School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(8/26/20)

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Note: Go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/ for links to other Center resources.

This resource is from the
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).

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For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu
For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm
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For discussion and interchange:
>**About creative models for teaching during the pandemic**

From a colleague: *I wonder if you have put together any thoughts about the kind of learning taking place now, and possibly, in the fall that involves online teaching and learning. Observing what my granddaughter have been dealing with suggests that this may be a larger issue than I have heard anyone discussing. My impression is that their teachers have scrambled to find topics and subjects that are easiest for them to translate from their regular classroom teaching activities. Some of it involves them giving lessons online directly, so this assumes some average comprehension on the part of the recipients and , of course, these same differences may correspond to differences in parents' abilities to translate the teachers' lessons to their children. Some of this may be mitigated by having children come to school in reduced numbers during the fall and thus only "attending school" in the older sense just a few days or hours of the week.*

Center Response: It is going to take a lot of creativity, smarts, expert advocacy, and connections to ensure that policy makers are focused on the many facets of education that have been ignored in the past and that the COVID-19 crisis has so exacerbated that they can no longer be avoided. Much obviously is needed given the problem of engaging students in online learning. As the Hechinger report notes:

While some students thrived during the coronavirus inspired spring of remote learning, educators, parents and students themselves have reported frighteningly low engagement. Among 20,000 middle and high school students surveyed by Youth Truth, a national nonprofit research organization, just 41 percent of them said they could motivate themselves to do schoolwork while their school buildings were closed. Broken down by grade, 57 percent of fifth graders said they could motivate themselves, and that portion steadily dropped by age with barely one quarter of 12th graders saying the same.

A start in discussing the matter is to focus on continuing to improve teaching.

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\>From: *How Schools Can Redeploy Teachers in Creative Ways During COVID-19*
https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/08/06/how-schools-can-redeploy-teachers-in-creative.html

"As a school year like no other approaches, principals and teachers are experimenting with new staffing arrangements that are designed to provide support for the deep academic and emotional needs of children who are returning to school—physically or virtually—after the coronavirus threw their lives and learning into disarray....

Dan Domenech, the executive director of AASA, the School Superintendents Association, said separating remote and in-person teaching jobs is a common approach. He offered this scenario as an illustration: In an elementary school with 100 students in four 5th grade classes, one teacher handles remote instruction for 50 students who are at home while her three colleagues teach the remaining 50 children in the building....

Guidance from the Council of Chief State School Officers, which represents state superintendents, suggests that districts consider looping by grade or subject, which would let teachers keep the same student groups they had last year into this year. ...

In the Fenton Charter School network, which runs five elementary schools in Los Angeles...in an all-virtual mode, teachers in each grade will take turns serving as content leads for four to six weeks. In that role, one teacher will design the videos, assessments, and lessons for the whole grade in science, for instance, while colleagues handle them for other subjects....

One teacher-leadership model is sparking increased interest as schools grapple with how best to support students. It's called the Multi-Classroom Leadership model, and it was designed by the education advocacy group Public Impact to help excellent teachers reach more students...In this model, a teacher with a strong track record of student growth is trained as a "multi-classroom leader" for five to eight teachers...

The 300 instructional coaches in Florida's Miami-Dade school district might be asked to shift their roles a bit too.... They'll coach teachers virtually, but they might spend more time doing direct instruction with students in remote breakout rooms...."

\>*With respect to federal support for improving instruction and curriculum* (including hardware and software), it will be interesting to see what states do with the funding just allocated by the U.S. Department of Education funding. Here is a sample of what has been proposed:

Texas will invest in developing new statewide virtual courses as part of its Texas Home Learning program, including the creation of new open resources for English Learners in reading and math, with a goal of reaching over one million English Learner students and providing professional development to more than 300,000 teachers.

New York will provide over 190,000 teachers and educational leaders with a combined 450,000 hours of professional support to implement effective practices in remote/hybrid teaching and learning, which, in turn, will reach an estimated two million students.

Louisiana will provide over 75,000 students access to microgrants for remote learning resources, including at least 12,000 who will receive devices or hotspots through the program.

Rhode Island will enhance its virtual Advanced Course Access program so that middle and high school students have access to a richer, more diverse set of course offerings, and elementary school students can access the program

\>*Much obviously is needed given the problem of engaging students in online learning.* As the Hechinger report cited above highlights, "educators, parents and students themselves have reported frighteningly low engagement."

Of course, the situation was almost this bad in too many schools even before the pandemic. With respect to long-standing efforts to improve how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students, we see mostly statements of concern and simple lists of actions that do not address the motivational roots of the problem.

As to essential student/learning support staff, the focus is mainly on counselors and nurses because they are seen as meeting specific mental and physical health needs created by the COVID-19 crisis. Other student/learning support staff are almost disappearing from the discussion, especially when the emphasis is on MTSS and Community Schools. The widespread, unproductive competition among school student support professionals and with community service providers is a continuing consequence of this state of affairs.

Our Center's efforts in this context remain focused on connecting with education leaders at all levels to (a) stress the motivational facets of engaging student in schooling and instruction and (b) provide frameworks and prototypes (along with TA and coaching) for transforming currently marginalized and fragmented student/learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system. For a brief discussion about student engagement see

>*Re-engaging Disconnected Students Online and at School: Focus on Intrinsic Motivation*
   http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/reengage.pdf

For a sense of essential system changes to enhance student/learning supports, see the Center's recent online *free* books entitled:

>*Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*
>*Improving School Improvement*
>*Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*
   Access from http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

For discussion and interchange:
>Supporting parents/families as co-teachers

Here's a quote from a recent newspaper article:

While having an online structured school day should enhance learning, some parents worry that the new schedule and rules, which will require daily attendance, will result in more intense demands to carry out a role that many say they are not qualified to handle–that of co-teacher.

A parent is quoted as saying*:*

I have five children [ages 10 to 16] and one WI-FI hotspot. I can't answer the questions my kids are asking.... We need help....The school district doesn't understand we're not qualified to answer a lot of questions our kids are asking...."

To start a community of practice discussion about this, we asked a number of colleagues for their comments about connecting with families to welcome them, answer questions (e.g., about the technology involved in online learning), and generally how they can best support students.

> From a Principal: *Some ideas mostly come from the virtual platform such as virtual orientations, virtual meet the teacher night, social media information, classroom communication apps such as remind and class dojo, and virtual training videos on the meeting platform and for us Google Classroom. With that said comes internet accessibility barriers and whether the district or community businesses provide support to families it is a major concern. Prior to school we ensure all numbers and emails are working by contacting parents. We will also have teams to provide early onset intervention for students not engaged, missing sessions, etc. This will come through any means of contact as well as home visits.*

>From a student support staff member: *We have been using our student management system (Alma) and our district website to reach out to families. Through these sites, lots of resources are available to our school community. Also, Google has just ramped up their services to provide more for educators and families. Our teachers are using google classroom for both in school and remote learning. This is a great way to communicate with both students and families.*

> From a former state department of education leader: *The negativity and divisive messages in the media about face-to-face vs. online vs. hybrid models has created a rift between schools and their families. People are upset, want to be heard and need support. Schools need to do substantial outreach to build or rebuild alliances and trust with families. This is a year to focus first on communication and outreach so that teachers and kids can feel safe enough to attend to learning and parents are reassured that their district is working for them.*

>From a former district superintendent: *What I am hearing from principals and superintendents is that there has been on-going communication via technology with parents. Parents have participated in surveys to select their preference for virtual or face-to-face instruction. Schools have reached out by phone to parents who have not responded. The concern I hear is when teachers and schools are unable to reach the families by phone when they've not responded to the survey. A support that is gaining prevalence is providing students with a Chrome book or other device and using school buses with internet access points to park in neighborhoods with families who may not have internet connection. I am also hearing that parents whose schools are opening virtually are organizing groups of common age ranges to host "home school" so that one parent does not have to miss work the entire week.*

Here's an Online Resource from One University

The IRIS Center Peabody College Vanderbilt University offers a module with tips to support a child's learning at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.
>*Parents: Supporting Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic*
https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/c19/

It is designed to help parents be prepared for a new school year that includes fully online or blended instruction. The module includes practical, real-world tips and strategies for:
- Keeping up with what your child is expected to learn
- Creating and sharing learning spaces in what are often crowded living environments
- Reducing distractions and other obstacles to learning
- Using lessons learned from the Spring to improve learning at home this Fall

It stresses
- Clarifying what is and (perhaps just as importantly) what is not a parent's role
- Supporting your child's learning
- Promoting your child's social and emotional wellbeing
- Supporting your child if he or she is struggling or has a disability

And for an example of one district's extensive back to school resources for students and families, see https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/17056

Finally, with specific respect to students with IEPs and 504 plans, here's a thought for those at home:

"... One small glimmer of light is that learning at home is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to observe, understand, and support your children as learners. Does your child have difficulty following her teacher's complicated explanations? Seeing how the teacher presents a lesson, while watching how your child responds, is more illuminating than just reviewing your child's homework or looking at her exam grades. This time at home together can help you better understand how she learns. Through careful observation, it is possible to identify patterns that help you better understand your child's learning strengths and challenges and enable you to choose strategies based on that understanding." From: *Your Child's Educational Rights While Crisis Schooling: IEPs and 504 Plans in a Pandemic* https://www.additudemag.com/iep-504-plan-crisis/

For discussion and interchange:

>Improving the quality of online instruction at the university level

From a colleague:

Having read a summary of what our university intends for its students in the fall, I am concluding that this is going to be a national problem at many levels. Have you been party to informed discussions of potential problems and solutions among your colleagues. I are wondering where to turn to learn more about all this.

Center Response: With respect to teaching online, an example of how our university is supporting improvement is found on the website for the *Center for Education Innovation & Learning in the Sciences (CEILS)* – https://ceils.ucla.edu/. Its mission is to establish "a collaborative community of instructors committed to advancing teaching excellence, assessment, diversity, and scholarship, resulting in the enhancement of student learning experiences." While it was created for the Life and Physical Sciences, COVID-19 and the move to online teaching expanded its focus.

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Invitation to Listserv Participants:

We hope you will share your experiences and suggestions about the above matters and any others you think should be discussed throughout this extraordinary school year.
Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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What are you so concerned about now?
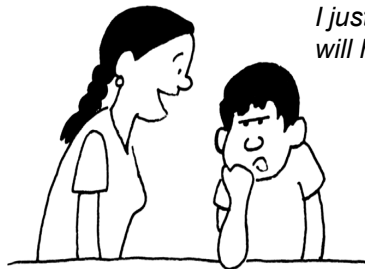
I just realized that because of COVID-19, schools will have a new form of high stakes testing!

>Links to a few other relevant shared resource

5 Reasons Students Aren't Engaging in Distance Learning
https://childmind.org/article/5-reasons-students-arent-engaging-in-distance-learning/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=5%20Reasons%20Students%20Aren%E2%80%99t%20Engaging%20in%20Distance%20Learning&utm_campaign=Public-Ed-Newsletter

Inequality in Household Adaptation to Schooling Shocks: COVID-Induced Online Learning Engagement in Real Time https://www.nber.org/papers/w27555

All of the following can be found at https://pacer.org/special/covid-19.asp

>*Preparing Your Child with Disabilities for Distance Learning* (Trans: Spanish, Hmong, Somali)

>*Distance Learning and Your Child's Individualized Education Program (IEP): Consideration of Related Services* (Trans.: Spanish)

>*Distance Learning and Resolving Disputes Regarding My Child's IEP* (Trans.: Spanish)

>*Distance Learning and Your Child with Disabilities, Tips for Families*

>*Distance Learning Activities During COVID-19 to Help Transition-age Youth on an IEP Prepare for Adulthood*

>*Supporting Your Child's Mental Health and Emotional Wellness During the COVID-19 Outbreak* (Trans.: Spanish)

>*COVID-19 Distance Learning and Challenging Behaviors* (Trans.: Spanish. Hmong)

### In case you missed these recent online resources from the Center:

>*Schools Re-opening: Safety Plus Enhancing Equity of Opportunity and Social Justice*

>*The Role of Schools in Promoting Whole Child Development and Learning?*
  Access at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/news.htm

>*Online and At School: Teachers Alone Can't and Shouldn't Be Expected to Address the Wide Range of Student Mental Health Concerns*
  http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/teachers.pdf

>*What is (and isn't) in Place to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching for the New School Year?* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/what'sin.pdf

>*Watch out! Much Discussion of MTSS, Little Discussion of Student/Learning Support Staff and Developing MTSS into a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System*
  http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/july19init.pdf

>*Hypersensitivity to a Student's Emotional Reactions Can Be Harmful*
  http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/july16init.pdf

Webinars

>*8/27 The Future of Learning - Emerging from the Pandemic Better than Normal*
>*8/27 Capacity building for smaller mentoring organizations*
>*9/1 Fostering Organizational, Participant, and Mentoring Relationships*
>*9/9 McKinney-Vento 101: Understanding the Rights of Students Experiencing Homelessness*
>*9/9 Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: SEL Roadmap for Reopening Schools*
>*9/15 Comprehensive Gang Model: Building Impactful Collaboration Through Community Mobilization*
>*9/17 Meeting the needs of adolescent youth*
>*9/22 Determining Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services*

For more webinars, go to the our Center's links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm

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For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html
Also online are two related free books
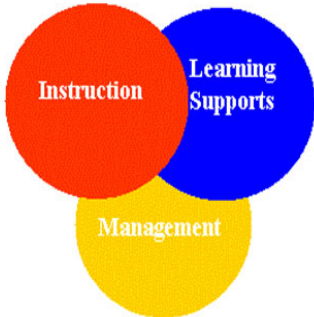
Improving School Improvement
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

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*Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to
promoting whole child development, advancing social justice,
and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.*

DEAR READER:

*Everyone has a stake in the future of public education. This is a critical time for action.
Send this resource on to others. Think about sharing with the growing number who are
receiving it. AND Let us know about what we should be including.*

*For those who are employed by state and local education agencies and schools, we
know you are busy. It would be great to share what actions you are taking to address
immediate concerns and how you are anticipating the problems that will arise as schools
reopen.*

**THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND
INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES!**

For new sign-ups – email Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing.

**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 on Facebook (access from the Center's home page http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/)**