizing on economies of scale.
- (3) *Avoiding Projectitis.* Moving beyond a special project approach in pursuing high priority problems (e.g., enhancing attendance, increasing school safety, dealing with learning, behavior, and emotional problems). The emphasis is on embedding each priority into the process of developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.
- (4) *Enhancing Classroom-based Learning Supports.* Enabling support staff and volunteers to work in classrooms to help teachers/students address classroom organization, dynamics, and student needs in ways that reduce problems and increase learning (e.g., enhancing personalized learning and special assistance, engaging disconnected students).
- (5) *Ending the Marginalization of Student/Learning Supports in School Improvement Efforts.* Strategies for ensuring student/learning supports staff are at key planning and decision making table to ensure that strengthening learning supports is on the agenda and that strategic plan are made for capacity building (e.g., resource allocation, professional development, operational infrastructure changes, etc.).

Listserv participants: What suggestions do you have for avoiding “ho hum, another workshop” and instead providing substantive professional development to improve and advance development of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports at every school and every district? Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Examples

>Learning supports professional development conference

Each summer the Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE) organizes a megaconference showcasing best practices. This year five presentations focus on the transformation of student and learning supports. They are as follows:

(1) *Learning Supports Awareness: Join the Movement.* The ALSDE Office of Learning Supports is partnered with 40 districts in implementing an integrated system of learning supports, designed to help districts and schools address barriers to learning and teaching. Participants gain an awareness of learning supports in Alabama, learn how to become a part of the initiative and leave with specific examples.

(2) *Outcomes of a Learning Supports System: What It Really Means. How can schools effectively address barriers to learning, including those created by poverty, mobility, and other factors outside of school?* Participants hear a compelling story that demonstrates how a district and its schools implemented the Learning Supports framework and impacted students who struggled to overcome barriers that often seemed insurmountable. Participants leave with an understanding of how an Integrated System of Learning Supports is organized and operates from the district level to the school level to improve learning outcomes for all students.

(3) *Student Success: A Kaleidoscope of Support Services.* Focuses on concerns such as school safety, behavior, attendance, guidance and counseling, and facilitating graduation success. Prevention and Support Services proudly shares a comprehensive learning support system to enhance student success and accountability. Join in the conversation as local strategic plans are designed.

(4) *Two High Schools. One Goal. A Culture of Student Supports.* Building a high performing learning culture is the hallmark of two featured high schools in Alabama's learning supports schools. The schools have built student-centered climates — complete with belief systems and structures for ensuring student success. Learn how these school teams have integrated school management, instruction, and learning supports to produce phenomenal student results. Participants will leave motivated and ready to implement strategies!

(5) *Community Collaboration: Making the Connections to Improve Student Outcomes.* As a lead district in developing an integrated learning supports system, the Shelby County district team and school teams have partnered with community agencies to provide additional support to students, families, and schools. This session focuses on utilizing community partnerships to strengthen the "school learning community" to accomplish a system of interventions to meet the needs of all students. Discussions include the impact of programs, such as school-based mental health, mentoring programs, family engagement, transitions, and college/career partnerships resulting in improved student attendance, fewer student conduct referrals, and increased graduation rates.

Note: We were pleased to receive the following note from one of the presenters of the Community Collaboration presentation:

“Our district has been working with Learning Supports for the past two years and was among one of the first districts to implement the Learning Supports framework in Alabama. It has been a very positive experience for our district and our focus is now with sustaining our work. The leaders of the megaconference believe our district is doing an excellent job in creating partnerships and working together to benefit our students and their families. As part of our presentation, I would like to give the attendees a copy of the Center's Community Engagement survey so that they can evaluate their present practices

and spark conversations as to what their particular school district is doing to create community and school partnerships. I believe based on what I read that anyone could reproduce the materials, but I wanted to make sure before I distributed.”

We responded: Do it! We don't copyright so that folks can simply make copies, adapt, etc. Hopefully, as time goes on, you will have a chance to look at and use many of the other resources that can be accessed for free from our website to enhance current supports, facilitate professional development, and move forward with system development. See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> .And please feel free to contact us if you are looking for a specific resource, need some technical assistance by email or conference call, or think we can help in any way.

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Featured set of center resources:

>For professional development related to learning supports

We have developed and have links to many resources that might be useful in preparing for the above professional development activity and for action follow up. See, for example, *Training and Presentation Resources* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/materials/trainingpresentation.htm> .

This set of resources includes:

- >Presentations, Webinars, and Related Material (e.g., Powerpoint Slides, Handouts)
- >Continuing Education Modules
- >Quick Training Aids & Tutorials
- >Fact & Information Resources

Also see

- >*Practitioner & Professional Development: Virtual Toolbox for Mental Health in Schools* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/toolbox.htm>

With specific respect to content for professional development focused on system development, see

- >*System Change Toolkit for Transforming Student Supports into a Unified & Comprehensive System for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

You know you can't sleep during this workshop.



I know. But maybe if you were just a little quieter, I could.



*For information about the *2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports*, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

***Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to
enabling equity of opportunity and promoting whole child development***

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/>**