



*Improving Schools,
Engaging Students*

Resource Aid . . .

Frameworks for Systemic Transformation of Student and Learning Supports

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Preface

If school improvement efforts are to be effective in enabling all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school, we all must move significantly beyond prevailing thinking. Current policy and practice is a grossly inadequate response to the many complex factors that interfere with positive development, learning, and teaching. Policy that perpetuates narrow-focused, categorical approaches to problems must be revised since it promotes an orientation that overemphasizes individually prescribed services to the detriment of prevention programs, results in marginalized and fragmented interventions, and undervalues the human and social capital indigenous to every neighborhood. School improvement policy must be expanded to support development of the type of comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive approach that can effectively address barriers to learning and teaching. To do less is to make values such as *We want all children to succeed* and *No child left behind* simply rhetorical statements.

Needed is a fundamental, systemic *transformation* in the ways schools, families, and communities address major barriers to learning and teaching. Such a transformation is essential to enhancing achievement for all, closing the achievement gap, reducing dropouts, and increasing the opportunity for schools to be valued as treasures in their neighborhood.

Given the current state of school resources, the transformation must be accomplished by rethinking and redeploying how existing resources are used and by taking advantage of the natural opportunities at schools for countering problems and promoting personal and social growth. Staff and students need to feel positive about themselves and what they are doing if they are to cope with challenges proactively and effectively. Every school needs to commit to fostering staff and student strengths and creating an atmosphere that encourages mutual support, caring, and sense of community.

All this, of course, involves major systemic changes. Such changes require weaving school owned resources and community owned resources together over time at every school in a district. And, it requires addressing the complications stemming from the scale of public education in the U.S.A.

A variety of our Center's documents present policy and practice analyses and explore new directions with respect to these matters. The following document draws on several of these works to provide a resource aid that (1) highlights four fundamental, systemic concerns related to transforming student and learning supports and (2) offers frameworks for addressing them.

Howard Adelman & Linda Taylor
Center, Co-directors

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FRAMEWORKS FOR SYSTEMIC TRANSFORMATION OF STUDENT AND LEARNING SUPPORTS

The Center's policy and practice analyses have shone a light on how school improvement efforts deal with the various factors interfering with students having an equal opportunity to succeed at school. Unfortunately, the picture that has emerged is rather bleak. Given the continuing difficulties related to reducing dropout rates and closing the achievement gap, the findings underscore the need for expanding school improvement in ways that substantially enhance learning supports.

As a resource for the systemic transformation of student and learning supports, the Center has formulated a set of frameworks to underscore the need and as potential guides for moving forward. This document highlights these frameworks.

Framing the Need

We frame the need for transforming student and learning supports in terms of what's missing in most school improvement plans.*

Inadequate Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning

First, we stress that prevailing approaches to school improvement do not effectively deal with factors leading to and maintaining students' problems, especially in schools where large proportions of students are not doing well. That is, current policy and practice inadequately *addresses the barriers to learning* that daily confront too many students and that have an impact on almost every student at some time during their time at school. Exhibit 1 illustrates this state of affairs.

Despite a clear need to improve how schools address barriers to learning, in their rush to raise test scores, school leaders mainly pursue instruction as if this was sufficient to ensure that every student will succeed. As a result, the emphasis in school improvement is mostly on enhancing curriculum/instruction and related management practices. (See almost any school improvement planning guide.)

Policy and practice marginalization maintains fragmented approaches

In effect, then, current policy emphasizes two components in pursuing school improvement (see Exhibit 2). And, by doing so, the need for fundamental restructuring of school and community resources to *enable learning* is virtually ignored. Thus, prevailing policy and practice continue to *marginalize* such efforts, and this maintains the piecemeal and fragmented approach to student and learning supports that is widely lamented (see bottom section of Exhibit 2).

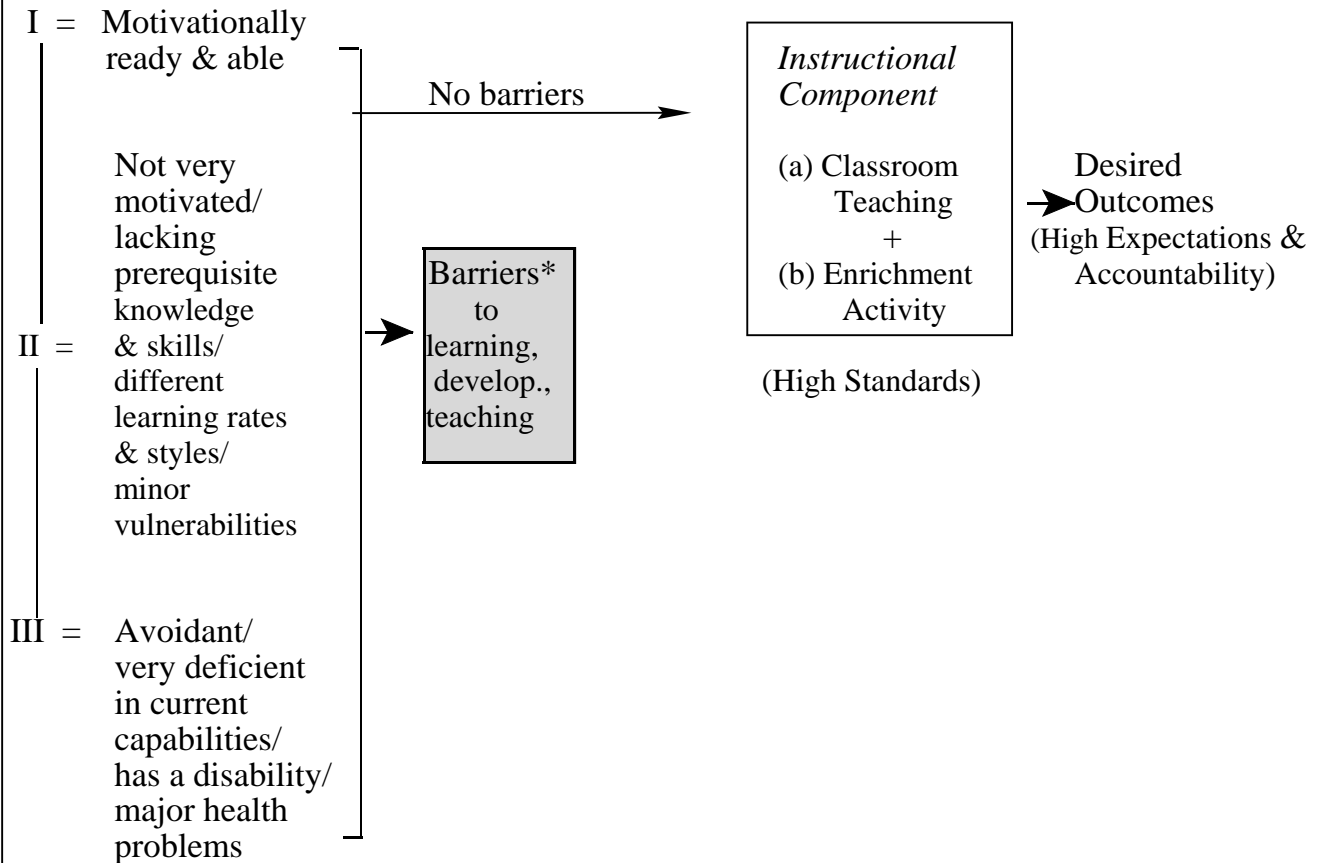
*See *School Improvement Planning: What's Missing?* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsmissing.htm>

Exhibit 1

Barriers to Learning and School Improvement

Range of Learners

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



***Examples of Risk-Producing Conditions that Can be Barriers to Learning**

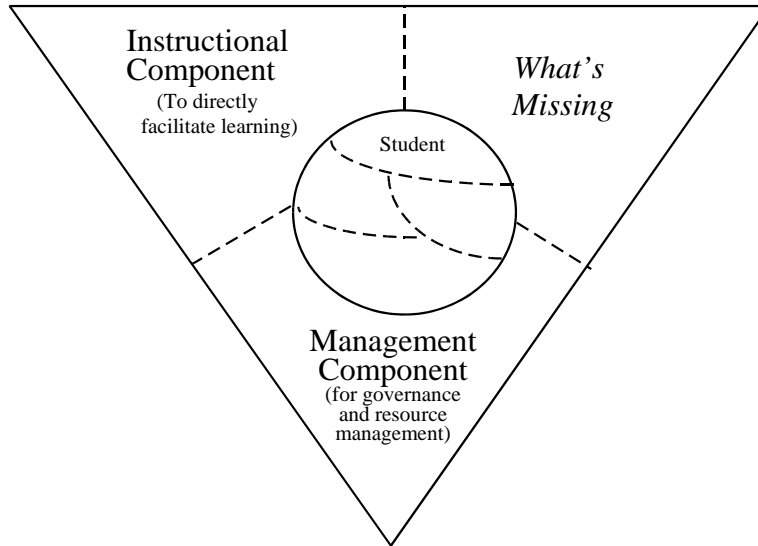
E n v i r o n m e n t a l C o n d i t i o n s**			P e r s o n F a c t o r s**
<i>Neighborhood</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>School and Peers</i>	<i>Individual</i>
>extreme economic deprivation	>chronic poverty	>poor quality school	>medical problems
>community disorganization, including high levels of mobility	>conflict/disruptions/violence	>negative encounters with teachers	>low birth weight/ neurodevelopmental delay
>violence, drugs, etc.	>substance abuse	>negative encounters with peers &/or inappropriate peer models	>psychophysiological problems
>minority and/or immigrant status	>models problem behavior		>difficult temperament & adjustment problems
	>abusive caretaking		>inadequate nutrition
	>inadequate provision for quality child care		

**A reciprocal determinist view of behavior recognizes the interplay of environment and person variables.

Exhibit 2

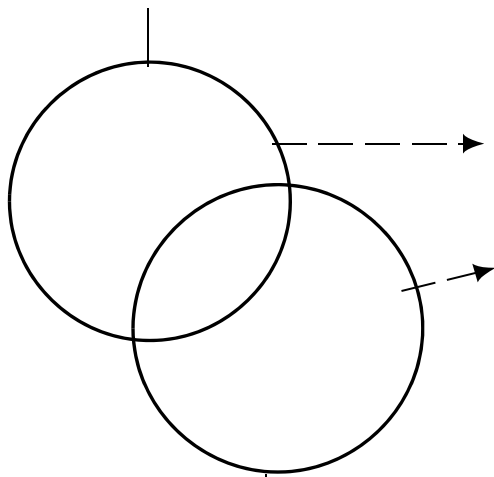
Current Two Component Model for Reform and Restructuring

(a) *What's missing?*



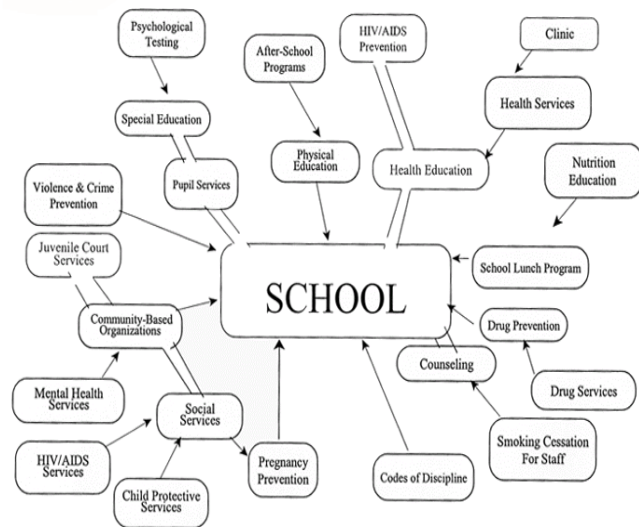
(b) *Not really missing, but marginalized and fragmented in policy and practice.*

Direct Facilitation of Development & Learning (Developmental Component)



Governance and Resource Management (Management Component)

Addressing Barriers to Development, Learning, & Teaching (not treated as a primary component)*



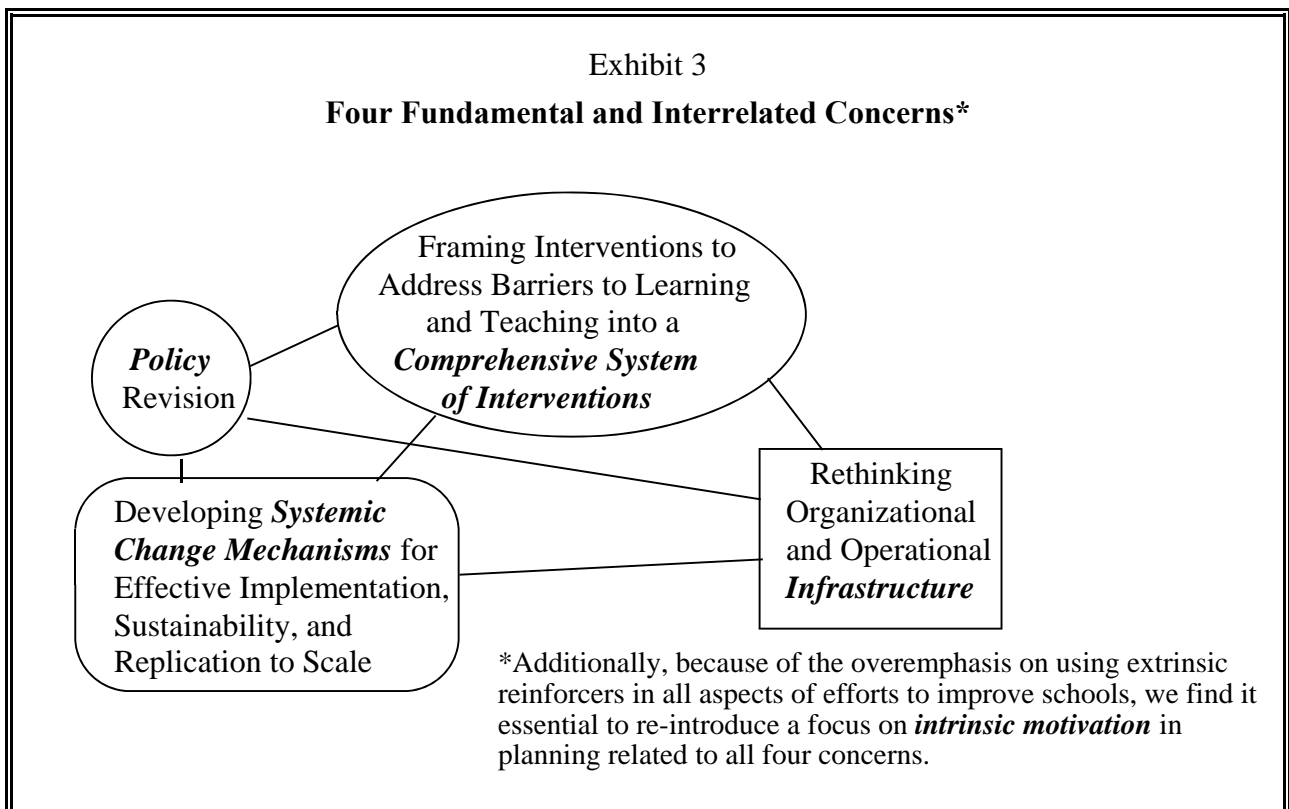
Adapted from: Health in Academics: A guide to Coordinated School Health Programs (1998). Edited by E. Marx & S.F. Wooley with D. Northrop. New York: Teachers College Press.

*While not treated as a primary and essential component, every school offers a relatively small amount of school-owned student "support" services – some of which links with community-owned resources. Schools, in particular, have been reaching out to community agencies to add a few more services. All of this, however, remains marginalized and fragmented in policy and practice.

With the above needs in mind, our work has highlighted four core systemic concerns with which decision makers and planners must grapple in developing effective systems for addressing barriers to learning and teaching. These concerns, highlighted in Exhibit 3, stress the need to:

Four core, interrelated systemic concerns

- (1) *Reframe interventions* in-classrooms and school-wide – unifying the fragmented interventions used to address barriers to learning and teaching and promote healthy development under a framework that can guide development of a comprehensive system at every school,
- (2) *Expand policy* – broadening policy for school improvement to fully integrate, as primary and essential, a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching, with school safety embedded in natural and authentic ways,
- (3) *Reconceive infrastructure* – reworking the operational and organizational infrastructure for a school, a family of schools, the district, and for school-family-community collaboration with a view to weaving resources together to develop a comprehensive system,
- (4) *Rethink the implementation problem* – framing the phases and tasks involved in "getting from here to there" in terms of widespread diffusion of innovations in organized settings that have well-established institutional cultures and systems.



Reframing Intervention as a Basis for Developing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching

While improved instruction is an absolute necessity, for too many youngsters it is not sufficient. Students who arrive at school lacking motivational readiness and/or certain abilities need something more. The complexity of factors interfering with learning and teaching underscores the need for a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system of learning supports (again see Exhibit 1).

One trend in formulating the range of interventions has been to highlight three tiers. For example, a graphic widely used is a pyramid-like triangle that, starting at its peak, stresses “intensive interventions” (for a few), “supplemental interventions” (for some), and “universal interventions” (for all). Other outlines highlight prevention, early intervention, and treatment approaches. Other descriptions amount to little more than itemizations of specific interventions and listings of various disciplines providing support.

If the marginalization of student supports is to end, a framework that presents a coherent picture of a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive set of interventions must be formulated and operationalized. Minimally, such a framework must delineate the essential scope and content focus of the enterprise.

Exhibit 4 frames the need in terms of a primary *Enabling or Learning Supports Component*. As illustrated, an enabling component involves first addressing interfering factors *and then* (re-)engaging students in classroom instruction. The reality is that interventions that do not include an emphasis on ensuring students are engaged meaningfully in classroom learning generally are insufficient in sustaining, over time, student involvement, good behavior, and effective learning at school.

The matter then arises as to how to operationalize such an enabling/learning supports component. To this end, we offer a comprehensive and unifying framework that encompasses *both* scope and content. The framework combines an integrated and systemic continuum of interventions and a multifaceted and cohesive set of content arenas.

A Continuum
of Integrated
School-
Community
Intervention
Systems

The intent, over time, is for schools to play a major role in establishing a full range of integrated intervention *systems* (not just tiers) for

- promoting healthy development and preventing problems
- intervening early to address problems as soon after onset as is feasible
- assisting with chronic and severe problems.

The interventions can be conceived along a continuum. In keeping with public education and public health perspectives, such a continuum encompasses efforts to enable academic, social, emotional, and physical development and to address behavior, learning, and emotional problems at every school and in every community.

Exhibit 4

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

Range of Learners

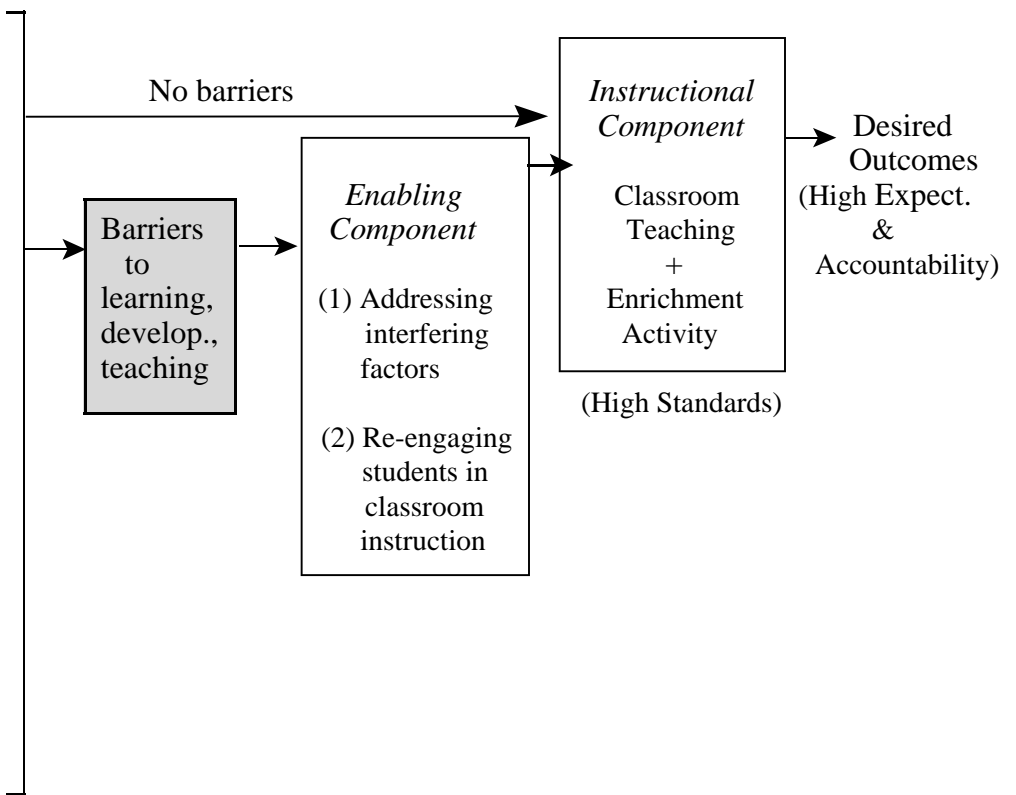
(categorized in terms of their response to academic instruction at any given point in time)

I = Motivationally ready & able

Not very motivated/
lacking prerequisite knowledge & skills/
different learning rates & styles/
minor vulnerabilities

II =

III = Avoidant/
very deficient in current capabilities/
has a disability/
major health problems



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

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

Public education has been characterized as an institution that “waits for failure”

Most schools have some programs and services that fit along the entire continuum. However, interventions at each level are not integrated and are not well connected. Moreover, the tendency to focus mostly on the most severe problems has skewed the process so that too little is done to prevent and intervene early after the onset of a problem. One result of this is that public education has been characterized as an institution that “waits for failure” before intervening.

As illustrated in Exhibit 5, the continuum ranges from programs for primary prevention (including the promotion of mental health) – through those for addressing problems soon after onset – on to treatments for severe and chronic problems. With respect to comprehensiveness, the school and community examples highlight that many problems must be addressed holistically and developmentally and with a range of programs – some focused on individuals, their families, and the contexts in which they live, work, and play and some focused on mental and physical health, education, and social services. With respect to concerns about integrating programs, the systemic emphasis underscores the need for concurrent intra- and inter-program linkages and for linkages over extended periods of time. The continuum also provides a basis for adhering to the principle of using the least restrictive and nonintrusive forms of intervention required to appropriately respond to problems and accommodate diversity.

Moreover, given the likelihood that many problems are not discrete, the continuum is designed to address root causes, thereby minimizing tendencies to develop separate programs for each observed problem. In turn, this enables increased coordination and integration of resources which can increase impact and cost-effectiveness.

As graphically illustrated by the tapering of the three levels of intervention in the exhibit, development of a fully integrated set of interventions is meant to reduce the number of individuals who require specialized supports. That is, the aim is to prevent the majority of problems, deal with another significant segment as soon after problem onset as is feasible, and end up with relatively few students needing specialized assistance and other intensive and costly interventions. For individual students, this means preventing and minimizing as many problems as feasible and doing so in ways that maximize engagement in productive learning. For the school and community as a whole, the intent is to produce a safe, healthy, nurturing environment/culture characterized by respect for differences, trust, caring, support, and high expectations.

Exhibit 5

Levels of Intervention:*
Connected Systems for Meeting the Needs of All Students

School Resources

(facilities, stakeholders, programs, services)

Examples:

- General health education
- Social and emotional learning programs
- Recreation programs
- Enrichment programs
- Support for transitions
- Conflict resolution
- Home involvement
- Drug and alcohol education

- Drug counseling
- Pregnancy prevention
- Violence prevention
- Gang intervention
- Dropout prevention
- Suicide prevention
- Learning/behavior accommodations & response to intervention
- Work programs

- Special education for learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, and other health impairments

Community Resources

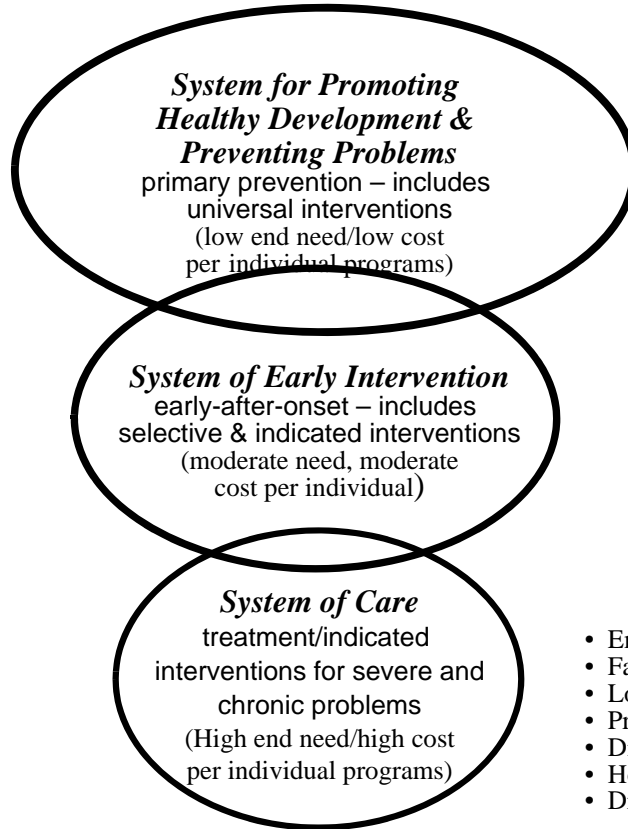
(facilities, stakeholders, programs, services)

Examples:

- Recreation & Enrichment
- Public health & safety programs
- Prenatal care
- Home visiting programs
- Immunizations
- Child abuse education
- Internships & community service programs
- Economic development

- Early identification to treat health problems
- Monitoring health problems
- Short-term counseling
- Foster placement/group homes
- Family support
- Shelter, food, clothing
- Job programs

- Emergency/crisis treatment
- Family preservation
- Long-term therapy
- Probation/incarceration
- Disabilities programs
- Hospitalization
- Drug treatment



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

Such collaboration involves horizontal and vertical restructuring of programs and services
(a) within jurisdictions, school districts, and community agencies (e.g., among departments, divisions, units, schools, clusters of schools)
(b) between jurisdictions, school and community agencies, public and private sectors; among schools; among community agencies

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

Designing the Continuum to Fit School Improvement Efforts

We operationalize the continuum as part of the concept of an *Enabling or Learning Supports Component*. This helps to coalesce and enhance programs with the aim of ensuring all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. A critical matter is defining what the entire school must do to enable *all* students to learn and *all* teachers to teach effectively. School-wide approaches are especially important where large numbers of students are affected and at any school that is not yet paying adequate attention to equity and diversity concerns.

Moving beyond the laundry list

Pioneering efforts have further operationalized such a component into six programmatic arenas. In doing so, they have moved from a “laundry list” of programs, services, and activities to a defined set of content or “curriculum” arenas that captures the essence of the multifaceted ways schools must address barriers to learning. Exhibit 6 outlines the prototype for the six arenas.

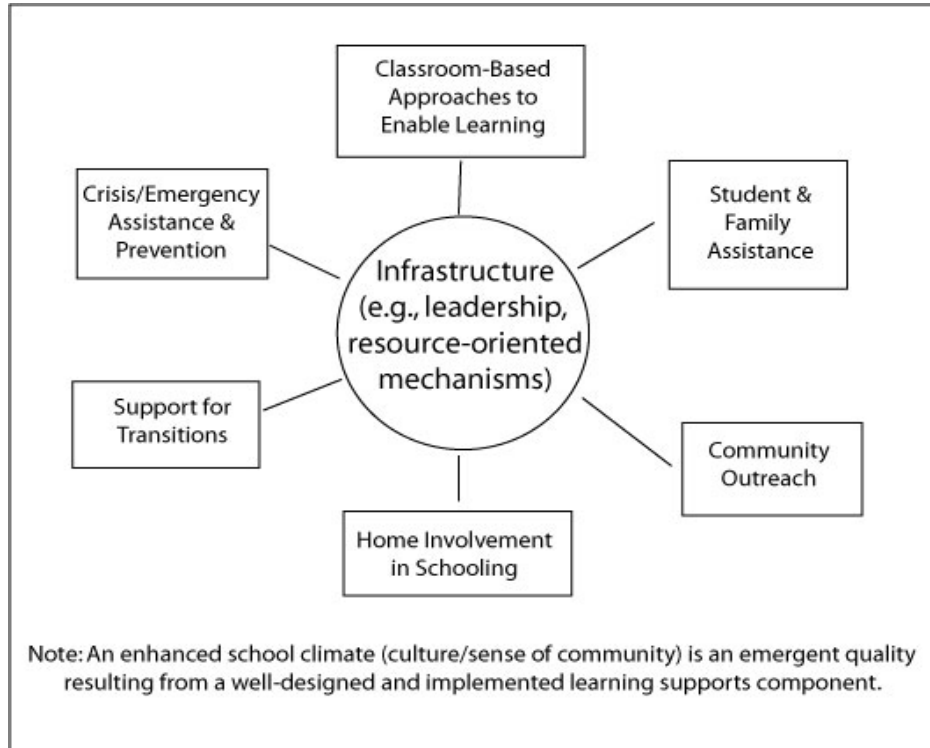
As illustrated, the prototype encompasses programs to

- *enhance regular classroom strategies to enable learning* (i.e., improving instruction for students who have become disengaged from learning at school and for those with mild-moderate learning and behavior problems)
- *support transitions* (i.e., assisting students and families as they negotiate school and grade changes and many other transitions)
- *increase home and school connections*
- *respond to, and where feasible, prevent crises*
- *increase community involvement and support* (outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers)
- *facilitate student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed.*

See Appendix A for a table outlining specific examples related to each arena.

Exhibit 6

Categories of *Basic Content Arenas* for Learning Supports Intervention



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

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

Combining the continuum and the content arenas yields a guiding matrix

Combining the six content arenas with the continuum of interventions illustrated in Exhibit 5 provides a comprehensive and multifaceted intervention framework to guide and unify school improvement planning for developing a system of learning supports. The resultant matrix is shown in Exhibit 7. This unifying framework facilitates mapping and analyzing the current scope and content of how barriers to learning and teaching are addressed. Overtime, such mapping and analysis is needed at the school level, for a family of schools (e.g., a feeder pattern of schools), at the district level, and community-wide.

In essence, beginning in the classroom with differentiated classroom practices and by ensuring school-wide learning supports, such a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive systemic approach

- >addresses barriers through a broader view of “basics” and through effective accommodation of individual differences and disabilities
- >enhances the focus on motivational considerations with a special emphasis on intrinsic motivation as it relates to individual readiness and ongoing involvement and with the intent of fostering intrinsic motivation as a basic outcome
- >adds remediation, treatment, and rehabilitation as necessary, but only as necessary.

The Center has designed a *toolkit* to provide ready access to a set of resources for mapping and analyzing the scope and content of efforts to address barriers. Go to:
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

Exhibit 7

Matrix for Reviewing Scope and Content of a Component to Address Barriers to Learning*

Scope of Intervention

		System for Promoting Healthy Development & Preventing Problems	System for Early Intervention (Early after problem onset)	System of Care
Organizing around the Content/ "curriculum" (for addressing barriers to learning & promoting healthy development)	Classroom-Focused Enabling			
	Crisis/ Emergency Assistance & Prevention			
	Support for transitions			
	Home Involvement in Schooling			
	Community Outreach/ Volunteers			
	Student and Family Assistance			
		Accommodations for differences & disabilities	Specialized assistance & other intensified interventions (e.g., Special Education & School-Based Behavioral Health)	

*Note that specific school-wide and classroom-based activities related to positive behavior support, "prereferral" interventions, and the eight components of Center for Prevention and Disease Control's Coordinated School Health Program are embedded into the six content ("curriculum") areas.

Frameworks to *Expand Policy* for School Improvement

Given federal policies as reflected in the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), we have suggested that ending marginalization requires bringing to policy tables proposals for

- a unifying umbrella concept
- a comprehensive systemic intervention framework
- an integrated infrastructure at all levels for developing a comprehensive system of learning supports and ensuring that it is a full partner in school improvement planning and decision making

Each of these matters have major relevance for improving how schools address barriers to student learning and teaching. And, dealt with effectively in policy and practice, they can help establish that student/learning supports are essential in *enabling* all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. In the preceding section, we offered a comprehensive systemic intervention framework, and in a subsequent section, we focus on reworking infrastructure. What follows here are frameworks for expanding school improvement policy.

Current Policy Needs to be Expanded

As already noted, our analyses indicate that the two component model upon which current reforms are based is inadequate for significantly improving the role of schools in helping prevent and correct learning, behavior, and emotional problems (again see Exhibit 2). Specifically, while improved instruction is necessary, for too many youngsters it is not sufficient.

It is widely conceded that student supports are fragmented and reach only a small proportion of those in need. Moreover, sparse budgets lead counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, and other support staff at schools into counter-productive competition with each other and with community professionals working with schools. Changes clearly are needed. The question is how best to alter this unacceptable status quo.

Our work suggests the value of

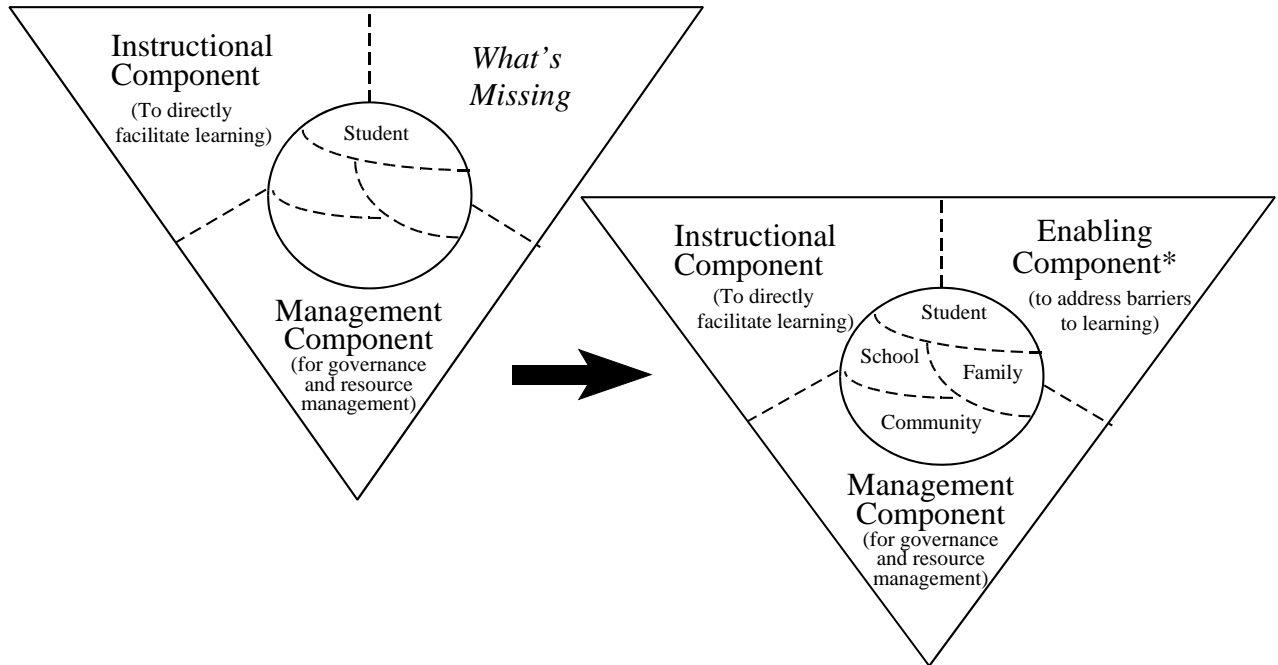
- coalescing all student/learning supports under a rubric such as *addressing barriers to student learning*
- configuring the work into a *primary and essential component* of school improvement.

School improvement policy must expand by adopting a three component framework

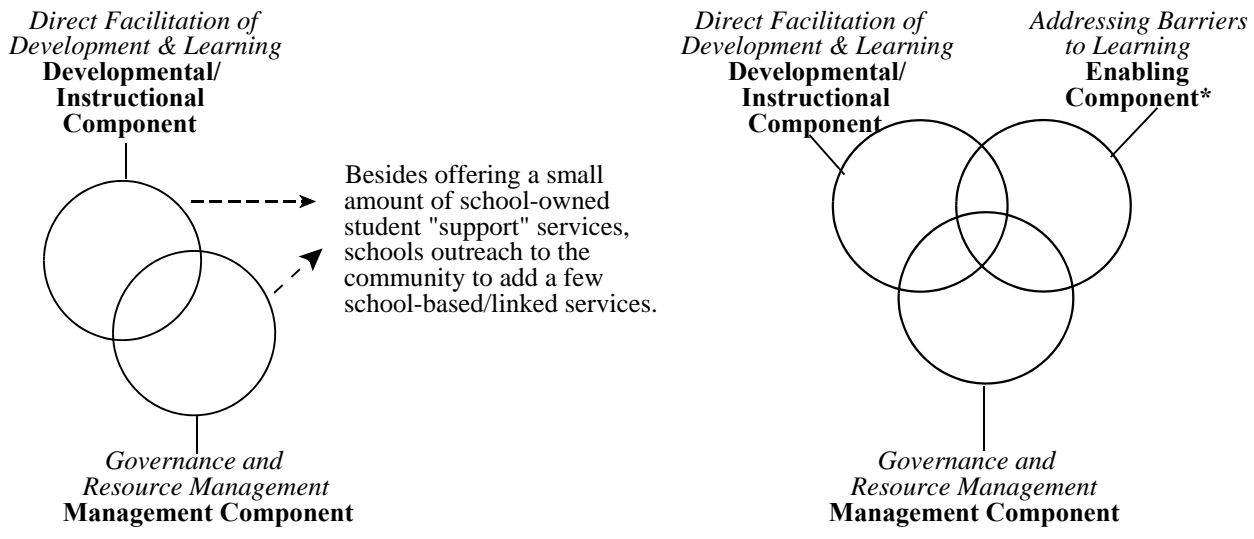
As indicated, we view such a component as a comprehensive system of learning supports designed to enable learning by addressing barriers. Moreover, the component is framed in policy and practice as fully integrated with the instructional and management components at a school and district-wide (see Exhibit 8). The intent of all this is to move school improvement policy from its overemphasis on two components to adoption of a three component framework.

Exhibit 8

**Expanding School Improvement Policy:
Moving from a Two- to a Three-component Framework**



FROM TO



*The third component (an enabling or learning supports component) is established in policy and practice as primary and essential and is developed into a comprehensive approach by weaving together school and community resources.

Adapted from various public domain documents written by Adelman and Taylor.

Unifying Concept

Recent policy and program analyses make it clear how few support staff are full participants at school and district tables where major school improvement decisions are made. It is not surprising, then, that student support concerns are not appropriately accounted for in school improvement planning and implementation. This state of affairs fundamentally undermines efforts to enable all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

For fragmentation and marginalization of student support to end, all staff involved must find better ways to work together. While some efforts have been made, we all can point to forces likely to perpetuate “silo” activity and counter-productive competition among personnel who represent different programs and professional affiliations.

Part of the problem is the term *student support*. It doesn’t seem to convey to policy makers that the total enterprise is essential and must be a primary component of school improvement. The problem is compounded because the term often is interpreted as denoting the work of “specialists” who mainly provide “services” to a few of the many students who are not doing well at school.

We suggest that major inroads would result from adoption of a unifying umbrella concept that better conveys the *primary* role student/learning supports can play in school improvement. Such a concept should convey a big picture understanding of the supports and why they are essential. It should provide an unambiguous answer to the question: *What is the overall direct and immediate function of student supports?*

A unifying
umbrella
concept helps
convey the
primary role
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play in school
improvement

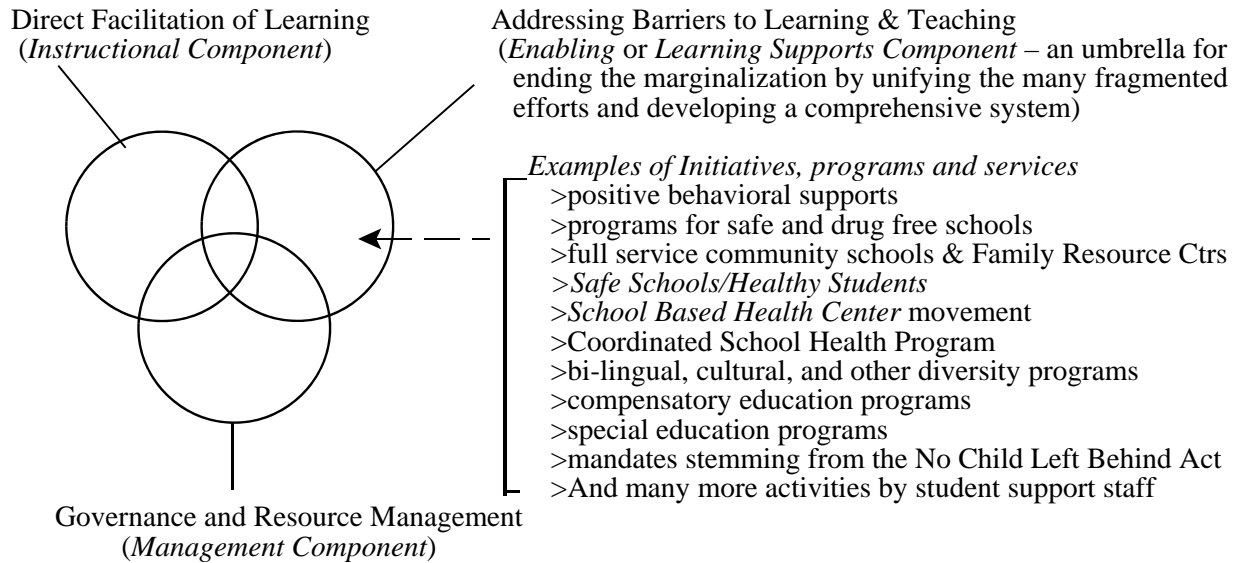
To underscore the importance of a component to address barriers to learning, we call it an *Enabling Component* (i.e., a component to enable learning by addressing the barriers). Such a component provides the umbrella for coalescing all student/learning support initiatives, programs, and services (see Exhibit 9). A set of general guidelines for such a component are presented in Appendix B.

Whatever the component is called, the important points are that (a) it is seen as necessary, complementary, and as overlapping the instructional and management components, and (b) it is elevated to a level of importance commensurate with the other components. For more on this, see –

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/assuringnochild.pdf>

Exhibit 9

An Enabling or Learning Supports Component as an Umbrella Concept for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Promoting Healthy Development



Various states and localities moving to pursue school improvement in terms of three primary and essential components have adopted other designations for their enabling component. For example, the state education agencies in California and Iowa and various districts across the country have adopted the term *Learning Supports*. The Hawai`i Department of Education uses the term *Comprehensive Student Support System* (CSSS). Building on this, proposed legislation in California refers to a *Comprehensive Pupil Learning Supports System*. The Berkeley (CA) Unified School District calls it a Universal Student Support System. See the Center’s toolkit for rebuilding student and learning supports for examples of policy statement

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentssupport/toolkit/aida.pdf>

Expanding the
Accountability
Framework for
Schools

**Accountability
is a policy tool that
has extraordinary
power to
reshape schools**

**Current
accountability
pressures
marginalize
almost every
effort not
seen as directly
and quickly
producing
higher
achievement
scores**

School accountability is a policy tool with extraordinary power to reshape schools – for good and for bad. Systems are driven by accountability measures. This is particularly so under “reform” conditions.

As everyone involved in school reform knows, the only measure that really counts is achievement test scores. These tests drive school accountability, and what such tests measure has become the be-all and end-all of what is attended to by many decision makers. This produces a growing disconnect between the realities of what it takes to improve academic performance and the direction in which many policy makers and school reformers are leading the public.

The disconnect is especially evident in schools serving what are now being referred to as “low wealth” families. Such families and those who work in schools serving them have a clear appreciation of many barriers to learning that must be addressed so students can benefit from the teacher’s efforts to teach. These stakeholders stress that, in many schools, major academic improvements are unlikely until comprehensive and multifaceted approaches to address these barriers are developed and pursued effectively.

At the same time, it is evident to anyone who looks that there is no direct accountability for whether these barriers are addressed. To the contrary, efforts essential for addressing barriers to development and learning are further devalued and cut when achievement test scores do not reflect an immediate impact.

Thus, rather than building the type of system that can produce improved academic performance, prevailing accountability measures are pressuring schools to pursue a direct route to improving instruction. The implicit underlying assumption is that students are motivationally ready and able each day to benefit from the teacher’s instruction. The reality, of course, is that the *majority* of youngsters do not fit this picture in too many schools. Students confronted with a host of external interfering factors usually are not in a position to benefit even from significant instructional improvements. The result is low test scores and an achievement gap.

Logically, well designed, systematic efforts should be directed at addressing interfering factors. However, current accountability pressures override the logic and marginalize almost every effort not seen as directly and quickly leading to higher achievement scores. Ironically, this works against what must be done and against gathering evidence on how the impact of addressing barriers to learning directly.

All this leads to an appreciation of the need for an expanded framework for school accountability – a framework that includes direct measures of achievement and much more. We view this as a move toward what has been called *intelligent accountability*. Exhibit 10 highlights such an expanded framework.

As illustrated, there is no intent to deflect from the laser-like focus on meeting high academic standards. Debate will continue about how best to measure academic outcomes, but clearly schools must demonstrate they effectively teach academics.

At the same time, policy must acknowledge that schools also are expected to pursue high standards in promoting positive social and personal functioning, including enhancing civility, teaching safe and healthy behavior, and some form of “character education.” Every school we visit has specific goals related to this facet of student development and learning. Yet, it is evident that there is no systematic evaluation or reporting of the work. As would be expected, then, schools direct few resources and too little attention to these unmeasured concerns. Yet, society wants schools to attend to these matters, and most professionals understand that personal and social functioning are integrally tied to academic performance. From this perspective, it seem self-defeating not to hold schools accountable for improving students’ social and personal functioning.

It is self-defeating not to attend to benchmark indicators of progress related to addressing barriers to learning

For schools where a large proportion of students are not doing well, it is also self-defeating not to attend to benchmark indicators of progress in addressing barriers to learning. Schools cannot teach children who are not in class. Therefore, increasing attendance always is an expectation (and an important budget consideration). Other basic indicators of school improvement and precursors of enhanced academic performance are reducing tardiness and problem behaviors, lessening suspension and dropout rates, and abating the large number of inappropriate referrals for special education. Given this, the progress of school staff related to such matters should be measured and treated as a significant aspect of school accountability.

School outcomes, of course, are influenced by the well-being of the families and the neighborhoods in which they operate. Therefore, performance of any school should be judged within the context of the current status of indicators of community well-being, such as economic, social, and health measures. If those indicators are not improving or are declining, it is patently unfair to ignore these contextual conditions in judging school performance.

In sum, it is unlikely the majority of students in economically depressed areas will perform up to high standards if schools and communities do not pursue a holistic, systemic, and collaborative approach that focuses not just on students, but on strengthening their families, schools, and surrounding neighborhood.

Exhibit 10

Expanding the Framework for School Accountability

Indicators of Positive Learning and Development

High Standards for *Academics**
(measures of cognitive achievements, e.g., standardized tests of achievement, portfolio and other forms of authentic assessment)

High Standards for Learning/ Development Related to *Social & Personal Functioning**
(measures of social learning and behavior, character/ values, civility, healthy and safe behavior)

"Community Report Cards"

>increases in positive indicators

Benchmark Indicators of Progress in Addressing Barriers & (Re-)engaging Students in Classroom Learning

High Standards for *Enabling Learning and Development***
(measures of effectiveness in addressing barriers , e.g.,
>increased attendance
>reduced tardies
>reduced misbehavior
>less bullying and sexual harassment
>increased family involvement with child and schooling
>fewer referrals for specialized assistance
>fewer referrals for special education
>fewer pregnancies
>fewer suspensions and dropouts)

>decreases in negative indicators

*Results of interventions for directly facilitating development and learning.

**Results of interventions for addressing barriers to learning and development.

Frameworks for *Reworking Infrastructure* at School, Feeder Patterns, District Levels, and for School-Community Collaboratives

Well-designed, compatible, and interconnected infrastructures at schools, for school complexes, at the district level, and for school-community collaboratives are essential for developing a comprehensive system of learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching. Each level plays a key role in weaving together existing school and community resources and developing a full continuum of interventions over time. Moreover, content and resource-oriented infrastructure mechanisms enable programs and services to function in an increasingly cohesive, cost-efficient, and equitable way.

Rethinking
Infrastructure
for Districts
and Schools

The fundamental principle in developing an organizational and operational infrastructure is that *structure follows function*. That is, the focus should be on establishing an infrastructure that enables accomplishment of major functions and related tasks in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

Structure
follows
function

For school districts, the vision of leaving no child behind encompasses ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. As we have stressed, pursuing such a vision requires effectively operationalizing three core functions: (1) facilitating learning and development, (2) addressing barriers to learning and teaching in ways that enable learning and development, and (3) governing and managing the district. In pursuing each of these, the major processes involve *systemic* planning, implementation, and evaluation and accountability.

A component
for learning
supports
requires
integrated
infrastructure
mechanisms
that are fully
integrated
into school
improvement
efforts

The infrastructure need is to establish a connected set of mechanisms to steer and carry out these fundamental functions and processes on a regular basis in keeping with the vision for public education. Such an infrastructure enables leaders to steer together and to empower and work productively with staff on major tasks related to policy and practice (e.g., designing and directing activity, planning and implementing specific organizational and program objectives, allocating and monitoring resources with a clear content and outcome focus, facilitating coordination and integration to ensure cohesive implementation, managing communication and information, providing support for capacity building and quality improvement, ensuring accountability, and promoting self-renewal).

Developing and institutionalizing a comprehensive component for learning supports requires infrastructure mechanisms that are integrated with each other and are fully integrated into school

improvement efforts. Along with unifying various initiatives, projects, programs, and services, the need *at a school* is to rework infrastructure to support efforts to address barriers to learning in a cohesive manner and to integrate the work with efforts to facilitate instruction and promote healthy development. *At the district level*, the need is for administrative leadership and capacity building support that helps maximize development of a comprehensive system of learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching at each school. And, it is crucial to establish the district's leadership for this work at a high enough level to ensure the administrator is always an active participant at key planning and decision-making tables.

Infrastructure for a comprehensive system of learning supports should be designed from the school outward

From our perspective, the infrastructure for a comprehensive system of learning supports should be designed from the school outward. That is, *conceptually*, the emphasis is first on what an integrated infrastructure should look like at the school level. Then, the focus expands to include the mechanisms needed to connect a family or complex (e.g., feeder pattern) of schools and establish collaborations with surrounding community resources. Ultimately, central district (and community agency) units need to be restructured in ways that best support the work at the school and school complex levels. Indeed, a key guideline in designing district infrastructure is that it must provide leadership and build capacity for (a) establishing and maintaining an effective learning supports infrastructure at every school and (b) a mechanism for connecting a family of schools.

All this involves reframing the work of personnel responsible for student/learning supports, establishing new collaborative arrangements, and redistributing authority (power). With this in mind, those who do such restructuring must have appropriate incentives, safeguards, and adequate resources and support for making major systemic changes. (We do recognize all this is easy to say and extremely hard to do.)

At Schools Every school is expending significant resources on student and learning supports to enable learning. Yet, few have mechanisms to ensure appropriate use of these resources and to work on developing a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports. Such mechanisms contribute to cost-efficacy by ensuring student and learning support activity is planned implemented, and evaluated in a coordinated and increasingly integrated manner. Creation of such mechanisms is essential for braiding together existing school and community resources and, ensuring programs and services function in increasingly cohesive ways that also resolve related turf and operational problems.

Exhibit 11 illustrates a school infrastructure prototype. Obviously, a small school has less staff and other resources than most larger schools. Nevertheless, the three major functions necessary for school improvement remain the same in all schools, namely (1) improving instruction, (2) providing learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching, and (3) enhancing management and governance. The challenge in any school is to pursue all three functions in an integrated and effective manner.

The added challenge in a small school is how to do it with so few personnel. The key is to use and, to the degree feasible, modestly expand existing infrastructure mechanisms. In a small school, however, rather than stressing the involvement of several administrative leaders and numerous staff members, the emphasis is on the role a *School Leadership Team* can play in establishing essential infrastructure mechanisms.

With less personnel, a principal must use who and what is available to pursue all three functions. Usually, the principal and whoever else is part of a school leadership team will lead the way in improving instruction and management/governance. As presently constituted, however, such a team may not be prepared to advance development of a comprehensive system of learning supports. Thus, someone already on the leadership team will need to be assigned this role and provided training to carry it out effectively.

**Needed:
an administrative
leader for the
school's
learning supports
component**

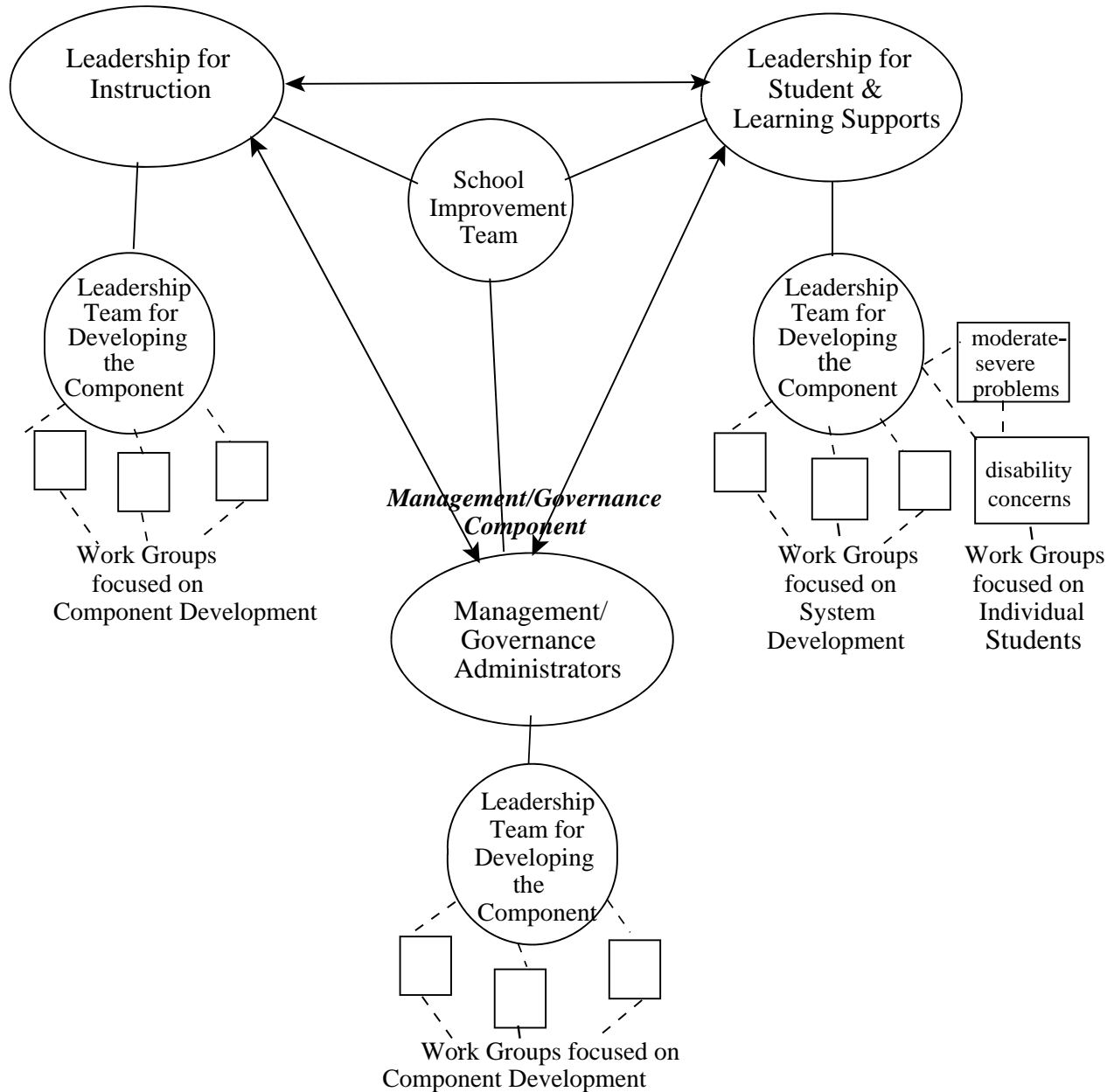
Alternatively, someone in the school who is involved with student supports (e.g. a pupil services professional, a Title I Coordinator, a special education resource specialist) can be invited to join the leadership team, assigned responsibility and accountability for ensuring the vision for the component is not lost, and provided additional training for the tasks involved in being a Learning Supports or Enabling Component Lead. The lead, however chosen, will benefit from eliciting the help of other advocates/champions at the school and from the community. These all can help ensure development, over time, of a comprehensive system of learning supports.

Obviously administrative leadership is key to ending marginalization of efforts to address behavior, learning, and emotional problems. Another key is establishment of a team that focuses specifically on how learning support resources are used.

Exhibit 11. Example of an Integrated Infrastructure at the School Level*

Facilitating Learning/Development
Instructional Component

Addressing Barriers to Learning
Enabling or Learning Supports Component



*The infrastructure for a comprehensive system of learning supports should be designed from the school outward. That is, conceptually, the first emphasis is on what an integrated infrastructure should look like at the school level. Then, the focus expands to include the mechanisms needed to connect a family or complex (e.g., feeder pattern) of schools and establish collaborations with surrounding community resources. Ultimately, central district units need to be restructured in ways that best support the work at the school and school complex levels.

About a School-based Leadership Team for Developing a Learning Supports Component

Initially, a leader for an enabling or learning supports component, working with a leadership team, can reduce fragmentation and enhance cost-efficacy by ensuring existing programs and services are coordinated and increasingly integrated. Over time, the group can provide school improvement leadership to guide stakeholder work groups in evolving the school’s vision for student and learning supports. The aims are not only to prevent and correct learning, behavior, emotional, and health problems, but contribute to classroom and schoolwide efforts to foster academic, social, emotional, and physical functioning and promote an increasingly positive school climate.

A Learning Supports Leadership Team might be tempted to concentrate solely on psychosocial programs; it is meant, however, to focus on all major programs and services supporting the instructional component. This means bringing together representatives of all these programs and services. Such teams might include, for example, guidance counselors, school psychologists, nurses, social workers, attendance and dropout counselors, health educators, special education staff, after school program staff, bilingual and Title I program coordinators, health educators, safe and drug free school staff, and union representatives. Beyond these folks, such a team is well-advised to add the energies and expertise of other administrators, regular classroom teachers, non-certificated staff, parents, and older students. It also should include representatives of any community agency that is significantly involved with schools.

The focus is on improving outcomes for the many and cost-efficacy through system development, not just assisting a few individuals

In pursuing its work, the team provides what often is a missing link for managing and enhancing programs and developing a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports. It can integrate, strengthen, and stimulate new and improved interventions. Examples of tasks include (a) mapping and analyzing activity and resources to improve their use in preventing and ameliorating problems and to assess gaps and clarify priorities, (b) enhancing procedures for management of programs and information and for communication among school staff and with the home, and (c) explore ways to redeploy and enhance resources – such as clarifying which activities are nonproductive, suggesting better uses for resources, and establishing priorities for developing new interventions, as well as reaching out to connect with additional resources in the school district and community to fill gaps.

Because school have a long standing history with teams that focus on specific individuals, it is important to highlight the difference between such teams and a Learning Supports Leadership Team (Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 12
Contrasting Team Tasks

<i>A Case-Oriented Team</i>	<i>A Leadership Team for System Development</i>
Focuses on specific <i>individuals</i> and discrete <i>services</i> to address barriers to learning	Focuses on developing a unified & comprehensive system of supports to address barriers to learning for all students
Sometimes called:	Possibly called:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Study Team• Student Study Team• Student Success Team• Student Assistance Team• Teacher Assistance Team• IEP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning Supports Resource Team• Learning Supports Component Team• Learning Supports Component Development Team
EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS:	EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">>triage>referral>case monitoring/management>case progress review>case reassessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">>aggregating data across students and from teachers to analyze school needs>mapping resources in school and community>analyzing resources>identifying the most pressing program development needs at the school>coordinating and integrating school resources & connecting with community resources>establishing priorities for strengthening programs and developing new ones>planning and facilitating ways to strengthen and develop new programs and systems>recommending how resources should be deployed and redeployed>developing strategies for enhancing resources>social "marketing"

In contrasting the two teams, the intent is to highlight the difference in functions, and the need for mechanisms that focus on both sets of functions

Where creation of "another team" is seen as a burden, existing teams, such as student or teacher assistance teams and school crisis teams, have demonstrated the ability to perform resource-oriented tasks. In adding the resource-oriented tasks to another team's work, great care must be taken to structure the agenda so sufficient time is devoted to the additional tasks. For small schools, a large team often is not feasible, but a two person team can still do the job.

***For a Complex
or “Family”
of Schools***

Schools in the same geographic (catchment) area have a number of shared concerns, and feeder schools often are interacting with students from the same family. Furthermore, some programs and personnel are (or can be) shared by several neighboring schools, thus minimizing redundancy and reducing costs. A multi-site team can provide a mechanism to help ensure cohesive and equitable deployment of resources and also can enhance the pooling of resources to reduce costs. Such a mechanism can be particularly useful for integrating the efforts of high schools and their feeder middle and elementary schools. (This clearly is important in addressing barriers with those families who have youngsters attending more than one level of schooling in the same cluster. It is neither cost-effective nor good intervention for each school to contact a family separately in instances where several children from a family are in need of special attention.)

*A multi-site team
can resource use,
achieve economies
of scale, and
improve outcomes*

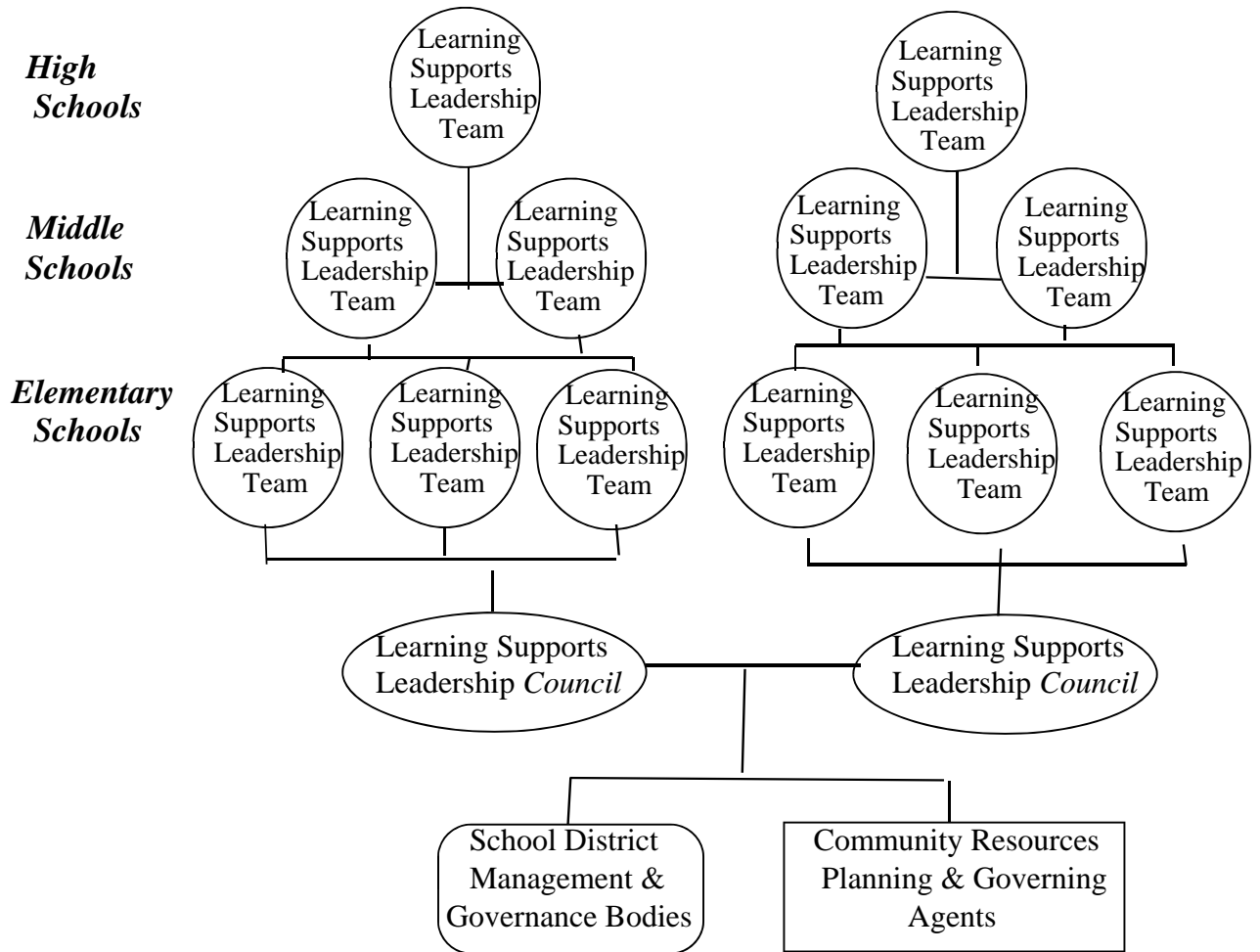
With respect to linking with community resources, multi-school teams are especially attractive to community agencies who often don't have the time or personnel to link with individual schools. In general, a group of schools can benefit from a multi-site resource mechanism designed to provide leadership, facilitate communication and connection, and ensure quality improvement across sites. For example, a multi-site body, or what we call a *Learning Supports Leadership Council*, might consist of a high school and its feeder middle and elementary schools. It brings together one-two representatives from each school's *Learning Supports Leadership Team* (see Exhibit 13).

A Council meets about once a month to help (a) coordinate and integrate programs serving multiple schools, (b) identify and meet common needs with respect to guidelines and staff development, and (c) create linkages and collaborations among schools and with community agencies. In this last regard, it can play a special role in community outreach both to create formal working relationships and ensure that all participating schools have access to such resources.

More generally, the council provides a useful mechanism for leadership, communication, maintenance, quality improvement, and ongoing development of a component for addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Natural starting points for councils are the sharing of needs assessment, resource mapping, analyses, and recommendations for reform and restructuring. Specific areas of initial focus may be on such matters as addressing community-school violence and developing prevention programs and safe school plans.

Exhibit 13

Developing and Connecting Mechanisms at Schools Sites with Families of Schools, and District and Community-wide



From our perspective, the infrastructure for a comprehensive system of learning supports should be designed from the school outward. That is, *conceptually*, the emphasis is first on what an integrated infrastructure should look like at the school level. Then, the focus expands to include the mechanisms needed to connect a family or complex (e.g., feeder pattern) of schools and establish collaborations with surrounding community resources. Ultimately, central district (and community agency) units need to be restructured in ways that best support the work at the school and school complex levels. Indeed, a key guideline in designing district infrastructure is that it must provide leadership and build capacity for (a) establishing and maintaining an effective learning supports infrastructure at every school and (b) a mechanism for connecting a family of schools.

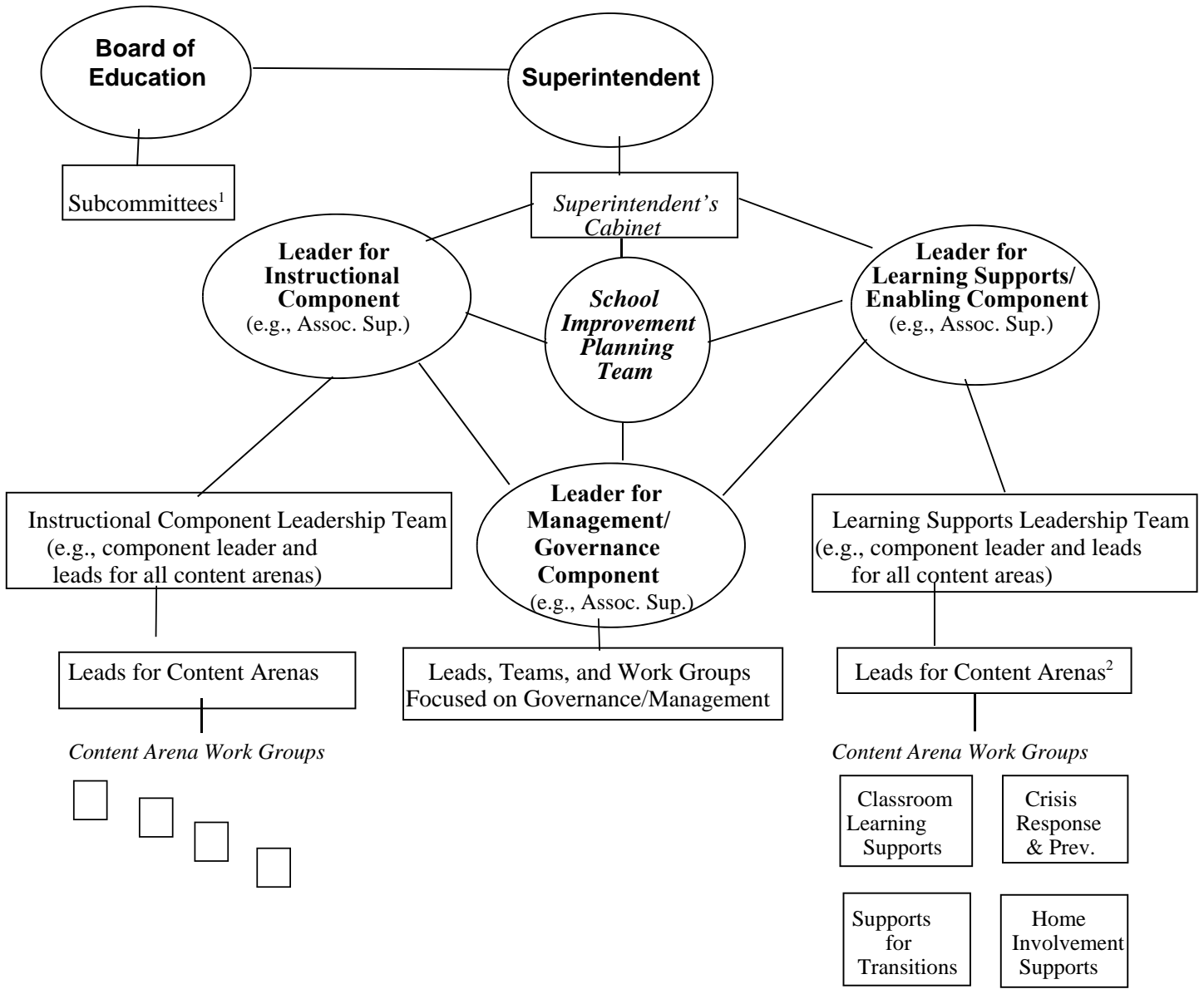
***A Prototype
for District
Infrastructure***

At the district level, the need is for administrative leadership and capacity building support that helps maximize development of a comprehensive system of learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching at each school. And, it is crucial to establish the district's leadership for this work at a high enough level to ensure the administrator is always an active participant at key planning and decision-making tables.

Exhibit 14 lays out a framework to consider in reworking district infrastructure in ways that promote development of a comprehensive system of learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching. As indicated, it is essential to have a cabinet level administrative leader (e.g., an associate superintendent, a chief officer) who is responsible and accountable for all resources related to addressing barriers to learning. The resources of concern come from the general fund, compensatory education, special education, and special projects (e.g., student support personnel such as school psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses; compensatory and special education staff; special initiatives, grants, and programs for afterschool, wellness, dropout prevention, attendance, drug abuse prevention, violence prevention, pregnancy prevention, parent/family/ health centers, volunteer assistance, community resource linkages to schools).

Exhibit 14

Prototype for an Integrated Infrastructure at the District Level with Mechanisms for Learning Supports That Are Comparable to Those for Instruction



Notes:

1. If there isn't one, a board subcommittee for learning supports should be created to ensure policy and supports for developing a comprehensive system of learning supports at every school (see Center documents *Restructuring Boards of Education to Enhance Schools' Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers to Student Learning* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/boardrep.pdf> and Example of a Formal Proposal for Moving in New Directions for Student Support <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newdirections/exampleproposal.pdf>)

2. All resources related to addressing barriers to learning and teaching (e.g., student support personnel, compensatory and special education staff and interventions, special initiatives, grants, and programs) are integrated into a refined set of major content arenas such as those indicated here. Leads are assigned for each arena and work groups are established.

Infrastructure for School- Community Collaboratives

Finally, we turn to school-community collaboratives. Collaboration among schools, families, and other major resources in a community are essential to developing a comprehensive and cohesive system of learning supports. Such a collaboration requires establishment of an effective collaborative. And, this requires development of a well-conceived infrastructure of mechanisms that are appropriately sanctioned and endorsed by governing bodies (see Exhibit 15). Besides basic resources, key facets of the infrastructure are designated leaders (e.g., administrative, staff) and work group mechanisms (e.g., resource- and program-oriented teams).

At the most basic level, the focus is on connecting families and community resources with one school. At the next level, collaborative connections may encompass a cluster of schools (e.g., a high school and its feeder schools) and/or may coalesce several collaboratives to increase efficiency and effectiveness and achieve economies of scale. Finally, “systemwide” (e.g., district, city, county) mechanisms can be designed to provide support for what each locality is trying to develop.

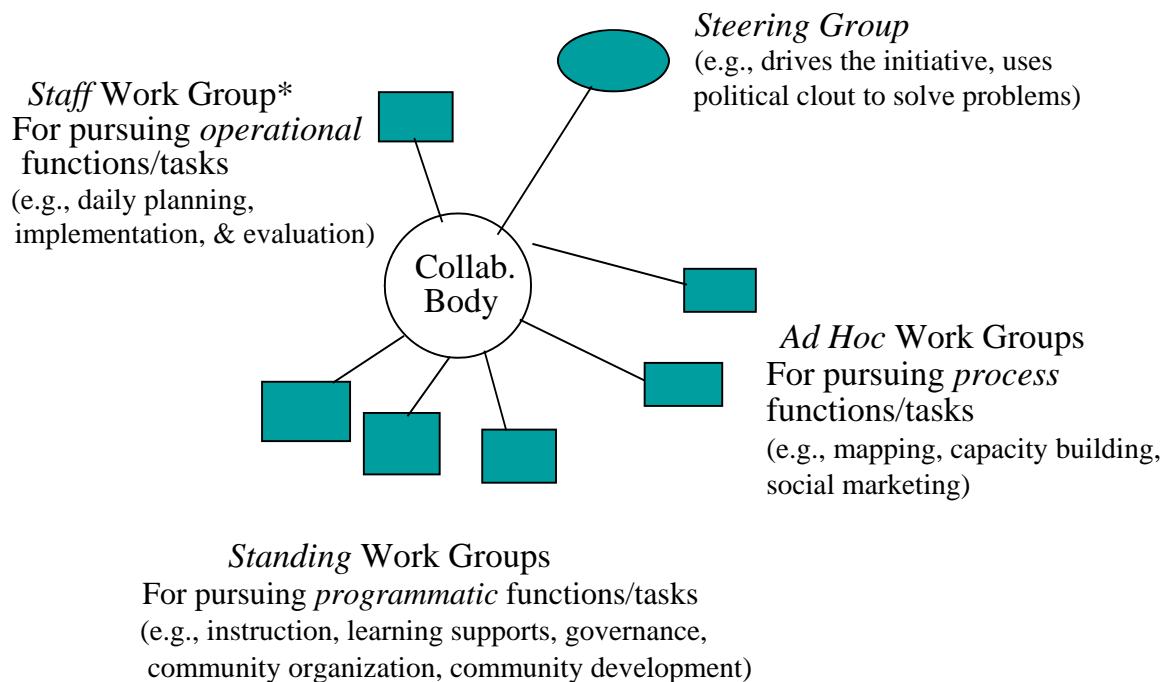
*All
collaboratives
need a core
team to steer
the process*

All collaboratives need a core team to steer the process. The team must consist of competent individuals who are highly motivated – not just initially but over time. The complexity of collaboration requires providing continuous, personalized guidance and support to enhance knowledge and skills and counter anxiety, frustration, and other stressors. This entails close monitoring and *immediate* follow-up to address problems.

Local collaborative bodies should be oriented to enhancing and expanding resources. This includes such functions as reducing fragmentation, enhancing cost-efficacy by analyzing, planning, and redeploying resources, and then coordinating, integrating, monitoring, evaluating, and strengthening ongoing systemic organization and operations. Properly constituted with school, home, and community representatives, such a group develops an infrastructure of work teams to pursue collaborative functions. To these ends, there must be (1) adequate resources (time, space, materials, equipment) to support the infrastructure; (2) opportunities to increase ability and generate a sense of renewed mission; and (3) ways to address personnel turnover quickly so new staff are brought up to speed. Because work or task groups usually are the mechanism of choice, particular attention must be paid to increasing levels of competence and enhancing motivation of all stakeholders for working together. More generally, stakeholder development spans four stages: orientation, foundation-building, capacity-building, and continuing education.

Exhibit 15

Basic Facets of a Comprehensive Collaborative Infrastructure^a



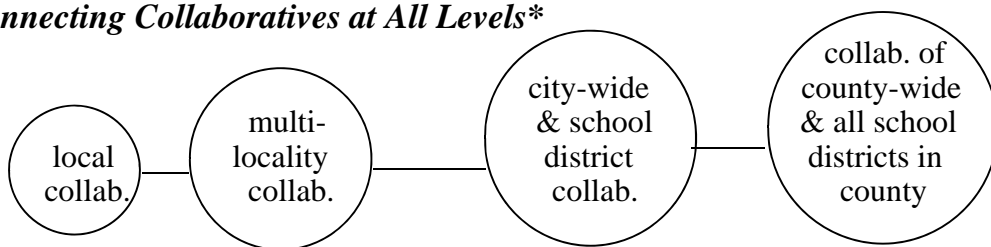
***Staffing**

- >Executive Director
- >Organization Facilitator (change agent)

Who should be at the table?

- >families^b
- >schools^c
- >communities^d

Connecting Collaboratives at All Levels*



^aCollaboratives can be organized by any group of stakeholders. Connecting the resources of families and the community through collaboration with schools is essential for developing comprehensive approaches. At the multi-locality level, efficiencies and economies of scale are achieved by connecting a complex (or “family”) of schools (e.g., a high school and its feeder schools). In a small community, such a complex often is the school district. Conceptually, it is best to think in terms of building from the local outward, but in practice, the process of establishing the initial collaboration may begin at any level.

^b*Families*. It is important to ensure that all who live in an area are represented – including, but not limited to, representatives of organized family advocacy groups. The aim is to mobilize all the human and social capital represented by family members and other home caretakers of the young.

^c*Schools*. This encompasses all institutionalized entities that are responsible for formal education (e.g., pre-K, elementary, secondary, higher education). The aim is to draw on the resources of these institutions.

^d*Communities*. This encompasses all the other resources (public and private money, facilities, human and social capital) that can be brought to the table at each level (e.g., health and social service agencies, businesses and unions, recreation, cultural, and youth development groups, libraries, juvenile justice and law enforcement, faith-based community institutions, service clubs, media). As the collaborative develops, additional steps must be taken to outreach to disenfranchised groups.

Because adjoining localities have common concerns, they may have programmatic activity that can use the same resources. Many natural connections exist in catchment areas serving a high school and its feeder schools. For example, the same family often has children attending all levels of schooling at the same time. In addition, some school districts and agencies already pull together several geographically-related clusters to combine and integrate personnel and programs. Through coordination and sharing at this level, redundancy can be minimized and resources can be deployed equitably and pooled to reduce costs.

Toward these ends, a multi-locality collaborative can help (1) coordinate and integrate programs serving multiple schools and neighborhoods; (2) identify and meet common needs for stakeholder development; and (3) create linkages and enhance collaboration among schools and agencies. Such a group can provide a broader-focused mechanism for leadership, communication, maintenance, quality improvement, and ongoing development of a comprehensive continuum of programs and services. Multilocality collaboratives are especially attractive to community agencies that often don't have the time or personnel to link with individual schools.

One natural starting point for local and multilocality collaboratives are the sharing of need-assessments, resource mapping, analyses, and recommendations for addressing community-school violence and developing prevention programs and safe school and neighborhood plans.

Needed: policy, guidance, leadership, and assistance to ensure localities can establish and maintain collaboration and accomplish desired goals

At the systemwide level, the need is for policy, guidance, leadership, and assistance to ensure localities can establish and maintain collaboration and steer the work toward successful accomplishment of desired goals. Development of systemwide mechanisms should reflect a clear conception of how each supports local activity. Key at this level is systemwide leadership with responsibility and accountability for maintaining the vision, developing strategic plans, supporting capacity building, and ensuring coordination and integration of activity among localities and the entire system. Other functions at this level include evaluation, encompassing determination of the equity in program delivery, quality improvement reviews of all mechanisms and procedures, and review of results.

Frameworks for *Rethinking the Implementation Problem* (or Getting from Here to There)

Despite the nationwide emphasis on school improvement, there has been widespread failure to address how desired improvements will be accomplished. That is, we find little evidence of sophisticated strategic planning for how schools and districts intend to move from where they are to where they want to go. Little attention has been paid to the complexities of large scale diffusion. Leadership training for policy makers and education administrators has given short shrift to the topic of scale-up processes and problems.

School improvement obviously needs to begin with a clear framework and map for what changes are to be made. It should be equally obvious that there must be a clear framework and map for how to get from here to there, especially when the improvements require significant systemic change. And, in both cases, there is a need for a strong science-base, leadership, and adequate resources to facilitate capacity building. With all this in mind, this unit focuses on the problem of expanding school improvement planning to better address *how* schools and districts intend to accomplish designated changes. Specifically, we frame and outline some basic considerations related to systemic change.

Linking Logic Models for School Improvement

Efforts to make substantial and substantive school improvements require much more than implementing a few demonstrations. Improved approaches are only as good as a school district's ability to develop and institutionalize them equitably in all its schools. This process often is called diffusion, replication, roll out, or scale-up. The frequent failure to sustain innovations and take them to scale in school districts has increased interest in understanding systemic change as a central concern in school improvement.

At this point, we should clarify the term *systemic change*. Our focus is on district and school organization and operations and the networks that shape decision making about fundamental changes and subsequent implementation. From this perspective, systemic change involves modifications that amount to a cultural shift in institutionalized values (i.e., reculturalization). For interventionists, the problem is that the greater the distance and dissonance between the current culture of schools and intended school improvements, the more difficult it is to successfully accomplish major systemic changes.

The real difficulty
in changing
the course of any
enterprise lies
not in developing
new ideas but in
escaping old ones
John Maynard Keynes

Our interest in systemic change has evolved over many years of implementing demonstrations and working to institutionalize and diffuse them on a large scale. By now, we are fully convinced that advancing the field requires escaping "project mentality" (sometimes referred to as "projectitis") and becoming sophisticated about facilitating systemic change. Fullan stresses that what is needed is

leadership that “motivates people to take on the complexities and anxieties of difficult change.” We would add that such leadership also must develop a refined understanding of how to facilitate systemic change.

Exhibit 16 suggests how major elements involved in designing school improvements are logically connected to considerations about systemic change. That is, the same elements can be used to frame key intervention concerns related to school improvement and systemic change, and each is intimately linked to the other. The elements are conceived as encompassing the

- vision, aims, and underlying rationale for what follows
- resources needed to do the work
- general functions, major tasks, activities, and phases that must be pursued
- infrastructure and strategies needed to carry out the functions, tasks, and activities
- positive and negative results that emerge.

Strategic planning for systemic change in schools and districts should account for each of these elements. The process starts with a clear sense of a school’s prototype for ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed in school. Then, the planning focus is on how the school will accomplish essential changes. At the district level, the need is for a strategic plan that clarifies how the district will facilitate replication and scale-up of prototype practices.*

*For a discussion of each of the above elements, see H.S. Adelman & L. Taylor (2006), Systemic change for school improvement. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 17, 55-77.

Exhibit 16. Linking Logic Models for Designing Diffusion of an Innovation and Related Systemic Changes

Key considerations with respect to both the diffusion and systemic change processes:

- >What is the vision, long-term aims, and underlying rationale?
- >What are the existing resources that might be (re)deployed and woven together to make good progress toward the vision?
- >What general functions, major tasks, activities, and phases need to be implemented?
- >What infrastructure and strategies are needed to carry out the functions, tasks, and activities?
- >What short-term indicators will be used as process benchmarks, what intermediate outcomes will indicate progress toward long-range aims, and how will negative outcomes be identified?

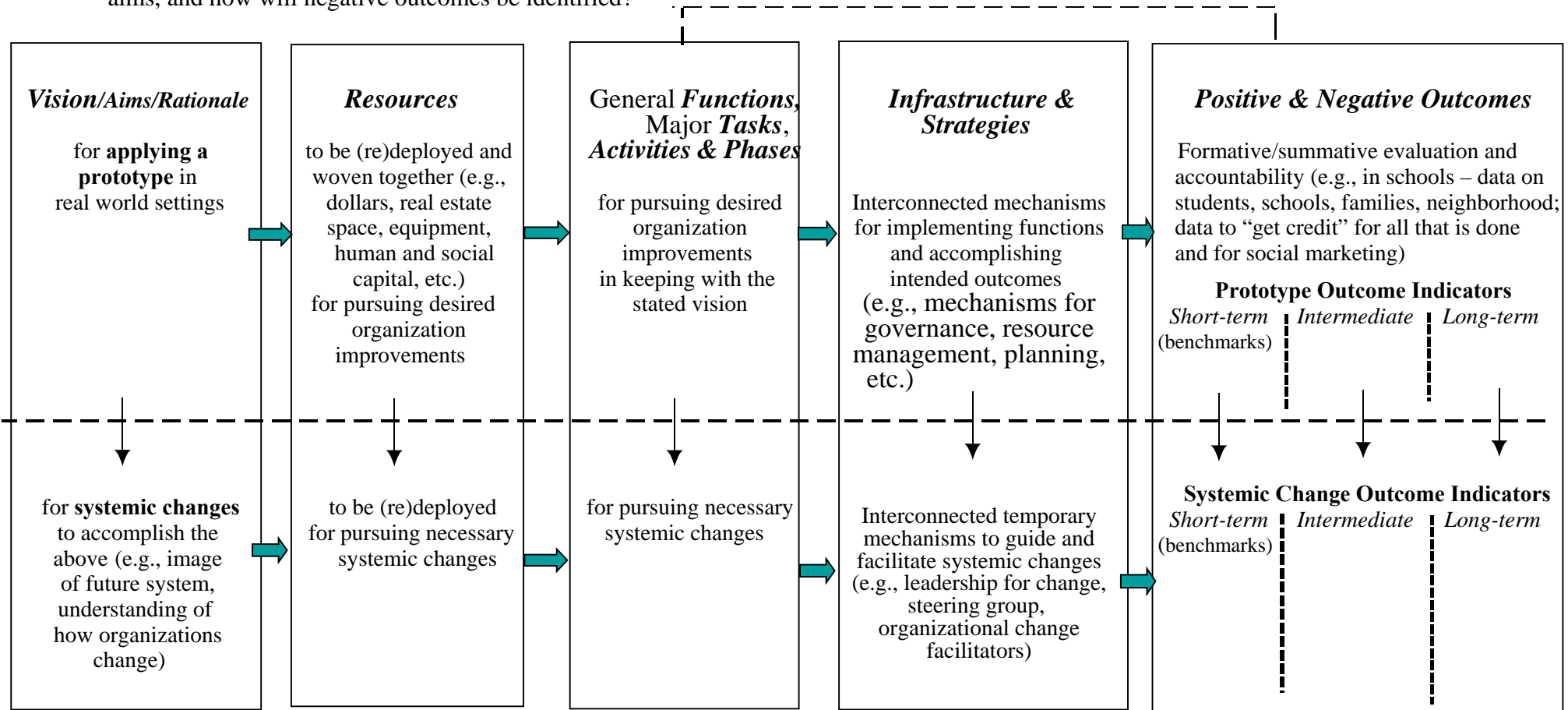


Exhibit 17 briefly highlights key consideration related to Planning, implementing, sustaining, and going-to-scale, including the four phases of the change process. (Here, too, see Adelman & Taylor, 2007 for a discussion of each cell in the matrix.)

Exhibit 18 highlights a set of parallel and linked tasks related to each of the four phases.

Too little is done to create readiness for change or to develop an effective infrastructure and strategic plans for start-up and phase-in

These are fundamental matters for policy makers and planners to address with respect to ensuring that effective systemic changes are designed, implemented, sustained, and taken to scale. In our experience, the prevailing tendency is not to do so. As a result, too little is done to create readiness for change or to develop an effective organizational and operational infrastructure and strategic plans for start-up and phase-in. This is a recipe for innovative failure.

An understanding of concepts espoused by community psychologists such as empowering settings and enhancing a sense of community also is useful. There is a growing body of work suggesting that the success of a variety of initiatives depends on interventions that can empower stakeholders and enhance their sense of community. However, the proper design of such interventions requires understanding that empowerment is a multifaceted concept. In discussing power, theoreticians distinguish “power over” from “power to” and “power from.” *Power over* involves explicit or implicit dominance over others and events; *power to* is seen as increased opportunities to act; *power from* implies ability to resist the power of others.

Enhancing a sense of community involves ongoing attention to daily experiences. With respect to sustaining initiatives, stakeholders must experience initiative in ways that make them feel they are valued members who are contributing to a collective identity, destiny, and vision. Their work together must be facilitated in ways that enhance feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness with and commitment to each other. As Tom Vander Ark, executive director of education for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, wisely notes: “Effective practices typically evolve over a long period in high-functioning, fully engaged systems.”

Exhibit 17

New Initiatives: Considerations Related to Planning, Implementing, Sustaining, and Going-to-scale

NATURE & SCOPE OF FOCUS

Intervention/ Program Prototype Development	Adoption/Adaptation of the Prototype at a Particular Site	System-Wide Replication/ Scale-Up
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*SOME
KEY
FACETS*

Social Marketing

Vision &
Policy Commitment

Partnership Negotiation
& Leadership
Designation

Infrastructure
Enhancement/Develop.
(e.g., mechanisms for
governance, steering,
operation, coordination)

Resources -- Redeployed
& New (e.g., time, space,
funds)

Capacity Building
(especially development
of personnel & addressing
personnel mobility)

Standards, Evaluation, &
Accountability

Creating
Readiness

Initial
Implementation

*PHASES OF THE
CHANGE PROCESS*

Institutionalization

Ongoing Evolution/
Creative Renewal

Exhibit 18

Prototype Implementation and Scale-up: Phases and Parallel and Linked Tasks*

Phase I
Creating Readiness:
 Enhancing the Climate/Culture for Change



Phase II
Initial Implementation:
 Adapting and Phasing-in the Prototype with Well-Designed Guidance and Support



Phase III
Institutionalization:
 Ensuring the Infrastructure Maintains and Enhances Productive Changes



Phase IV
Ongoing Evolution

System Change Staff

Disseminates the prototype to create interest (promotion and marketing)

Evaluates indications of interest

Makes in-depth presentations to build stakeholder consensus

Negotiates a policy framework and conditions of engagement with sanctioned bodies

Elicits ratification and sponsorship by stakeholders

Implementation Team works at site with **Organization Leadership** to

Redesign the organizational and programmatic infrastructure

Clarify need to add temporary mechanisms for the implementation process

Restructure time (the school day, time allocation over the year)

Conduct stakeholder foundation-building activity

Establish temporary mechanisms to facilitate the implementation process

Design appropriate prototype adaptations

Develop site-specific plan to phase-in prototype

Team works at site with appropriate **Stakeholders**

Plans and implements ongoing stakeholder development/empowerment programs

Facilitates day-by-day prototype implementation

Establishes formative evaluation procedures

System Change Staff continues contact with **Organization Leadership**

Facilitates expansion of the formative evaluation system (in keeping with summative evaluation needs)

Clarifies ways to improve the prototype

Compiles information on outcome efficacy

Institutionalize ownership, guidance, and support

Plan and ensure commitment to ongoing leadership

Plan and ensure commitment to maintain mechanisms for planning, implementation, and coordination

Plan for continuing education and technical assistance to maintain and enhance productive changes and generate renewal (including programs for new arrivals)

Organization Leadership works with **Stakeholders** in evolving the prototype

*Updated from: H.S. Adelman & L. Taylor (1997). Toward a scale-up model for replicating new approaches to schooling. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 8, 197-230

Systemic
Change
Infrastructure
and Strategies

Implementation and scaling-up of major systemic changes requires *administrative leadership* and the addition of *temporary infrastructure mechanisms* to facilitate changes, including capacity building.

In general, existing infrastructure mechanisms must be modified in ways that guarantee new policy directions are translated into appropriate daily operations. Well-designed mechanisms ensure local ownership, a critical mass of committed stakeholders, processes that overcome barriers to stakeholders effectively working together, and strategies that mobilize and maintain proactive effort so that changes are implemented and there is renewal over time.

It is rare to find situations where a well-designed systemic change infrastructure is in place. More characteristically, ad hoc mechanisms have been set in motion with personnel who have too little training and without adequate formative evaluation. It is common to find structures, such as teams and collaboratives operating without clear understanding of functions and major tasks. This, of course, defies the basic organizational principle that structure should follow function.

Effective and linked administrative leadership *at every level* is key to the success of any systemic change initiative in schools. Everyone needs to be aware of who is leading and is accountable for the development of the planned changes. It is imperative that such leaders be specifically trained to guide systemic change. And, they must be sitting at key decision making tables when budget and other fundamental decisions are discussed.

As highlighted in Exhibits 16, 17, and 18, the general functions and major tasks related to sustainability and large-scale replication require dedicated change agent mechanisms that are fully integrated into the infrastructure for school improvement at each school site, for a “family of schools,” and at the district level. Thus, a significant portion of the resources for systemic change must be used to design and implement the set of integrated mechanisms that constitute the temporary, but essential, infrastructure for steering, facilitating, and evaluating the change process itself.

Part of a systemic change infrastructure are teams of “champions” who agree to steer the process. Such a team provides a broad-based and potent mechanism for guiding change. At the school level, for example, such a steering group creates a special leadership body to own the linked visions for school improvement and systemic change and to guide and support the work. These advocates must be competent with respect to what is planned, and they should be highly motivated not just to help get things underway, but to ensure sustainability.

The first focus of these teams is on assuring that capacity is built to accomplish the desired systemic changes. This includes ensuring an

adequate policy and leadership base for implementation. If essential policy and staffing are not already in place, this becomes the first focus for the group.

Concluding Comments

Anyone who has done a substantive analysis of what schools do to address psychosocial and mental health concerns can articulate a host of deficiencies. Adequate data are available to make the case that something needs to be done to improve matters.

Those who view learning, behavior, and emotional problems through the lens of providing as many specialized *services* as possible are quick to point to the number who are not served and then advocate for more services. A different agenda surfaces when the situation is viewed by those concerned mainly with classroom management and school discipline interventions. And, still other agenda arise when the concern is about promoting youth development, wellness, cognitive, social, and emotional learning, and fostering the emergence of a caring, supportive, and nurturing climate throughout a school.

The different perspectives have led to advocacy for a variety of initiatives, such as Positive Behavior Support, Coordinated School Health, Safe Schools/Healthy Students, Response to Intervention, Early Intervening, social and emotional learning, character education, projects to ameliorate bullying, violence, substance abuse, pregnancy, dropouts, efforts to enhance school connectedness and student re-engagement, and many more. Each initiative focuses on a major concern; each has a political constituency and a silo of economic support; each has established a niche. And, each has contributed to the piecemeal, ad hoc, and often simplistic approaches that characterize efforts to address problems.

In many places, the situation resembles a zero sum game. A zero sum game is a situation or interaction in which one participant's gains result only from another's equivalent losses. In trying to make the world a better place for children and adolescents, many advocates feel they must focus strategically and laser-like on one concern because resources are sparse and distributed politically. Thus, they enter into a zero sum game.

The continuing tendency of many advocates for enhancing student supports in schools is to compete in this way even though it pits the needs and interests of some youngsters against the needs and interests of others. And, too often, it generates counterproductive relationships among school staff and between school and community professionals, with the situation sometimes exacerbated by narrow pursuit of specific professional guild interests.

It is inevitable that some advocates will fight for specific groups of children and adolescents. Given current policy inequities, however, they can hope only for small zero sum successes. With respect to learning supports, usually this means

immediate specialized services for a few more students, but at a cost for others that seldom is articulated.

Given that many problems experienced by students arise from the same underlying causes, it makes sense not to consider each separately. Indeed, various policy and practice analyses indicate that it is unwise to do so. The complexity of factors interfering with learning and teaching underscore the need to coalesce efforts to address the variety of factors that interfere with a school accomplishing its mission. And, the coalesced efforts must be embedded into the larger agenda for school improvement.

The mission of schools calls for ensuring that *all* students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school and beyond. Therefore, advocacy for students and learning supports must address the needs and interests of all students. And, given that these needs and interests depend largely on the way school staff function, there also must be advocacy for efforts to enhance staff well-being.

As the Carnegie Task Force on Education has stressed:

*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.*

The next decade must mark a turning point for how schools, families, and communities address the problems of children and youth. In particular, the focus must be on initiatives to transform how schools work to prevent and ameliorate the many problems experienced by too many students. To do less is to maintain what all agree is an unsatisfactory status quo.

A Few Recent Related Center References and Resources

Adelman, H.S. & Taylor, L. (2006). *The School Leader's Guide to Student Learning Supports: New Directions for Addressing Barriers to Learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Adelman, H.S., & Taylor, L. (2007). *Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement. Guidebook in series, Safe and Secure: Guides to Creating Safer Schools*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. http://www.safetyzone.org/safe_secure.html

Adelman, H. S. & Taylor, L. (2008). School-wide Approaches to Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching. In B. Doll & J. Cummings (Eds.), *Transforming School Mental Health Services: Population-based Approaches to Promoting the Competency and Wellness of Children*. Corwin Press.

Adelman, H. S. & Taylor, L. (2007). School Improvement: A Systemic View of What's Missing and What to Do About It. In B. Despres (Ed.) *Systems Thinkers in Action: A Field Guide for Effective Change Leadership in Education*. Rowman & Littlefield

Adelman, H. S. & Taylor, L. (2007). Systemic Change and School Improvement. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 17, 55-77.

Addressing What's Missing in School Improvement Planning: Expanding Standards and Accountability to Encompass an Enabling or Learning Supports Component – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/enabling/standards.pdf>

Framing New Directions for School Counselors, Psychologists, & Social Workers – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Report/framingnewdir.pdf>

Toward a School District Infrastructure that More Effectively Addresses Barriers to Learning and Teaching – [http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/toward a school district infrastructure.pdf](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/toward%20a%20school%20district%20infrastructure.pdf)

Infrastructure for Learning Supports at District, Regional, and State Offices – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentssupport/toolkit/aidk.pdf>

Developing Resource-Oriented Mechanisms to Enhance Learning Supports - A Continuing Education Packet – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/contedu/developing_resource_oriented-mechanisms.pdf

Working Collaboratively: From School-Based Teams to School-Community-Higher Education Connections – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/worktogether/worktogether.pdf>

And, for ready access to other resources, see the Center's list of *Resources and Publications* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/selection.html>

and the *Rebuilding Toolkit*

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

APPENDIX A

Major Examples of Activity in Each Content Arena

(1) Classroom-Based Approaches encompass

- Opening the classroom door to bring available supports in (e.g., peer tutors, volunteers, aids trained to work with students-in-need; resource teachers and student support staff work in the classroom as part of the teaching team)
- Redesigning classroom approaches to enhance teacher capability to prevent and handle problems and reduce need for out of class referrals (e.g. personalized instruction; special assistance as necessary; developing small group and independent learning options; reducing negative interactions and over-reliance on social control; expanding the range of curricular and instructional options and choices; systematic use of prereferral interventions)
- Enhancing and personalizing professional development (e.g., creating a Learning Community for teachers; ensuring opportunities to learn through co-teaching, team teaching, and mentoring; teaching intrinsic motivation concepts and their application to schooling)
- Curricular enrichment and adjunct programs (e.g., varied enrichment activities that are not tied to reinforcement schedules; visiting scholars from the community)
- Classroom and school-wide approaches used to create and maintain a caring and supportive climate

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

(2) Crisis Assistance and Prevention encompasses

- Ensuring immediate assistance in emergencies so students can resume learning
- Providing Follow up care as necessary (e.g., brief and longer-term monitoring)
- Forming a school-focused Crisis Team to formulate a response plan and take leadership for developing prevention programs
- Mobilizing staff, students, and families to anticipate response plans and recovery efforts
- Creating a caring and safe learning environment (e.g., developing systems to promote healthy development and prevent problems; bullying and harassment abatement programs)
- Working with neighborhood schools and community to integrate planning for response and prevention
- Capacity building to enhance crisis response and prevention (e.g., staff and stakeholder development, enhancing a caring and safe learning environment)

(3) Support for Transitions encompasses

- Welcoming & social support programs for newcomers (e.g., welcoming signs, materials, and initial receptions; peer buddy programs for students, families, staff, volunteers)
- Daily transition programs for (e.g., before school, breaks, lunch, afterschool)
- Articulation programs (e.g., grade to grade – new classrooms, new teachers; elementary to middle school; middle to high school; in and out of special education programs)
- Summer or intersession programs (e.g., catch-up, recreation, and enrichment programs)
- School-to-career/higher education (e.g., counseling, pathway, and mentor programs; Broad involvement of stakeholders in planning for transitions; students, staff, home, police, faith groups, recreation, business, higher education)
- Broad involvement of stakeholders in planning for transitions (e.g., students, staff, home, police, faith groups, recreation, business, higher education)
- Capacity building to enhance transition programs and activities

(4) Home Involvement in Schooling encompasses

- Addressing specific support and learning needs of family (e.g., support services for those in the home to assist in addressing basic survival needs and obligations to the children; adult education classes to enhance literacy, job skills, English-as-a-second language, citizenship preparation)
- Improving mechanisms for communication and connecting school and home (e.g., opportunities at school for family networking and mutual support, learning, recreation, enrichment, and for family members to receive special assistance and to volunteer to help; phone calls and/or e-mail from teacher and other staff with good news; frequent and balanced conferences – student-led when feasible; outreach to attract hard-to-reach families – including student dropouts)
- Involving homes in student decision making (e.g., families prepared for involvement in program planning and problem-solving)
- Enhancing home support for learning and development (e.g., family literacy; family homework projects; family field trips)
- Recruiting families to strengthen school and community (e.g., volunteers to welcome and support new families and help in various capacities; families prepared for involvement in school governance)
- Capacity building to enhance home involvement

(5) Community Outreach for Involvement and Support encompasses

- Planning and implementing outreach to recruit a wide range of community resources (e.g., public and private agencies; colleges and universities; local residents; artists and cultural institutions, businesses and professional organizations; service, volunteer, and faith-based organizations; community policy and decision makers)
- Systems to recruit, screen, prepare, and maintain community resource involvement (e.g., mechanisms to orient and welcome, enhance the volunteer pool, maintain current involvements, enhance a sense of community)
- Reaching out to students and families who don't come to school regularly – including truants and dropouts
- Connecting school and community efforts to promote child and youth development and a sense of community
- Capacity building to enhance community involvement and support (e.g., policies and mechanisms to enhance and sustain school-community involvement, staff/stakeholder development on the value of community involvement, “social marketing”)

(6) Student and Family Assistance encompasses

- Providing extra support as soon as a need is recognized and doing so in the least disruptive ways (e.g., prereferral interventions in classrooms; problem solving conferences with parents; open access to school, district, and community support programs)
- Timely referral interventions for students & families with problems based on response to extra support (e.g., identification/screening processes, assessment, referrals, and follow-up – school-based, school-linked)
- Enhancing access to direct interventions for health, mental health, and economic assistance (e.g., school-based, school-linked, and community-based programs and services)
- Care monitoring, management, information sharing, and follow-up assessment to coordinate individual interventions and check whether referrals and services are adequate and effective
- Mechanisms for *resource* coordination and integration to avoid duplication, fill gaps, garner economies of scale, and enhance effectiveness (e.g., braiding resources from school-based and linked interveners, feeder pattern/family of schools, community-based programs; linking with community providers to fill gaps)
- Enhancing stakeholder awareness of programs and services

- Capacity building to enhance student and family assistance systems, programs, and services

APPENDIX B

Guidelines for an Enabling or Learning Supports Component*

1. Major Areas of Concern Related to Barriers to Student Learning

- 1.1 Addressing common educational and psychosocial problems (e.g., learning problems; language difficulties; attention problems; school adjustment and other life transition problems; attendance problems and dropouts; social, interpersonal, and familial problems; conduct and behavior problems; delinquency and gang-related problems; anxiety problems; affect and mood problems; sexual and/or physical abuse; neglect; substance abuse; psychological reactions to physical status and sexual activity; physical health problems)
- 1.2 Countering external stressors (e.g., reactions to objective or perceived stress/demands/ crises/deficits at home, school, and in the neighborhood; inadequate basic resources such as food, clothing, and a sense of security; inadequate support systems; hostile and violent conditions)
- 1.3 Teaching, serving, and accommodating disorders/disabilities (e.g., Learning Disabilities; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder; School Phobia; Conduct Disorder; Depression; Suicidal or Homicidal Ideation and Behavior; Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; Anorexia and Bulimia; special education designated disorders such as Emotional Disturbance and Developmental Disabilities)

2. Timing and Nature of Problem-Oriented Interventions

- 2.1 Primary prevention
- 2.2 Intervening early after the onset of problems
- 2.3 Interventions for severe, pervasive, and/or chronic problems

3. General Domains for Intervention in Addressing Students' Needs and Problems

- 3.1 Ensuring academic success and also promoting healthy cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development and resilience (including promoting opportunities to enhance school performance and protective factors; fostering development of assets and general wellness; enhancing responsibility and integrity, self-efficacy, social and working relationships, self-evaluation and self-direction, personal safety and safe behavior, health maintenance, effective physical functioning, careers and life roles, creativity)
- 3.2 Addressing external and internal barriers to student learning and performance
- 3.3 Providing social/emotional support for students, families, and staff

4. Specialized Student and Family Assistance (Individual and Group)

- 4.1 Assessment for initial (first level) screening of problems, as well as for diagnosis and intervention planning (including a focus on needs and assets)
- 4.2 Referral, triage, and monitoring/management of care
- 4.3 Direct services and instruction (e.g., primary prevention programs, including enhancement of wellness through instruction, skills development, guidance counseling, advocacy, school-wide programs to foster safe and caring climates, and liaison connections between school and home; crisis intervention and assistance, including psychological and physical first-aid; prereferral interventions; accommodations to allow for differences and disabilities; transition and follow-up programs; short- and longer- term treatment, remediation, and rehabilitation)

(cont.)

- 4.4 Coordination, development, and leadership related to school-owned programs, services, resources, and systems – toward evolving a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated continuum of programs and services
- 4.5 Consultation, supervision, and inservice instruction with a transdisciplinary focus
- 4.6 Enhancing connections with and involvement of home and community resources (including but not limited to community agencies)

5. *Assuring Quality of Intervention*

- 5.1 Systems and interventions are monitored and improved as necessary
- 5.2 Programs and services constitute a comprehensive, multifaceted continuum
- 5.3 Interveners have appropriate knowledge and skills for their roles and functions and provide guidance for continuing professional development
- 5.4 School-owned programs and services are coordinated and integrated
- 5.5 School-owned programs and services are connected to home & community resources
- 5.6 Programs and services are integrated with instructional and governance/management components at schools
- 5.7 Program/services are available, accessible, and attractive
- 5.8 Empirically-supported interventions are used when applicable
- 5.9 Differences among students/families are appropriately accounted for (e.g., diversity, disability, developmental levels, motivational levels, strengths, weaknesses)
- 5.10 Legal considerations are appropriately accounted for (e.g., mandated services; mandated reporting and its consequences)
- 5.11 Ethical issues are appropriately accounted for (e.g., privacy & confidentiality; coercion)
- 5.12 Contexts for intervention are appropriate (e.g., office; clinic; classroom; home)

6. *Outcome Evaluation and Accountability*

- 6.1 Short-term outcome data
- 6.2 Long-term outcome data
- 6.3 Reporting to key stakeholders and using outcome data to enhance intervention quality

* Adapted from: *Mental Health in Schools: Guidelines, Models, Resources, and Policy Considerations* a document developed by the Policy Leadership Cadre for Mental in Schools. This document is available from the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA; downloadable from the Center's website at: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/policymakers/guidelinesexecsumm.pdf> A separate document providing the rationale and science-base for the version of the guidelines adapted for learning supports is available at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/guidelinesupportdoc.pdf>