School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(7/6/22)

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But the funding is not sustainable*

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(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:

>*Legislation is bringing more money for mental health to schools: But the
funding is not sustainable*

That's the concern we are hearing from school board members and administrators. They are asking about ways to "ensure that the current influx of federal funds are utilized in a sustainable way." Our response is to weave the temporary funding together with the district's budget for student and learning supports and pursue an initiative to establish a broad-based support system that plays out at every school.

Below is a response we made to the draft conveying recommendations for School Mental Health State Policy circulated for comment by the CA School Mental Health Policy workgroup (https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/mh/smhpworkgroup.asp). As you will see, we raised a note of caution about framing policy around the concept of "Comprehensive School Mental Health" rather than around policy that embeds mental health into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports. The following response will be familiar to those who have been following the work of the *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports* (http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html).

There is much in the draft document that is on-target. However, the "solution" for schools is not an approach that can or should be limited to "Comprehensive School Mental Health."

Certainly part of meeting the needs of all students involves addressing concerns about mental health. And such concerns undoubtably should be a high priority for society. However, students, parents, and school staff are confronted every day with a range of learning, behavior, and emotional problems, and the pandemic has increased the numbers related to all these concerns.

Given that the mission of schools is educating students, the specific challenge for them is to improve the role they play in directly confronting factors negatively affecting students' learning. These factors include a full range of pervasive and complex barriers to learning and teaching. This, indeed, requires a comprehensive approach, but one that embeds mental concerns rather than frames and limits the focus to mental health problems and services.

In some schools, principals have reported that up to 25 percent of their budget is consumed in efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching. Because school budgets are always tight, cost-effectiveness is a constant consideration. Analyses indicate limited results and redundancy in resource use. Rivalry for sparse resources also has produced counterproductive competition among support staff and with community-based professionals who link with schools. And these deficiencies typically are compounded as schools strive to meet immediate demands for more services.

Schools cannot continue to spend all the time of student and learning support staff responding to the culture of crisis that dominates efforts to address barriers to teaching and learning and reengage disconnected students and their families. To do so means maintaining the marginalization, fragmentation, counterproductive competition, redundancy, and limited outcomes that characterize most schools' approach to providing student/learning supports (including services for mental health).

Moving ahead at this time involves
> rethinking student and learning supports and the roles and functions of staff providing such supports
> approaching learning, behavior, and emotional problems as interrelated concerns
> using an umbrella concept, such as addressing barriers to learning, to create a unified component the various programs and initiatives currently being implemented for that purpose (e.g., MTSS, Community Schools, integrated services, social emotional learning as a response to problems, response to intervention, trauma informed practices, suicide and substance use prevention, crisis response, special efforts to close the opportunity and achievement gaps, etc., etc., etc....)
> adopting a design and a multiyear strategic plan for developing the unified component into a comprehensive and equitable system of student/learning supports.

More About Transforming What Schools Do to Address Mental Health Concerns

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

>*About Connecting Students with the Right Forms of Mental Health Assistance*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/connect.pdf

>*We must transform how schools address barriers to learning*
https://edsource.org/2022/we-must-transform-how-schools-address-barriers-to-learning/668110

>*We won't Argue Against Adding More Counselors,*
BUT ... Addressing Student Mental `Health Concerns Involves Much More than
Increasing the Number of Mental Health Providers
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/morethan.pdf

>*Time for Straight Talk about Mental Health Services and MH in Schools*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/mhinschools.pdf

>*Evolving Community Schools and Transforming Student/Learning Supports*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/evolvecomm.pdf

Is this topic being discussed in your locale?

Please let us know so we can share the info widely. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

## >What we're hearing from districts working on improving student support

(1) The transformative work we are doing in our School District to support all students focuses on

*Leveraging Robust Data Systems to Advance Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
and Improve Outcomes for All Students*

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, our District elevated the importance of identifying students in need of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports. With the leadership of the school board, superintendent, and newly restructured cabinet positions, we revamped the assessment system to include district wide reading and math assessments and a social emotional screener. We then overhauled the intervention tracking systems within Aeries, the student information system, so that teachers can track and monitor tier 1 supports and then refer students to MTSS teams for tier 2 or tier 3 interventions as needed. Finally, we partnered with Aeries to build Aeries Analytics dashboards that allows MTSS teams to quickly access student lists that meet certain data criteria to ensure that they are accessing necessary interventions. As a result of these robust data systems, we saw a reduction in referrals for special education services and consistency across the system in which interventions are available to students, how it is determined which interventions are appropriate for which students, and consistent documentation and progress monitoring of student supports within Aeries that follow students as they work their way through the grade levels within the school district. ...

Goals & Objectives for this Program
> Give teachers practical classroom solutions for struggling students so that they can begin to address student needs at the tier 1 level
> Provide a clearinghouse of researched-based tier 1 interventions to support teachers
> Consistently and effectively assign, document, monitor, and manage effective interventions
> Replace outdated and inefficient SST process with dynamic MTSS team-based case management, digitized documentation within our SIS, real-time progress monitoring and full transparency to all stakeholders
> Allow users to easily monitor and track student progress digitally so that the data follows students in Aeries, our student information system, from year to year....

(2) Over the last 4 years Our School District has been on a mission to increase mental health awareness in our community. We received 2 Federal Mental Health Awareness Training grants--one from SAMHSA, the other from The Justice Bureau, that largely supported our work from October 2018 through September 2021. Since that time we've been able to secure other funding and have continued our work this year. Below are some of the highlights that we've accomplished:

>We have trained over 600 parents and staff in Youth Mental Health First Aid and over 800 high school students in Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA).
>During COVID we sought ways to continue to reach parents and launched Livermore Learns, a parent education webinar series. We've found that the attendance at virtual parent classes far exceeds that of in person evening classes and since returning to in person learning we've continued the series. This school year we offered 20 evening webinars on topics including Anxiety in Children and Youth, Children and Trauma, PBIS at Home, and Supporting Your Child's Mental Health Over the Summer. Webinars are offered in both English and Spanish.
>We've formed a Mental Health Advisory Committee consisting of 10 mental health partner agencies, school district staff, a parent and a student representative. The Advisory Committee mapped mental health resources and outlined the mental health referral process and continues to work together to ensure that the mental health needs of our students are being addressed.
>Our district implements PBIS and we have established COST teams at all of our 18 school sites. In addition, we've improved our Crisis Team procedures. When a tragic vehicle accident the first Friday night of this school year took the life of a high school junior and injured 5 other juniors--2 of whom were on life support--our Crisis Team was equipped to respond.
>We've also launched a Mental Health website, providing resources to students, families, and staff. https://www.livermoreschools.org/Page/7933

(3) I am the Director of Pupil Services at a District in Pennsylvania. We are a district of 1900 students K-12. Beginning the 21/22 school year, we put into place our LEVEL-UP Program. We provide mental health services to prevent and respond to the mental health needs of our students while fostering a school climate that supports teaching and learning. We have developed a community partnership with a mental health agency in providing real time services through putting in place an in-house clinic. We have a referral system that starts at the district level and moves to the process of identifying the specific type of service needed for the student. Services can range from intensive mental health therapy, to behavioral interventions/functional behavioral assessments, to clinical evaluations. I believe we are aspiring in the right direction in providing school-based services for our students. I would love to share more information about our program in hopes it can inspire others to provide services to our students in a time when resources are limited for families.
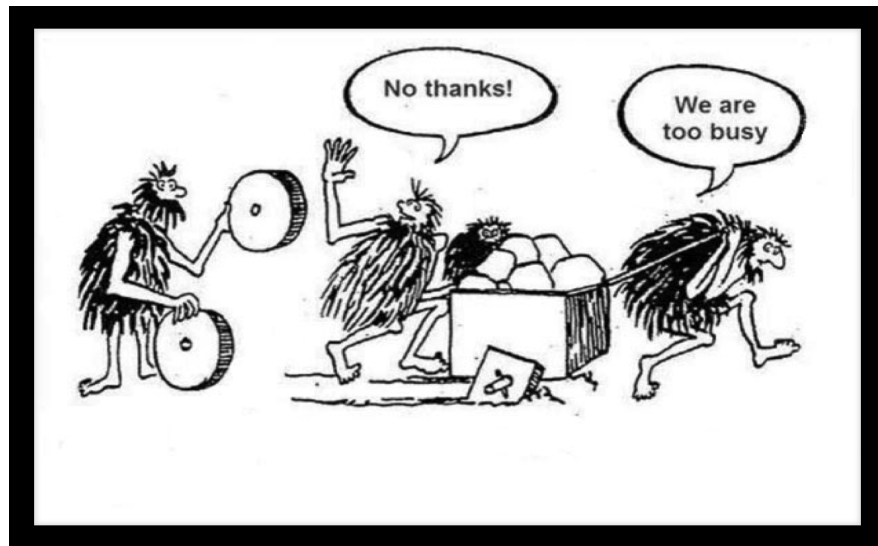
In case you didn't see our previous communication, we are seeking your input as we plan a national online summit focused on unifying student/learning supports with mental health concerns fully embedded.

See the input request on page 3 of

Reversing the Fragmentation of Student/Learning Supports:
Are You Part of the Problem?
Will You be Part of the Solution?

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/summer2022.pdf

Please share this.

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

Friends and friendships: pre-teens and teenagers
https://raisingchildren.net.au/pre-teens/behaviour/peers-friends-trends/teen-friendships

The impact of comprehensive student support on teachers: Knowledge of the whole child, classroom practice, and teacher support. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.02.012

Primary and Lower Secondary School Students' Social Support Profiles and Study Wellbeing
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/02724316211058061

Education and training interventions, and support tools for school staff to adequately respond to young people who disclose self-harm – a systematic literature review of effectiveness, feasibility and acceptability https://acamh.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/camh.12436

This Is the Price We Pay to Live in This Kind of Society
https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2022/06/news-mass-shootings-psychology-buffalo-uvalde/661157/

Report on the Condition of Education 2022 https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2022/2022144.pdf

Across US, Special Education Enrollment On The Rise
https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2022/06/24/across-us-special-education-enrollment-on-the-rise/29920/

2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health
https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2022/assets/static/trevor01_2022survey_final.pdf

Discriminatory Transgender Health Bills Have Critical Consequences for Youth
https://www.childtrends.org/publications/discriminatory-transgender-health-bills-have-critical-consequences-for-youth

National Guidelines for Integrated Student Support
https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/lynch-school/sites/ctc/why-integrated-student-support1.html

Schools and Trauma https://www.nctsn.org/resources/schools-and-trauma

Preparing for College Emotionally, Not Just Academically
https://childmind.org/article/preparing-for-college-emotionally-not-just-academically/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=pub_ed_nl_2022-06-28&utm_content=preparing-for-college-emotionally-not-just-academically

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A Few Upcoming Webinars

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

7/7 Social emotional learning Implementation: Success Strategies for the New School Year
7/7 The Community Resiliency Model for the Behavioral Health Workforce
7/7 Resilience Building Practices - Focus on Strengths and Assets
7/11 Working with Youth and Families Experiencing Homelessness and Home Insecurity
7/11 Youth and Families Experiencing Homelessness
7/12 Educator Bandwidth, Burnout, and Blameless Discernment
7/13 Work-Life Balance and Self-Care in the Helping Professions
7/13 School Preparedness, Community Resilience, and Recovery in the Face of Adversity:
7/14 Healing During Challenging Times
7/14 McKinney-Vento 101: Basic Requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act
7/21 Mentoring Through the Ages: Youth Perspectives
7/21 The School Counselor's Role in State Legislation
7/26 College and Career Support for Students with Disabilities

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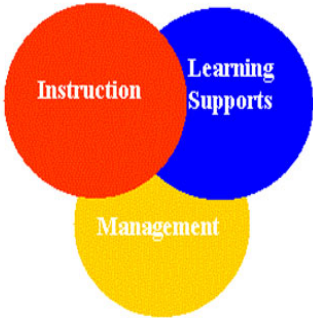
For information about the

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 at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm **and on Facebook (access from the Center's home page** http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/)