Students & Schools: Moving Forward*

September, 2020 (Vol. 24 #12) – *34 Years & Counting*

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*Concerned about addressing barriers to student learning and teaching & re-engaging disconnected students? about equity of opportunity? about whole child development? about school climate? All that and more is our focus.

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We encourage you to forward this to others. If this has been forwarded and you want to receive it directly, contact: Ltaylor@ucla.edu
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For more on resources from our national Center, see
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

>How are schools focusing on student engagement and re-engagement?

Engaging all students in schooling and instruction certainly is made more difficult by the safety measures related to the virus and remote teaching. For students in classrooms, social distancing, masks, and COVID testing are not what folks envisioned when they talked about enhancing school climate. For the rest, online learning has resulted in a large number of disengaged students.

As is evident to those browsing our Center's resources, we are stressing that the beginning of the school year requires special attention to (a) the motivational facets of engaging and re-engaging students in schooling and instruction and (b) adopting frameworks and prototypes for transforming currently marginalized and fragmented student/learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system. If you missed the discussions in the recent Community of Practice editions, see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm .

For a brief discussion about student engagement see
>*Re-engaging Disconnected Students Online and at School: Focus on Intrinsic
    Motivation* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/reengage.pdf

For more on this as well as for a sense of essential system changes to enhance student/learning supports, see the Center's recent online *free* books entitled:
>*Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*
>*Improving School Improvement*
>*Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*
    Access from http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Here is how one state is approaching these matters:

From the CT State Department of Education website
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/April-9-2020-Student-Engagement-Attendance-Guidance-for-Districts.pdf?la=en

"...While in-school attendance processes may change, student engagement remains paramount. Toward this end, during the COVID-19disruption of school, district and school administrators should make sure that regular connections are made with students and families. District and school staff can check-in and confirm that all families have access to information and services; are safe and supported; and are prepared to support their child's learning through the districts' continued learning efforts. It is as important as ever to ensure that all students are engaged and are connected to resources that they need.

Districts may ask:

>Teachers and support staff to connect with all students to maintain their relationships, assist with issues and concerns related to assignments, and encourage full participation in continued learning opportunities. These connections should be documented and tracked as appropriate. Districts should be strategic about ensuring students do not get missed, particularly in secondary grades where there may be multiple teachers for the same student.

>Student support staff to identify students who were chronically absent pre-COVID19 or otherwise identified as requiring additional support, and determine if the available pre-COVID-19 supports can continue virtually. Teachers and other school staff should have the option to refer a student who is exhibiting inadequate engagement to a school or district team responsible for school attendance in order to coordinate across departments and with community-based organizations.

>School administrators and support staff to reach out to students who are not signing into online learning or engaging in other continued learning opportunities. Families should be contacted by school staff to ensure safety and well-being and connect students to the continued learning opportunities and technology they may require. Resources previously available to schools and districts for students that were missing too much school should be engaged for students who are not connecting through distance learning.

>Addressing Student's Overall Safety and Well-being. While rigorous efforts are encouraged to facilitate student engagement, lack of response to school contacts raises concerns about the overall safety and well-being of families during these challenging times...."

Let Us Know

about what's being done about these matters locally.

And if anyone is thinking about increasing the capacity of a district or school with respect to developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports, we can help. Send all info to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America.

John Lewis

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>After the crisis, public education will be in a state of transformation:
What is being proposed?

Here is the perspective of one superintendent:

From: *Now is the time to prepare for the future* by Michael Matsuda
    https://edsource.org/2020/now-is-the-time-to-prepare-for-the-future/637432

"...With all the attention on reopening schools during a national pandemic, school leaders and policymakers need to also critically focus on how we will prepare students for the world after the pandemic....

Some teachers and many administrators and educational leaders believe that "hybrid" and distance learning is temporary and that after this crisis passes, we can go back to the good old status quo, including traditional "college ready" academic drivers. Going back to the status quo will only exacerbate the equity gaps in access to soft and hard skills, and also deepen the crisis in building cohesion among K-12 schools, community colleges, four-year institutions and the workforce....

We need to stop pining for the past and wake up to the fact that this is a teachable moment, an opportunity to align what we teach them so that students learn how to upskill throughout their lives, including how to navigate and thrive in a virtual hybrid world.

There are three things, therefore, that districts should focus on right now:

1. Make soft skills the drivers of instruction. These are commonly known as the development and cultivation of emotional intelligence and relational leadership skills. In the Anaheim Union High School District, we call these the 5Cs: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creativity and compassion (including self-compassion). These are critical building blocks of lifelong skills for success.

2. Partner with businesses, non-profits and community colleges to develop internships, mentorships, certificates and dual credit opportunities, focusing on hard skills or industry specific knowledge and applied learning experiences.

3. Invest in teacher capacity for creativity and innovation, supporting them in upskilling through the National Standards for Quality Online Learning where they can learn how to use technology, including mastering learning management systems...."

From the perspective of our Center's work, we understand that our society funds public education so that its schools can play a major role with respect to

- socializing the young
- ensuring the country's economic well-being
- preserving our representative democracy

With this in mind, we continue to advocate for moving school improvement policy and practice from a two to a three component framework (i.e., adding a component to address barriers to learning and teaching as primary and essential along with the focus on instruction and management).

Such a component will transform the ways

>instruction is delivered

>learning, behavior, and emotional problems are addressed

>social and emotional development are promoted

>families of schools collaborate with each other and with their surrounding community

>school safety and climate are enhanced

and more.

We want to share a wide range of perspectives about how public education will be transformed after the crisis. Send your comments to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

>Quick Links to Online Resources

Navigating the Uncertainty of Reopening Schools: A Guide for Parents, Families, and the Public
https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/navigating-uncertainty-reopening-schools?utm_source=PACE+All&utm_campaign=3ccae45449-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_08_29_05_32_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_9f1af6b121-3ccae45449-522725185

5 Reasons Students Aren't Engaging in Distance Learning
https://childmind.org/article/5-reasons-students-arent-engaging-in-distance-learning/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=5%20Reasons%20Students%20Aren%E2%80%99t%20Engaging%20in%20Distance%20Learning&utm_campaign=Public-Ed-Newsletter

Inequality in Household Adaptation to Schooling Shocks: COVID-Induced Online Learning Engagement in Real Time https://www.nber.org/papers/w27555

Getting tutoring right to reduce covid19 learning loss
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2020/05/21/getting-tutoring-right-to-reduce-covid-19-learning-loss/

Volunteer match covid 19 resource hub
https://info.volunteermatch.org/covid-19-resource-hub?1

Improving the Quality of Distance and Blended Learning
https://annenberg.brown.edu/sites/default/files/EdResearch_for_Recovery_Brief_8.pdf

Supports for Students in Immigrant Families
https://annenberg.brown.edu/sites/default/files/EdResearch_for_Recovery_Brief_9.pdf

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) – 2019 YRBS Results and Data Available Now https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/

Distance and Innovation – Final Rule – (unofficial copy) August 24, 2020 | Fact Sheet
https://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2018/distanceandinnovationunofficialreg.pdf

Teachers' Concerns Mounting as the School Year Kicks Off
https://ednote.ecs.org/teachers-concerns-mounting-as-the-school-year-kicks-off/?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=70634a36d6-Ed_Note_Daily&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-70634a36d6-53599575

Making Meaning in the Time of COVID: Interviews with Education Leaders
https://www.soldalliance.org/post/making-meaning-in-the-time-of-covid-interviews-with-education-leaders

Students have their own demands for school reopening
https://hechingerreport.org/students-have-their-own-demands-for-school-reopening/

Supporting Families and Child Care Providers during the Pandemic with a Focus on Equity
https://www.childtrends.org/publications/supporting-families-child-care-providers-during-pandemic-with-focus-equity

National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement offers resources, including sample scripts for classroom educators for the first day back to school; presentations for school mental health professionals; parent presentations; informational videos; etc.
https://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/resources/covid-19-pandemic-resources/

2020 KIDS COUNT Data Book https://www.aecf.org/resources/2020-kids-count-data-book/

A School Year Like No Other Demands a New Learning Day: A Blueprint for How Afterschool Programs & Community Partners Can Help
http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Blueprint-for-How-Afterschool-Programs-Community-Partners-Can-Help.pdf

In case you missed these recent online resources from the Center:

>*Schools Re-opening: Safety Plus Enhancing Equity of Opportunity and Social Justice*
>*The Role of Schools in Promoting Whole Child Development and Learning?*
    Access at   http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/news.htm
>*Online and At School: Teachers Alone Can't and Shouldn't Be Expected to Address the*
    Wide Range of Student Mental Health Concerns
        http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/teachers.pdf
>*What is (and isn't) in Place to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching for the*
    New School Year? http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/what'sin.pdf
>*Watch out! Much Discussion of MTSS, Little Discussion of Student/Learning Support*
    Staff and Developing MTSS into a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/july19init.pdf
>*Hypersensitivity to a Student's Emotional Reactions Can Be Harmful*
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/july16init.pdf

Webinars

>9/1 *Fostering Organizational, Participant, and* Mentoring Relationships

>9/9 *McKinney-Vento 101: Understanding the Rights of Students Experiencing Homelessness*

>9/9 *Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: SEL Roadmap for Reopening Schools*

>9/15 *Comprehensive Gang Model: Building Impactful Collaboration Through Community Mobilization*

>9/17 *Meeting the needs of adolescent youth*

>9/22 *Determining Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services*

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

School Practitioner Listservs in August*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

8/5
    >*About teaching and providing student/learning supports online*
    >*A Principal sent us a call for reopening schools*
    >*Helping children and teens through this difficult time*

8/12
    >*What should online schooling do to promote positive social development?*
    >*What's your view about this student's reaction to online instruction and support:?*
    >*Will online schooling reduce relational bullying?*

8/19
    >*Reconnecting with students who didn't participate in online learning*
    >*America's mental health system is sorely lacking a public focus*
    >*U.S. Dept of Ed provides rethinking education grants to eleven states*

    *Each week's Community of Practice offers links to relevant resources

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*Teachers' experiences of the crisis are a central resource for
connecting with students, demonstrating the value of students' lives and knowledge,
and supporting them in learning in the midst of this challenging time.*
Elizabeth Dutro, National Education Policy Center at the University of Colorado at Boulder

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>A Few News Stories *(excerpted from various news sources)*

Florida school districts beef up virtual programs to keep students. When students complete classes in a Florida virtual school, the public money tied to them flows away from their local district and often to a private company. That wrinkle in state education funding is one of the reasons why school districts are beefing up their in-house virtual programs as the COVID-19 crisis continues, Districts want to hold onto students who wish to learn at home, while protecting jobs for teachers, who can transfer into virtual jobs. In virtual school, families have more flexibility. Teachers record their lessons so students can replay them if they need to. They push out a week of assignments so students can go at their own pace. When they hold live sessions, it is to review a concept that was especially hard, or take questions, or allow students to socialize."
https://www.tampabay.com/news/education/2020/07/06/florida-school-districts-beef-up-virtual-programs-to-keep-students/

Chicago offers more details on how qualifying families can sign up for free internet plan. Chicago Public Schools released more details Wednesday about its plan to connect 100,000 low-income families to free internet, saying it will lean on more than 30 community organizations to assist with outreach. The community groups will be paid through the school district's philanthropic arm, called the Children First Fund. In addition to calling and sending letters to students' homes, community organizers will assist with training parents and students on how to use the Google suite. The school district plans to have students return to school buildings two days a week in the fall, with the majority of learning taking place remotely.
https://chicago.chalkbeat.org/2020/7/29/21347005/chicago-offers-more-details-on-its-how-families-can-sign-up-for-free-internet-plan

A California superintendent has a plan to bring students back to the classroom -- but not their teachers. One superintendent in the Los Angeles area has come up with a plan to welcome some students back to class. And it doesn't involve their teachers. When Glendale Unified School District kicks off the academic year, 20 of the district's elementary schools will open some empty classrooms

for remote learning. But instead of the traditional 24 students per classroom, there will be no more than 12. School officials are calling the group a "technology pod," which will be supervised by a single substitute teacher or district staffer. The staffers won't be teaching the students -- they will instead be present to offer computer technical assistance, monitor students' mask use, enforce social distancing and keep students focused on their work. Superintendent Vivian Ekchian came up with the idea after noticing that many young children of essential workers didn't have proper childcare when schools were forced to pivot to remote learning, so this is really an opportunity for childcare, for parents who can't stay home with their kids and need a safe place where their students can continue to learn while they're away working or looking for a job. About 1,000 of the 13,000 grade schoolers in the district will head to classrooms. Glendale is in Los Angeles County, where the Department of Public Health said earlier this month that it would not consider any applications for waivers enabling elementary schools to reopen, citing high local Covid-19 case rates. However, because there is no formal learning going on in the classrooms, the Glendale Unified School District is merely providing childcare, which is permitted. Desks will be at least 6 feet apart. Drinking fountains have been turned into hand washing stations. Children will be allowed recess and playtime. But each child will have their own toys and equipment and keep their distance. Pods will not intermingle, and siblings will be in the same pod. Breakfast and lunch will be brought to the door and distributed by the supervisor.
Students will have a temperature check each morning and answer health questions before entering the school.
https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/18/us/glendale-california-superintendent-distance-learning-in-classroom/index.html

Report reveals disparities among Black, Latino LAUSD students in online learning amid COVID-19 pandemic. More than 50,000 Black and Latino middle and high school students in Los Angeles did not regularly participate in the school system's main platform for virtual classrooms after campuses closed in March, reflecting the disparities faced by students of color amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficulties ahead as the LAUSD prepares for continued online learning, according to a new report.
https://abc7.com/lausd-los-angeles-unified-school-district-race-disparity-racial-divide/6321930/

More than 800 students told to quarantine in Georgia school district after possible virus exposure. In the six days the Cherokee County School District has been in session, administrators have directed 826 students and 42 teachers to quarantine. The district requires face coverings for teachers when social distancing is not possible. It does not mandate masks for students, though they are "encouraged." n the Cherokee district, traditional and online learning were offered. About 77 percent of more than 42,000 students reported in-person for the first day of classes.
https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/08/11/coronavirus-covid-live-updates-us/

5 Financial Issues Schools Will Face Due to the Coronavirus-Induced Recession. If the economic downturn is like the Great Recession, administrators will be challenged by smaller budgets, layoff decisions and more in coming years.
https://www.educationdive.com/news/5-financial-issues-schools-will-face-due-to-the-coronavirus-induced-recessi/583054/?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=03647fdb6c-ED_CLIPS_08_24_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-03647fdb6c-53599575

NJ - As Families Seek Help With Remote Learning, Some Newark Schools Offer an Alternative to 'Learning Pods'. The BRICK Education Network, which manages the Marion P. Thomas Charter School that Vazquez's daughter attends, said [last] week that it will open some classrooms for the children of essential workers and other students who aren't able to learn from home. The schools will provide adult supervision, along with internet service and meals, so students can do their virtual learning in a safe environment while their parents work.
https://newark.chalkbeat.org/2020/8/20/21378257/newark-remote-learning-pods-child-care

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As hard as this tragedy is hitting our families, there's still a lot of passion and hope, People's fire, their desires and aspirations for their children—that hasn't died.

Lakisha Young

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Comments and sharing from the field*

We were asked to share the following:

School Health on the Frontlines: Navigating Pandemics and Building Equity -- 2020 California School-Based Health Conference -- a virtual statewide school health conference online from October 6-8: www.schoolhealthcenters.org/about-us/conference/

*We usually devote this space mainly to information, ideas, and resource sharing from colleagues who want to let others in on things. This month, however, we were inundated with folks sending along their appreciations about the Center. So we thought it might be appropriate to share a few:

>*From a Superintendent*: "Please continue to send these valuable resources. Thank you so much for the professional level of research and excellence."

>*From a school board member*: "Your emails are my favorite. I devote several hours to reading and learning from them. The information you pass on is both useful and important. I can only imagine the time and dedication involved in providing this to all of us."

>*From a university professor*: "Thank you for this wonderful resource! [the Center] I've been using it for years and truly appreciate your work. I am working on a few committees her in in SF/Bay Area around mental health, SPED access, educational disparities and equity as we figure how to medically, psychologically and educationally support students and patients during COVID. I would love to be involved in any way in your center and will happily share relevant information I learn. I work to bridge the divide between our 'silo' systems of supporting children's development and education. Your dissemination of resources is so vital to administrators and policy leaders shaping the outcomes for our nation's youth."

>*From a former superintendent and current state board of education field specialist*: "I want to thank you for your continued work on behalf our students and staff. While I am officially "retired" as a school superintendent, I now serve as a state field specialist for the stste Association of School Boards, providing training and support to district leadership teams of elected board members and superintendents/administrators. There are many times that I forward your notes and resources to my colleagues or groups with whom I am working. One or two may have even been forwarded to my daughter and her husband for consideration as they raise two of the most precious granddaughters ever! I will always cherish being able to attend the session on campus that you facilitated as we were just in the beginning phases of MTSS. Thank you for your passion and for sharing it so willingly. I continue to be reminded of how much we all have to learn in this business of caring for kids."

*For next time, we look forward to lots of sharing
from any and all who have something good to share.*

Why are you upset?

I told the teacher that the computer ate my homework, and she told me how it could be retrieved.

DEAR READER:

Everyone has a stake in the future of public education. This is a critical time for action. Send this resource on to others. Think about sharing with the growing number who are receiving it. AND Let us know about what we should be including.

For those who are employed by state and local education agencies and schools, we know you are busy. It would be great if you could take a few minutes to share what actions you are taking to address immediate concerns and how you are handling the inevitable problems.

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For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
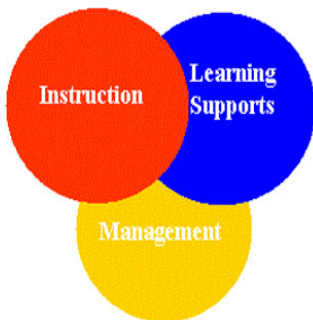*go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html*
Also online are two related free books

Improving School Improvement
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

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