

## Test Scores Plateauing? Consider Transforming Student & Learning Supports

Arguments continue about the scope of the plateau effect related to achievement testing, but there is widespread recognition that the effect is a significant one for too many schools.

As schools strive valiantly to meet accountability demands, reports from across the country indicate prevailing strategies for raising achievement test scores often generate increases for the first few years but then level off.

For example, in schools with low test scores, a strong emphasis on increasing scores may generate about an 11 percentile increase in year 1, another 3 percentile increase in year 2, and then flatten out by year 3 or 4. And when the leveling off is with students who are nowhere near performing well, then the students, staff, schools, and families continue to suffer.

Plateauing is another indicator that fundamental changes must be made in how barriers to learning and teaching are addressed and how disconnected students are re-engaged in learning at school.

And, such changes need to be fully integrated as a high priority in school improvement policy, planning, implementation, and accountability.

### Learning More about Transforming Student & Learning Supports

Wherever students' scores are plateauing well below what is desired, we encourage consideration of transforming student and learning supports.

1) For a quick overview of what this entails, take 30 minutes to look at an introductory webinar we put together recently. (The narration still needs some work, but the basics are there.)

>The webinar is at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/powerpoint/briefintroslicesrec.pptx>

>An accompanying set of handouts are at

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/intropphandouts.pdf>

2) If you want more details, see the new, free online book entitled:

>*Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified,*

*Comprehensive, and Equitable System* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf>

(This book was developed for the 2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports.\* The chapters provide protocol frameworks and many specifics for a systemic learning supports component to replace the existing marginalized and fragmented set of student and learning supports in districts and schools. The work also stresses that transformation can be done by redeploying existing resources and garnering economies of scale.)

3) If you want to see information about work underway across the country, see

>*Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Trailblazing Initiatives!*

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/summer14.pdf>

4) Of course, at any time you want to interact directly about any of this, just send an email to [adelman@psych.ucla.edu](mailto:adelman@psych.ucla.edu) or [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu) .

\*For more information on the *2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports*, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html> .

**Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;  
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to  
enabling equity of opportunity and promoting whole child development.**

Send comments and questions to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu) .