SCHOLASTIC

BUILDING A
LEARNING SUPPORTS SYSTEM

**Breaking the Barriers
to Student Success**

SCHOLASTIC
ACHIEVEMENT PARTNERS

Harnessing the Power of Learning Supports

As educators, we're all too familiar with the wide range of barriers that interfere with students' ability to succeed—even in well-managed schools with excellent instruction. Such barriers arise from poverty, demographic changes, bullying, natural disasters, and lack of access to essential supports. Although brought on by external forces, these factors create a real and significant wall between a child's world and the classroom experience. Forty years of research by UCLA professors Howard S. Adelman, Ph.D., and Linda Taylor, Ph.D., demonstrates the need for a unified, system-wide approach that effectively addresses these barriers.

Professional Development for Learning Supports

Scholastic has created professional learning to help schools and districts fully integrate learning supports with classroom instruction and school management so all students and teachers can succeed.

Our consultative approach helps districts and schools:

- Identify redundant and ineffective learning supports and uncover gaps
- Maximize effective use of existing staff and program resources
- Uncover opportunities to weave together school and community resources
- Implement learning supports in a unified, comprehensive, and equitable way

Custom Professional Development

Scholastic, one of the most trusted names in education, offers the following services to help you develop a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports:

LEARNING SUPPORTS INSTITUTE (One Day)

The one-day institute helps build capacity toward establishing a comprehensive system of learning supports. This introduction is a critical step in creating readiness and commitment and laying the foundation for implementation.

Institute Outcomes:

- Establish why a system of learning supports is an imperative for advancing school improvement plans and goals
- Understand what a comprehensive system of learning supports is and what it looks like
- Begin resource mapping across learning supports content areas that include:
  - Classroom-based enrichment
  - Transitions
  - Family engagement
  - Community collaboration
  - Crisis prevention
  - Student and family intervention
- Establish next steps for plan development

LEARNING SUPPORTS CONSULTATION & COACHING (Multiple Days*)

Customized support throughout the four phases of implementation: *Creating Readiness, Starting Up, Sustaining, and Replicating to Scale*

SITE-BASED IMPLEMENTATION (Multiple Days*)

Helps facilitate staff understanding and provides tailored student-centered approaches and program support that responds fluidly to each school's specific needs.

*Includes consultant fees and travel expenses, Institute Handout/Guide, *Comprehensive System of Learning Supports Handbook*

"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."

CARNEGIE TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION
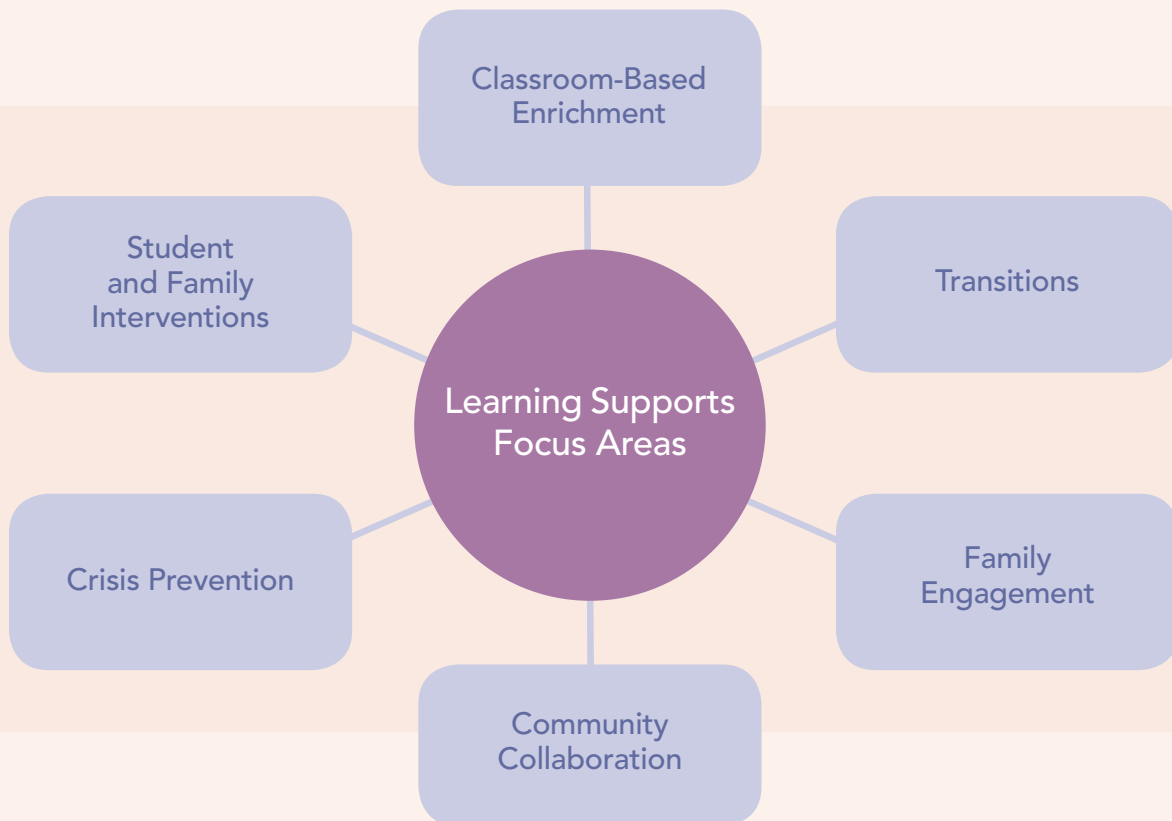
The Key to Integrating Learning Supports

While many schools and districts have a variety of student and learning supports in place, their implementation is fragmented and marginalized. This framework delineates how to maximize use of these resources by fully integrating them into—and giving them the same attention as—classroom instruction and school management.

This is a significant shift from what has traditionally been a piecemeal and ad hoc approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

INSTRUCTION

MANAGEMENT

Lack of integration

INSTRUCTION

LEARNING SUPPORTS

MANAGEMENT

Fully integrated
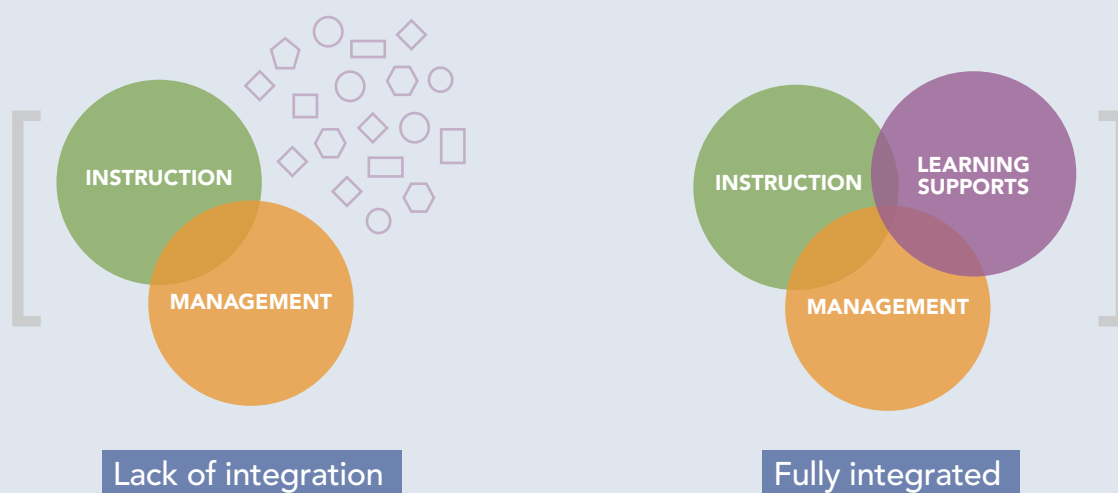
Learning Supports Focus Areas

Just as content "curriculum" areas in the classroom are well organized, it is critical to organize the content of learning supports. This framework emphasizes six learning supports focus areas:

Classroom-Based Enrichment

Student and Family Interventions

Transitions

Learning Supports Focus Areas

Crisis Prevention

Family Engagement

Community Collaboration

Outcomes of a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports:

- Increase student attendance and graduation rates
- Reduce teacher fatigue and attrition rates
- Re-engage students in the learning process
- Improve school climate
- Strengthen home-school-community collaboration
- Narrow the achievement gap
- Eliminate the plateau effect related to student achievement

Addressing Barriers in Gainesville City Schools, Georgia

Bullying

BEFORE Handled by whole-school assembly and/or classroom guidance units; then counseling and discipline referrals upon reports.

NOW Collaboratively plan, embedding anti-bullying in literature (instruction) • Involve students in planning prevention activities, include families and community in information sessions • Focus on prevention by raising awareness for all students (not just case by case)

Attendance

BEFORE Placed expectations in parent-student handbooks, reinforced through parental notification and referrals for chronic absentees and tardies.

NOW   Identify reasons "why" students are missing school • Improve the start of the school day, e.g. welcoming by name, breakfast experience • Design flexible schedules with blended learning for high school • Demonstrate concern toward students and families vs. compliance

Chronic Underachievement in Poverty

BEFORE Focused on remediation, e.g. tutoring, after or before school, additional instruction, frustrated with parents lack of ability to assist or no parental help

NOW Focus on expanded learning opportunities that provide positive experiences; community-school focus • Intentionally combine academic and extracurricular experiences, e.g. arts, sports to maximize effectiveness and participation. • Engage parents and families in outreach programs that are designed to empower and affirm their efforts, e.g. Read and Rise: a strength based approach to family engagement

Fragmentation and Marginalization of School-Community Resources

BEFORE School and partners meet quarterly to provide individual organization updates • Absence of a "framework" to ensure coordinated efforts and outreach.

NOW School leaders, community partners and family educators have a systems approach for meeting monthly to discuss and evaluate student needs. • Identify root causes that may affect a larger percentage/group of students. Determine and implement collaborative solutions. • Partners work collaboratively to fully integrate services and serve students most effectively by coordinating efforts and resources (staff, time, funds, school and community resources). • Individual and collective efforts are strategically planned with sustainability and replication-to-scale in mind.

Key Outcomes for Gainesville

As they implement their Comprehensive System of Learning Supports, the district is creating lasting and effective change.

STUDENTS
showed marked improvements:

- Increased the graduation rate from 73.3% to 87.2% in two years (lever rate comparisons).
- Increased performance on the ACT and SAT and AP exams.
- More students achieved "Exceeding Expectations" on state tests than ever before at every school.
- Percentage of students absent 10+ days decreased from 21% to 5%.
- Tardies reduced by 11%.
- Disciplinary tribunals decreased by 21%.
- Bus referrals reduced by 49%.
- Increased family and community engagement and satisfaction. Improved parental satisfaction (as determined by survey) from 78% to 93%.
- More than 92% of families participating in the Read and Rise program reported an increase in supporting their children's literacy development.
- Decreased teen pregnancy by 40% from 2009–2013.

TEACHERS
benefited from a variety of outcomes:

- Teachers now not only have a new streamlined referral process for getting immediate help for a student, but also a system for addressing ways to prevent similar problems in the future. This enables teachers to turn their attention back to the class as a whole.
- Teachers are now enhancing students' motivation to learn by allowing them to retake internal test and by adopting a "no zeros" grading policy.
- Middle school teachers benefit from a broadened focus on classroom-based learning supports.
- Teachers benefit from new strategies for enhancing successful transitions from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school.

LEADERS
gained greater integration throughout their community:

- Director of Learning Supports serves on the Hall County Commission on Children and Families to share information and link resources.
- School district coordinates with six colleges/universities in Professional Development School collaborations to promote literacy initiatives.
- Superintendent serves on the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Economic Development Council, and Issues Committees.
- Intergovernmental agreements have been implemented with City of Gainesville Park and Recreation and Hall County Schools (neighboring districts).
- Grant and implementation collaborations achieved with Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA, Park and Recreation, Center Point Counseling and Mentorship Agency, City of Gainesville Transit System.

The outcomes listed occurred over the first four years of implementation. Initial outcomes were seen as early as the first two years.

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