The MTSS Continuum: Essential but Not Comprehensive Enough – How to make it Better

In ESSA, a multi-tiered support system (MTSS) is referenced as "a comprehensive continuum of evidence-based, systemic practices to support a rapid response to students' needs, with regular observation to facilitate data based instructional decision making." Now that adaption of some form of MTSS is so widespread, it is time to realize that more is involved in a comprehensive approach than the emphasis on a *continuum* of interventions. That is, while a full continuum is essential, it is just one facet of a comprehensive intervention system.

Given this, schools using MTSS as a framework for interventions to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students need to build on and expand their intervention framework into a truly comprehensive system.

(1) To appreciate why MTSS (as widely formulated and implemented) is insufficient, see:
>*MTSS: Strengths and Weaknesses* (2019), in "Addressing Barriers to Learning," 24, 4-8.
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/winter19.pdf

(2) As a quick overview for understanding how to reframe MTSS into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports, see:
>*Toward Next Steps in School Improvement: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/towardnextstep.pdf

(3) For a more in-depth discussion, see:
>*Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

(4) To place the framework in the broad context of school improvement, see:
>*Improving School Improvement*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

(5) For examples of design and other documents developed by various state and district trailblazers, see:
>*Design Document Examples* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkitb1a.htm
>*Brochures Examples* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkita1a.htm

(6) As evidence of the need to rethink student/learning supports and fill critical gaps, schools can map and analyze current efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. See the resource aid:
>*Mapping & Analyzing Learning Supports*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf

(7) Anyone interested in moving forward to transform student and learning supports can find other resource aid in the Center's System Change Toolkit at
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm

(8) And feel free to contact the Center co-directors to discuss ways we can help with the transformation; just email Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.ucla.edu.