



Technical Assistance Sampler

Thinking About & Accessing Policy Related to Addressing Barriers to Learning

(updated 2016)

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By Way of Introduction

The Center for Mental Health in Schools, under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project at UCLA, has as its mission the improvement of outcomes for young people by enhancing policies, programs, and practices relevant to mental health in schools. Our center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter fragmentation and enhance collaboration between school and community resources.

There is growing concern among policy makers and many practitioners about serious flaws in current policies designed to address barriers to learning and promote healthy development. Although aimed at preventing and correcting learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems, these policies squander limited resources and impede good practice.

Some current initiatives aim to stimulate increased collaboration within schools, among schools, between schools and community agencies, and among agencies at local, state, and federal levels. Such initiatives mean to enhance cooperation and eventually increase integrated use of resources. The hope is that cooperation and integration will lead to better use of limited resources; another implicit hope is that collaboration will lead to comprehensive services. However, the work does not reflect an explicit policy framework for a unified, comprehensive, and equitable approach to address barriers to learning and re-engage disconnected students. To underscore this point, our research and analyses have stressed that in school improvement policy and practice

- little attention is paid to rethinking the student and learning supports at schools
- little attention is paid to doing more than co-locating a few community health and human services at select school sites
- little attention is paid to weaving school-owned resources and community-owned resources together into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system.

Thus, in both policy and practice, it is evident that developing a unified, comprehensive, integrated approach continues to be a low priority.

What's getting in the way of elevating the level of priority policy makers place on developing comprehensive approaches for addressing barriers to learning? Widely recognized are factors such as limited understanding and public support, battles among competing stakeholder groups for narrowly-defined vested interests, the lack of a unifying concept around which to rally support and guide policy formulation, the problem of balancing centralized and decentralized governance, rule-driven accountability, inadequate professional training, a dearth of evidence on intervention effectiveness, and failure of many agencies to take advantage of shifts in policy.

I. A Sample of Our Center's View of School-Community Connections for Addressing Barriers to Learning

At the outset, we want to stress our view that, given the number of students in need, the focus on addressing barriers to learning and teaching involves connecting community resources to schools. At the same time, we stress that such connections should always be discussed as more than a strategy for bringing in a few more clinical/social services to help a few more students in a few schools. Our research and analyses suggest that the scale of need in a school district calls for discussing all school-community connections in the context of expanding the policy and practice framework for school improvement in ways that enable transformation of student and learning supports.

If schools are to be effective in helping the many and not just the few, sparse school budgets make it essential to use community resources to fill critical gaps in student and learning supports. Ultimately, the aim is to develop a comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. This involves building a full continuum of interventions (including promoting social-emotional development; preventing behavior, emotional, and learning problems; responding as soon after problem onset as feasible; playing a role in a system of care).

With specific respect to student and learning supports, consider the following:

- (1) The fundamental reason for providing student and learning supports is to enhance equity of opportunity for succeeding in school. Equity of opportunity is a civil right.
- (2) Student and learning supports often are presented and discussed in terms of specific types of personnel and services, but they are best conceived in terms of a systemic approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students and their families.
- (3) Currently, there is not a system. Rather, to varying degrees, there are:
 - a variety of school-funded staff involved with student and learning supports (school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, Title I specialists, special educators, etc.) and
 - some resources from the community on some school campuses (school-based health center staff, clinicians and social service providers, police and probation officers, etc.) All this plays out as an ad hoc and fragmented set of interventions (programs and services; special initiatives and projects; demonstrations and pilots).
- (4) Underlying the fragmentation is a *fundamental policy problem*, namely the long-standing *marginalization of student and learning supports* in school improvement policy and practice. Thus, most efforts to directly use student and learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students are not a primary focus in school improvement planning. The irony is that, because of the marginalization, the continuing trend is to establish student and learning supports through piecemeal policies and implement them in a fragmented and sometimes redundant manner. Then, when budgets tighten, many of these supports are among the first cut. All this contributes to a counterproductive job competition among student support staff and between these school personnel and those community professionals involved with bringing services to schools.

- (5) Student and learning supports need to be understood as more than a set of *services* and certainly more than clinical services. These supports need to be broadly defined as the resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual supports to enable all students to have an equal opportunity for success at school by directly addressing barriers to learning and teaching. In the classroom and school-wide, such supports encompass efforts to reduce the overemphasis on using extrinsic reinforcers and enhance an emphasis on *intrinsic motivation* to promote engagement and re-engagement. In many schools, such resources are estimated to encompass about 25% of a school's budget, especially in situations where school and community resources are operating together. These are essential resources that require innovative thinking to get more bang for the buck and to avoid cuts because of poor outcomes.

Student and learning supports are designed to directly address interfering factors *and* to do so in a way that (re-)engages students in classroom instruction. Attention to both these matters is essential because, in general, interventions that do not ensure a student's meaningful engagement in classroom learning are insufficient in sustaining student involvement, good behavior, and effective learning at school.

- (6) The desire to provide better health and social services and to do so earlier (pre-k through the primary grades) in order to prevent so many learning, behavior, and emotional problems tends to lead policy makers to simply push for better ways to connect a few available community services to schools and enhance coordination and integration. This simplistic response to a complex problem has resulted in a host of failed initiatives over the last 50 years (beginning with the human service integration movement of the 1960s up through to today). California's Healthy Start is a prominent example (see brief history at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pr/healthystart.asp>). There are many lessons that need to be heeded from the failures, but unfortunately many "experts" and advocates/lobbyists find it inconvenient to discuss these lessons as they push their agenda (e.g., they use terms such as school-linked services, integrated services, one-stop shopping, wraparound services, seamless service delivery, coordinated school health, co-location of services, integrated student supports, full-service schools, community schools, systems of care, and more). We have discussed this in our brief policy notes entitled: *Integrated Student Supports and Equity: What's Not Being Discussed?* (March, 2014) <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/integpolicy.pdf> Here's the abstract:

“Connecting school, home, and community resources is essential to the well being of children and youth and to enhancing equity of opportunity for them to succeed at school and beyond. With this in mind, many initiatives and policy reports have focused on addressing the widespread fragmentation of supports for families and their children. Considerable policy emphasis has centered on the notion of integrated student supports. While most of the discussion of integrated student supports is well intentioned, the examples most frequently cited have little chance of enhancing equity of opportunity for students across the country. Moreover, as practiced, serious unintended negative consequences have been observed. This set of policy notes stresses the need and directions for moving forward.”

- (7) *Just* focusing on connecting a few community services to schools amounts to tinkering that can only help a few more students. The need is to transform student and learning supports in ways that can work toward creating equity of opportunity for the many. This requires major system changes that pull together such supports into a unified component, and then, over a period of several years, develop a comprehensive and equitable system by interweaving all that a school has with all that the community can bring to the table. Establishing such a system involves

- Expanding the policy framework for school improvement to fully integrate, as primary and essential, a student and learning supports component.
- Reframing student and learning support interventions to create a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports in classrooms and school-wide.
- Reworking the operational infrastructure to ensure effective daily implementation and ongoing development of a unified and comprehensive system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching.
- Enhancing approaches for systemic change in ways that ensure effective implementation, replication to scale, and sustainability.

We have developed prototype frameworks for each of these concerns. These frameworks are used by trailblazers across the country. See pioneers and trailblazers and lessons learned in working toward this, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing.htm> .

- (8) A critical way for staff involved in providing student and learning supports to enhance their value to schools is to assume leadership roles in transforming the current ad hoc, fragmented, and marginalized efforts into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system. They can start by establishing a *Learning Supports Leadership Team* (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/resource%20coord%20team.pdf>) As they unify and start developing what's already at the school into a system, they can identify critical gaps, set priorities, and reach out to the community to find if there are resources to fill the gaps. Poor communities can only bring limited resources to a school, and it is essential that such resources be distributed appropriately and not just to create 1-2 showcase schools.

In discussing any of this, it is essential to consider how proposals to improve student and learning supports can connect with the federal block grant in the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA). For a perspective on this, see our policy brief entitled: “ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning” <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf> .

II. Quick Find Gateways to Relevant Resources

One the following pages are current examples (May, 2016) of three Quick Finds for accessing the Center's online clearinghouse. There are over 130 relevant topics listed in the Quick Find menu. Each Quick Find has links to Center developed resources, as well as to resources from a variety of others. The menu of topics is at

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/quicksearch.htm> .

The three Quick Finds included here focus on:

- >*Barriers to Learning*
- >*Rethinking and Restructuring Student Supports to Enable Learning*
- >*Policy Related to Addressing Barriers to Learning*

Since Quick Finds are regularly updated, check online for latest resources.

A few others on the menu of topics are:

- >*Classroom-based Learning Supports*
- >*School-Community Collaboration*
- >*Community Outreach for Involvement and Support*
- >*Financing and Funding*
- >*Involving Stakeholders*
- >*Legislation Related to Student Supports and Mental Health*
- >*Mapping Existing School and Community Resources*
- >*School Turn-around and Transformation*
- >*School Improvement Planning*
- >*Systemic Change*

Also see Section 3 of the Center's *System Change Toolkit for Transforming Student and Learning Supports* for policy examples –

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

Quick Find On-line Clearinghouse

TOPIC: Barriers to Learning -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/barriers.htm>

The following represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be exhaustive. (Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one).

Center Developed Documents, Resources and Tools

Quick Finds

- [Children and Poverty](#)
- [Children of Alcoholics & Substance Abusers](#)
- [Cultural Competence and Related Issues](#)
- [Domestic Violence](#)
- [Foster Care](#)
- [Homeless Children and Youth - Education](#)
- [Immigrant Students and Mental Health](#)
- [Juvenile Justice Systems - Mental Health Needs](#)
- [Prevention for Students "At Risk".](#)
- [Teen Pregnancy and Prevention.](#)

Introductory Packet

- [Assessing to Address Barriers to Learning](#)
- [Cultural Concerns in Addressing Barriers to Learning](#)

Newsletter Articles

- [Addressing Barriers to Learning: Closing Gaps in Policy & Practice](#)
- [Behavior Problems: What's a School to Do?](#)
- [Denying Social Promotion Obligates Schools to Do More to Address Barriers to Learning](#)
- [Easing the Impact of Student Mobility: Welcoming & Social Support](#)
- [Promoting Youth Development and Addressing Barriers](#)
- [Re-engaging Students in Learning at School](#)
- [School Dropout Prevention: A Civil Rights and Public Health Imperative](#)

Practice Notes

- [Working with disengaged students](#)
- [Welcoming Strategies for Newly Arrived Students and Their Families](#)
- [Many Schools, Many Students: Equity in Addressing Barriers \(Fact Sheet\)](#)
- [Fidgety Students](#)
- [Disengaged Students](#)
- [Students in Distress](#)

Information Resource

- [Barriers, Buffers, & Youth Development](#)
- [Gender Bias Faced By Girls and What We Can Do: One Student's Perspective and Appended Information from the Center](#)
- [Understanding Diversity to Better Address Barriers to Learning](#)

Policy Notes

- [Common Core State Standards and Learning Supports](#)

Resource Aid Packet

- [Addressing Barriers to Learning: A Set of Surveys to Map What a School Has and What It Needs](#)

Technical Assistance Samplers

- [A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning](#)

Quick Training Aids

- [Attention problems in school](#)
- [Behavior problems in school](#)

Continuing Education Module

- [Addressing Barriers to Learning: New Directions for Mental Health in Schools](#)
- [Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling](#)

Center Brief

- [Addressing Barriers to Student Learning & Promoting Healthy Development: A Usable Research-Base](#)
- [Youth Gangs and Schools](#)

Articles

- [Adelman, H.S., Taylor, L., & Schnieder, M.V. \(1999\). A school-wide component to address barriers to learning. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 15\(4\): 303-326.](#)

Other Relevant Documents, Resources, and Tools on the Internet

Strategies for Learning Improvement

- [The Achievement Gap Initiative](#)
- [Add It Up: Using Research to Improve Education for Low-income and Minority Students](#)

- [Academic Success Among Poor and Minority Students: An Analysis of Competing Models of School Effects](#)
- [Chronic Early Absence](#)
- [Closing the Achievement Gap](#)
- [Community Interventions to Promote Healthy Social Environments: Early Childhood Development and Family Housing](#)
- [Equity in Competence Education: Realizing the potential, overcoming the obstacles](#)
- [A Framework for Advancing the Well-Being and Self-Sufficiency of At-Risk Youth](#)
- [In Parsing the Achievement Gap: Baselines for Tracking Progress](#)
- [Student Health and Academic Achievement](#)
- [Title I - Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged](#)

Socio-Economic Issues on Education

- [Children and the Long-Term Effects of Poverty](#)
- [Homeless Children: Addressing the Challenge in Rural Schools](#)
- [Racial/Ethnic Bias and Health: Scientific Evidence, Methods, and Research Implications](#)

School Problems

- [How maternal Family and Cumulative Risk Affect Absent](#)

Info Sheets/Fact Sheets/Reports

- [ECS Quick Facts: School Poverty and Academic Performance](#)
- [Measuring Poverty in the United States](#)

Related Agencies and Websites

- [Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students](#)
- [National Center for Children in Poverty](#)

Relevant Publications That Can Be Obtained through Libraries

- **Adolescence: Growing Up in America Today (2006).** Dryfoos, J.G. and Barkin, C.: Oxford University Press.
- **Changing the school learning environment : where do we stand after decades of reform? (2004).** Edited by J. Frymier & R. G. Joekel. Lanham, Md. : Scarecrow Education.
- **Class and Schools:Using Social, Economic, and Educational Reform to Close the Black-White Achievement Gap (2004).** Rothstein, R.: Economic Policy Institutes.
- **Educating the Other America: Top Experts Tackle Poverty, Literacy and Achievement in Our Schools(2008).** Newman, S.B.: Paul H. Brookens Pub Co.
- **Meeting the Needs of Students: A Handbook for School and Mental Health Professionals (2007).** Tania, N.; Presswood-Thomas; Donald; Presswood:Paul H. Brookens Pub Co. .
- **Understanding Poverty in the Classroom: Change Perceptions for Students Success (2011).** Templeton, Beth: Romana and Littlefield.

We hope these resources met your needs. If not, feel free to contact us for further assistance. For additional resources related to this topic, use our [search](#) page to find people, organizations, websites and documents. You may also go to our [technical assistance page](#) for more specific technical assistance requests.

Quick Find On-line Clearinghouse

TOPIC: Enabling/Learning Supports Component: Rethinking and Restructuring Student Supports -- http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/qf_enabling.htm

Over the last two decades, work on transforming student and learning supports has blossomed across the country. Changes being discussed include (a) a fundamental shift in school improvement policy, (b) development of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of intervention, (c) reworking of operational infrastructure, and (d) strategic implementation that accounts for replication to scale and sustainability.

In an era of scarce resources, rebuilding supports for learning is essential, but the work often must be done on a shoestring and in stages. Therefore, the Center at UCLA has put together a great amount of free resources to aid those trying to enhance learning supports and has done so with a view to how to proceed in stages and without an allocation of additional funds. Many of these resources are designed to enhance readiness and momentum for new directions for student support; others are aids for building capacity.

As a keystone for the [*National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports*](#), a new book has been written entitled [*Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System*](#). Click on the title free access on our website.

After passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), we did an analysis of how ESSA addresses barriers to learning and the implications for enhancing equity of opportunity. See ESSA, [Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning](#)

Also see:

[Education Leaders' Guide to Transforming Student and Learning Supports](#)

Here is some information about trailblazing states and districts:

[Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Trailblazing Initiatives!](#)

With respect to systemic changes, we suggest proceeding in stages. See the resources in **System Change Toolkit** on line at: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>; others can be found in the **Center's General Resource List** at: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/selection.html>.

Other books on the topic:

- REBUILDING FOR LEARNING: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching and Re-engaging Students. (2008). Scholastic.
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/rebuild/RebuidlingV11RD28.pdf>
 - *The School Leader's Guide to Student Learning Supports: New Directions for Addressing Barriers to Learning*. (2006). Corwin Press.
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/corwin/bookannouncement.htm>
-

Here's a small sample of what's in the System Change Toolkit and the Center Resource List:

- *Steps and Tools to Guide Planning and Implementation of a Comprehensive System to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/stepsandtoolstoguideplanning.pdf>
- *Leadership Training: Moving in New Directions for Student Support*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/contedu/movinginnewdirections.pdf>
- **What Every Leader for School Improvement Needs to Know About Student and Learning Supports**
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whateveryleader.pdf>
- **District Superintendents and the School Improvement Problem of Addressing Barriers to Learning**
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/supt.pdf>
- **What Do Principals Say about Their Work? Implications for Addressing Barriers to Learning and School Improvement**
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/principalsay.pdf>
- **Transforming School Improvement to Develop a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: What District Superintendents Say They Need to Move Forward**
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/superintendentsay.pdf>
- **Leadership Changes: Minimizing the Downside**
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newleader.pdf>
- **Guidance Notes:**
 - [Developing a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: First Steps for Superintendents Who Want to Get Started](#)
 - [Establishing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports at a School: Seven Steps for Principals and Their Staff](#)
 - [Introducing the Idea of Developing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports to a New Superintendent or to One Who May Be Ready to Move Forward](#)
 - [Enhancing a School Board's Focus on Addressing Barriers to Learning & Teaching](#)
 - [About Demonstration Sites](#)
 - [Moving toward a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: Mapping & Analyzing Learning Supports](#)
 - [Analyzing What is Being Spent in Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching](#)
- **Information Resources:**

- [A Set of Key Resources Superintendents Can Draw on to Guide Development of a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports for All Schools in the District](#)
- [Some Resources for Principals to Learn More About and for Teaching About a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports](#)
- **Policy Notes & Guides**
 - [Standards and Learning Supports](#)
 - [Teachers Cant Do it Alone!](#)
 - [Board Policy Prototype for a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports](#)
- **Practice Notes**
 - [Connecting Learning Supports to Standards for Curriculum](#)
 - [Helping and Socialization](#)

Center's Initiative for Common Core Standards for Learning Supports

- [Initiative Announcement](#)
- [Standards for a Learning Supports Component](#)
- [Moving School Improvement Policy and Practice Forward: *Context for Standards for a Unified, Comprehensive, & Systemic Learning Supports Component*](#)
- [Standards Debates Continue to Ignore Student and Learning Supports](#)

Examples of Related Resources:

Developing Comprehensive, Multifaceted, and Integrated Approaches

- [Establishing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports at a School: Seven Steps for Principals and Their Staff](#)
- [Enhancing Classroom Teachers' Capacity to Successfully Engage All Students in Learning: It's the Foundation of Learning Supports](#)
- [Some Resources for Principals to Learn More About and for Teaching About a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports](#)
- [A Set of Key Resources Superintendents Can Draw on to Guide Development of a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports for All Schools in the District](#)
- [Connecting Schools in Ways that Strengthen Learning Supports](#)
- [Moving Beyond the Three Tier Intervention Pyramid Toward a Comprehensive Framework for Student and Learning Supports](#)
- [Addressing Barriers to Learning: Overview of the Curriculum for an Enabling \(or Learning Supports\) Component](#)
- [Building Comprehensive, Multifaceted, and Integrated Approaches to Address Barriers to Student Learning](#)
- [CSSS - Hawaii's Comprehensive Student Support System: A Multifaceted Approach that Encompasses & Enhances Mental Health in Schools](#)
- [Embedding Mental Health into a Learning Supports Component: An Essential Step for the Field to Take Now](#)

- [Framework for Systemic Transformation of Student and Learning Supports \(A Resource Aid\)](#)
- [Guidance Notes for Designing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports and Strategically Planning its Implementation](#)
- [Guides for the Enabling Component -- Addressing Barriers to Learning and Enhancing Healthy Development \(Guides to practice\)](#)
 - a. [A Guide to the Enabling Component](#)
 - b. [Getting from Here to There: A Guidebook for the Enabling Component](#)
- [Implementing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: A Brief District Guide for Moving Forward](#)
- [Improving Outcomes for Students and Schools Requires a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports](#)
- [Introduction to a Component for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning](#)
- [A School-Wide Component to Address Barriers to Learning](#)
- [Toward Next Steps in School Improvement: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching \(A Resource Aid\)](#)
- [Transforming Student and Learning Supports: ESEA Won't Do It, But States and Localities Can](#)
- [What is a Comprehensive Approach to Student Supports?](#)
- [Embedding Bullying Interventions into a Comprehensive System of Student and Learning Supports](#)

Reframing Staff Roles and Functions

- [Beginning Steps in Personnel Development Related to Establishing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports](#)
- [Best Practices in the Use of Resource Teams to Enhance Learning Supports](#)
- [Framing New Directions for School Counselors, Psychologists, and Social Workers](#)
- [Improving Teaching and Learning Supports by Addressing the Rhythm of a Year \(Resource Aid Packet, 2003\)](#)
- [Needed: A Greater Role for Learning Support Staff in Inservice at Every School \(Newsletter article, Winter, 2003\)](#)
- [Organization Facilitators: A Key Change Agent for Systemic School and Community Changes](#)
- **Survey of Learning Supports System Status in:** [Resource Mapping and Management to Address Barriers to Learning: An Intervention for Systemic Change](#)

More on Restructuring Student Supports

- [It's Good that Some Students Did Well this Year; Now Let's Enable All Students to Succeed at School \(Policy alert\)](#)
- [What Every Leader for School Improvement Needs to Know About Student and Learning Supports](#)
- [Introducing the Idea of Developing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports to a New Superintendent or to One Who May Be Ready to Move Forward](#)
- [Connecting Counseling, Psychological, & Social Support Programs to School Reform \(Newsletter article, Winter, '00\)](#)
- [Expanded School Reform](#)

- [Expanding Educational Reform to Address Barriers to Learning: Restructuring Student Support Services and Enhancing School-Community Partnerships \(Center Report, Oct. '99\)](#)
 - [Expanding the Framework for School Accountability](#)
 - [FACT SHEET - What is a Learning Support Resource Team?](#)
 - [Restructuring Education Support Services: Toward the Concept of an Enabling Component](#)
 - [A Sampling of Outcome Findings from Interventions Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning](#)
 - [Summit on New Directions for Student Support \(Newsletter Article, Fall 2002\)](#)
- A few Other Relevant Publications
 - [Aligning School Accountability, Outcomes, and Evidenced-Base Practices.](#) (Adelman & Taylor 2002. Data Matters, #5, 16-18).
 - [Building Comprehensive, Multifaceted Approaches to Address Barriers to Student Learning.](#) (Adelman & Taylor, 2002. Childhood Education, 78, 261-268).
 - [Classroom Climate](#) (Adelman & Taylor, 2005. In S. W. Lee (Ed) Encyclopedia of School Psychology, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage).
 - [Connecting Schools, Families, and Communities.](#) (Taylor & Adelman, 2000. Professional School Counseling, 3, 298-307).
 - Education Reform: Broadening the Focus. (Adelman, 1995. Psychological Science, 6, 61-62).
 - [Establishing School-Based Collaborative Teams to Coordinate Resources: A Case Study.](#) (Lim & Adelman, 1997. Social Work in Education, 19, 266-278).
 - [Guide 7: Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement.](#) (Adelman & Taylor, 2002. In Guidebook series: Safe and Secure: Guides to Creating Safer Schools. Northwest Regional Educational Lab).
 - [Involving Teachers in Collaborative Efforts to Better Address Barriers to Student Learning.](#) (Adelman & Taylor, 1998. Preventing School Failure, 42, 55-60).
 - [Looking at School Health and School Reform Policy through the Lens of Addressing Barriers to Learning.](#) (Adelman & Taylor, 2000. Children Services: Social Policy, Research, and Practice, 3, 117-132).
 - [Mapping a School's Resources to Improve their Use in Preventing and Ameliorating Problems.](#) (Adelman & Taylor, 2006. In C. Franklin, M. B. Harris, & P. Allen-Mears (Eds.) School Social Work and Mental Health Workers Training and Resource Manual Oxford University Press).
 - [Moving Prevention from the Fringes into the Fabric of School Improvement.](#) (Adelman & Taylor, 2000. Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 11, 7-36).
 - [On Sustainability of Project Innovations as Systemic Change.](#) (Adelman & Taylor, 2003. Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 14, 1-26).
 - [A Policy and Practice Framework to Guide School-Community Connections.](#) (Taylor & Adelman, 1998. Rural Special Education Quarterly, 17,62-70).
 - Reorganizing Student Supports to Enhance Equity. (Adelman & Taylor, 2006. In E. Lopez, G. Esquivel, S.Nahari (Eds.) Handbook of Multicultural School Psychology).
 - [Restructuring Education Support Services: Toward the Concept of an Enabling Component.](#) (Adelman, 1996. Kent, OH: American School Health Association).
 - [Scaling-Up Reforms across a School District.](#) (Taylor, Nelson, & Adelman, 1999. Reading and Writing Quarterly, 15, 303-326).

- [School-Community Relations: Policy and Practice](#). (Taylor & Adelman, 2003. In Fishbaugh, et al., (Eds.), Ensuring safe school environments: Exploring issues □ seeking solutions. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum).
- [School-Wide Approaches to Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching](#). (Adelman & Taylor, 2008. National Association of School Psychologists, 277-306).
- [A School-Wide Component to Address Barriers to Learning](#). (Adelman, Taylor, & Schnieder, 1999. Reading and Writing Quarterly, 15, 277-302).
- School Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services. (Adelman, 1998. In E. Marx & S.F. Wooley, with D. Northrop (Eds.), Health is academic: A Guide to coordinated school health programs. Teachers College).
- [Toward a Scale-Up Model for Replicating New Approaches to Schooling](#). (Adelman & Taylor, 1997. Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 8, 197-230).
- Upgrading School Support Programs through Collaboration: Resource Coordinating Teams. Rosenblum, DiCecco, Taylor, & Adelman, 1995. Social Work in Education, 17, 117-124)

Finally, if you need something more specific or want to explore any of this in greater depth, contact ltaylor@ucla.edu.

We hope these resources met your needs. If not, feel free to contact us for further assistance. For additional resources related to this topic, use our [search](#) page to find people, organizations, websites and documents. You may also go to our [technical assistance page](#) for more specific technical assistance requests.

If our website has been helpful, we are pleased and encourage you to use our site or contact our Center in the future. At the same time, you can do your own technical assistance with "[The Fine Art of Fishing](#)" which we have developed as an aid for do-it-yourself technical assistance.

Quick Find On-line Clearinghouse

TOPIC: Policy Related to Addressing Barriers to Learning -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/policy.htm>

The following represents a sample of information to get you started and is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

(Note: Clicking on the following links causes a new window to be opened. To return to this window, close the newly opened one).

Center Developed Documents, Resources and Tools

Guides

- [New Directions in Enhancing Educational Results: Policymakers' Guide to Restructuring Student Support Resources to Address Barriers to Learning](#)
- [Information Resource: Policy Implications for Advancing Systemic Change for School Improvement](#)
- [Board Policy Prototype for a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports](#)

Reports & Briefs

- [A Center Policy & Practice Analysis Brief: School Attendance Problems: Are Current Policies & Practices Going in the Right Direction?](#)
- [A Center Policy Report for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning: Closing Gaps in School/Community Policy and Practice](#)
- [A Center Policy Report: Policies and Practices for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning: Current Status and New Directions](#)
- [Balancing Cut-backs at Schools is Essential to Ensuring Equity of Opportunity](#)
- [Center Policy Report: An Initial Look at Texas Policy Related to Mental Health in Schools](#)
- [Expanding Policy Leadership for Mental Health in Schools: Report from the Mini-Summit](#)
- [Mental Health in Schools: Guidelines, Models, Resources, & Policy Considerations](#)
- [Should Policy Specify a Formal Role for Schools Related to Mental Health?](#)

Practice Notes

- [About Policy and Practice Trends for Reducing Truancy .](#)

Articles

- H. Adelman & L. Taylor (2011). [Turning around, transforming, and continuously improving schools: Policy proposals are still based on a two rather than a three component blueprint.](#) . *International Journal of School Disaffection*, 8.
- H. Adelman & L. Taylor (2011). [Expanding school improvement policy to better address barriers to learning and integrate public health concerns.](#) *Policy Futures in Education*, 9

- N.D. Brener, M. Weist, H. Adelman, L. Taylor, & M. Vernon-Smiley. (2007). [Mental Health and Social Services: Results From the School Health Policies and Programs Study 2006](#). *J Sch Health*. 77: 486-499.
- H.S. Adelman & L. Taylor (2002). [Building Comprehensive, Multifaceted, and Integrated Approaches to Addressing Barriers to Student Learning](#). *Childhood Education*, 78(5), 261-268
- H.S. Adleman, C. Reyna, R. Collins, J. Onghai, & L. Taylor (1999). [Fundamental Concerns About Policy for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning](#) *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 15(4), 327-350
- H.S. Adelman, & L. Taylor (2000). [Looking at School health and School Reform Policy Through the Lens of Addressing Barriers to Learning](#). *Children's Services: Policy, Research, and Practice* 3 (2), 117-132 .
- H.S. Adelman, & L. Taylor (1998). [A Policy and Practice Framework to Guide School-Community Connections](#). *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 17(3/4) 62-70.
- H.S. Adelman, & L. Taylor (2002) [Towards a Comprehensive Policy Vision for Mental Health in Schools](#). Chapter in *Handbook of School Mental Health: Advancing Practice and Research*

Newsletters

- [Center Report: Summit on New Directions for Student Support \(November, 2002\)](#)
- [Policies and Practices for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Current Status and New Directions, \(Fall, '96\)](#)
- [Open Letter to the Secretary of Education.\(Summer, '98\)](#)
- [Addressing Barriers to Learning: Closing Gaps in Policy and Practice \(Summer, '97\)](#)

Reports from the Coalition for Cohesive Policy in Addressing Barriers to Development & Learning

- [Initial Tasks and Guiding Frameworks: Coalition for Cohesive Policy in Addressing Barriers to Development & Learning: report from the Steering Committee](#)
- [The Policy Problem and a Resolution to Guide Organizations Working toward Policy Cohesion \(October 1999\)](#)
- [Proposal for Policy Legislation: Restructuring Student Support Resources and Enhancing Their Connection with Community Resources \(August 2000\)](#)
- [Coalition for Cohesive Policy in Addressing Barriers to Development and Learning: 1999 Report from the Steering Committee](#)
- [Coalition for Cohesive Policy in Addressing Barriers to Development and Learning: 1998 Report from the Steering Committee](#)

Technical Assistance Sampler

- [Technical Assistant Sampler: Thinking About and Accessing Policy Related to Addressing Barriers to Learning](#)

Net Exchange

- [Policy Information](#)

Other Relevant Documents, Resources, and Tools on the Internet

General

- [Beyond Ideology, Politics, and Guesswork: The Case for Evidence-Based Policy \(2008\) T. Dunworth , et al., Urban Institute.](#)
- [Child and Family Policy Center: Articles on Community Building, Accountability, and Early Childhood](#)
- [Collective Impact for Policymakers: Working together for children and youth](#)
- [Examining Policies and Practices Through an Equity Lens](#)
- [Learning from Starting Points: Key Lessons for Funders and Policymakers](#)
- [A National Youth Development Agenda: Public Policy Positions of the National Collaboration for Youth](#)
- [Social Policy Report: Applying Research to Policy and Practice](#)
- [What Works? Integrating Multiple Data Sources and Policy Research Methods in Assessment Need and Evaluation Outcomes in Community Based Child and Family Service Systems](#)

Mental Health/Health

- [California State Board of Education Parent Involvement Policy](#)
- [Health, Mental Health, and Safety Guidelines for Schools](#)
- [Healthier Students Are Better Learners: A Missing Link in School Reforms to Close the Achievement Gap](#)
- [The Mental Health Policy and Service Guidance Package \(2004\)](#)
- [Policy, Research, and Practices to Inform the Decision-Making Process](#) *State Mental Health Lawmakers' Digest: Volume 6, Number 2 -- Spring 2009*
- [Report of the Surgeon General's Conference on Children's Mental Health: A National Action Agenda](#)

Education

- [Improving Educational Outcomes: How State Policy Can Support School Principals as Instructional Leaders: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices](#)
- [Local School Wellness Policies \(2009\) Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)
- [Model Local School Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition to assist local school districts meet the requirements of Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.](#)
- [Overview and Inventory of State Education Reforms](#)
- [Overview and Summary of Findings: School health policies and programs study](#)
- [Policy options for interventions in failing schools \(2005\) C. Speng, RAND](#)
- [Prevalence of School Policies, Programs, and Facilities that Promote a Healthy Physical School Environment \(2003\)](#)
- [State Funding Programs for High-Cost Special Education Students](#)
- [Urban Policies and Programs to Reduce Truancy](#)

Related Agencies and Websites

- [Agency for Health Care Policy and Research](#)
- [Baby Matters: A Gateway to State Policies and Initiatives](#)
- [Center for the Study of Mental Health Policy and Services](#)
- [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#)

- [Center on Education Policy](#)
- [Department of Education](#) website.
Click on Legislation, Regulations, and Policy Guidance or Guide to U.S. Department of Education Programs.
- [Department of Health and Human Services](#)
- [EdSource: Clarifying Complex Educational Issues](#)
- [The Future of Children](#)
- Guides to State and Local Governments on the Net:
 - [State and Local Government on the Net](#)
 - [University of Michigan Document Center: State Government and Politics](#)
- [The Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy \(University of Virginia\)](#)
- [National Academy for State Health Policy](#)
- [National Adolescent Health Information Center](#)
- [Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions](#)

Relevant Publications That Can Be Obtained through Libraries

- A model for helping schools address policy options regarding gay and lesbian youth. Roffman, Deborah M. *Journal of Sex Education & Therapy*. American Assn of Sex Educators Counselors & Therapists Inc AASECT: US, 2000. 25 (2-3): p. 130-136.
- Historical trends in federal education policies that target students placed at risk. Mitchell, Antoinette. In: Mavis G. Sanders, Ed. *Schooling students placed at risk: Research, policy, and practice in the education of poor and minority adolescents..* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers: Mahwah, NJ, US Mahwah, NJ, US, 2000. p. 17-35 of xxi, 387pp.
- Policy and practice in suicide prevention. Jenkins, Rachel; Singh, Bruce. *British Journal of Forensic Practice*. Pavilion Publishing: United Kingdom, 2000 Mar. 2 (1): p. 3-11.
- *Promoting Health and Wellness in Underserved Communities: Multidisciplinary Perspectives Through Service Learning*. By Pelham, A., Sills, E., Eisman, G.S., & Corrigan, R.A. (2010). Stylus Publishing.
- School health : policy and practice / American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on School Health. Elk Grove Village, IL : American Academy of Pediatrics, 2004.
- Schooling students placed at risk : research, policy, and practice in the education of poor and minority adolescents / edited by Mavis G. Sanders. Mahwah, N.J. : L. Erlbaum Associates, 2000.

We hope these resources met your needs. If not, feel free to contact us for further assistance. For additional resources related to this topic, use our [search](#) page to find people, organizations, websites and documents. You may also go to our [technical assistance page](#) for more specific technical assistance requests.

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III. A Few Examples of Educational Policy Research and Analysis

An Ecology Metaphor for Educational Policy Analysis: A Call to Complexity. M.B. Weaver-Hightower (2008). *Educational Researcher*, 37, 153-167.

<http://edr.sagepub.com/content/37/3/153.abstract>

Abstract: Educational policy might productively be conceptualized with an ecology metaphor. Each policy, thus considered, exists within a complex system that reflects varied international, national, regional, and local dynamics. Using this metaphor provides policy analysts with a view of the regularities and irregularities of any policy, its process, its texts, its reception, and its degree of implementation. The characteristics of policy ecologies alert analysts to the possibilities of great transformation, for good or ill, and give them a way to conceptualize how such transformations occur. Perhaps most important, using an ecology metaphor suggests specific ways that progressive researchers might positively intervene in the policy process.

Recent Trends in Intergovernmental Relations: The Resurgence of Local Actors in Education Policy. J. A. Marsh & P. Wohlstetter (2013).

Educational Researcher, 42, 276-283. <http://edr.sagepub.com/content/42/5/276.abstract>

Abstract: In this essay, the authors explore trends in intergovernmental relations (IGR) by analyzing recent education policies—No Child Left Behind Act, Common Core State Standards, and local empowerment policies. Identifying a resurgent role for local actors in education policy, the authors argue that recent federal efforts to exert more control have in many ways strengthened the influence of local actors by providing avenues for school districts and other local “non-system” players to challenge traditional governance arrangements. In a similar vein, because the federal government’s ability to achieve its goals rests primarily on actions of local players, federal policies have in the course of implementation strengthened the hand of many local actors. Based on their analyses, the authors stress that IGR is not a zero-sum game. As one level gains power in certain domains, other levels may simultaneously acquire power in the same or different domains. The authors further argue that relations among federal, state, and local governments are bidirectional. Federal policy often requires states and districts to alter local policies, and conversely, decisions made by states and districts can also influence federal decisions. The authors begin the essay with an overview of the intergovernmental landscape, followed by an analysis of current education policies to illustrate the ways in which local actors have retained and asserted significant control over schooling, despite the expanded federal role in education policy. The essay concludes with questions for future research and practice.

“Expanding the Moral Community” or “Blaming the Victim”? The Politics of State Education Accountability Policy. K.A. McDermott

(2007). *American Education Research Journal*, 44, 77-111.

<http://aer.sagepub.com/content/44/1/77.short?related-urls=yes&legid=spaer;44/1/77>

Abstract: Advocates of educational accountability policies say that the policies are intended to use the state’s authority to ensure equal educational opportunity. Opponents make essentially the opposite claim: that expanded state power is intended to disempower local communities and to single them out for blame, in response to larger political and economic imperatives. This article analyzes the enactment of educational accountability policies in four U.S. states, drawing upon legislative documents, hearing and debate transcripts where available, and press coverage. The analysis concludes that policy makers did intend to make the public education system more equitable. However, the results of the policies as implemented show a significant gap between aspirations and results. This gap increases the accountability-policy critics’ credibility.

Toward Teacher Education Research That Informs Policy. C.

Sleeter (2014). *Educational Researcher*, 43, 146-153.

<http://edr.sagepub.com/content/43/3/146>

Abstract: This article investigates the extent to which researchers are currently engaged in a shared research program that offers systematic evidence of the classroom impact of organized venues (preservice as well as inservice) for teacher professional learning. The article stems from concern about policies rooted in suspicion that teacher education is either ineffective or tangential to improving outcomes for students, as well as earlier findings that far too little teacher education research has been designed to address that suspicion with data (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, and Shapely, 2007). An analysis of 196 articles published in 2012 in four leading teacher education journals internationally found only 1% to report large-scale mixed-methods studies, only 6% to examine the impact of teacher education on teaching practice and/or student learning, and most of the rest to be conducted within rather than across silos. Three recommendations for strengthening teacher education research are offered.

Assembling and Disassembling: Policy as Productive Play. J.P. Koyama & H. Varenne (2012). *Educational Researcher*, 41, 157-162.

<http://edr.sagepub.com/content/41/5/157.abstract>

Abstract: In this piece, the authors examine educational policy by focusing on the ways in which actors “play” or selectively follow, negotiate, and appropriate cultural instructions and rules. They outline a framework that situates assemblage, a notion utilized in actor-network theory, within the critical cultural study of policy. Treating policy assemblage as a dynamic cultural form, they argue, provides a way of revealing the complexities of sociomaterial connections inherent to policy implementation. The authors pay particular attention to what happens when disparate actors join together to perform policy-directed tasks. It is within these heterogeneous and hybrid linkages that policy negotiations and controversies can become productive play. The authors briefly discuss the dynamic composition of productive policy play. Then, applying it to a controversy revealed in the ethnographic analysis of No Child Left Behind conducted by the first author, they demonstrate the framework’s usefulness in considering the sociocultural processes of policy in action.

ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to

Learning. H. Adelman & L. Taylor (2015). A policy analysis from the national Center for Mental Health in Schools in the Dept. of Psychology at UCLA.

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

Among the conclusions of this analysis:

- The legislation clearly underscores that barriers to learning need to be addressed so that many more students will be able to meet challenging state academic standards.
- At the same time, the act addresses such barriers in a piecemeal and mostly indirect manner.
- As a result, ESSA conveys a fragmented picture and a lack of coherence with respect to essential student and learning supports.
- Student and learning supports need to be unified and developed into comprehensive system if they are to significantly enhance equity of opportunity as an essential component in enabling every student to succeed.
- If states and LEAs are to move away from existing fragmented and marginalized approaches for dealing with factors interfering with student success, they will need to use the transition to local control as a time to plan beyond the limitations of federal formulations.

The analysis indicates the imperative for transformative system change. From this perspective, the report also highlights frameworks and prototypes that can be used as planning aids and guides in developing a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic approach for addressing barriers to learning and re-engaging disconnected students.

Using ESSA to Transform Student and Learning Supports

The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) recognizes that significant numbers of students require supports to successfully meet challenging state academic standards. The legislation clearly underscores that student and learning supports permeate efforts to enable every student to succeed. Unfortunately, the act muddies the nature and scope of such supports by scattering references to them throughout the various Titles, Parts, Subparts, and Sections. By addressing barriers to learning and teaching in a piecemeal and mostly indirect manner, ESSA conveys a fragmented picture and a lack of coherence with respect to essential supports. This reflects a long-standing problem related to school improvement efforts.

The shift to more local control provides an opportunity for state and local stakeholders to escape the limitations of the federal act and prevailing thinking. The opportunity is to move away from existing fragmented and marginalized approaches to more effectively deal with factors interfering with student success and enhance equity of opportunity. Making this happen involves starting transformative planning now. And a first emphasis must be on ending the way school improvement planning has marginalized direct efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching.

To more fully understand the current situation, see *ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning* -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf>

Some state and district leaders have started. They are focused on a fundamental transformation of how schools can enhance equity of opportunity by addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

We suggest that others start now by *establishing a leadership workgroup* charged with transformative planning. Such planning focuses on unifying and then developing a comprehensive and equitable system of student and learning supports by

- (a) adopting a three component framework for school improvement (i.e., establishing a component for addressing barriers to learning and fully integrating it with the components for instruction and management-governance)
- (b) moving beyond current MTSS thinking (i.e., developing an intervention continuum that functions as an *integrated set of subsystems* for promoting healthy social emotional development, preventing problems, responding quickly when problems arise, and contributing effectively to helping with severe and chronic problems)
- (c) organizing student and learning supports cohesively into a set of well-designed and delimited intervention arenas (e.g., we have categorized six that schools need to address each day)
- (d) weaving together school with relevant community resources appropriately and effectively
- (e) formulating the processes for systemic change, scale-up, and sustainability in a strategic and effectively resourced manner.



For a range of resources related to this matter, see
National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

And feel free to let us know if you want us to help.
Contact us at Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.cula.edu

IV. An Example of a Policy Prototype for School Board Use in Developing a Policy for a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Learning Supports

(Adapted from board policy in several districts)

Rationale:

The Governing Board recognizes that for some of our students, improvements in instruction and curricula are necessary but not sufficient. We recognize that the economic, neighborhood, family, school, peer, and personal circumstances can create barriers to teaching and learning. The Board believes that the role of schools and the district is to promote development of the whole child and ensure equity of opportunity. This includes addressing barriers to learning by creating a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of supports, referred to as a *learning supports component*, that is *fully interwoven* with other District wide and site level school improvement efforts.

The Governing Board recognizes that school, home, and community resources combined together and developed into a comprehensive system can support development of the whole child, can address barriers to learning and teaching, and re-engage disconnected students. All children, youth, and families members should have equal access to interventions and resources in proportion to their needs. The successful development of such a system is essential to efforts to improve school climate.

With this policy statement, we commit to developing a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic *learning supports component* for every school. Such a component joins the instructional and management/governance components as the third primary and essential facet of school improvement.

Details:

It is the intent of the Board of Education that a *Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Learning Supports* be fully interwoven with other school and district program efforts to improve instruction and maximize the use of resources at individual schools. All interventions are to be tailored to the diversity of students and families in our schools.

Learning supports are defined as the resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual assistance intended to enable all pupils to have an equal opportunity for success at school. To enable effective use of learning supports, school and community resources are unified in a learning supports component and fully integrated with instructional efforts and interventions and professional development. A learning supports component is deployed in classrooms and schoolwide to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a leadership group to prepare a District design and strategic plan for developing a *Unified and Comprehensive Learning Supports Component* that facilitates the establishment of such a support system at each school. The design and plan shall clarify administrative leadership and mechanisms at District and school levels and ways for clusters (e.g., feeder patterns) of schools and central office operations to support school site efforts (e.g. helping schools achieve economics of scale and implement practices that effectively improve classroom operations and student learning). The design and plan shall also focus on ways to further promote collaboration with communities at the classroom, school, cluster, and central office levels.

The component design should encompass a continuum of interventions that mesh with community efforts to prevent problems, respond as early as feasible after a problem surfaces, and provide for students with severe and chronic problems. The following content arenas should be considered when establishing the continuum:

(1) *Classroom-based learning supports.* Teacher professional development and collaboration with other teachers and support staff should enhance the capacity of teachers to personalize instruction, promote healthy development, address problems, engage and re-engage students in classroom learning, and foster social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development. Teacher professional development and collaboration includes strategies for better enhancing resilience and addressing learning, behavior, and emotional problems within the context of the classroom. To enhance classroom resources and strategies and professional development, this includes in-classroom collaboration with student support staff and targeted use of volunteers.

(2) *Support for Transitions.* The focus here is on enhancing the capacity of schools to handle transitions for students and families (e.g., transitions throughout the school day, over the school year, newcomers entering school, grade level to grade level, school to school and school to college or work). Interventions might include: welcoming and social support programs for newcomers; school and classroom adjustment programs; before and after school and lunch time programs that enrich learning and provide safe recreation; attendance monitoring and support; programs for vulnerable populations, including, but not limited to, those in homeless education, migrant education, and special education programs and counseling for vocational and college transition.

(3) *Crisis Response and Prevention.* The focus here is on establishing systemic approaches for responding to, and preventing, emergency crises. Interventions might include: the establishment of a crisis team to ensure immediate response, school wide and school-linked prevention programs to enhance safety, reduce violence, bullying, harassment, abuse, and other threats to ensure a supportive and productive learning environment.

(4) *Home Involvement and Engagement with School.* The focus here is on enhancing home involvement through interventions that support family needs and enhance communication and connection between home and school. These may include ways for those in need of health and social services to connect effectively with such supports; family literacy programs; parent education; shared decision making and problem solving affecting the pupil and the school; interventions for reengaging homes that have disengaged from school involvement.

(5) *Community involvement and support.* The focus here is on enhancing limited school resources and filling critical intervention gaps through linkages with a wide range of community resources and agencies such as: health clinics, probation offices, mental health services, libraries, recreational facilities, community artists; volunteers and mentors, and postsecondary education institutions.

(6) *Student and Family Assistance.* After all appropriate efforts have been made to address factors interfering with a student learning and performing at school (including application of Response to Intervention), special assistance for pupils and their families is provided or pursued through referrals that effectively connect those in need with direct services to address barriers to the learning of pupils at school. Interventions might include effective case and resource management, connecting with community service providers, special assistance for teachers in addressing the problems of specific individuals, counseling or special education.

*Research, standards, and quality indicators related to a Unified Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Learning Supports is available from the national Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> .

V. Agencies and Resource Centers

The Center's *Gateway to a World of Resources* at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/gateway/gateway_sites.htm provides a starter list of organizations that either focus directly on policy concerns or offer resources that can aid in studying and formulating policy relevant to addressing barriers to learning.

Other, more general agencies and organizations are:

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality --
<http://www.ahrp.gov/>

American Association of School Administrators --
www.aasa.org

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities --
www.cbpp.org

Center on Education Policy --
<http://www.cep-dc.org/>

Center for Psychology in Schools and Education --
<http://www.apa.org/ed/cpsc/>

Center for Schools and Communities --
<https://www.center-school.org/>

Child and Family Policy Center --
www.cfpciowa.org

Council of Chief State School Officers --
<http://ccsso.org/>

Consortium for Policy Research in Education
www.cpre.org

Economic Policy Institute --
<http://epi.org/>

The Future of Children --
<http://futureofchildren.org>

Georgetown University Child and Human
Development Center --
<http://gucchd.georgetown.edu>

Greater Washington Urban League --
<https://www.gwul.org>

Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) --
<http://iel.org/>

Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy
(Univ. of Virginia) --
<http://www.ilpp.virginia.edu>

Institute for Child Health Policy --
<http://www.ichp.ufl.edu>

Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy --
<http://www.ilpp.virginia.edu/>

National Association of State Boards of Education --
www.nasbe.org

National Assoc. of State Directors of Spec. Education --
www.nasdse.org

Nat. Assoc. of State Mental Health Program Directors --
www.nasmhpd.org

National Center for Children in Poverty --
<http://nccp.org/>

National Center on Education and the Economy --
www.ncee.org

National Institute on Educational Governance,
Finance, Policymaking, & Management
U.S. Dept. of Education --
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/GFI/>

Office of Human Services Policy,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services --
<https://aspe.hhs.gov/office-human-services-policy>

RAND -- www.rand.org

Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and
Social Policy Yale University --
<http://ziglercenter.yale.edu/>

U.S. Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/landing.jhtml>

Click on *Legislation, Regulations, and Policy Guidance* for information on these matters pertaining to education programs and activities -- includes links to full text documents on the Dept. of Education's web as well as to useful resources elsewhere on the Internet.

Click on *Guide to U.S. Department of Education Programs* for a concise description of each program, who may apply, and how to obtain more information.

Click on the *Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance of GSA* for a comprehensive listing of all Federal programs that give out money or other forms of assistance.

Guides to State and Local Governments on the Net

<http://www.statelocalgov.net/index.cfm>

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/state.html>

Appendix

Three Brief Aids Prepared by Our Center

The following were prepared as aids in thinking about, mapping, and analyzing policy for addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

(1) Some Points About Influencing Policy

(2) Fundamental Concerns About Policy for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning

(3) Addressing Barriers to Learning/Strengthening Schools, Families, and Neighborhoods: Framework Outlining Areas of Interest

(1) Some Points About Influencing Policy

As we attempt to influence public policy, it is essential to have some perspective on what the term means.

Policy denotes a purposive course of action aimed at dealing with a matter of concern. We treat public policy as courses of action carried out by institutions and people who staff them. We also view the process of developing policy as political, but not limited to the enactment of laws, regulations, and guidelines. That is, while much policy is enacted by legally elected representatives, policy often emerges informally because of the way people in institutions pursue course of action each day. Decisions not to act also constitute policy making.

A great deal of discussion in recent years focuses on whether policy should be made from the top-down or the bottom-up. Our experience in attempting to influence policy related to the matter of addressing barriers to student learning suggests that efforts to generate changes must focus on the top, bottom, and at every level of the system.

The commitment and priority assigned to a policy generally is reflected in the support provided for implementing specified courses of action. Some actions are mandated with ample funds to ensure they are carried out; others are mandated with little or no funding; some are simply encouraged.

Designated courses of action vary considerably. More often than not policy is enacted in a piecemeal manner, leading to fragmented activity rather than comprehensive, integrated approaches. Relatedly time frames often are quite restricted -- looking for quick payoffs and ignoring the fact that the more complex the area of concern, the longer it usually takes to deal with it. The focus too often is on funding short-term projects to show what is feasible -- with little or no thought given to sustainability and scale-up.

Public policy related to addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development clearly warrants renewed attention. Those concerned with this topic have a role to play in both analyzing the current policy picture and influencing needed changes. The figure on the next page underscores some of the major policy dimensions we find worth keeping in mind as we think about influencing public policy.

(2) Fundamental Concerns About Policy for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning

Policy makers and school personnel have long understood that if schools are to function well and students are to learn effectively, factors that interfere with student learning and performance must be addressed. As the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989) succinctly concluded: "School systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students. But when the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge" (p. 7).

Funding for compensatory education, special education, safe and drug free schools, dropout prevention, and teen pregnancy prevention are prominent examples of policy efforts that involve schools in a variety of programs and services to address barriers to learning. Related efforts are seen in the emphasis on school-community partnerships to foster school-linked services that are part of various initiatives to increase health and human service agency collaboration and program integration.

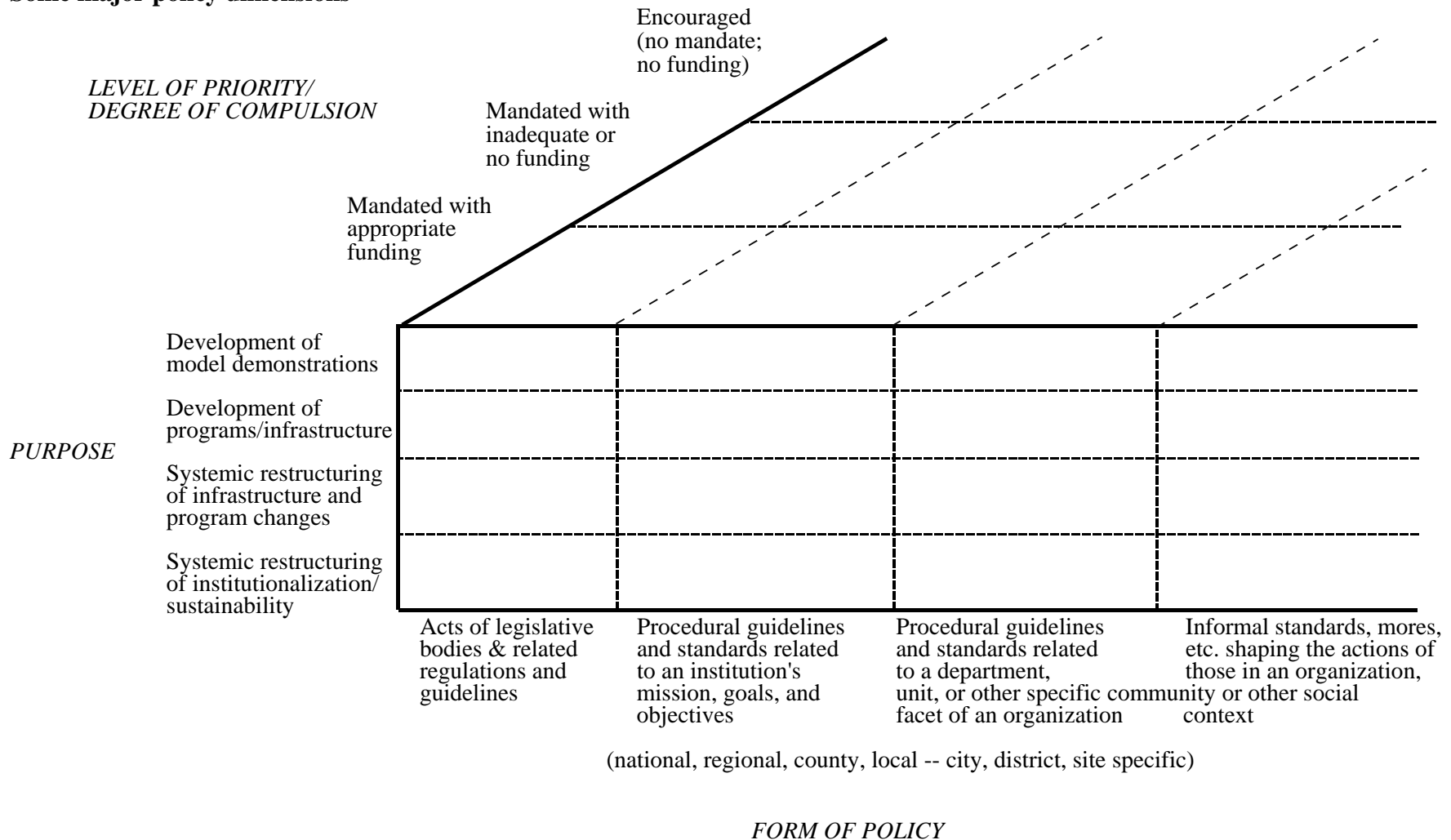
Clearly policy makers have been active. Now it is time to review what has been created and make some improvements. Based on previous analyses, a few points already appear evident.

On the Positive Side

There clearly are many initiatives at all levels designed to move things forward. Just reviewing the impressive array of documents colleagues have sent (before and since the UCLA summit in July) indicates the range of innovative work and the sense of accomplishment so many feel about the work in which they are involved.

The initiatives fall into three groups. One set (the majority) are designed to promote coordination and collaboration among governmental departments and service agencies to foster integrated services, with an emphasis on greater local control, increased involvement of parents and business, and linking services to schools as feasible. To encourage organizational changes, local, state, and federal intra and interagency committees have been established; legislative bodies are rethinking their committee structures; some states have gone so far as to create new executive branch structures (e.g., combining all agencies and services for children and families under one cabinet level department). In their most ambitious forms, these efforts are evolving into comprehensive community initiatives (CCI's) with an emphasis on community building.

Some major policy dimensions



OTHER DIMENSIONS

Comprehensiveness = piecemeal (fragmented) action $\leftarrow \rightleftarrows \rightarrow$ comprehensive (integrated) action

Degree of flexibility in administering policy = none $\leftarrow \rightleftarrows \rightarrow$ full waivers granted as appropriate

Length of funding = brief $\leftarrow \rightleftarrows \rightarrow$ long-term

Requirement of in-kind contribution (buy-in) = none $\leftarrow \rightleftarrows \rightarrow$ designated percentage (kept constant or with proportion shifting over time)

The second group of initiatives basically are models for reforming and restructuring the instructional and management components of schools -- extending in some cases to entire school districts. Evident in most of these are the national push for higher standards and expectations, a results-focus, strategies to enhance direct academic support, movement away from a deficiency model to a strengths/resilience-oriented paradigm, and devolving control to school sites. In a few cases (e.g., Kentucky, California, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio), there are discussions of strengthening the linkage between school reforms and initiatives to integrate community services -again reflecting recognition of the need for integration and comprehensiveness and the move toward community building.

The third group stresses specific approaches to dealing with problems. Many of these initiatives generate supplemental ("add-on") programs usually supported with "soft" money (e.g., programs for violence reduction, dropout prevention, substance abuse prevention, teen pregnancy prevention, school-based health centers, Family/Youth Resource Centers).

All of the initiatives are relevant to addressing barriers to student learning. All are important pieces and need to be understood both in terms of what they accomplish and do not accomplish. And such an understanding is enhanced by viewing them through the lens of the likelihood that they can adequately address barriers to learning.

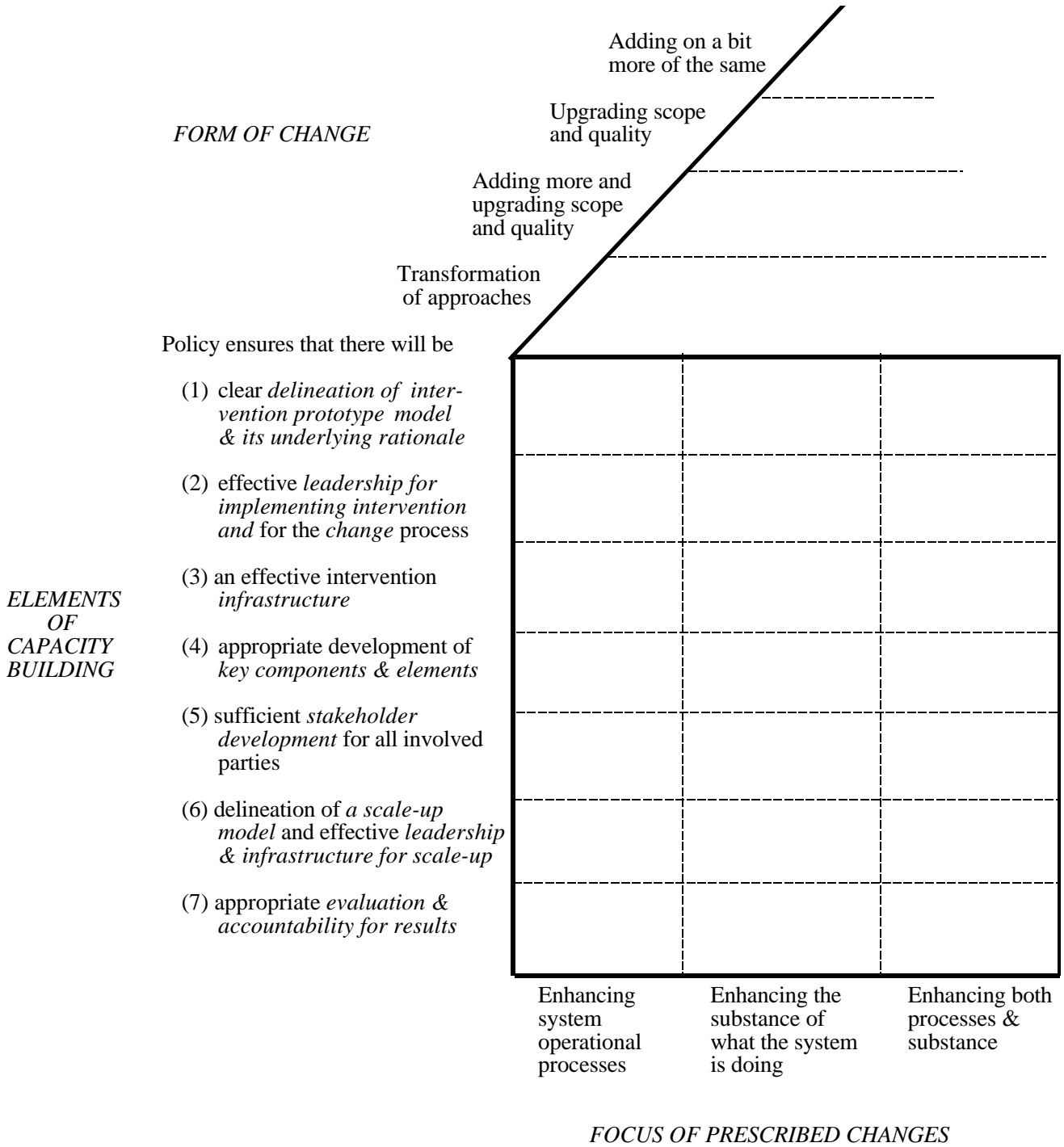
Fundamental Policy Concerns About Current Initiatives

In analyzing current initiatives from the perspective of addressing barriers to learning, our emphasis is on clarifying fundamental concerns -- not generating a list of operational problems. Ultimately, the intent of policy initiatives focusing on ameliorating complex psychosocial problems should be to enhance the *effectiveness* of interventions. As current policy efforts recognize, one aspect of achieving this aim is the commitment to *cohesiveness* (or integrated effort) by improving agency and department coordination/collaboration. Another aspect involves efforts to *enhance the nature and scope of intervention activity* (see the Figure on the next page).

With respect to cohesiveness, it is clear that policy initiatives to foster collaboration have not been paired with efforts to integrate the vast body of policy that is contributing to fragmentation. The main strategies for dealing with the lack of cohesive policies have been to grant (a) flexibility in the use of categorical funds and (b) temporary waivers from regulatory restrictions. These moves have helped in specific instances but have not provided the type of impetus for change that is needed. Direct attention to restructuring and reforming existing policy with a view to fostering cohesive intervention is long overdue.

With respect to improving the nature and scope of intervention activity, our analyses (using the dimensions represented in the accompanying Figure) suggest that most policy only adds a bit more of the same and pays scant attention to the substantive content of changes or to key elements of capacity building. This is particularly evident when one looks for specific changes in the way intervention activity is planned and implemented in communities and at school sites.

Figure 4. Example of a dimensional framework for analyzing intervention policy at national, state, and local levels.



The concerns we raise are illustrated by analysis of two major initiatives: (a) school-linked services and (b) school-owned support services. In the former instance, the trend has been for community agencies simply to co-locate a few of their services on a few school campuses. In doing so, they provide some clients better access to services. Access clearly is a prerequisite to effective intervention. Access, of course, is no guarantee of effectiveness. Moreover, co-location is no guarantee of intervention cohesiveness. Indeed, in linking with schools, community agencies may simply operate in parallel to the intervention efforts of school personnel -- leading to another form of fragmentation. Even more of a problem is the reality that there simply are not enough community agency resources for all services to link with all schools. Thus, the situation becomes either a matter of limiting linkages to the first schools that express an interest or spreading limited resources (until they are exhausted) as more schools reach out. Finally, none of this is designed to deal with the fact that the nature and scope of intervention activity provided is inadequate to the task of effectively addressing barriers to student learning.

By approaching school-linked services as a co-location model, outside agencies are creating a sense of threat among personnel who staff school-owned support services. This certainly is not conducive to collaboration and further interferes with cohesiveness. A more fundamental concern, however, is that school-owned programs and services continue to be viewed as tangential in school reform policy. Thus, little attention is paid to restructuring and reforming how these resources are used. This clearly works against making them more effective.

In the long run, substantially increasing *availability and access* to essential help requires a true integration of all community and school owned resources; increasing intervention *effectiveness* requires changes that transform the nature and scope of how these and other resources are used.

These are but two examples, but they underscore the point that policy makers and reform leaders have yet to come to grips with the realities of addressing barriers to learning. And the likelihood of their doing so is not great as long as so many advocates for children and families pursue narrow and competing agendas.

As was discussed at the UCLA summit, we believe that enhancing intervention effectiveness in addressing barriers to student learning requires policy that

- is cohesive
- provides the resources necessary for transforming the nature and scope of intervention efforts so that comprehensive, integrated approaches are developed
- creates necessary infrastructure and provides for effective capacity building to ensure appropriate implementation of comprehensive, integrated approaches
- provides the resources necessary for implementing widespread scale-up.

Inadequate policy support related to any of these matters means that the aim of enhancing intervention effectiveness on a large-scale will not be achieved.

(3) Addressing Barriers to Learning/Strengthening Schools, Families, and Neighborhoods: Framework outlining areas of interest

Health (physical, mental)	Education (regular/special trad./alternative)	Social Services	Work/ Career	Enrichment/ Recreation	Juvenile Justice	Neighborhood/ Comm. Improvement
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Prevention							
Early-After- Onset Intervention							
Treatment of Chronic & Severe Problems							

Level of Initiatives

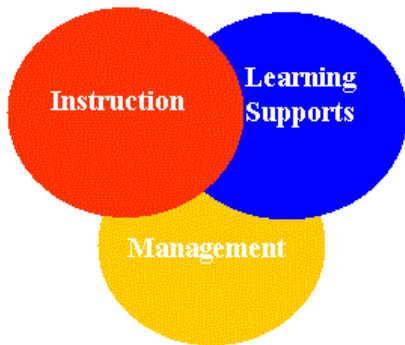
- National (federal/private)
- State-wide
- Local
- School/neighborhood

Questions:

What are the initiatives at the various levels?

How do they relate to each other?

How do they play out a school site and in a neighborhood?



National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports

<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.*

2016 -- Student and learning supports have long been marginalized in school improvement policy and practice. As a result, such supports are developed in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner. Implementation is fragmented and at times redundant. Those involved often are counterproductively competitive, especially when funding is sparse (and when isn't it?).

All this needs to change. Yet, most of the widely circulated reports about improving schools pay little or no attention to the role of school student and learning support staff.

And while the passage of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) offers opportunities, it also continues the piecemeal approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students and families. See our analysis:

[ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning](#)

It is time to make the marginalization a major issue.

To these ends, we launched the *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports in 2015*. The aim of this ongoing initiative is to mobilize direct actions for (a) elevating school improvement policy discussion about ending the marginalization of student and learning supports and (b) moving toward transformation of such supports.

Solid groundwork has been laid by our earlier initiative for New Directions for Student and Learning Supports and the work in 2015.

As a basic resource, in 2015 we developed a new work entitled: ***Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System*** (see below). This resource has been placed for free access on our website -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf>

Interested? Let us hear your views about direct action to end the marginalization and transform student and learning supports. Also, let us know if you are ready to move forward to develop a Learning Supports Component to better address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu or to adelman@psych.ucla.edu