Students & Schools: Moving Forward*

November, 2019 (Vol. 24 #2) – *33 Years & Counting*

What's Here

> **>About Mapping and Enhancing Learning Supports**

> **Quick Links to Resources from Across the Country**

> **About transforming student/learning supports**

> **Comments, requests, information, questions from the field**

> **and more**

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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
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For discussion:

>About Mapping and Enhancing Learning Supports

> *School systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students.*
> *But when the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge.*
>
> Carnegie Task Force on Education

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 (i.e., mostly a segment of those major behavior, learning, and emotional problems).

Every school wants to improve how its addresses barriers to learning and teaching. In doing so, the first steps are to adopt a framework for the interventions and then use that framework to map what's already in play. (See the Center's mapping tool for an example of a framework that expands the focus of MTSS – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf .)

The mapping provides data for doing a gap analysis and setting priorities for filling gaps.

The ultimate aim is to pull together all the activity into a unified component for addressing barriers to teaching and learning and then develop that component over several years into a comprehensive and equitable system of learning supports.

To make this happen, existing policy and operational infrastructures must be reworked so that the unified component is pursued as a primary and essential facet of all school improvement efforts (i.e., treated on a par with the instructional and management components).

(For in-depth explanation of this, go to Chapter 6 of *Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html .)

Quick Links to Resources from Across the Country

A few relevant resources, reports, and journal publications

Children Living in High-Poverty, Low-Opportunity Neighborhoods
https://www.aecf.org/resources/children-living-in-high-poverty-low-opportunity-neighborhoods/

Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Leveraging the Best Available Evidence
https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventingACES-508.pdf

Best Practices for Educating English Language Learners: History, Controversy, and a Path Forward http://urcues.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ELLS-brief_FINAL-.pdf

Education Could Help States Improve Educational Stability for Youth in Foster Care
https://www.gao.gov/assets/710/701531.pdf

Schools as Change Agents in Reducing Bias and Discrimination: Shaping Behaviors and Attitudes (2019) M. Losinski, R. Ennis, A. Katsiyannis, L. Rapa. *Journal of Child and Family Studies. 28*, 2718–2726. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10826-019-01452-2

Peer Sympathy for Bullied Youth: Individual and Classroom Considerations (2019) T. Waasdorp, W. Monopoli, et al. *School Psychology Review, 48*, 193–206.
https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/periodicals/spr-volume-48-no-3-2019

School Uniforms: Do they really improve student achievement, behavior?
https://journalistsresource.org/studies/society/education/school-uniforms-research-achievement/

Communicating in a Crisis: Risk Communication Guidelines for Public Officials
https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Communicating-in-a-Crisis-Risk-Communication-Guidelines-for-Public-Officials/PEP19-01-01-005

Mental Health Competencies for Pediatric Practice
https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2019/10/17/peds.2019-2757

Student Mental Health: What is the Issue and Why Does it Matter
https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/Student-Mental-Health.pdf

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It's what you learn after you know it all that counts. Earl Weaver

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About Transforming Student and Learning Supports

(1) We are continuing our focus on state legislatures. Previously, we sent the education
  committees in each state our policy analysis report on:

> *How Well Do State Legislatures Focus on Improving School Efforts to Address*
> *Barriers to Learning and Teaching & Re-engage Disconnected Students?*
> (Online at - http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Legisanal.pdf)

Currently, we are sending specific state analyses to all legislators in a subset of states.

Your participation in this facet of the *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning*
Supports is always welcome. For more on the initiative, see the link at the end of this ENEWS.

(2) What's Happening in La Crosse, WI – Their 2019 Focus on Rebuilding for Learning
  https://www.lacrossepartnersinlearning.com/

> *On-going collaboration between La Crosse County, City of La Crosse, and School District of La*
> *Crosse – and well over 30 frontline organizations working directly in support of youth and families*
> *– is poised to unveil another outstanding experience. This year's Rebuilding for Learning theme,*
> *Know Your Impact! ... will focus around the endless possibilities available in our community that are*
> *making an impact in the lives of students and families in the La Crosse area.*

Some Background. This collaborative meets once per quarter and 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. Participants include Department Heads / Managers / Directors
from those three organizations.

In 2011, the collaborative's Family and Youth Subcommittee adopted the conceptual framework
outlined in Adelman and Taylor's book, *Rebuilding for Learning*. In adopting this framework,
the subcommittee began to refer to itself as the "Rebuilding for Learning Steering Committee."
The descriptive term "Rebuilding for Learning Initiative" now refers to the subcommittee's
activities.

Under the new framework, the RfL Steering Committee adopted the goal of ensuring all children
have the opportunity to succeed by addressing barriers students face that interfere with coming
into the classroom "ready to learn." One of the first objectives of the renamed "RfL 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 (www.lacrossepartnersinlearning.org),
and addressing perceived communication problems created by the need for confidentiality.

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 RfL
activities as well as available community services and promising initiatives (i.e., neighborhood
revitalization, community policing, local mental health services, etc.). Attendance at the summits
has grown each year, with over 1,000 individuals attending recent summits.

Let Us Know:
  About efforts you know about focused on transforming student/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/learning
    supports, we can help. Send all info to ltaylor@ucla.edu

Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world. Dolores Huerta

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

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

News from around the country related to addressing barriers

Federal spending on children falls to lowest level in a decade. Federal spending on children in the United States fell to the lowest level in a decade in 2018, negatively impacting working families with children, according to a report released by the Urban Institute. Spending fell to about $6,200 per child younger than 19. The decline was driven by a reduction in federal spending on education and nutrition programs and a temporary reduction in child-related tax credits.
https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/federal-spending-children-falls-lowest-level-decade-n1055136

NC bill aimed at providing more mental health resources in schools. As mental health problems among children increase, a new North Carolina bill is tackling the issue head-on. House Bill 75 allows funding for each school district to create a mental health crisis response plan made up of the State Bureau of Investigation, local law enforcement and school administrators to identify students who may pose a threat to themselves or others. The bill also requires a facility assessment once a year to make sure public schools are safe and secure in the event of a major threat such as an active shooter. https://www.wsoctv.com/

A year after the hurricane community still in crisis. A year after Hurricane Michael, the Florida county hardest hit by the Category 5 storm is still in crisis: Thousands in Bay County are homeless, medical care and housing are at a premium, domestic violence has become a problem and severely diminished mental health services are overwhelmed with backlogs. Bay County schools have lost more than 1 in 8 students, which will affect the amount of state education funding they receive. During the past school year alone, 125 students in Bay County schools were placed in custody for a mental health evaluation under Florida's Baker Act. Because the hurricane left standing only one medical center that can receive Baker Act patients, students were sent to facilities as far as 580 miles (933 kms) away. The school district has a waitlist of 350 students who need mental health services, and the county at large lost 40 percent of its behavioral health specialists after the storm.
https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2019-10-09/a-year-after-michael-florida-community-still-in-crisis

U.S. Department of Ed new grants for school safety and mental health. U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos today announced $71.6 million in new funding to enhance safety in schools and improve student access to mental health resources. The U.S. Department of Education made the awards under four grant programs, which support recommendations identified in the final report issued by the Federal Commission on School Safety. The four grant programs are as follows:
>The Trauma Recovery Demonstration Grant Program provides more than $6.7 million to five states -- Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Louisiana, and Nevada...
>Project Prevent provides more than $11.3 million to 15 school districts to increase their capacity to assist schools in communities with pervasive violence...
>The School Climate Transformation Grant Program provides $42.4 million to 69 school districts to help develop, enhance, or expand systems of support for, and technical assistance to, schools implementing a multi-tiered system of support for improving school climate....

>The Mental Health Demonstration Grant Program provides $11 million to 27 State education agencies and school districts to support innovative partnerships to train and deploy school-based mental health service providers in schools. The purpose is to expand the pipeline of high-quality, trained professionals to address shortages of mental health services in high-need schools and to provide supports that encompass social and emotional learning, mental wellness, resilience, and positive connections between students and adults.

https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-announces-new-grant-awards-address-school-safety-and-improve-access-mental-health-services

Here are three local announcements about the Mental Health Demonstration Grant Program

From VA: "...Grant will provide training for currently employed school mental health professions, such as school counselors, psychologists. social workers, and nurses. These staff members will work to become qualified field supervisors for graduate students completing internships. The grant also includes financial incentives for between 150 and 200 trainees in the participating university training programs to accept internships and employment in the six specified schools divisions..."

From MI: "...The goal, is to meet the mental health needs of nearly 7,000 students in 19 rural school buildings. The program will enable these schools to expand mental health services by increasing its capacity to train school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other mental health professionals..."

From NY: "...The Niagara Falls City School District, working with Niagara University and other higher-education community partners, will implement a five-year mental health service professional demonstration project that will add five graduate-level social worker interns, five school psychologist interns, and five school counseling interns, increasing district mental health capacity by 15 part-time staff annually. The grant will also allow for professional development initiatives to help teachers recognize trauma-induced behaviors sooner allowing for early intervention and to support implementation strategies related to improving student social and emotional development..."

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If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, of what, then, is an empty desk a sign?

Albert Einstein

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Comments from the field

We strive to provide good information and resources, and we appreciate hearing that folks have found specific aspects of the work helpful.

Here, from a district Superintendent, is a common response we receive:

I was forwarded an email today with links to the 2019 Addressing Barriers to Learning e-journal. Thank you for sharing this good thought-provoking and discussion information. The topics of the articles I downloaded this afternoon are very timely. I appreciate your sharing this information with the field. I would be happy to be added to your mailing list for resources in the future.

Here is a sample of other feedback:

I am continually sharing the work you are doing with districts, state and policy regarding the need to address barriers to teaching and learning as a school improvement priority.

I read your book, "Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide" as a textbook for a class for my Director of Spec. Ed. and Pupil Services license in Wisconsin. Thank you. I've spent many years in my career promoting effective MTSS practices and continue to do so now. I'm interested in anything that helps me build supports for all students in my school

districts. Thanks for putting out resources that help.

Just wanted to thank you for your ongoing efforts to enhance student engagement and wellness.

Thank you for always taking issues seriously!!

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*Information is online about the

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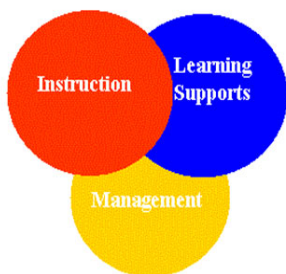http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

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 and 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