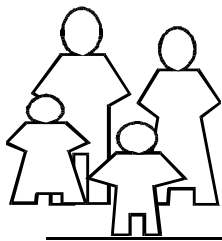


About the Initiative for
New Directions for Student Support

- C Flyer about the Initiative
- C About the Summits Initiative
- C Current Status of the Initiative
- C Example of Statewide Summit Report
and Follow-up
- C New Directions Q & A



New Directions for Student Support

. . . a national initiative

*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.*

Despite decades of discussion about ensuring all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school, reformers have paid little attention to rethinking the way schools provide student supports.

Until now! A national initiative for *New Directions for Student Support* is underway. The goal is to bring student support into the 21st century by revolutionizing what schools do to address barriers to learning and teaching.

It's an Imperative for

- >>>any school designated as low performing
- >>>closing the achievement gap
- >>>making schools safe

Meeting the Challenges Requires Rethinking ALL Support Programs, Resources, and Personnel

Most people hear the term *student support* and think mainly about pupil service personnel (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses) and the special services such staff provide. But, schools need and have many more resources they use to meet the challenge of ensuring all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

Besides traditional support staff, learning support is provided by compensatory education personnel (e.g., Title I staff), resource teachers who focus on prereferral interventions, and personnel who provide a variety of school-wide programs (e.g., after school, safe and drug free school programs). New Directions stem from rethinking how *all* these resources are used.

******After holding a national summit and three regional summits, it is clear that the next steps are to organize at the state level. To date, four states have already held statewide summits and are in the process of pursuing *New Directions for Student Support*. And, so far, over 30 organizations have signed on as initiative co-sponsors** (see the other side of this announcement).

Interested in exploring any of this further?

Go to the homepage of the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>) and click on the green button labeled "Summits for New Directions."

Or contact:

Howard Adelman or Linda Taylor, Co-Directors, Center for Mental Health in Schools,
Box 951563, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095- 1563
(866) 846-4843 – toll free; Fax: (310) 206-8716; email: smhp@ucla.edu

The Summits Initiative is sponsored by the national *Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA*.^{*}
So far, the growing number of co-sponsors includes:

- C American School Counselors Association
- C American School Health Association
- C Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- C California Association of School Psychologists
- C California Center for Community School Partnerships
- C California Department of Education
- C Center for Cooperative Research and Extension Services for Schools
- C Center for Prevention of Youth Violence, Johns Hopkins University
- C Center for School Mental Health Assistance at the University of Maryland at Baltimore
- C Center for Social and Emotional Education
- C Coalition for Cohesive Policy in Addressing Barriers to Development and Learning
- C Coalition for Community Schools
- C Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
- C Education Development Center
- C Indiana Department of Education
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- C National Association of State Boards of Education
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- C Policy Leadership Coalition of Mental Health in Schools
- C Region VII Comprehensive Center
- C School Social Work Association of America
- C Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative
- C Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction



^{*}The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA. Support comes in part from the Office of Adolescent Health, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (Title V, Social Security Act), Health Resources and Services Administration (Project #U93 MC 00175), with co-funding from the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Both are agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



About the Summits Initiative

The Summits Initiative: *New Directions for Student Support* is designed as a strategic effort to move student support efforts in new directions and into a central position in improving schools and enhancing outcomes for all students. It represents a major response to the growing and widespread imperative for closing the achievement gap and leaving no child behind.

The initiative already has mobilized a great deal of interest and energy from educational leaders and school staff and from their organizations across the country. (There are currently 31 co-sponsoring groups.) At this stage, the emphasis is on increasing proactive advocacy for *New Directions for Student Support*, building a leadership network nationally and in every state, and delineating specific recommendations and action steps for getting from here to there.

The Initiative began in October 2002 with a national Summit. This was followed by a series of regional summits. Based on the exceptional response, the decision was made to proceed with state-wide summits. Indiana was the fourth of these, following Minnesota, Wisconsin, and California. Several other states are in the planning stages. At an appropriate time, a policy makers' summit on student support will be organized to clarify new directions and encourage adoption of major recommendations.

Throughout the process, efforts across the country to move in new directions are being identified and showcased. Technical assistance and training for localities and states is being provided. And, mutual support networks are being developed for sharing of effective practices, lessons learned, and data on progress.

Summits Initiative:

New Directions for Student Support:

***Rethinking Student Support to Enable Students to Learn
and Schools to Teach***

Current Status of the Initiative

After holding the national and several regional Summits, the initiative is now moving rapidly to schedule statewide Summits for *New Directions for Student Support*.

To read more about the initiative, go to:

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

There, you will find the summit reports, follow-up activity, updates, and resource materials from the national, regional and the state summits in California, Indiana, Minnesota, Texas, Wisconsin, and Connecticut.

Then, if you are interested in the possibility of holding such a statewide summit, feel free to contact: Linda Taylor at: ltaylor@ucla.edu

The summit report and the first follow-up update from one statewide summit (Texas) is included on the following pages to illustrate facets of the work that is underway.



New Directions for Student Support Initiative*

Texas' Statewide Summit
In Austin on September 27, 2004

The Texas Summit was held in Austin on September 27, 2004.**

Summit goals include:

1. Clarifying basic frameworks for new directions in student support
2. Highlighting where it is happening
3. Mobilizing local action toward new directions for student support
4. Providing resource aids for moving forward
5. Developing a mechanism within the state for supporting new directions for student support.

Objectives for the day were to:

- C Clarify new directions thinking about the nature of student support through clarifying four fundamental problems that must be addressed in pursuing New Directions (i.e. the policy problem, the intervention frameworks problem, the infrastructure problem, the systemic change problem).
- C Highlight ways to enhance the policy and practice priority status of this component of schools
- C Foster an exchange of information about policy and practice around the country
- C Facilitate proactive strategic planning and problem-solving for next steps state-wide and at local levels related to moving student support from the margins to a central position in school improvement policy and planning

*While all Summit information can be accessed at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> and many stakeholders already have received the introductory pamphlet on the initiative and some other documents, attached to this report are several key documents for sharing with others. These are (1) an overview about the initiative and the concept paper entitled *New Directions for Student Support*, (2) a document outlining *Guidelines for a Student Support Component*, and (3) the Executive Summary of the Report from the National Summit. Please feel free to copy and share any of these and refer colleagues to the information on the website (which includes examples of "Where it's Happening" and a growing tool kit to facilitate the process).

**Appended is a list of attendees, as well as a list of others throughout the state who were unable to attend, but indicated interest in new directions.

Participant Perspectives

Based on the discussion and written input, participants stressed:

1. Evidence of a “Plateau Effect” Increases the Urgency for Pursuing New Directions for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching

The urgency for systemic changes stems from the data on test scores, dropouts, graduation rates showing the reality of how many students are not profiting from the exclusionary focus on improving instruction. Moreover, evidence is increasing that achievement test score averages tend to plateau after a few years of initial gains.

Without a major focus on effectively addressing barriers to learning and teaching, too little attention is devoted to classroom and school-wide programs for engaging and re-engaging students in classroom learning. Comprehensive approaches to these matters, not just greater attention to controlling behavior, must be a central focus of leaving no child behind.

Given there will be mid-course corrections to the No Child Left Behind Act, it is imperative to stress new directions for learning supports as essential to efforts to raise test scores and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. Based on student data, a learning support component should be included in all school improvement planning and implementation.

2. New Directions: Not New Resources

New directions is about leadership for systemic changes that use existing resources more effectively.

Strong leadership at the school and district is needed to

- C develop mechanisms for consistent planning to integrate a broad range of resources and personnel for learning supports (e.g., horizontal and vertical teams such as a Learning Supports Resource Team at each school and a Learning Supports Resources Council for each feeder pattern)
- C facilitate integration of instructional and learning supports personnel at building and district levels to map existing resources for learning supports, do a gap analysis, set priorities for addressing barriers to learning and teaching, and so forth
- C determine the cost-benefits of sharing resources to achieve economy of scale (e.g., the high school and its feeder schools in a neighborhood)
- C review school improvement plans to determine if they appropriately include a focus on learning supports, and if not, take steps to correct the oversight
- C reach out strategically, as needed, to community resources. In doing so, focus on *integration of resources* at each school, not just coordination.

3. Across the State, Existing Practices Provide a Foundation Upon which to Build

Schools across Texas offer examples of outstanding programs to build on in pursuing systemic changes, especially with respect to prevention and early intervention. It is the case that these are fragmented because they are marginalized in schools and districts. This can change by adopting an umbrella concept such as addressing barriers to learning and use of broad frameworks to connect learning supports and instruction. Throughout, it is important to show clear connections to data on what students need to be successful. Under one umbrella, the focus can be on a comprehensive approach to learning supports that enables students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

Next Steps in Moving Forward in Texas

Participants were eager to move ideas into action and to set priorities on where to start. The following were key comments and suggestions:

- C Reach Out Again to Influential State Professional and Community Organizations* (e.g., school boards; PTA; Teachers Associations; Administrators Associations; all pupil service organizations; United Way, League of Women Voters, Mayors, Chambers of Commerce etc.).

The goal is to enhance their involvement in the *New Directions for Student Support Initiative*. Encourage them to share information through their websites, newsletters, and at meetings. (Once a state-wide Steering group is functional, the UCLA Center can facilitate communications from the Steering Group to relevant organizations.)

- C Embed New Directions for Student Support in Training and in Accountability Documents*

It was recognized that work would have to be undertaken with University preservice and inservice programs (and with researchers as well). And, it was suggested that eventually the initiative should explore ways to have the Association of School and College Accreditation address this matter.

- C About creating readiness and building capacity for change*

Immediate contact should be made with all state associations concerned with schools. In this era of dwindling resources, it is essential to stress that enhanced student outcomes can be achieved through positive systemic changes that *use existing resources in more effective ways*. Early emphasis should be on emphasizing need and feasible strategies, including clarifying the flexibility that exists under current local, state, and federal policies for reshaping learning supports. Clarify strategies for braiding resources and provide ongoing technical assistance to move forward. All this can help show that working toward a cohesive and comprehensive learning supports component is permitted and encouraged.

- C Determine if the State Education Agency can play a greater leadership role related to new directions for student support*

For example, identify what systemic changes would foster new directions for students support (credentialing/licensing requirements; job descriptions, inservice training for learning support and instructional staff, development of standards and expanded accountability for student support, etc). Regional Centers might provide the support for mapping existing resources and moving toward comprehensive and integrated learning supports.

- C Prepare a document that clarifies Texas' New Directions for Student Supports Initiative*

Have a work group develop a brief document clarifying what would New Directions would mean and look like in terms of content and infrastructure at a school and at the district level. Develop examples for rural, suburban, and urban districts

- C Share the information at multiple venues* (association meetings, staff development conferences, inservice training, etc).

Begin a process that brings a broad range of key leaders on board (e.g., Superintendents, School Boards, Directors of Special Education/Student Support/Title I, Unions, etc.). This means formulating an effective message to them and outlining ways to proceed that they will see as a good use of their time and energy. This should be the focus of an early work group. A goal here is to ensure that a learning supports component is included in every school's school improvement plan.

- C Build leadership capacity*

Ask those involved in pre- and in-service professional preparation and those providing technical assistance (institutions of higher education, TA centers) to include a focus on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and on responding to such barriers with a comprehensive learning supports component. Enlist their involvement in the Texas New Directions for Student Support Initiative.

To facilitate capacity building, work groups could identify

- >efforts around the state that reflect major systemic changes toward new directions for student support and best practices related to resource use and learning supports component development
- >benchmarks to keep systemic changes on track (e.g., establishment of supportive policies, waivers to facilitate braiding of funds, inservice training).
- >out-of-state places moving in new directions for student support (e.g., Iowa, Hawai'i, Madison, etc.).

Who is Ready to Take the Lead in Moving the Initiative Forward?

Participants discussed the need for *mechanisms* focused specifically on moving forward with the new directions initiative. (How to set the process in motion? Who would take the lead?)

It was recognized that a steering and work groups are needed.

(1) Steering Group to Guide Next Steps

This group should assume ownership of the initiative and commit to championing, leading, and guiding the process in ways that ensure effective systemic change and sustainability. It's first functions would include:

- >identifying, establishing, and providing direction to work groups
- >ratifying the “brief” that provides an overview of the need for and general concepts for moving in new directions.
- >supporting, reviewing and, as appropriate, ratifying work group products.

The UCLA Center will facilitate organization of the Steering Group over the next 1-2 months

Note: For a steering group to be most effective, its ultimate membership should consist of high level “power brokers” who have the vision, commitment, position, and status to lead in new directions and also clear away barriers to progress. And, it helps to have some staffing resources to support implementation of steering functions and facilitate work group efforts can be volunteered by the organizations represented on such a group.

The following Summit participants indicated willingness to be part of a statewide steering group:

Ramon Abarca, Superintendent, Uvalde Consolidated ISD
Kathy Armenta, Associate Clinical Professor, University of Texas School Social Work
Sally Arthur, Director Educational Support Services, Humble ISD
Carol Bennets, Katy ISD
Stephanie Blanck, Special Education Director, Georgetown ISD
Nancy Chavkin, Prof./Director, Richter Institute for School Work Research, Texas State Univ.
Jill Darling, Student Assistant Programs Director, Richardson ISD
Lupita Garcia, Director Parent/Student Services, Irving ISD
Estella Garza, Coordinator, San Antonio ISD
Maria (Chris) Garza, Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans
Evelyn Henry, Director, Houston ISD
P. J. Holland, Director of Student Development, McKinney ISD
Peggy Hood, Assistant Director Special Education, Humble ISD
Linda Meigs, SAIL Coordinator, Georgetown ISD
Brenda Melton, Past President American School Counselor Association, San Antonio ISD
John Moore, Executive Director, Office of Educational Support Services, Austin ISD
Robert Muller, Executive Director Student Services, Killeen ISD
Debra Rimmer-Mayorga, Interim Asst. Superintendent Student Support Services, Houston ISD
Cynthia Schiebel, Director Student Support Services, Eanes ISD
Jennifer Scott, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative and Pupil Services, Longview ISD

Constance Thompson, Manager Counseling and Guidance, Houston ISD
Patricia Weger, Acting Manager, Psychological Services, Houston ISD
Brenda Wilson, Director of Secondary Education, Frenship ISD
Linda Yater, Assistant Superintendent Student Services, Dallas ISD

If you would like to join the steering group, please fax us the response form enclosed.

Others interested in working on next steps, include:

Stan Brein, Grant Specialist, Austin ISD
Sandra DeLaCruz, Executive Director Pupil Support, Grand Prairie ISD
Pam Faulkner, SDFSC Coordinator, ESC2
Sancy Fuller, Special Populations Coordinator, McKinney ISD
Steve Hamman, Assistant Director of Special Education, Austin ISD
Robert Jaklich, Executive Director, Harlandale ISD
Janie Livas, Director of Federal Programs, Edcouch Elsa ISD
Angie Pena, Special Education Director, Edcouch Elsa ISD
John Washington, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services & Community Relations, Garland ISD
Willie Zavala, Superintendent, Harlandale ISD

Others “nominated” to join the efforts:

Mary Cardiff, Round Rock ISD
Linda Bloomquist, Williamson Co Prob. Dept.
Pat Workman, Director of Special Student Services, Richardson ISD
Cory Green, Texas Education Agency
Marcus Nelson, Austin ISD
Nolan Estes
Annell Todd
Michelle McComb, Texas Department of Health
Gwen Johnson, Houston ISD
Ted Moore, McKinney ISD
Mike Moses
Rosemarie Allen, Dallas ISD
Shirley Neeley, Commissioner, Texas Education Agency
George Fair, UT, Dallas
Betty Baitland, Sptd., Fort Bend ISD
Gene Green, U.S. Congress

Organizations that should be included:

Texas Association of Student Assistance Professionals
State Attorney Generals Office
Texas School Nurse Administrators
National Education Association
American Federation of Teachers
Association of Compensatory Education
Healthy Student, Healthy Schools
Commissioners Cabinet
Texas legislature
National Association of Student Assistance Professionals
Juvenile Justice Programs
Texas School Counseling Association
Texas Association of School Psychologists
Texas School Nurse Association
Texas Social Work Association
National Elementary School Principals Association

National Secondary School Principals Association
Texas Summit Committee for Prevention
Safe and Drug Free Schools State Initiative
National Association of School Administrators
National Parent Teacher Association
National Council of La Raza
Texas Department of Health
Area Adult Ed Cooperatives
Texas Association of School Boards
Texas Association of School Administrators
Texas Association of Secondary School Principals
Texas Association of Elementary Principals
American School Counselor Association
The Education Trust
National Association of School Boards
The College Board
Texas ASCD
Texas Retired Teachers Association
Alliance of Urban School Districts
Texas Urban School District Alliance
Texas Parent Teacher Association
Texas School Counseling Association
League of United Latin American Citizens
READ Commission
United Way

(2) Work groups

Work groups will be formed to flesh out specific ideas about new directions and about how to get from here to there. Facilitators for each work group should be established to ensure group effectiveness and cross-group communication and to interface with the steering group. Given that groups will include individuals from around the state, the process would use email, supplemented by U.S. mail, FAX, and phone.

Examples of work group products might be a series of briefs that provide an overview about the need and possible nature of new directions for student support.

- >clarify existing resources and concerns about how they are currently deployed
- >outline a comprehensive intervention learning supports framework for new directions
- >describe how existing infrastructure might be reframed at all levels so that new directions are pursued effectively
- >clarify what must happen to get from here to there (how to effect necessary systemic changes)

As a participant or someone who is interested in *New Directions for Student Support*, we encourage you to send a copy of this document to anyone or any organization that you feel should be part of the network of people and programs that is coming together around this important matter.

Appendix A

The New Directions for Student Support Initiative is sponsored by the national Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA* and is co-sponsored by:

- C American School Counselors Association
- C American School Health Association
- C Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- C California Association of School Psychologists
- C California Center for Community School Partnerships
- C California Department of Education
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- C National Middle Schools Association
- C Policy Leadership Cadre for MH in Schools
- C Regional VII Comprehensive Center
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- C Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative
- C Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

*The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Department of Psychology, UCLA.

Write: Center for Mental Health in Schools, Box 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095- 1563 Phone: (310) 825-3634
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Summits Initiative:
New Directions for Student Support
Texas, September 27, 2004

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New Directions for Student Support
Texas, September 27, 2004
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Update #1 – Texas New Directions for Student Support Initiative

Listserv now in Operation

As proposed at the Texas Summit the state listserv for the New Directions for Student Support Initiative is now established. It will be used to provide updates on the work to those who attended the summit and to anyone who expresses interest. (Note: All replies to the listserv email come back to the Center for processing and sharing within the state and with other states working on this initiative.)

The initiative continues to grow. The energy from Texas has been invigorating. And, we are pleased to report that the just held Connecticut statewide summit went exceedingly well and will soon be joining the network of states pursuing initiatives for New Directions for Student Support. Next summits will be for Iowa and New York.

Texas Initial Steering Group for the Initiative

As of now, the Texas New Directions for Student Support Initiative Steering Group includes:

- >Ramon Abarca, Superintendent, Uvalde Consolidated ISD
- >Rosemarie Allen Associate Superintendent, Dallas ISD
- >Kathy Armenta, Associate Clinical Professor, University of Texas School Social Work
- >Sally Arthur, Director Educational Support Services, Humble ISD
- >Carol Bennets, Katy ISD
- >Stephanie Blanck, Special Education Director, Georgetown ISD
- >Nancy Chavkin, Prof./Dir., Richter Institute for School Work Res., Texas State Univ.
- >Wanda Crotty, Special Services, Boerne ISD
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- >Lana Fry, Region 16 Education Service Center
- >Lupita Garcia, Director Parent/Student Services, Irving ISD
- >Estella Garza, Coordinator, San Antonio ISD
- >Maria (Chris) Garza, Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans
- >Melvin Getwood, Director External Funding, Port Arthur ISD
- >Evelyn Henry, Director, Houston ISD
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Work group 2 -- Provide input into a *series of briefs/plans* that provide an overview related to:

- >Identify existing state policy that would provide an opportunity to move in New Directions for Student Support; draft policy proposals to share with school boards to address New Directions for Student Support
- >Identify strategies for mapping the range of resources in the district/schools/community for prevention, early intervention, treatment to show how a comprehensive learning support continuum can be formed
- >Identify key leaders/districts that are reframing existing infrastructures to move in new directions (e.g., including learning supports in school improvement plans and processes, expanding student study teams so they have a broader focus on learning support for prevention and early intervention programs)
- >Identify opportunities for system changes that would sustain New Directions for Student Support (budgeting, professional development, capacity building, aligning policies, developing standards and accountability related to this).

Steering group members taking the lead on this are:

- >Jane Owen, Midwestern State University
- >Stephanie Blanc, Georgetown ISD
- >Peggy Hood, Humble ISD
- >Linda Meigs, Georgetown ISD

Would you like to work on providing input and reviewing the briefs as part of this workgroup?

YES NO

#####

If you know of any steps that have been taken related to moving in New Directions for Student Support, please let us know in your response to this email or contact ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Also let us know if you need any technical assistance support from our Center? ltaylor@ucla.edu

#####

Any other general comments to help the process along?

Thanks for your continued efforts on this important work.

Howard and Linda

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New Directions for Student Support: A Comprehensive Learning Supports System Q & A

The following addresses five frequently asked questions that arise in discussing efforts to ensure schools have a *Comprehensive Learning Supports System* in place.

- 1) *Why is a Comprehensive Learning Supports System an imperative?*
- 2) *What needs to be done to make such a component a reality?*
- 3) *What does such a component need to look like at a school?*
- 4) *What's the research-base for such a component?*
- 5) *What will it cost?*

T Why is a Comprehensive Learning Supports System an imperative?

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.

- C ***Leaving No Child Left Behind.*** Schools need a better system of learning supports to increase the likelihood that ***ALL*** students have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- C ***Enabling Schools to be Effective.*** All schools, and especially those high priority schools “in need of improvement,” must enhance how they use the considerable resources they expend in addressing barriers to student learning (see Exhibit 1).

Available Data Underscore the Nature and Necessity of Meeting the Challenge.

- >National findings related to high school graduation indicate that nearly one-third of all public high school students fail to graduate¹
- >Findings indicate that one-quarter to one-half of all beginning teachers leave teaching within four years and many do so because of the lack of an adequate system of learning supports²
- >In most states, a significant proportion of schools are designated as “High Priority” (previously Low Performing) Schools
- >Evidence is growing that when test score gains are achieved, they mainly occur for young students, are related to noncomplex skills, and tend to plateau after a district shows modest gains over a three year period –
(<http://www.nctimes.net/news/2002/20020830/90153.html>;
<http://www.wcboe.k12.md.us/newsreleases/050702anews.htm>; <http://edreform.com/press/naeptrends.htm>)

T What needs to be done to make such a component a reality?

C *Establish Policy for a Learning Support Component and Make Schools Accountable for How Resources for Learning Supports are Expended.*

School improvement efforts must focus on better instruction and also on enhancing how a school addresses barriers to learning. For this to happen, policy should be established that encompasses greater accountability for using existing resources to develop an effective component of learning supports at every school (see Exhibit 2, and also see examples)

C *A Concise and Coherent Approach.*

To guide development of a comprehensive learning support system, it is essential to provide a concise and coherent framework for learning support activity at a school (see Exhibit 3)

C *Moving Forward.*

Developing a comprehensive learning support system calls for

- >reframing the support staff roles and functions
- >redeploying some existing resources by reducing fragmentation, redundancy, and the overemphasis on expensive services
- >redesigning infrastructure mechanisms from the school level on up through the state Department of Education
- >addressing capacity building and systemic change considerations
- >accountability reviews

T What does such a component need to look like at a school?

See Exhibit 4 for a brief description.

T What's the research-base for such a component?

An extensive and growing body of literature indicates the value of providing supportive programs and services. Enabling students to learn and teachers to teach improves school attendance, reduces behavior problems, improves interpersonal skills, enhances achievement, and increases bonding at school and at home.³ A recent statewide example comes from California where data indicate a significant relationship across secondary schools between the state's *Academic Performance Index* (API) scores and three-quarters of the survey indicators on the *Healthy Kids Survey* – (<http://www.wested.org/chks/pdf/factsheet.pdf>)

T What will it cost?

C No New Dollars.

A comprehensive learning support system can be established by reworking how current student support resources are used.⁴ The emphasis is on redeploying existing resources by

- >reframing the roles and functions of existing student support staff
- >reducing fragmentation and redundancy
- >reducing the overemphasis on expensive services.⁵

*What the best and wisest parent wants for (her)/his own child
that must the community want for all of its children.
Any other idea . . . is narrow and unlovely.*
John Dewey

Endnotes

1. Who Graduates? Who Doesn't (2004). The Urban Institute, Education Policy Center. Online at – http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410934_WhoGraduates.pdf

2. Benner, A. D. (2000). "The Cost of Teacher Turnover." Austin, Texas: Texas Center for Educational Research. Online at <http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/txbess/turnoverrpt.pdf> >> Hanushek, E, Kain, J., & Rivkin, A. (in press). "Why Public Schools Lose Teachers." *Journal of Human Resources*. >> MacDonald, D. (1999) "Teacher Attrition: A Review of Literature." *Teaching and Teacher Education* 15:839-848. >> Tye, B. & O'Brien, L (2002). "Why Are Experienced Teachers Leaving the Profession?" *Phi Delta Kappan* 84, 24-32.

3. See *Addressing Barriers to Student Learning & Promoting Healthy Development: A Usable Research-Base* online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/BarriersBrief.pdf>. Also see Lists of Empirically Supported/ evidence Based Interventions for School-aged Children and Adolescents annotated at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/aboutmh/annotatedlist.pdf>

4. The systemic changes needed can be underwritten in many districts through the provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act and in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act that focus on using some of the allocated funds for integration of programs and services (e.g., to support an facilitator/coordinator to enhance their systems for student support in ways that lead to a comprehensive, integrated, and cohesive component at school, cluster, and district levels).

5. As the in-classroom and school-wide approaches emerge, the need for out-of-classroom referrals will decline. This allows for rapid and early response when a student is having problems, and it enables student support staff to work more effectively in linking students up with community services.

Exhibit 1. Considerable resources currently are being expended to address barriers to learning, with too little effectiveness.

Range of Learners

(categorized in terms of their response to academic instruction)

Motivationally ready & able

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

Avoidant; very deficient in current capabilities; has a disability; major health problems

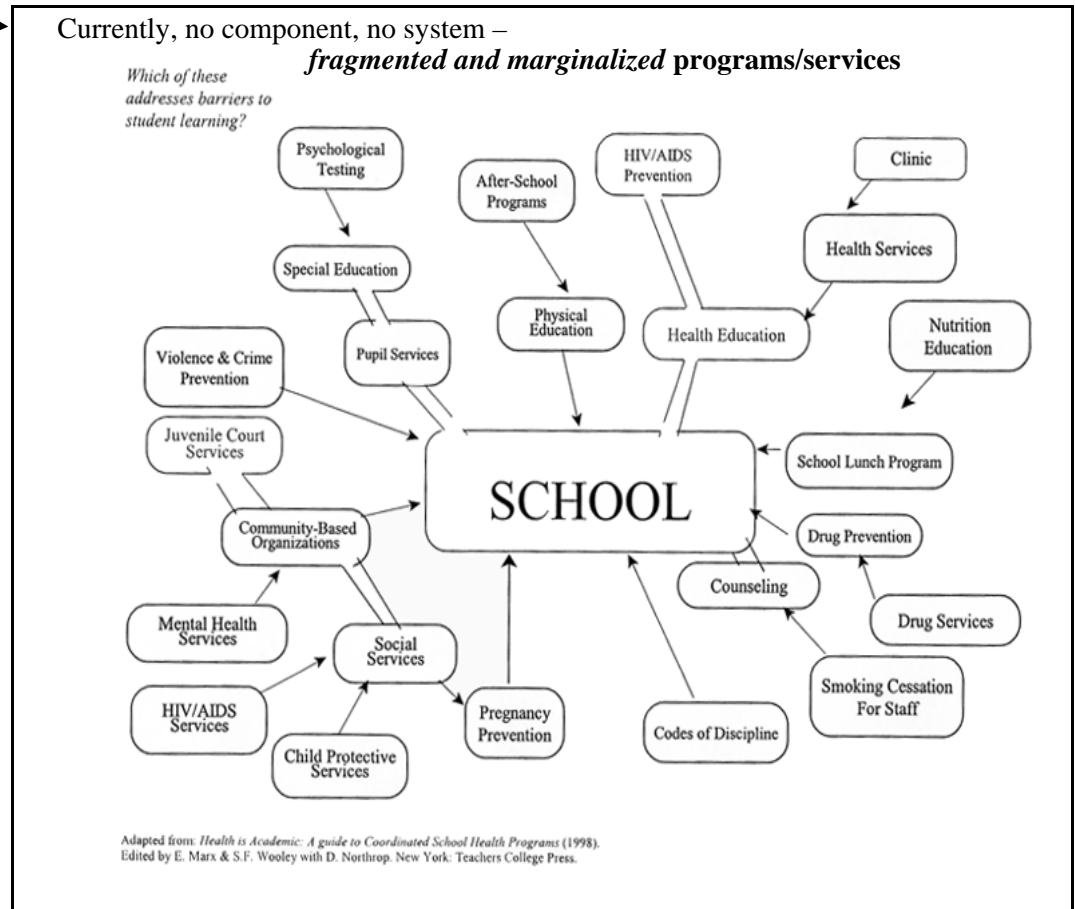
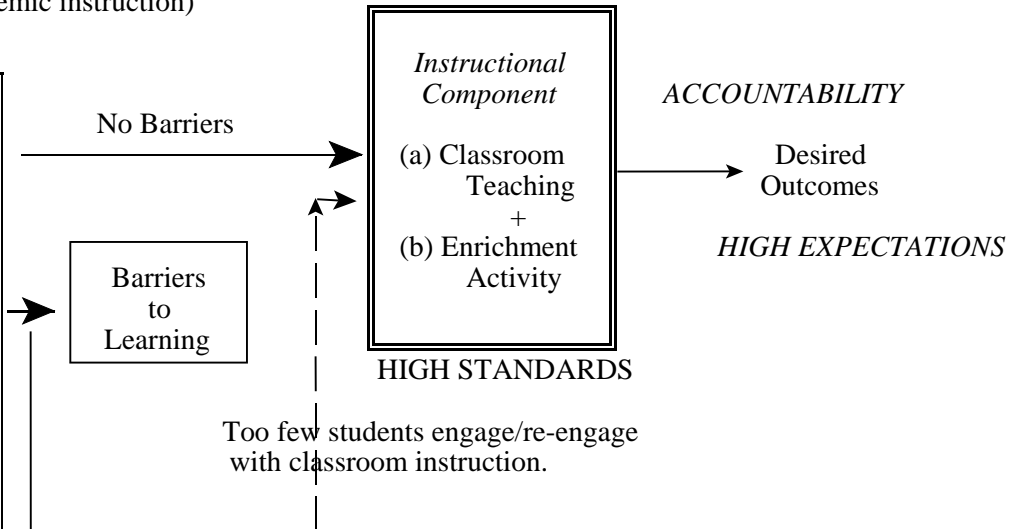
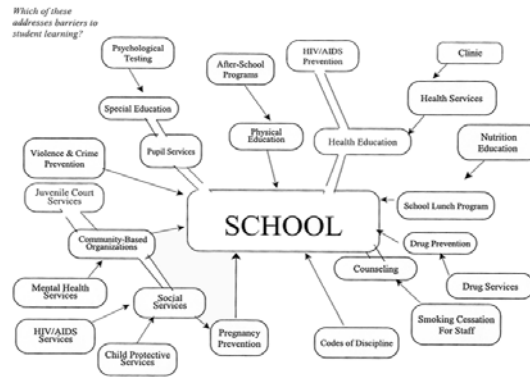
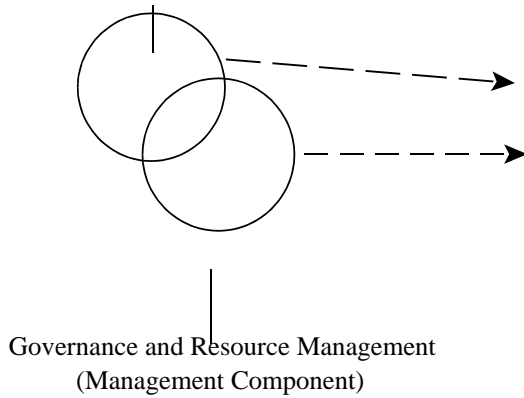


Exhibit 2. Moving from a two- to a three-component approach to school improvement.

(a) Two components and fragmented and marginalized support services.

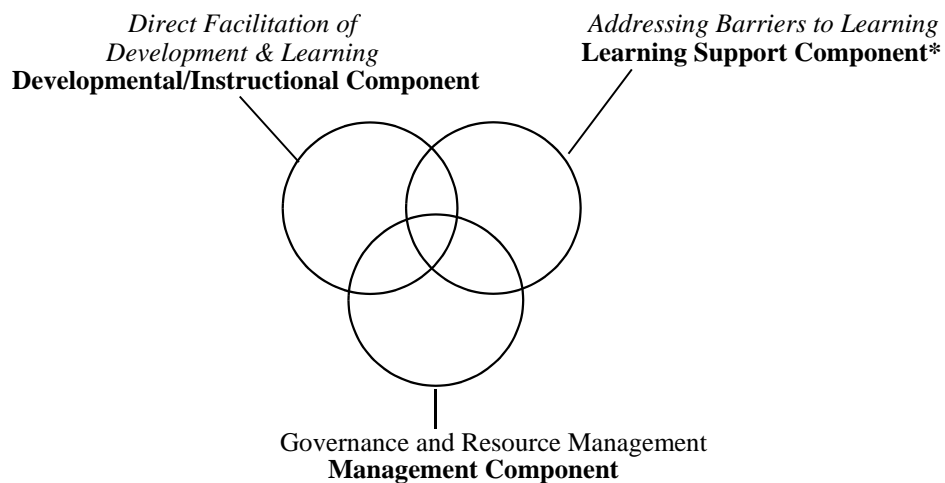
Direct Facilitation of
Development & Learning
(Developmental Component)

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



*While not treated as a primary and essential component, every school offers some school-owned student "support" programs and services – some of which links with community-owned resources. All the activity, however, remains marginalized and fragmented in policy and practice.

(b) Turning support services into a Comprehensive Learning Support System.



*Learning support is established in policy and practice as primary and essential and is developed into a comprehensive system by weaving together school and community resources.

Exhibit 3. A learning support component to address barriers to learning and enhance healthy development at a school site.

Range of Learners

(categorized in terms of their response to academic instruction)

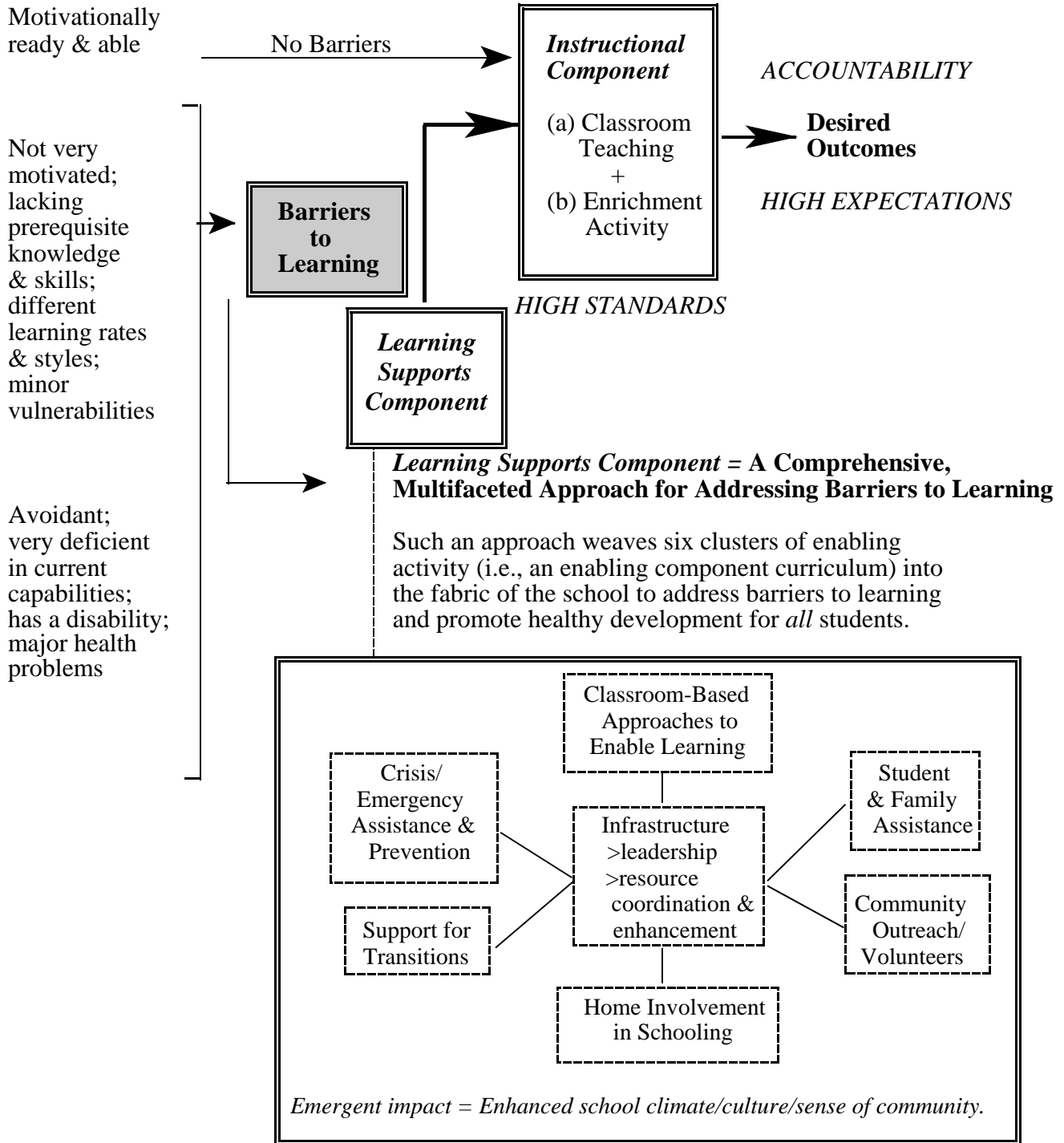


Exhibit 4

What does such a component need to look like at a school?

A Comprehensive Learning Support System is conceived as a primary and essential facet of school improvement. The aim is to ensure that every school develops a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive component to address barriers to learning and promote healthy development. Given limited resources, such a component is established by deploying, redeploying, and weaving all existing learning support resources together.

A school with a learning support component redesigns its infrastructure to establish an administrative leader to guide the component's development and be accountable for daily implementation, monitoring, and problem solving. Another facet of the infrastructure is a resource-oriented team that helps establish and evolve the component over a period of years. The administrator and the team use the CPLSS framework in planning and implementing programs in all six content areas (see Exhibit 3), with the aim of establishing an effective continuum of systems to

- C promote healthy development and prevent problems
- C respond to problems as soon after onset as is feasible
- C provide intensive care.

There also are mechanisms for responding when students are identified as having problems. In each instance, an analysis is made of the reasons for the problems. For most students, the problems are resolved through minor situational and program changes. Those for whom such strategies are insufficient are provided additional assistance first in the classroom. For those whose problems require more intensive help, referrals for specialized assistance are made, processed, and interventions are set in motion and carefully monitored and coordinated.

Because there is an emphasis on programs and activities that create a school-wide culture of caring and nurturing, students, families, staff, and the community feel the school is a welcoming and supportive place, accommodating of diversity, and committed to promoting equal opportunities for all students to succeed at school. When problems arise, they are responded to positively, quickly, and effectively. Morale is high.

A Typical Example of Focusing on Helping the Teacher with Student Re-engagement, Rather than Overemphasizing Discipline and Referral for Services

Matt, a third grader, has not been doing well at school. He often is in trouble on the school playground before school and during lunch. Before the component was established, his teacher constantly had to discipline him and send him to the principal's office. He had been referred to the Student Success Team but he was among a long list of students who were in line to be reviewed. Now, the focus is on how to enhance what goes on in the classroom and on school-wide changes that minimize negative encounters; this minimizes the need for classroom management, discipline, and referral out for expensive special services.

The focus on enhancing teacher capacity to reengage students in daily learning activities is helping Matt's teacher learn more about matching his individual interests

and skills and how to design the instructional day to provide additional supports from peers and community volunteers. Rather than seeing the solution in terms of discipline, she learns how to understand what is motivating Matt's problem and is able to provide more a personalized approach to instruction and extra in-classroom support that will reengage Matt in learning. Over time, all student support staff (all professional staff who are not involved in classroom instruction) will be trained to go into the classroom to help the teacher learn and implement new approaches designed not just for Matt, but for all students who are not well-engaged in classroom learning.

At the same time, the focus on enhancing support for transition times (such as before school and lunch) increases the recreational and enrichment opportunities available for all students so that they have positive options for interaction. Staff involved in playground supervision are specifically asked to work with Matt to help him engage in an activity that interests him (e.g., a sport's tournament, an extramural club activity). They will monitor his involvement to ensure he is truly engaged, and they, along with one of the student support staff (e.g., school psychologist, counselor, social worker, nurse) will use the opportunity to help him and other students learn any interpersonal skills needed to interact well with peers.

Newcomers: One Example of Support for Transitions and Home Involvement

To enhance family involvement in schooling, special attention is placed on enhancing welcoming and social support strategies for new students and families. Student support staff work with office staff to develop welcoming programs and establish social support networks (e.g., peer buddy systems for students; parent-parent connections). As a result, newcomers (and all others) are greeted promptly and with an inviting attitude when they come into the school. Those who do not have the correct enrollment records are helped to access what is needed. Parents are connected with another parent who helps them learn about school and neighborhood resources. Upon entering the new classroom, teachers connect the newcomer with a trained peer buddy who will stick with the newcomer for a few weeks while they learn the ropes. Support staff will work with each teacher to identify any student who has not made a good transition, and they will determine why and work together and with the family to turn the situation around.

Crisis prevention:

To reduce the number of crises, student support staff analyze what is preventable (usually related to human relations problems) and then design a range of school-wide prevention approaches. Among these are strategies for involving all school personnel (credentialed and classified) in activities that promote positive interactions and natural opportunities for learning prosocial behavior and mutual respect.

Fewer Referrals, Better Response:

As the in-classroom and school-wide approaches emerge, the need for out-of-classroom referrals declines. This allows for rapid and early response when a student is having problems, and it enables student support staff to work more effectively in linking students up with community services when necessary.