*ENEWS & Resources for School Improvement**

November, 2018 (Vol. 23 #2) – *32 Years & Counting*

> **Concerned about addressing barriers to student learning and teaching & re-engaging disconnected students? about equity of opportunity? about whole child development? about school climate? All that and more is our focus.*

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We encourage you to forward this to others. If this has been forwarded and you want to receive it directly, contact: Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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For more on resources from our national Center, see
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

What's Here

Resources from across the country

This month's special focus for school improvement
Improving systems for addressing barriers to learning and teaching & re-engaging disconnected students

Updates about transforming student/learning supports

News and sharing from the field related to addressing barriers
and more

Resources from across the country
A few relevant special reports and journal publications

Students with disabilities: Additional information from education could help states provide pre-employment transition services – https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/694378.pdf

Teen dating abuse resource guide –
https://www.childrenssafetynetwork.org/resources/teen-dating-abuse-2018-resource-guide

Overdiagnosis of mental disorders in children and adolescents –
https://capmh.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s13034-016-0140-5

The school discipline dilemma: A comprehensive review of disparities and alternative approaches (2018). R. Welsh & S. Little. *Review of Educational Research, 88,* 752-794.
Http://rer.aera.net

Student perceptions of self-efficacy and teacher support for learning in fostering youth competencies: Roles of affective and cognitive engagement (2018). W. Chong, G. Liem, V. Huan, et al*., Journal of Adolescence 68*, 1–11.
https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-adolescence/vol/68/suppl/C

Protecting high-risk youth in high-risk contexts: Neighborhoods, parenting, and victimization (2018). M. Tillyer, J. Ray, M. Hinton. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 47*, 2027–2040.
https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs10964-018-0832-7.pdf

Depression screening and health outcomes in children and adolescents: A systematic review (2017). M. Roseman, N. Saadal, & K. Riehm. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 62*, 813-817. http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0706743717727243

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By focusing on community, collaboration, and communication, we will strengthen academic achievement for all learners, build strong social emotional supports in our schools, empower educators and principals to make wise school-based decisions, and develop long-term fiscal plans that support our schools.... Andrew Bott, Superintendent, Brookline (MA)

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This Month's Special Focus for Improving Schools

>Improving systems for addressing barriers to learning and teaching & re-engaging disconnected students

For: School Boards, Superintendents, School Administrators, and All Other Concerned Stakeholders

The Problem: Every school has some resources devoted to addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Some devote as much as 25% of their budget to such concerns. But in most schools, the efforts are fragmented and marginalized and focused on a relatively few students with major behavior, learning, and emotional problems. Now is the time to improve the situation by moving forward in efforts to develop a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.

Framing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Learning Supports: Broadening MTSS

A well-developed system of learning supports encompasses resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, emotional, and cognitive supports in the classroom and schoolwide. A comprehensive, cohesive, and coherent system is essential to reducing dropout rates, narrowing the achievement gap, and strengthening whole school improvement and is essential for enabling whole child improvement and enhancing equity of opportunity for success at school and beyond for all students.

Thinking about a continuum of interventions is a good starting point for framing the nature and scope of a comprehensive system. The levels of such a continuum involve an interrelated and overlapping intervention subsystems focused on

> (1) promoting development and preventing problems
> (2) responding to problems as early-after-onset as feasible
> (3) treating severe, pervasive, and chronic problems.

While MTSS stresses a continuum of interventions, it does little to guide development of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports. MTSS must be reconceived. That is:

• each of the three levels of MTSS must be developed as an integrated set of *subsystems,*
• the subsystems must *link school and community interventions* in ways that weave resources together, and
• across the subsystems, the laundry list of fragmented programs and services must be coalesced into a circumscribed set of arenas reflecting the content purpose of the various interventions.

With respect to this latter concern, pioneering work across the country emphasizes six arenas encompassing interventions to:

> >Enhance regular classroom strategies to enable learning (e.g., improving instruction for students who with mild-moderate learning and behavior problems and those have become

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disengaged from learning at school; includes a focus on prevention, early intervening, and use of strategies such as response to intervention)

>Support transitions (i.e., assisting students and families as they negotiate school and grade changes and many other transitions)

>Increase home and school connections and engagement

>Respond to, and where feasible, prevent crises

>Increase community involvement and support (outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers)

>Facilitate student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed.

All this is spelled out in two recent books that are free and readily accessible online:

>*Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*

>*Improving School Improvement*

    Both available at this time as free resources at:

    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Not ready for a book length presentation? Then, here are some brief introductory resources

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

>*What are Learning Supports?*
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whatlearnsupports.pdf

>*What Is a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports?*
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whatis.pdf

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

>*Steps and Tools to Guide Planning and Implementation of a Comprehensive System to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching*
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/stepsandtoolstoguideplanning.pdf

>*Leadership Training: Moving in New Directions for Student Support*
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/contedu/movinginnewdirections.pdf

Also see the Center's Toolkit for Rebuilding the System
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm

Topics in October's School Practitioner Community of Practice
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

How Best to Enhance Behavioral Health/Mental Health in Schools

Transforming credentialing standards for student/learning supports

Working with school resource officers

Handling misbehavior, building positive relationships

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    ...a spate of student-on-student violence, including three attacks in 8 days, one of them tragically fatal, captured the attention of the community.... Parents and community members called for more mental health professionals, counselors, social workers, and psychologists to address the social emotional needs of students and families, and enhanced safety and security infrastructure and practices to protect our staff and students.... Brian Osborne, Superintendent, New Rochelle (NY)

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Updates about Transforming Student and Learning Supports

From La Crosse, WI

[The Family and Youth Subcommittee (Rebuilding for Learning Steering Committee) is a subcommittee of the La Crosse Community Collaboration, which is a partnership between three local governmental entities: (1) The School District of La Crosse, (2) the City of La Crosse and (3) La Crosse County. The Collaboration, which began in 2005, has a meeting once per quarter which is chaired jointly by the School District of La Crosse Superintendent, the Mayor of the City of La Crosse, and the La Crosse County Administrator.]

In 2011, the Family and Youth Subcommittee adopted a conceptual framework outlined in Howard S. Adelman and Linda Taylor's book, "Rebuilding for Learning," to advance the mission of strengthening collaboration and improving communication within the family and youth services area. In adopting this framework, the subcommittee began to refer to itself as the "Rebuilding for Learning Steering Committee."

Under the new framework, the Rebuilding for Learning Steering Committee adopted the goal of ensuring all children have the opportunity to succeed by addressing barriers students face that prevent them from coming into the classroom "ready to learn." Examples of these barriers, stemming from challenges faced by either the child or the child's parents, include: (a) a mental health issue; (b) a substance abuse issue; (c) and abusive or neglectful parent; (d) a lack of basic needs; (e) behaviors which disrupt the classroom and put the child at risk of entering the criminal justice system either as a youth or later as an adult.

To address these barriers, the Steering Committee adopted Adelman and Taylor's strategy of working towards creating more integrated and seamless systems across three levels of intervention: (1) prevention, (2) early intervention, and (3) emergency intervention.

One of the first objectives of the Steering Committee was to plan a summit bringing together School, City, County and community providers of services to children and youth. This first summit in August of 2011 focused heavily on examining local systems of intervention to identify gaps and overlaps. From this first summit came the objectives of creating and maintaining a website and addressing perceived communication barriers that were created by the need to keep certain child and youth information confidential.

Recent summits have focused on increasing trauma-informed practices throughout our three agencies as well as community service agencies. They have also sought to increase awareness of Rebuilding for Learning activities as well as available community services and promising initiatives (i.e., neighborhood revitalization, community policing, local mental health services). Attendance at the summits has grown each year, with over 1,000 individuals attending the 2016 summit.

Since 2011, the Steering Committee as served as an important collaboration point for several projects and initiatives that have advanced the strategy of creating more integrated and seamless intervention systems. These have included:

>*Developing a Memorandum of Understanding that led to better and more streamlined communications between the School District and La Crosse County about the status and needs of specific children and youth.*

>*Launching a collaborative effort (La Crosse Area Family Collaborative, LAFC) that includes new Neighborhood Social Workers who are integrated with local schools and serve as an early intervention resource to stabilize families (with the County, City and School District all contributing funding and/or in-kind resources).*

>*Developing a comprehensive "system of care" to address behaviors that put youth at risk of entering the juvenile justice system and which more closely aligns policies and practices of the school, county and community youth service providers.*

>*Creating a jointly funded administrator position to manage the new "system of care," help administer the LAFC, assist with coordination RBL activities and facilitate development of a 501(c)3 organization.*

http://www.lacrossepartnersinlearning.com/about-us/page-2/

Let Us Know:
(1) About any presentations on this topic
(2) What you see happening to transform student and learning supports

And if anyone is thinking about increasing the capacity of a district or school with respect to developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student supports, *we can help*. Send all info to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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The lack of access to education for children around the world is a massive problem.... The notion that millions of children are desperate to go to school and are not given the opportunity is something I cannot accept. – Rihanna

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>**Calls for grant proposals & presentations**
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm

> job and training opportunities
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm

News and sharing from the field related to addressing barriers

David Berliner: My students asked who I would vote for. *I told them that I was done voting for politicians who spout foolishness [about reforming schools] over and over again!*
https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2018/10/22/education-professor-my-students-asked-who-i-would-vote-heres-what-i-told-them/?utm_term=.993987fac8ee

Schools scramble to get students back in class after Hurricane Michael. Florida Panhandle officials are trying to figure out how to resume classes after Hurricane Michael damaged or destroyed many schools last week. The challenge is especially daunting in Bay County, where schools are closed until further notice. School leaders are working to come up with a plan to get thousands of students back in the classroom as soon as possible (there are 26,000 students in Bay County) Bay School District officials are considering split sessions for high school students on campuses that escaped relatively unscathed. One high school would hold classes in the morning, and another in the afternoon. https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/14/us/hurricane-michael-schools-students/index.html

Instructional activities offered to students while schools closed. With students in Onslow County (NC) heading into a fifth week of no school, with schools closed due to damage from Hurricane Florence, officials offered instructional opportunities to keep students engaged in learning. Onslow County Schools announced a schedule of "Pop-Up" learning sites to be held at various locations. There were general learning sites focused on language arts and math as well as opportunities for students enrolled in dual language programs and for music and language arts. High schools also offered assistance with essays, financial aid and applications for college and scholarships. Locations included libraries, museums, recreation centers, churches, conference centers.
http://www.jdnews.com/news/20181007/instructional-activities-offered-to-students-while-schools-closed

> From the district's website: *Response to the Onslow County Schools Pop Up Learning Sessions has been tremendous. We received over 1,160 applications for our PreK-12 general education sessions, 120 applications for our Dual language sessions, and 293 for our art and music sessions. Overall, we have been able to extend invitations to over 1,340 of the 1,573 applicants utilizing over 190 teachers and staff members.*

District wrestles with mass school closings. The Dallas school district has proposed shutting down or consolidating 22 campuses. Enrollment dropped over the past few decades from 180,00 students to about 157,000. Much of that decline is attributed to families leaving for charter schools. Projections show a further drop in students unless the district can continue attracting them back.
https://www.dallasnews.com/news/education/2018/10/04/dallas-isd-wrestles-potential-mass-school-closings-consolidations-plan-future

Lawmakers buy industry fix to protect schools from guns. Security companies spent years pushing schools to buy more products, but sales were slow, and industry's campaign to free up taxpayer money for upgrades had stalled. That changed last February, when a former student shot and killed 17 people at a Florida high school. Since that attack, security firms and nonprofit groups linked to the industry have persuaded lawmakers to elevate the often-costly "hardening" of schools over other measures that researchers and educators say are proven to reduce violence. The industry helped Congress draft a law that committed $350 million to equipment and other school security over the next decade. Nearly 20 states have come up with another $450 million.
https://www.richmond.com/news/ap/ap-lawmakers-buy-industry-fix-to-protect-schools-from-guns/article_fc956b2e-96d5-5636-bd6b-80d659165a8b.html

Turn school property into teacher housing? The San Jose Unified School District has identified nine district-owned properties where it is considering building several hundred new units of affordable housing for teachers and other school employees. San Jose Unified says it's fighting to find and retain workers as rising housing costs outpace income. Teachers are commuting up to four hours a day to and from the city's schools, potential hires are refusing jobs here and talented staff are quitting in droves, forcing the school district to replace one out of every seven teachers each year.
https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2018/10/06/turn-schools-into-teacher-housing-bay-area-community-up-in-arms-over-unique-idea/

Students organize mental health festival. Little Chute (WI) The school's first Student Mental Health Wellness Festival was organized by students in partnership with Prevent Suicide Fox Cities. Organizers hope the idea spreads to other schools as a way to encourage students to talk about mental health, find resources and recognize adults who can support them. They took the quiet subject of mental health, often only discussed in the context of tragedy, and decided to make it a celebration of sharing and strength. School staff and event organizers talked to the students about the importance of finding people and activities that help them feel resilient during difficult times. The school is joining nine other schools in the region using a program that helps students build relationships with trusted adults and launch their own mental wellness campaigns.
https://www.richmond.com/news/ap/wisconsin-students-organize-mental-health-festival/article_fe7300e3-7a2f-598a-a9c3-2f6bafe7c3b8.html

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From the Wisconsin news story:
It's helpful to know there are people out there to help. It gives us hope. It really does.
Elizabeth Lehrer, high school senior
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A few comments from colleagues

(1) Re. the 10/17/18 School Practitioner on Working with School Resource Officers: "It's really important to bring in a perspective from a juvenile defense attorney in developing an MOU to guide a school resource officer program. There are potential unintended consequences if there is not deliberate and careful separation between confidential student information / education records and a DOC staff person. We never want school to become a place where kids make first contact with the juvenile justice system. In recent years, technology has made traces of juvenile justice involvement into permanent marks on a student's future through use of ATN, numbers that are generated when an arrest is made (even for minor offenses). This number tends to pop up in background searches later in life, student loan rates are impacted - even the ability to join a branch of the military can be inhibited by the electronic records. Maine's Juvenile Justice Advisory Group has commissioned a study into the best practices when it comes to schools/law enforcement interactions and partnerships. The study is underway, but we already have some preliminary findings and recommendations."

(2) "I have followed your work for years, and often check on your site when I'm looking for current ideas to inform practices here. ... We are, in fact, trying to move all 72 of our school districts towards systematic and coordinated multi-tiered systems of support, and the uptake of evidence-based, implementation-sensitive practices. Our focus has been primarily at the district and school level however, and I would say that schools and districts are inconsistently optimizing home-school-community opportunities. There is an emerging focus on youth wellness hubs and integrated service delivery that may bear fruit in this regard. If I come across any district that appears to be doing exemplary work that aligns with this model, I will drop you a line."

(3) "Thank you for all the tremendous work and advocacy you do for mental health in the school system! I have the pleasure and privilege of being both a fourth grade teacher and attaining my MSW, so I have a strong desire to help create a better social and emotional environment especially for elementary school children Your resources will certainly be a tremendous wealth of information in my goals of supporting students on a scale beyond my current classroom. One of the particularly fascinating methods I noticed you purposefully utilized throughout your work was identifying and striving to alleviate the practical pitfalls and bureaucratic hoops involved with implementing new programs in schools - it's really a breath of fresh air to see the recognition of what really happens when the tires hit the road in the school system. Thank you for developing so many wise *and* practical ideas for improving mental health in the school system!."

What did you learn in school today?

Not enough I guess, they told me I have to go back tomorrow!

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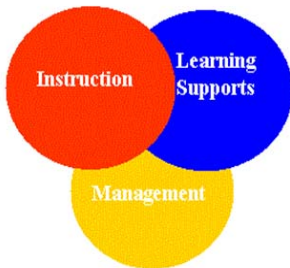
*Information is online about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

Also online are two 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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THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS

Who Are We? Recently renamed the *Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports,* our national Center was established in 1995 under the auspices of the *School Mental Health Project* (which was established in 1986). We are part of the Department of Psychology at UCLA. The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

For more information about the Center and its many resources, go to the website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu or email Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.ucla.edu

Send info to share with others or ask for specific resources by email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu