



**Leadership Institute**

## **Enhancing School Improvement: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Re-engaging Students**

### **Session Topics:**

- I. Why is a System of Learning Supports *Imperative* for School Improvement
- II. What is a System of Learning Supports?  
*An intervention perspective*
- III. What is a System of Learning Supports?  
*An infrastructure perspective*
- IV. What is a System of Learning Supports?  
*A policy perspective*
- V. What's Involved in Getting from Here to There?
- VI. Engaging and Re-engaging Students with an Emphasis on Intrinsic Motivation
- VII. Concluding Comments

---

**About the Center at UCLA** – The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA.

Permission to reproduce this document is granted. Please cite source as the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. (Contact info: Center for Mental Health in Schools, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA, Box 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563; phone (310) 825-3634 or Toll Free (866) 846-4843.

For an overview of resources available at no cost from the Center, use the internet to scan the website: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

Note: Most of the handouts from this presentation are included on the Center website in both powerpoint & PDF formats.

## ***Session II***

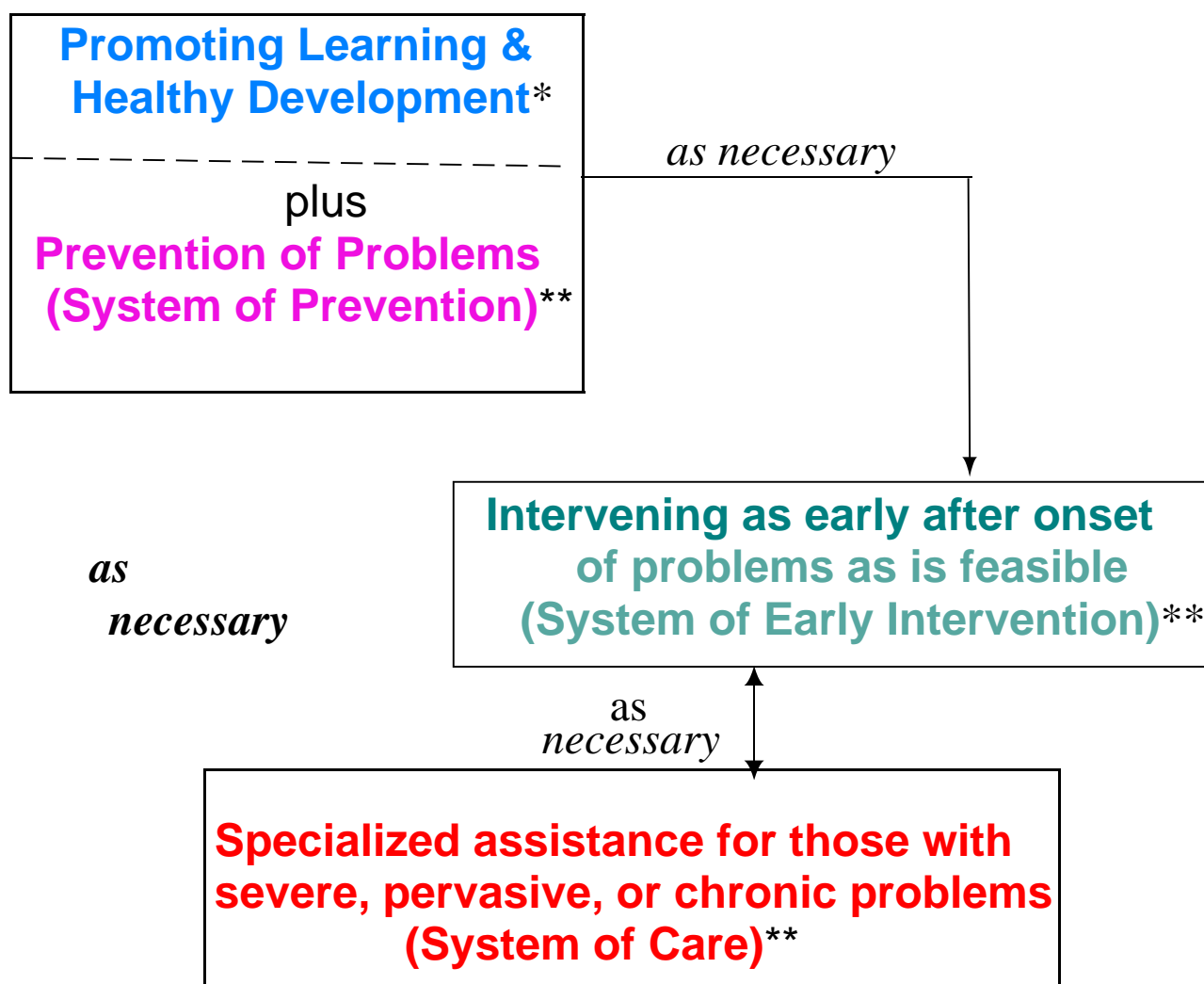
### **What is a System of Learning Supports? *Intervention Framework***

- >A Sequential Approach
- >Defining Learning Supports
- >Framing a Comprehensive *System of Learning Supports*
- >Major Examples of Intervention Activity in Content Arenas
- >Combined Continuum and Content Arenas

## An Integrated Sequence of Interventions

Meeting the needs of all students requires promotion of assets, prevention of problems, & addressing problems in keeping with the principle of least intervention needed.

As illustrated below, this translates into a sequential approach that at its foundation involves enhancing the focus on promoting healthy development and preventing problems.



\*Interventions to directly facilitate development and learning.

\*\*Interventions that combine to establish a full continuum for addressing barriers to learning and development.

## Defining learning supports

To accomplish the essential public education goal of enabling all students to have an equal opportunity for success at school, research indicates the need for developing a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system of learning supports.

Learning supports are the resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual supports to directly address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

A comprehensive system of learning supports provides supportive interventions in classrooms and schoolwide and is fully integrated with efforts to improve instruction and management at a school.



Framing a Comprehensive  
*System of Learning Supports to*  
Address Barriers to Learning



***Intervention Continuum  
& Content***

## Levels of Intervention:\*

### Connected Systems for Meeting the Needs of All Students

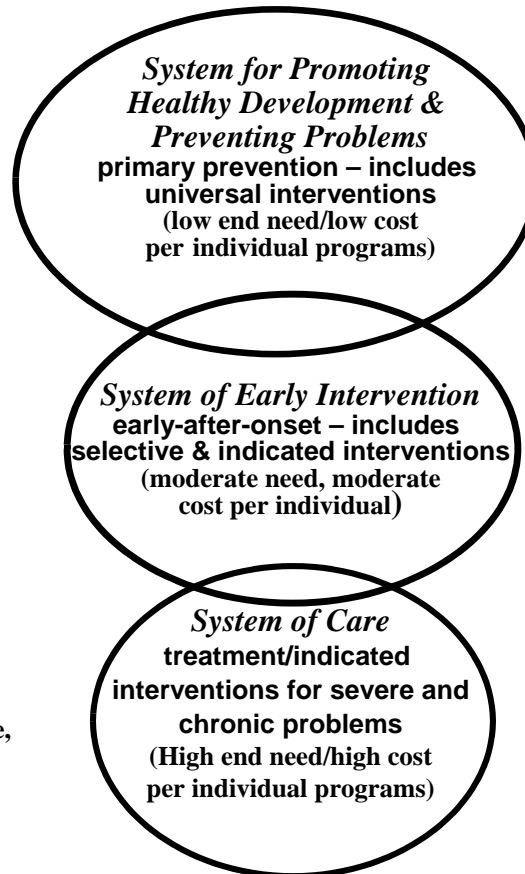
#### One Key Facet of a Learning Supports Component

##### *School Resources*

(facilities, stakeholders, programs, services)

##### Examples:

- General health education
- Social and emotional learning programs
- Recreation programs
- Enrichment programs
- Support for transitions
- Conflict resolution
- Home involvement
- Drug and alcohol education
  
- Drug counseling
- Pregnancy prevention
- Violence prevention
- Gang intervention
- Dropout prevention
- Suicide prevention
- Learning/behavior accommodations & response to intervention
- Work programs
  
- Special education for learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, and other health impairments



##### *Community Resources*

(facilities, stakeholders, programs, services)

##### Examples:

- Recreation & Enrichment
- Public health & safety programs
- Prenatal care
- Home visiting programs
- Immunizations
- Child abuse education
- Internships & community service programs
- Economic development
  
- Early identification to treat health problems
- Monitoring health problems
- Short-term counseling
- Foster placement/group homes
- Family support
- Shelter, food, clothing
- Job programs
  
- Emergency/crisis treatment
- Family preservation
- Long-term therapy
- Probation/incarceration
- Disabilities programs
- Hospitalization
- Drug treatment

Systemic collaboration is essential to establish interprogram connections on a daily basis and over time to ensure seamless intervention within each system and among *systems for promoting healthy development and preventing problems, systems of early intervention, and systems of care.*

Such collaboration involves horizontal and vertical restructuring of programs and services

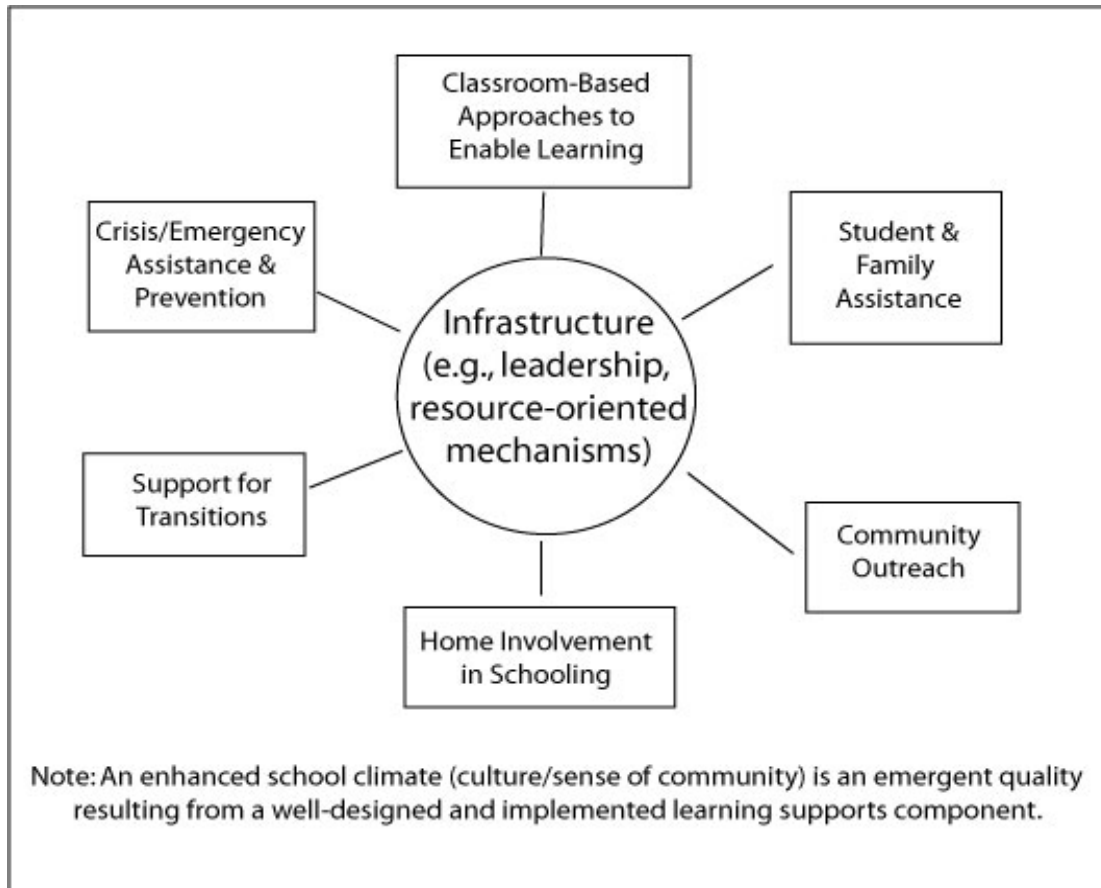
(a) within jurisdictions, school districts, and community agencies (e.g., among departments, divisions, units, schools, clusters of schools)

(b) between jurisdictions, school and community agencies, public and private sectors; among schools; among community agencies

---

\*Various venues, concepts, and initiatives permeate this continuum of intervention *systems*. For example, venues such as day care and preschools, concepts such as social and emotional learning and development, and initiatives such as positive behavior support, response to intervention, and coordinated school health. Also, a considerable variety of staff are involved. Finally, *note that this illustration of an essential continuum of intervention systems differs in significant ways from the three tier pyramid that is widely referred to in discussing universal, selective, and indicated interventions.*

# Categories of *Basic Content Arenas* for Learning Supports Intervention

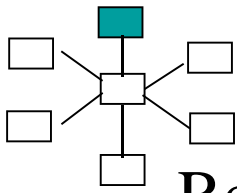


Adapted from Adelman, H.S. & Taylor, L. (1994). *On understanding intervention in psychology and education*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Note: *All categorical programs can be integrated into these six content arenas.*

Examples of initiatives, programs, and services that can be unified into a system of learning supports include positive behavioral supports, programs for safe and drug free schools, programs for social and emotional development and learning, full service community schools and family resource and school based health centers, Safe Schools/Healthy Students projects, CDC's Coordinated School Health Program, bi-lingual, cultural, and other diversity programs, compensatory education programs, special education programs, mandates stemming from the No Child Left Behind Act, and many more.

# **Major Examples of Activity in Each of the Six Basic Content Arenas**



# Classroom-Focused Enabling & Re-engaging Students in Classroom Learning

## *\*Classroom based efforts to enable learning*

- >> Prevent problems; intervene as soon as problems are noted
- >> Enhance intrinsic motivation for learning
- >> Re-engage students who have become disengaged from classroom learning

## *C Opening the classroom door to bring available supports in*

- T** Peer tutors, volunteers, aids (trained to work with students-in-need)
- T** Resource teachers and student support staff

## *C Redesigning classroom approaches to enhance teacher capability to prevent and handle problems and reduce need for out of class referrals*

- T** Personalized instruction; special assistance as necessary
- T** Developing small group and independent learning options
- T** Reducing negative interactions and over-reliance on social control
- T** Expanding the range of curricular and instructional options and choices
- T** Systematic use of prereferral interventions

## *C Enhancing and personalizing professional development*

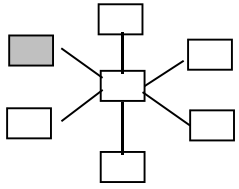
- T** Creating a Learning Community for teachers
- T** Ensuring opportunities to learn through co-teaching, team teaching, mentoring
- T** Teaching intrinsic motivation concepts and their application to schooling

## *C Curricular enrichment and adjunct programs*

- T** Varied enrichment activities that are not tied to reinforcement schedules
- T** Visiting scholars from the community

## *C Classroom and school-wide approaches used to create and maintain a caring and supportive climate*

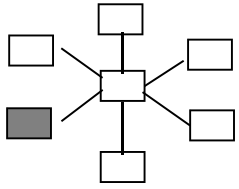
- T** Emphasis is on enhancing feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to others at school and reducing threats to such feelings



## Crisis Assistance and Prevention

- \*School-wide and classroom-based efforts for
  - >>responding to crises
  - >>minimizing the impact of crises
  - >>preventing crises

- C Ensuring immediate assistance in emergencies so students can resume learning*
- C Providing Follow up care as necessary*
  - T** Brief and longer-term monitoring
- C Forming a school-focused Crisis Team to formulate a response plan and take leadership for developing prevention programs*
- C Mobilizing staff, students, and families to anticipate response plans and recovery efforts*
- C Creating a caring and safe learning environment*
  - T** Developing systems to promote healthy development and prevent problems
  - T** Bullying and harassment abatement programs
- C Working with neighborhood schools and community to integrate planning for response and prevention*
- C Staff/stakeholder development focusing on the role and responsibility of all in promoting a caring and safe environment*



## Support for Transitions

### \*School-wide and classroom-based efforts to

- >>enhance acceptance and successful transitions
- >>prevent transition problems
- >>use transition periods to reduce alienation
- >>use transition periods to increase positive attitudes/motivation toward school and learning

### *C Welcoming & social support programs for newcomers*

- T** Welcoming signs, materials, and initial receptions
- T** Peer buddy programs for students, families, staff, volunteers

### *C Daily transition programs for*

- T** Before school, breaks, lunch, afterschool

### *C Articulation programs*

- T** Grade to grade (new classrooms, new teachers)
- T** Elementary to Middle School; Middle to High School
- T** In and out of special education programs

### *C Summer or intersession programs*

- T** Catch-up, recreation, and enrichment programs

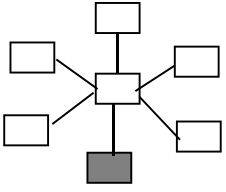
### *C School-to-career/higher education*

- T** Counseling, pathway, and mentor programs

### *C Broad involvement of stakeholders in planning for transitions*

- T** Students, staff, home, police, faith groups, recreation, business, higher educ.

### *C Staff/stakeholder development for planning transition programs/activities*



# Home Involvement in Schooling

## \*School-wide & classroom-based efforts to engage the home in

- >>strengthening the home situation
- >>enhancing problem solving capabilities
- >>supporting student development and learning
- >>strengthening school and community

### *C Addressing specific support and learning needs of family*

- T** Support services for those in the home to assist in addressing basic survival needs and obligations to the children
- T** Adult education classes to enhance literacy, job skills, English-as-a-second language, citizenship preparation

### *C Improving mechanisms for communication and connecting school and home*

- T** Opportunities at school for family networking and mutual support, learning, recreation, enrichment, and for family members to receive special assistance and to volunteer to help
- T** Phone calls from teacher and other staff with good news
- T** Frequent and balanced conferences (student-led when feasible)
- T** Outreach to attract hard-to-reach families (including student dropouts)

### *C Involving homes in student decision making*

- T** Families prepared for involvement in program planning and problem-solving

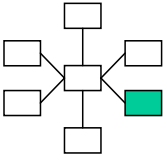
### *C Enhancing home support for learning and development*

- T** Family Literacy, Family Homework Projects, Family Field Trips

### *C Recruiting families to strengthen school and community*

- T** Volunteers to welcome and support new families and help in various capacities
- T** Families prepared for involvement in school governance

### *C Staff/stakeholder development to broaden awareness of and plan programs to enhance opportunities for home involvement*



# Community Outreach for Involvement and Support (including Volunteers)

\*Building linkages and collaborations to strengthen students, schools, families, and neighborhoods

## *C Planning and Implementing Outreach to Recruit a Wide Range of Community Resources*

- ✓ Community resources such as public and private agencies; colleges and universities; local residents; artists and cultural institutions, businesses and professional orgs.; service, volunteer, and faith-based organizations
- ✓ Community policy and decision makers

## *C Systems to Recruit, Screen, Prepare, and Maintain Community Resource Involvement*

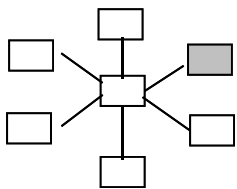
- ✓ mechanisms to orient and welcome
- ✓ mechanisms to enhance the volunteer pool,
- ✓ mechanisms to maintain current involvements; enhance sense of comm.

## *C Reaching out to Students and Families Who Don't Come to School Regularly – Including Truants and Dropouts*

## *C Connecting School and Community Efforts to Promote Child and Youth Development and a Sense of Community*

## *C Capacity Building to Enhance Community Involvement & Support*

- ✓ policies/mechanisms to enhance & sustain school-community involvement
- ✓ staff/stakeholder development on the value of community involvement
- ✓ “social marketing”



## Student and Family Assistance

\*Specialized assistance provided through personalized health and social service programs

- C Providing support as soon as a need is recognized and doing so in the least disruptive ways*
  - T** Prereferral interventions in classrooms
  - T** Problem solving conferences with parents
  - T** Open access to school, district, and community support programs
- C Referral interventions for students & families with problems*
  - T** Screening, referrals, and follow-up – school-based, school-linked
- C Enhancing access to direct interventions for health, mental health, and economic assistance*
  - T** School-based, school-linked, and community-based programs
- C Follow-up assessment to check whether referrals and services are adequate and effective*
- C Mechanisms for resource coordination to avoid duplication of and fill gaps in services and enhance effectiveness*
  - T** School-based and linked, feeder family of schools, community-based programs
- C Enhancing stakeholder awareness of programs and services*
- C Involving community providers to fill gaps and augment school resources*
- C Staff/stakeholder development to enhance effectiveness of student and family assistance systems, programs, and services*

**For more specific examples and mapping and analysis self study surveys for each arena, see the Center's online resource aid:**

***Guide to resource mapping and management to address barriers to learning:  
An intervention for systemic change***

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

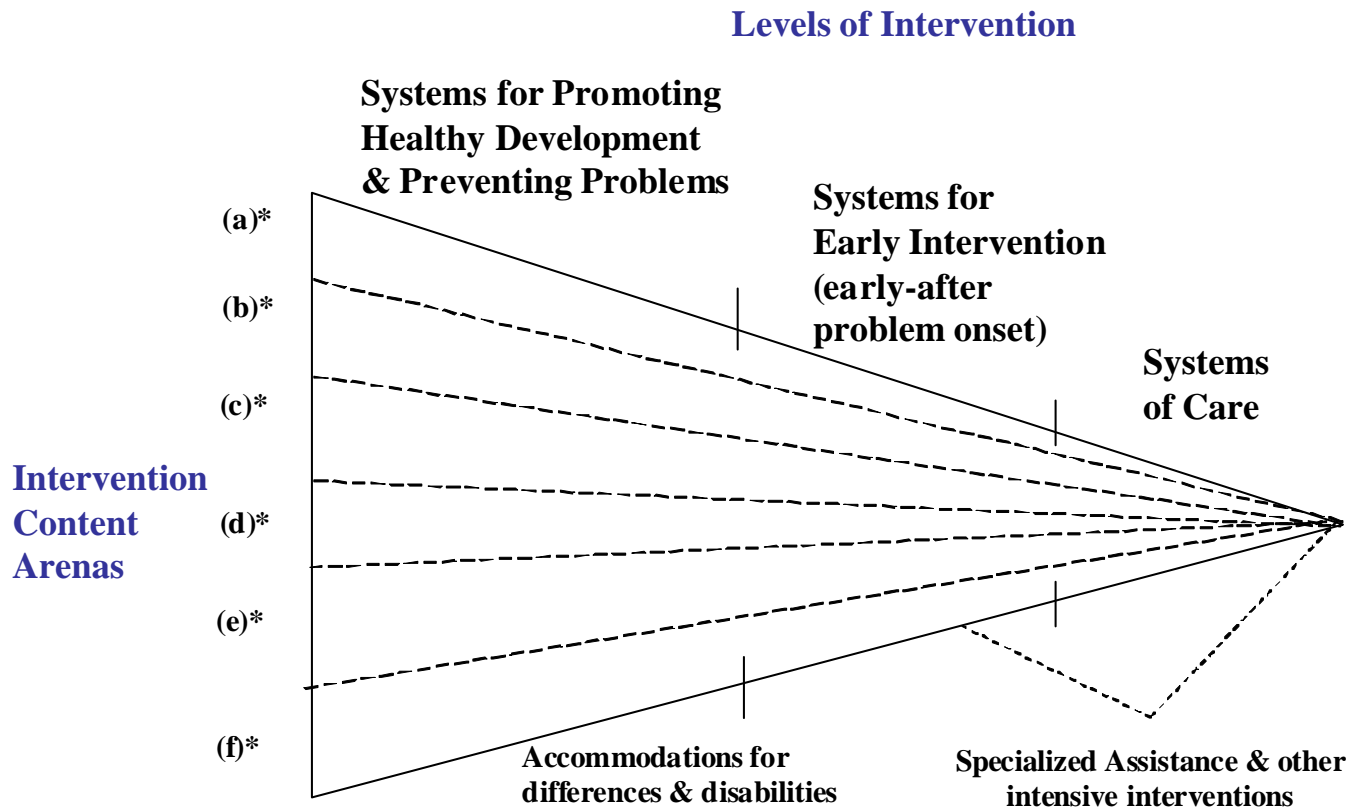
# Combined Continuum and Content Arenas

## Provides the Framework for a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports (an Enabling Component\*)

		Levels of Intervention		
		Systems for Promoting Healthy Development & Preventing Problems	Systems for Early Intervention (Early after problem onset)	Systems of Care
<b>Intervention Content Arenas</b>	Classroom- Focused Enabling			
	Crisis/ Emergency Assistance & Prevention			
	Support for transitions			
	Home Involvement in Schooling			
	Community Outreach/ Volunteers			
	Student and Family Assistance			
		Accommodations for differences & disabilities	Specialized assistance & other intensified interventions (e.g., Special Education & School-Based Behavioral Health)	

\*Note: Various venues, concepts, and initiatives will fit into several cells of the matrix. Examples include venues such as day care centers, preschools, family centers, and school-based health centers, concepts such as social and emotional learning and development, and initiatives such as positive behavior support, response to interventions, and the coordinated school health program. Most of the work of the considerable variety of personnel who provide student supports also fits into one or more cells.

# System of Learning Supports is Designed to Produce a Declining Proportion of Students Needing Special Assistance



- (a) = Classroom-focused enabling**
- (b) = Support for transitions**
- (c) = Home involvement in schooling**
- (d) = Community outreach/volunteers**
- (e) = Crisis/ emergency assistance and prevention**
- (f) = Student and family assistance**

The framework is intended to guide development of a *comprehensive system of learning supports* in ways that make it a primary and essential component of school improvement.

Such an enabling component is meant to:

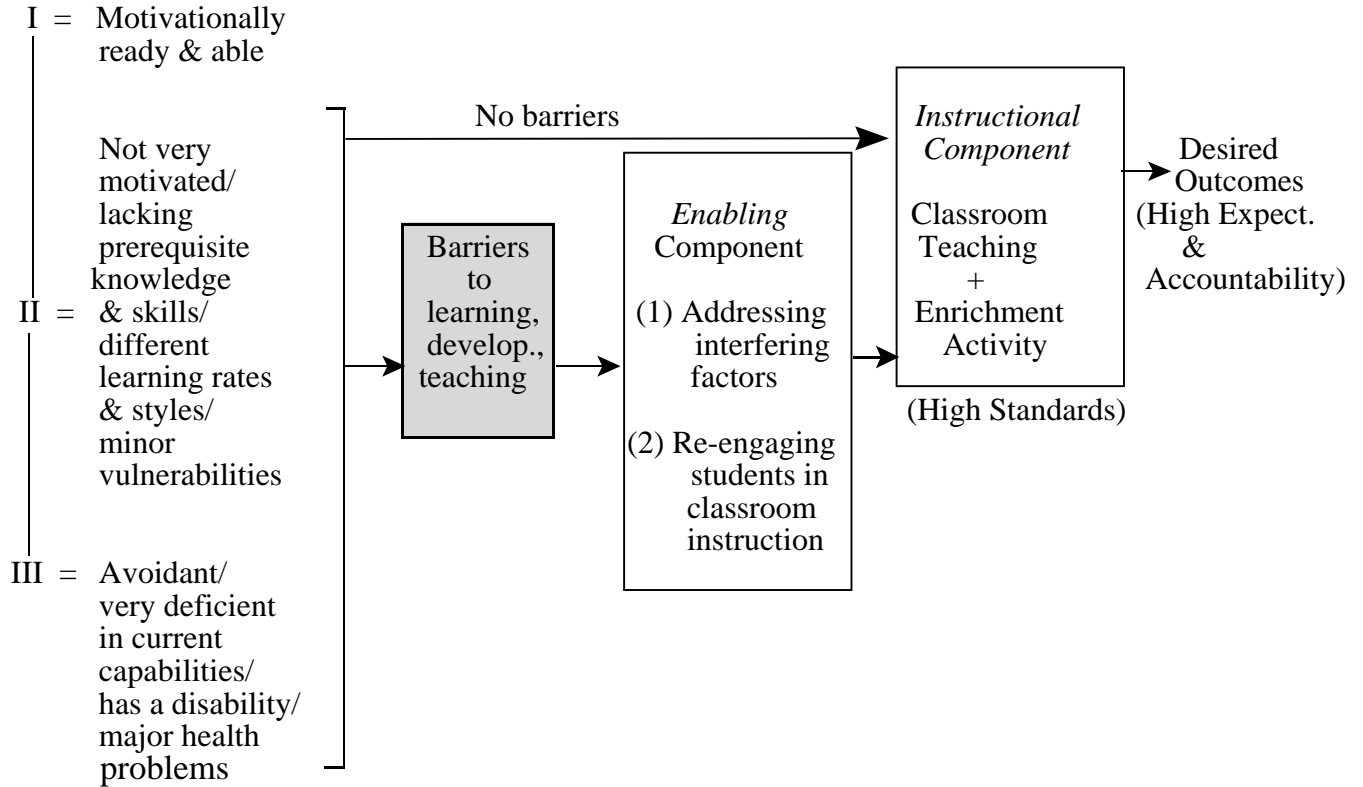
(1) address interfering factors

**and**

(2) re-engage students in  
classroom instruction

## An Enabling Component to Address Barriers and Re-engage Students in Classroom Instruction\*

Range of Learners  
(categorized in terms of their response to academic instruction at any given point in time)



\*In some places, an Enabling Component is called a Learning Supports Component. Whatever it is called, the component is to be developed as a comprehensive system of learning supports at the school site.

## To Recap:

- School improvement planning for developing a comprehensive system of learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching requires:
  - (1) adoption of an umbrella framework that can unify current efforts
  - (2) expansion of the framework for school accountability to account for efforts to enhance social and personal functioning and address barriers to learning and teaching
- A comprehensive framework to guide development of an enabling/learning supports component combines a continuum of intervention with a discrete set of content areas. The resulting matrix provides a mapping tool and a planning guide for developing a comprehensive set of learning supports.

## *Study Questions*

- < What constitutes a full continuum of interventions in providing learning supports?
- < Why don't most schools strive to develop a comprehensive system of learning supports?

### *Activity*

**Looking at the schools you know –**

*How close are they to having a comprehensive system of learning supports?*

**To answer this, see the tool for mapping  
& analyzing Learning Supports –**

**Online at**

**[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/  
tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf)**

## ***Some Relevant References & Resources***

- < *Frameworks for Systemic Transformation of Student and Learning Supports*

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

- < *The School Leader's Guide to Student Learning Supports: New Directions for Addressing Barriers to Learning –*

<http://www.corwinpress.com/book.aspx?pid=11343>

***Next:***

**An overview of  
operational infrastructure considerations**