Students & Schools: Moving Forward*

November, 2020 (Vol. 25 #2) – *34 Years & Counting*

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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

>**Since Schools Can't Afford More Support Staff,**
What will they do to Address Barriers to Learning & Teaching?

From the Education Commission of the States:

Data suggest that schools lack the mental health staff they need. Federal data suggest that school counselors, psychologists and social workers might confront overwhelming caseloads as the pandemic continues. In the 2018-19 school year, there were roughly 425 students for every school counselor .... Twenty three percent of students attended schools with no psychologists and 53% attended schools with no social workers.
     The pandemic may be worsening such shortages. Recent data on jobs postings suggest that schools and districts are hiring far fewer counselors, psychologists and social workers than in previous years.
     https://ednote.ecs.org/data you can use students mental health needs in 2020/?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=8978eda20d ED_CLIPS_10_19_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930 8978eda20d 53599575

These data are hardly a surprise. The reality is that the prevailing model for student and learning supports precludes there ever being enough student support personnel to effectively address the many barriers interfering with learning and teaching at schools.

As schools plan to deal the problems ahead, what critically needs to be discussed is how to rethink student and learning supports. Schools, working with home and community stakeholders, need to devote enough of their limited time and sparse resources to the task of *transforming* student/learning supports. Given the current depleted state of school resources, the

transformation must be accomplished by reframing and redeploying how existing resources are used.

Currently, many schools are planning around a multitier system of supports (MTSS) and hopefully are going beyond the limitations of this framework. MTSS provides a good *starting point* for transforming student/learning supports. Other initiatives to build on are the Community Schools movement and efforts to collocate health and social services at schools.

The transformation process calls on policy makers to establish a component dedicated directly to both (1) addressing barriers to learning and teaching and (2) reengaging disconnected students. The emphasis on both these concerns is essential because interventions that do not ensure students are engaged meaningfully in classroom learning usually are insufficient in sustaining, over time, student engagement, good behavior, and effective learning at school.

The current state of affairs underscores the long-standing imperative to reframe student and learning supports. A prototype framework for a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports is available to stimulate discussion and planning – see

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

Related Center documents:

> >*Task Forces Forming to Provide Recommendation for Re-opening Schools: Student/Learning Supports Leaders Need to be at the Table*
> http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/taskforces.pdf

> >*COVID-19 is Killing District/School Budgets: What to Do and Not to Do about Student/Learning Supports*
> http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/budgetx.pdf

Also see the information on the *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports* - http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html
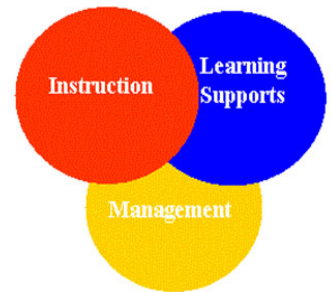
Let Us Know:
About what ideas are being proposed for transforming schools as they re-open.
And if anyone is thinking about increasing the capacity of a district or school with respect to developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports, we can help. Send all info to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Don't tell me what you value, show me your budget, and I'll tell you what you value. – Joe Biden quoting his father

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>Quick Links to Online Resources

Five Ways America's Public Schools Could Survive the Coming Fiscal Storm
https://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/10/five_ways_americas_public_scho.html?utm_source=PACE+All&utm_campaign=a13307b923-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_08_29_05_32_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9f1af6b121-a13307b923-522725185

The Kids Aren't Alright: Invest in Their Now and Their Future
https://medium.com/voices4kids/the-kids-arent-alright-invest-in-their-now-and-their-future-4021c8cb4561

2020 Back to School Toolkit (in English and Spanish) https://www.mhanational.org/back-school

Thriving Schools (from Kaiser Permanente)
See *Continuing Learning: Playbook for Healthy School Communities*
https://thrivingschools.kaiserpermanente.org/get-inspired/coronavirus-response/schools-reopening-playbook/?utm_source=partner&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=full%20playbook%20promotion

Caring for each others and ourselves during the corona virus
http://media.clever-publishing.com/coronavirusebook

Struggling learners' difficulties have intensified: Here's what can help
https://exclusive.multibriefs.com/content/struggling-learners-difficulties-have-intensified-heres-what-can-help/education

IEPs and special education during COVID-19
https://www.educationdive.com/news/study-guide-ieps-and-special-education-during-covid-19/586752/

STEM games and simulations https://ssec.si.edu/

Space station explorers https://www.spacestationexplorers.org/

NASA space place https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/

Classroom Materials at the Library of Congress https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/

Reimagining Schools https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/reimagining-schools-tickets-125192802041

State Legislative Action to Support Students' Mental Health
https://ednote.ecs.org/state-legislative-action-to-support-students-mental-health/?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=b99d441898-Ed_Note_Daily&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-b99d441898-53599575

2021 State of Mental Health in America Report
https://mhanational.org/sites/default/files/State%20of%20Mental%20Health%20in%20America%20-%202020_0.pdf

The Complex Trauma Spectrum During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Threat for Children and Adolescents' Physical and Mental Health by Cénat & Dalexis (2020). In Psychiatry Research, 293, 113473. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113473

Note: the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) offers its own webinars and lists others at http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/Connect/Webinars/

Ed Dept Civil Rights Data Shows Restraint, Seclusion, Sexual Assault on the Rise

Two major takeaways:

> Students with disabilities were disproportionately restrained and secluded

> K-12 sexual violence increased 55%

https://www.educationdive.com/news/education-civil-rights-data-release-takeaways/587339/?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=5fb0195d27-ED_CLIPS_10_21_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-5fb0195d27-53599575

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Public schools are at the heart of our democracy, and the foundation of our common life.
In a time of national crisis, let's act to show that we take democracy seriously.

Matt Alexander, Principal

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Here's what was discussed in the Community of Practice during October
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

Note: *All community of practice editions contain Links to relevant shared resources.*

Topics:
>*Strategies to link students to support during distance learning*
>*Are schools meeting the MH needs of general education students?*
>*How are students experiencing online learning?what do they say about making it better?*
>*In the News:*
>>Fewer Kids, Less Money: How the Pandemic Puts Districts in a Bind
>>Will the Students Who Didn't Show Up for Online Class This Spring Go Missing Forever?
>Ill. district creates online counseling resources.
>*Pandemic fuels "crisis" in education workforce*
>*Schools need technical support for distance teaching*
>*How are Schools Planning to Prevent an Increase in Dropouts?*
>*What if each student were served by a team?*
>*More about risk and resilience during the pandemic*

If you missed the resources and news in the Special Editions of the Community of Practice
prepared in relation to the crisis, see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

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>For more resources, see our website http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

>For info on the status of upcoming conferences
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm

>For info on webinars http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm

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

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

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As we live in fear of contact with others and of contracting this coronavirus, many have
referred to the changes occurring in our lives since the COVID-19 pandemic began as the
"new normal." I, for one, do not want to think any of this is normal.

Cynthia Stocker, Superintendent

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>A Few News Stories (excerpted from various news sources)

(1) *Zoom school's mental health toll on kids*

https://www.apa.org/news/apa/2020/10/online-learning-mental-health

...The mental health consequences of staying home for school may be daunting, but psychologists believe that it's possible to mitigate the impact on children—if parents and teachers are willing to find new ways to leverage what research has shown about effective learning strategies. "We can't simply transfer what was done in the classroom to the online setting," says University of Oklahoma associate professor Benjamin Heddy, "We need to do things in a different way."

Distance learning can provide an opportunity for kids to develop self-regulation skills—the ability to manage progress toward goals—more rapidly and earlier in life than usual, Heddy explains. In Zoom school, students might have several assignments with deadlines throughout the week, so they must create strategies to accomplish the tasks, evaluate their progress, and modify tactics as needed. "In the traditional classroom structure, much of this is done for students with structures like class time to work on specific assignments," Heddy says. "In the online environment, many students are learning how to self-regulate more effectively, which is a skill they will use throughout life."

A few ways parents can help kids learn at home:
>Ask your children what they are learning online and talk about why the subject is important and interesting.>Guide them through breaking down assignments into smaller tasks so they can feel successful along the way.
>Help them organize their time and set short-term, achievable goals for shorter school days or during independent study periods.
>Give children choices about how they accomplish the tasks to encourage their sense of autonomy.
>Offer personalized, genuine feedback about the work they are doing in online school.

(2) *Enrollment Is Dropping In Public Schools Around the Country*

https://www.npr.org/2020/10/09/920316481/enrollment-is-dropping-in-public-schools-around-the-country

Orange County, Fla., has 8,000 missing students. The Miami-Dade County public schools have 16,000 fewer than last year. Los Angeles Unified — the nation's second-largest school system — is down nearly 11,000. Charlotte-Mecklenburg in North Carolina has 5,000 missing. Utah, Virginia and Washington are reporting declines statewide. Large and small, rich and poor, urban and rural — in most of these districts the decline is a departure from recent trends. In many parts of the country the start of the year has been marked by multiple changes in plans, widespread confusion among teachers and families, deep concerns about safety, and worries about unequal access to technology. Public schools are generally funded by states on a per-pupil basis. The first week of October marks the first of two "count days" in many states — a day in the fall, right at the start of the new fiscal year, where school districts must submit an official enrollment count to determine their funding for the subsequent year.

(3) *Poverty, exacerbated by the pandemic, presents one of the biggest barriers to learning for many students*

https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/education/story/2020-10-12/nonprofits-san-ysidro-schools-partner-to-help-students-and-their-families-survive

Getting students enrolled and connected has taken more than just distributing devices and internet hotspots across the San Ysidro School District (CA), where three-quarters of students come from low-income families, three-fifths are English learners and one-fourth are homeless.
Schools in San Ysidro, South Bay Union, National City and San Diego Unified have referred more than 1,300 students to South Bay Community Services since the start of this current school year — students that the schools were unable to track down Caseworkers from the nonprofit call, write to families and visit their homes. Once they got a hold of the families, they ask them a series of questions about what they need and work to provide help — or find another nonprofit who can. School officials worked with Casa Familiar to bring enrollment registration to the families. They set up a pop-up tent registration booth at an affordable housing complex where they knew many San Ysidro families lived. They also set up booths at Casa Familiar's community center and at one of the district's elementary schools

(4) *Virus shutdown took a toll on routine health care for kids*
https://apnews.com/article/virus-outbreak-medicare-seema-verma-medicaid-archive-db7ec785d089094c0e5bddfccfd5e062

A sharp decline in routine medical care for low-income children during the coronavirus shutdown could cause long-term harm if not reversed, The data, based on an analysis of billing records, come from Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, which together cover nearly 40 million low-income children. Among the findings: Early childhood vaccinations declined by 22%, or 1.7 million fewer immunizations for kids up to age 2. Time-sensitive screenings for cognitive or developmental problems fell by 44%. Even after accounting for increased use of telehealth, there were 6.9 million fewer mental health visits. Visits to dentists plunged by 69%.

(5) *Arkansas Children's Hospital offers free WiFi hotspots*
https://www.jonesborosun.com/news/arkansas-children-s-offers-free-wifi-hotspots/article_919279f9-b8c0-57d6-8a3b-683aaf3daf0e.html

Arkansas Children's and Windstream are providing free community WiFi hotspots in parking lots of three Arkansas Children's facilities to help families with children who are learning virtually during the pandemic. Access to the internet through these hotspots will be safe and secure and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As Arkansas Children's internet provider, Windstream has strengthened signals so families can access the WiFi in parking lots.

(6) *The road back: Inside a school district preparing to welcome students back on campus*
https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona-education/2020/10/09/apache-junction-unified-prepares-person-school/5899421002/

Apache Junction (AZ)will take the next step in reopening during a pandemic: The district will welcome students back to campuses. Educators have prepped for this moment for months. The next step for Apache Junction began when the district launched a "hybrid" school model, where students could attend school in-person two days a week, while learning virtually for three. The students would alternate their days on campus, leaving fewer in the classroom. About 70% of Apache Junction students are expected to return to school in person. The remaining 30% have opted to remain in online school.

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From the above Apache Junction story
> *I'm not gonna lie to you, I'm afraid every single day. But I do want to see the kids.*
> Lydia Henry, Teacher

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Comments and sharing from the field

(1) From a SEA colleague: "I'm doing a webinar on free mental health resources; it will start with a brief presentation then go into a facilitated discussion. Please share the below information

Description: *In this time of so much uncertainty, it is important as educators, parents, and caregivers to support the emotional well-being of our students and colleagues as well as our own mental health. Join us as we review various free resources for mental health supports on PsychCircular* (https://psychcircular.wixsite.com/free) *a website created for disseminating free educational psychology resources.*
    Date: 10/27/20   Time: 3:30pm to 4:30pm PST
        https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdsmblb_Z-TQ8INsoPx6Tysa2N43oVLZD7R4rpFN_9u66g8LA/viewform

If there is continued interest, I may do a reoccurring Monthly Mental Health Moment through the Tuesday Tea Hosted by CSB (Tuesday Tea is a network for Teachers helping Teachers -- a place to ask questions and share resources with professional colleagues. Join us for a collaborative discussion to learn tools and techniques, almost every Tuesday from 3:30pm to 4:30pm PST).

(2) "I have been a fan of your work over many years – quietly reading from across the continent! Early this spring, I began a webinar series on reopening schools with a weekly discussion related to school operations in COVID. The operations officials are the ones responsible for protocols for PPE, social distancing, cleaning, planning pathways for entrances and exits, schools bus seating, controls for cohort sizes and mixing of cohorts. These logistical elements can all have mental health impacts. It would be helpful to understand how these mitigation measures can be implemented to have the least negative impact on the staff, students and their families."

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Opportunities to find deeper powers within ourselves come when life seems most challenging.
Joseph Campbell
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Invitation to Listserv Participants:

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.
Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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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 three related free books
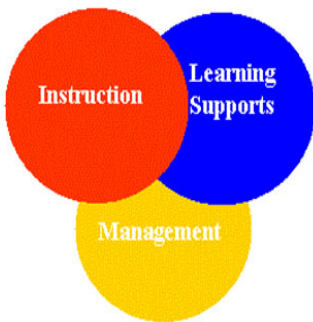
Improving School Improvement
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

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

Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

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