

WHAT IS A LEARNING SUPPORTS LEADERSHIP TEAM?

Every district and school that wants to improve student and learning supports needs a dedicated *development* mechanism to accomplish the work. The goal is to rework existing resources into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system to improve how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students. A *Learning Supports Leadership Team* is such a mechanism at district and school levels.

A Learning Supports Leadership Team takes responsibility for transforming current marginalized and fragmented interventions into a *system* that is fully integrated as a primary and essential facet of school improvement. The work includes outreaching to the community to fill critical system gaps by weaving in human and financial resources from public and private sectors.

What Are the Functions of this Leadership Team?

At the school level, a Learning Supports Leadership Teams contrast with teams that focus on individual student/family problems (e.g., a student support team, an IEP team). Case-oriented teams pursue such functions as referral, triage, and care monitoring or management. A Learning Supports Leadership Team performs essential functions and tasks related to the planning, implementation, and ongoing development of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to student learning and teaching.

Examples of functions are:

- ◆ Aggregating data about all students to analyze district/school needs
- ◆ Conceptualizing, developing, planning, overseeing implementation, and system improvement sustainability and renewal
- ◆ Mapping existing school and community resources
- ◆ Analyzing resources & formulating priorities for system development (in keeping with the most pressing needs of the district/school)
- ◆ Recommending how resources should be deployed and redeployed
- ◆ Coordinating and integrating school resources & connecting with community resources
- ◆ Planning and facilitating ways to strengthen and develop new programs and systems
- ◆ Developing strategies for enhancing resources
- ◆ Establishing work groups as needed
- ◆ “Social marketing”

In mapping and analyzing resources and setting priorities, the team can build on MTSS using the Center’s learning supports component framework. It outline six domains for learning supports and expands the continuum of interventions. (See <https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/restructuring-california-schools-address-barriers-learning-and-teaching-covid-19> .)

Who’s on Such a Team?

A Learning Supports Leadership Team can be initiated with only a few people. Where feasible, it should expand into an inclusive group of informed, willing, and able stakeholders. This might include the following:

- Administrative Lead for the component
- School Psychologist
- Counselor
- School Nurse
- School Social Worker
- Behavioral Specialist
- Special education teacher
- Representatives of community agencies involved regularly with the school
- Student representation (when appropriate and feasible)
- Others who have a particular interest and ability to help with the functions

It is important to integrate this team with the infrastructure mechanisms at the school focused on instruction and management/governance. For example, the school administrator on the team needs to represent the team at administrative and governance meetings.

The Center’s toolkit for *Rebuilding Student Supports into a Comprehensive System for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching* provides many resources to aid efforts to improve student/learning supports. Section B provides detailed guidance for reworking the operational infrastructure to include a Learning Support Leadership Team at district and state levels and a Learning Supports Leadership Council for a family of schools (e.g., the feeder pattern) to garner economies of scale and other benefits <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>