School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(7/14/21)

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EMERGING HOT TOPICS

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>*Links to a few other relevant shared resources*

(Scroll down to read about the above and for hotlinks to resources)

Note: Go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/ for links to other Center resources.

This resource is from the
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).

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For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

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For discussion and interchange:
Do the MH concerns arising from the pandemic make it essential to promote mutual support groups for teachers and other school staff?

Given widespread recognition about the pandemic's toll on mental health, it is not surprising that we have received requests for resources to guide establishing support groups for teachers and other school staff. While supporting teachers is not controversial, how schools should do it often is.

Where do schools in your locale stand on this issue?

Here are some thoughts from our perspective about framing discussions: Clearly, not all students and staff will start the school year in a traumatized state. But as the research on minimizing disengagement, burnout, and dropping out emphasizes, schools must focus on enhancing a strong social support structure and meaningful ways to participate in decision making for staff and students.

Mutual support groups can play a role but must be embedded in a broader set of institutional practices that ensure a school is experienced as a place where participants believe they can succeed, feel supported in their efforts, and feel they have sufficient control over what is happening to them. This calls for systemic changes that both minimize threats to and enhance positive feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness.

None of this is easy, but after the pandemic it has become essential to pay even greater attention to enhancing the quality of life at school and ensure a high priority systemic response to reverse conditions that undermine teacher well-being and result in so many leaving the profession.

Examples of what needs to be done include:

- ensuring that the school year begins in a welcoming and socially supportive way (with well designed strategies for inducting newcomers into the school culture)
- transforming working conditions by opening classroom doors and creating appropriate teams of staff and students who support, nurture, and learn from each other every day
- carefully monitoring to identify those who are having trouble adjusting and providing personalized assistance and helping to organize mutual support groups as needed
- transforming inservice training into personalized staff development and support from first induction into a school through ongoing capacity building
- restructuring school governance to enable shared decision-making.

To get things moving, the staff at a school probably will require a session to reflect on the nature and scope of need and how to proceed. Given their training and skills, support staff could be an important resource in all this.

A good starting place for links to online resources on this matter are those listed in the Center's Quick Find on *Burnout* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/burnout.htm . See, for example, *Understanding and Minimizing Staff Burnout* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/burnout/burn1.pdf . Also see:

>*Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE)* https://www.garrisoninstitute.org/initiatives/programs/cultivating-awareness-and-resilience-in-education/

CARE is described as *a unique program designed to help teachers, other educators and administrators learn how to reduce stress and enliven their teaching by promoting awareness, presence, compassion, reflection, and inspiration – the inner resources they need to help students flourish, socially, emotionally and academically.*

>The *National Child Traumatic Stress Center* offers both online and in-person training on general trauma education https://www.nctsn.org/resources/training.

>The National Association of School Psychologists provides a resource entitled:

Care for the Caregiver: Guidelines for Administrators and Crisis Teams https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/mental-health-resources/care-for-caregivers-tips-for-families-and-educators/care-for-the-caregiver-guidelines-for-administrators-and-crisis-teams

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About School-Based Mutual Support Groups
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/support/support1.pdf

This resource covers steps and tasks for establishing mutual support groups at a school.

   (1) working within the school to get started,
   (2) recruiting members,
   (3) training them on how to run their own meetings, and
   (4) offering off-site consultation as requested.

While the specific focus is on parent groups, the procedures are readily adaptable for use with others, such as older students and staff.

>***Safe schools: Are school police essential?***

As you know, this topic is being heatedly discussed. Here are a few excerpts from sources that have related views:

(1) From: *Counselors Not Cops: Ending the Regular Presence of Law Enforcement in Schools*
http://dignityinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/DSC_Counselors_Not_Cops_Recommendations-1.pdf

Summary Policy Recommendations
"... Create Safe Schools through Positive Safety and Discipline Measures
Instead (of police), school staff trained to ensure safe and positive school climates, such as community intervention workers, peace builders, behavior interventionists, transformative or restorative justice coordinators, school aides, counselors and other support staff, can and do prevent and address safety concerns and conflicts. These staff monitor school entrances and ensure a welcoming environment, respond to the root causes of conflict and disruptive behaviors, prevent and intervene to stop intergroup and interethnic tension, and address students' needs. ...
    Roles for these staff include to:
        >Help prevent and address safety concerns and conflict;
        >Monitor school entrances and ensure a welcoming environment;
        >Respond to the root causes of behavior; >Prevent and intervene to stop intergroup and
        interethnic tension;
        >Address students' needs; and
        >Work with stakeholders to create a school safety plan, including a plan for evacuation
        should the need arise, and ensure all staff are trained to carry out the plan.
Ongoing training and support for all school staff in positive approaches to school climate and discipline, including:
        >Trauma-informed practice;
        >Child and adolescent development and psychology;
        >Comprehensive youth development practices and programming;
        >Conflict resolution and peer mediation;
        >De-escalation techniques;
        >Violence prevention and intervention;
        >Intergroup and interethnic conflict, intervention and truce-building strategies;
        >Bias-based and sexual harassment and sexual violence;
        >Working with youth with disabilities or physical, emotional, or mental conditions;
        >Working with LGBTQ and gender non-conforming youth;
        >Cultural competencies (including understanding and addressing racism, sexism, homophobia,
        transphobia, ableism, adultism/ageism, and other implicit and explicit biases);
        >The impacts of arrest, court, detention, incarceration and/or deportation on youth life chances;
        >Effective strategies for building safe schools without relying on suppression;
        >Restorative and transformative justice practices;
        >School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports; and/or
  Other positive approaches to school climate and discipline being used in the district
    Promoting youth and parent leadership within the school through leadership councils that
    have an integral role in creating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating safe and
    supportive school climates. This may include serving as restorative justice facilitators in the
    school, ensuring there are trainings for all parents, students and community members to fully
    understand how positive alternatives are being implemented and who is responsible for
    different aspects of maintaining a positive school climate, and monitoring any agreements
    with law enforcement
    Developing district-level structures, such as a Student and Teacher Supportive Services
    Department, that will:
      >Coordinate support staff, including counselors, social workers, nurses, dropout prevention
      coordinators, community intervention workers, peace builders, behavior interventionists, parent
      coordinators and others, who are working to promote safe and positive school environments and
      address the root causes of problems; and
      >Monitor implementation and provide support and coaching for schools that are struggling to
      implement these practices.
    Intentional recruiting of Black and Latino administrators, teachers, school safety and support staff
    trained in the positive approaches above to ensure that school staff reflect the communities in
    which they are working...."

(2) From: *Alternatives to School Police Programs*
https://crimlawandpolicy.wordpress.com/2020/05/20/alternatives-to-school-police-programs/

"...Policies that focus on conflict resolution practices and mental health professionals have the potential to improve the physical and psychological safety of our students and schools. School counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers serve a critical role in providing school-based mental health services.

>School counselors have specialized knowledge of curriculum and instruction and help screen students for the basic skills needed for a successful transition from youth to adulthood.
>School psychologists have a graduate degree in school psychology, which combines the disciplines of psychology and education. They typically have extensive knowledge of learning, motivation, behavior, childhood disabilities, assessment, evaluation, and school law.
>School social workers have master's degrees in social work. They have special expertise in understanding family and community systems and linking students and their families with the community services that are essential for promoting student success.

Because of their knowledge and skill, mental health professionals are able to support some of the needs of the students, such as emotional, mental, and social needs. When students have the support they need, it creates a school culture where students feel safe and empowered to report safety concerns, which is proven to be one of the most effective school safety strategies. In the aftermath of a crisis, school-employed mental health professionals can also provide supports that facilitate a return to normalcy...."

Here is an article from the Christian Science Monitor that gives a picture of what's currently happening in MN schools post the Floyd killing.

In a roiled Minneapolis, schools are testing new model for safety
https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Education/2021/0420/In-a-roiled-Minneapolis-schools-are-testing-new-model-for-safety

"...the district hired 11 civilian safety specialists. Two individuals had been on staff previously in this role, bringing the total to 13 – close to the previous number of SROs. The district says the role is not intended to be a direct replacement of SROs.
"I wouldn't say there are any similarities other than they do support our emergency management and security functions when necessary. But they are civilian. They are not armed, they don't carry handcuffs or pepper spray or any of those tools, they're not uniformed, and they have no power of arrest," says Mr. Matlock, the district's security director..."

As districts consider budgets, federal funding, and concerns about staffing to enhance safety and improve school climate, the following may be helpful.

See the Center's Quick Find topic pages on
>*School Climate* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/environments.htm
>*Safe Schools and Violence Prevention* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2108_03.htm

Here are a couple of resources our Center put together previously discussing:
>*Who are School Resource Officers?* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/schoolpolice.pdf
>Rethinking discipline to improve school climate
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/disciplineclimate.pdf

Here's a recent news report:
>Alexandria [VA] will redirect funds from school police to mental health, mentorship
https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2021/07/07/alexandria-school-police-mental-health/?wpisrc=nl_sb_smartbrief programs

Here are three recent journal articles:

>*Legal socialization during adolescence: The emerging role of school resource officers.*
   https://spssi.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/josi.12446

>*Examining the Role of School Resource Officers on School Safety and Crisis Response
   Teams* https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15388220.2016.1263797

>*Development of Online Professional Development for School Resource Officers:
   Understanding Trauma, Social-Emotional Learning, Restorative Discipline, and Cultural
   Diversity* https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11896-020-09404-z

Where do schools in your locale stand on this issue?

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As part of our emphasis on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and embedding mental health into school improvement policy and practice, the above are matters our Center has focused on in recent years. And we try to keep up with the rapidly changing picture, particularly with a view to updating how these matters fit into the *National Initiative to Transform Student and Learning Supports* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

**If you have practices, research, or just want to share your views about the above emerging hot topics, please send them to be shared widely.
Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu**

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From: *Professional Development This Summer:
What Teachers and Principals Say They Need*
   https://www.edweek.org/leadership/professional-development-this-summer-what-teachers-and-principals-say-they-need/2021/04

"We just keep plowing ahead with this whole assess and test [model]. The kids really don't care about any of it," a high school teacher said. "I think it needs to be a much more humanistic approach." What he's witnessed over the past several months has him more convinced of this than ever. "We have kids who just don't show up. That used to happen, but I think it's happening at like twice or three times the rate since the pandemic," he said.

   Given this spike in student disengagement, this teacher suggests PD that can offer concrete ideas on how teachers can incorporate social-emotional learning into their content areas. "The pandemic has made me realize that unless we find ways to focus on students as people and engage them as people and make the work we're doing important to them where they are now, everything is for nothing. We have to start with them as people."

BUT ...

From: *Summer school plans hinge on teacher energy*
   https://edsource.org/2021/summer-school-plans-hinge-on-teacher-energy/654833

There are millions of dollars in federal and state money to spend on robust summer programs that meet students' academic and social and emotional needs, but district officials are scrambling to find enough teachers to fill classrooms.

   After months of teaching remotely and then transitioning to in-person instruction, with the plethora of accompanying safety precautions, many teachers say they are just too tired to take a summer job. ...That creates a dilemma for district officials who know students need summer programs this year more than ever. To fill the gaps, school districts are tapping retired teachers and student teachers to fill classrooms, while others are turning to churches, after-school programs and community organizations like Girls and Boys Clubs of America, Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts to help them offer in-person summer programs to students.

Listserv participants: *What are schools in your locale doing to provide teachers/staff supports and professional development this summer?* Ltaylor@ucla.edu

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

Schools use home visits, calls to convince parents to choose in-person classes in fall
https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/schools-in-person-learning-outreach/2021/07/03/4cb7e512-c9f2-11eb-a11b-6c6191ccd599_story.html?wpisrc=nl_sb_smartbrief

6 Tips for Setting Up Virtual Professional Learning Sessions
https://www.edutopia.org/article/6-tips-setting-virtual-professional-learning-sessions

Anti-LGBTQ Policy Proposals Can Harm Youth Mental Health
https://www.childtrends.org/publications/anti-lgbtq-policy-proposals-can-harm-youth-mental-health

Past Is Prologue: 12 Big Challenges From Last School Year That Could Now Define the Fall of 2021 — From Learning Loss to Restoring Trust, Closing Achievement Gaps & More
https://www.the74million.org/article/how-12-big-challenges-last-school-year-could-define-schools-in-fall-2021/

Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences
>https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/prevention.html
>https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/aces-infographic/home?ACSTrackingID=USCDC_1104-DM60892&ACSTrackingLabel=New%20Infographic:%20Preventing%20Adverse%20Childhood%20Experiences%20%20&deliveryName=USCDC_1104-DM60892

Embracing a New Normal: Toward a More Liberatory Approach to Family Engagement
https://media.carnegie.org/filer_public/f6/04/f604e672-1d4b-4dc3-903d-3b619a00cd01/fe_report_fin.pdf

Addressing Youth Mental Health in the Wake of COVID-19
https://www.nap.edu/resource/26262/interactive/?ct=t(SEAN-youth-mental-health)

Group Work in Education: Addressing Student Concerns
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/groupwork.pdf

How Project-Based Learning Can Teach Empathy
https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-project-based-learning-can-teach-empathy

Service Learning Can Enhance Social Emotional Development
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/servicelearn.pdf

"Safe Space" or "Brave Space": How GSAs can Address Intersectionality
https://www.communitypsychology.com/safe-space-or-brave-space-how-gsas-can-address-intersectionality/?utm_source=vol4_issue7&utm_medium=enewsletter

High-Quality Afterschool Programs for LatinX Youth
https://www.communitypsychology.com/high-quality-afterschool-programs-for-latinx-youth/?utm_source=vol4_issue7&utm_medium=enewsletter

The Fastest-Improving City School Districts Aren't the Ones You Might Expect
https://www.edweek.org/leadership/the-fastest-improving-city-school-districts-arent-the-ones-you-might-expect/2021/07

A Few Upcoming Webinars

7/14 Investing in the potential for new leaders and new perspectives in education leadership

7/14 Seeing beyond the pandemic

7/18 Culturally Responsive Instructional Strategies

7/20 Pursuing Equitable Outcomes: Exploring the Intersection of Race and Disability in K-12 Education

7/23 Fostering Equity in Community Wellness and Peer Support Programs Affinity Groups

7/26 Determining McKinney-Vento Eligibility

7/28 Asset-Focused Ecological Supports for Vulnerable Youth During COVID-19 and Post-Pandemic

7/28 Peer Networking for Family Leaders who Foster and Support Family Engagement

7/28 Expecting and delivering equitalbe opportunities for learning

7/29 Addressing learning loss

8/4 Welcomed: Embracing Students, Families and Educators in the New School Year

8/5 Reimagining learning: starting with students in the center

8/5 Adapting Prevention Interventions to Better Serve Vulnerable Populations

8/11 Understanding Doubled up

8/16 Positive community norms

8/26 Paving the Way to College for Students Experiencing Homelessness

9/29 Fully Present: Leveraging Attendance Data to Ensure Ongoing Success

Webinar recording: Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth
https://preventioninstitute.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4bf5a36bd9f72789255d49a&id=17f472fea9&e=b6757fd9d7

For more webinars, go to the our Center's links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm

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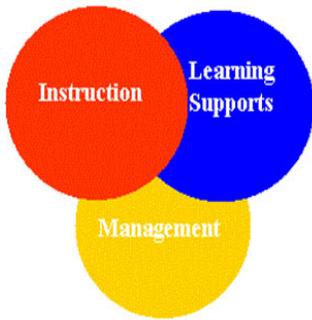
For information about the
National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to
promoting whole child development, advancing social justice,
and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.

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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

**THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND
INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES!**

For new sign-ups – email Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing.

**We post a broad range of issues and responses to the Net Exchange
on our website a**t http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm
and on Facebook (access from the Center's home page http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/ **)**