



**29 years
& counting**

**School Practitioner
Listserv**

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



July 27, 2015

Requests from a Colleague

**>Needed: Ideas for getting administrative buy-in
for improving student and learning supports**

Follow-up on a Previous Request

>Regarding community providers working in schools

Featured Center Resources

**>Resources to help administrators rethink use of existing
student & learning support staff in anticipation of inviting
community resources into schools**

#####

**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>**

#####

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.

Rrequest: "I am looking for anything related to getting administrator buy-in for improving student supports"

Center Response: Education decision makers are busy folks. That is why we make jokes about needing an elevator speech when proposing something to a superintendent. Of course, major ideas for improving student and learning supports are not likely to gain traction because someone has crafted a three minute speech.

As part of efforts related to system transformation and sustainability, we have developed some resources that can be adopted/adapted in communicating the need and a proposal for improving student and learning supports. These have been designed specifically for superintendents, school boards, principals, and other critical decision makers.

From our experience, the first step is for a group of advocates to prepare a proposal and then send it to the administrative leadership. This first message can't be too lengthy, but it does have to outline the imperative driving the need for change. In stressing the imperative, we recommend emphasizing how the improvements will

- better address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students by ending the considerable fragmentation and redeploying current budget allocations to fill significant gaps;
- enhance the type of equity of opportunity that can raise test scores for all students;
- help overcome limitations related to existing school improvement policy and planning.

We outline some ideas and steps we use in our work in the following Guidance Notes:

>*Introducing the Idea of Developing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports to a New Superintendent or to One Who May Be Ready to Move Forward*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/introtosups.pdf>

This document provides a prototype for a brief introductory memo and outlines follow-up steps for clarifying what is being proposed. It references places that have begun to make improvements. With respect to our work, we specifically highlight that significant changes are underway around the country:

>*Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Trailblazing Initiatives!* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/summer14.pdf>

>*2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

>*Brochures from Districts and State Departments* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkit1a.htm>

>*Examples of state and District Design Documents* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkitb1a.htm>

In following up, the need is for a brief overview of the ideas being proposed. This can be done with a brief power point presentation – see for example, the 30 min. introductory webinar we use for our work:

>Intro webinar – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/powerpoint/briefintrosldesrec.pptx>

If appropriate, we also follow-up with a Brief Introductory Document – see for example,

>*Toward Next Steps in School Improvement: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/towardnextstep.pdf>

(Note: if this document doesn't seem to fit your situation, there are others to choose from in Section A of the Center's System Change Toolkit – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>)

To follow this up, we draw from a range of Center documents, such as:

>*Improving Outcomes for Students and Schools Requires a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/improvingoutcomes.pdf>

>*What Every Leader for School Improvement Needs to Know About Student and Learning Supports* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whateveryleader.pdf>

>*Developing a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: First Steps for Superintendents Who Want to Get Started* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/superstart.pdf>

>Establishing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports at a School: Seven Steps for Principals and Their Staff – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/7steps.pdf>

>*Enhancing a School Board's Focus on Addressing Barriers to Learning & Teaching* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/schoolboardfocus.pdf>

We also try to anticipate the questions that will be raised and prepare a Q & A handout. See

>*Q & A Talking Points* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkita2.htm>

Other aids we have found useful in making the case are in the Center's System Change Toolkit. One example includes:

>*Rethinking District Budgets to Unify and Sustain a Critical Mass of Student and Learning Supports at Schools* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/financebudget.pdf>

Anyone is welcome to use and adapt any of our resources and to let us know if they need something else.

Listserv participants: What ideas can you share about this essential facet of advocating for improvement of student and learning supports? Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

#####

Follow-up on a Previous Request

>Regarding community providers working in schools

Previous request: "I'm a licensed therapist who has done some work in schools. I find therapists don't understand education and working with staff on their turf. I also find that educators are not attuned to the mental health issues of youngsters either. Any suggestions on how to merge the two domains?"

Comments from a state department of education leader:

“This has been a concern of mine, particularly since I catch wind of a troublesome tale every once in a while about clinicians working in schools, not in an integrated manner, but in a co-located clinic model. I have wondered about whether this is an area for some professional development? I just came across the National Association of School Psychologists standards regarding knowledge of schools and schooling for graduate training programs. Perhaps this could serve as a backbone to start the education process:

‘Has Knowledge of:

- >School and systems structure, school organization, general education, special education, and alternative educational services across diverse settings
- >Psychological and educational principles and research related to organizational development and systems theory
- >Issues and needs in schools, communities, and other settings, including accountability requirements; local, state, and federal policies and regulations; and technology resources
- >Evidence-based school practices that promote academic outcomes, learning, social development, and mental health; prevent problems; and ensure positive and effective school organization and climate across diverse situations, contexts, and characteristics’

As for educators understanding the mental health needs of their students, the AWARE grant is promoting Youth Mental Health First Aid. We do a training on mental health screening using public domain screeners. We are hoping to get this up on our website soon. We have models in our state for depression screening during mandatory health education class (high school), and one district that has a VERY extensive screening process. I am cautious about screening, as our state has such a poor student-pupil service provider ratio in all areas, as well as community behavioral health provider shortages. I do not think it is ethical to identify students who cannot then get mental health services.”

#####

Featured set of center resources:

>Resources to help administrators rethink use of existing student & learning support staff in anticipation of inviting community resources into schools

As the foregoing discussion illustrates, it is essential to focus education decision makers on the need for and ways to rethink student and learning supports and to identify gaps that community resources can help to fill. This requires helping to clarify

- the nature and scope of existing student and learning supports personnel and resources,
- the way in which community resources can be used appropriately (correcting the

impression that community resources can do everything that schools need and indicating that they are best invited in to help fill critical gaps),

- the changes that will significantly move the currently marginalized and fragmented activity into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system.

In addition to the resources already included above, we have a range of additional materials that can help address these matters. Here are a few examples:

> *Mapping & Analyzing Learning Supports* (A School Improvement Tool for Moving toward a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports)
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf>

This tool outlines a six step process that can be used by school improvement planners and decision makers to chart all current activities and resource use (e.g., school, district, community) as a basis for evaluating the current state of development, doing a gap analysis, and setting priorities for moving forward.

> *Cut-Backs Make it Essential to Unify and Rework Student and Learning Supports at Schools and Among Families of Schools* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/cutbacks.pdf>

> *Why School-owned Student Support Staff are So Important* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/school-ownedstudentsupportstaff.pdf>

> *Framing New Directions for School Counselors, Psychologists, & Social Workers* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/report/framingnewdir.pdf>

*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/>