



National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support*

January, 2007 Update

To: Network for the National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support

CALL TO ACTION!

A great deal of the Initiative's work to date has focused on creating readiness for essential changes. We will continue with this. BUT, all signs point to 2007 being the time for actions that can produce fundamental changes related to developing comprehensive systems for learning supports.

At this juncture, we are recommending that all those in the network pursue the following three courses of action to move things forward in the coming months:

- (1) participate at school improvement decision making and planning tables to ensure there is a sophisticated focus on new directions for developing a comprehensive system of learning supports – see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Newsletter/summer06.pdf>
- (2) communicate with Congress about including discussion of a comprehensive system of learning supports as a major agenda item in the hearings for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (e.g., No Child Left Behind) – see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/nclbra.pdf>
***Also see the attached letter sent by colleagues in North Carolina.
- (3) focus the attention of Mayors on working with schools to help develop a comprehensive system of learning supports – see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Newsletter/winter07.pdf>

READY TO MOVE FORWARD?

If you are associated with a district that is ready to move forward and want to explore ways we might be able to help, contact Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Also, remember that the Center continues to provide free and ready online access to a range of documents to support moving in new directions and a variety of resources for enhancing learning supports. (See appended list.)

*This national initiative is hosted and facilitated by the Center for Mental Health in Schools. 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 #U45 MC 00175), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In the Planning Stages

- >>Leadership Institute for Hawaii
- >>Large Urban Center Summits

Let's us hear where else we should be considering. (contact: ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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As you can tell, efforts to move in new directions continue to burgeon. For updates, see
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ndannouncement.htm>

As always, we value your input on how to maximize the initiative's impact, including info on upcoming events where there could be an opportunity to engage decision makers in exploring New Directions.

We look forward to hearing from you and to continuing to work with you in the best interests of young people, their families, and their schools.

Respectfully submitted,
Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor

No Child Left Behind – The football version

1. All teams must make the state playoffs and all MUST win the championship. If a team does not win the championship, they will be on probation until they are the champions, and coaches will be held accountable. If after two years they have not won the championship their footballs and equipment will be taken away until they do win the championship.
2. All players will be expected to have the same football skills at the same time even if they do not have the same conditions or opportunities to practice on their own. NO exceptions will be made for lack of interest in football, a desire to perform athletically, or genetic abilities or disabilities of themselves or their parents. All players will play football at a proficient level!
3. Talented players will be asked to workout on their own, without instruction. This is because the coaches will be using all their instructional time with the athletes who aren't interest in football, have limited athletic ability or whose parents don't like football.
4. Games will be played year round but statistics will only be kept in the 4th 8th and 11th game. It will create a New Age of Sports where every school is expected to have the same level of talent and all teams will reach the same minimum goals. If no team gets ahead, then no team gets left behind. If fans do not like this new law, they are encouraged to vote for vouchers and support private teams that can screen out the non-athletes and prevent their players from having to play with bad football players.

Sent to us by a colleague who indicated that "This is making the rounds in our school district."

**Don't Forget About the Available
Online Resource Aids**

The online tool kit and other resources are meant to provide free and easily accessed aids. Go to the Center's website – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

For example, as an additional response to the frequently asked question about costs, the Center has added a brief response – see – *What will it Cost? - No New Dollars!*
(For this document's URL and for other examples of what's available see the Appended List)

Also, note that we have been updating the resource *Where's It Happening? Examples of New Directions for Student Support & Lessons Learned* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/wheresithappening.htm>

Contains descriptions of trailblazing and pioneering efforts at school, district, state, and national levels. Includes pilots that were not sustained and early versions of major initiatives that continue to evolve.

If you have been involved in developing a comprehensive New Directions for Student Support approach, please send us the information so that we can include it. Contact: ltaylor@ucla.edu

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***INITIATIVE FOR NEW DIRECTIONS FOR STUDENT SUPPORT**

The *National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support* stresses that new directions means rethinking *all* support programs, resources, and personnel. 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.

The initiative's growing impact is seen in the involvement of increasing numbers of states and localities and initiative co-sponsors. The trend has been to look to the National Initiative for support in mobilizing active networks. The staff at the UCLA Center provides facilitative support and leadership. Each month the Center generates outreach mailings in all states and is receiving a steady flow of requests for more information and assistance from state and local education agencies and boards of education seeking to move in new directions. Listservs have been established to facilitate communications. Special meetings/trainings are convened. Legislative action has been stimulated. Corwin Press recently published two books that support the initiative, and these may be the beginning of a New Directions series.

Stakeholders in each state, of course, differ in how they relate to and support the National Initiative and pursue work in their own states and localities. What is common across venues is that increasing numbers of stakeholders want to go in new directions through making systemic changes to develop comprehensive approaches. And, what is becoming clearer is that opportunities to move forward occur every time school improvement is an agenda item.

APPENDIX

Examples of Resources for Creating Readiness and Building Capacity

(1) **Making the Case** – Here's a few more brief documents to help create readiness:

- > *Talking Points - Five Frequently Asked Questions About:
Why Address What's Missing in School Improvement Planning?*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/q&aschoolimprove.pdf>
- > *What will it Cost? - No New Dollars!*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/whatwillitcost.pdf>
- > *Costs of Not Addressing Barriers to Learning*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/costs.pdf>
- > *Data on the Plateau or Leveling Off Effect of Achievement Test Scores*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/plateau.pdf>
- > *Data Related to the Need for New Directions for School Improvement*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/data.pdf>

(2) **Building the Work into School Improvement Planning Guides** – See:

- > *School Improvement Planning: What's Missing?*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsmissing.htm>
- > *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/pdffdocs/enabling/standards.pdf>
- > *Designing Schoolwide Programs in Title I Schools: Using the Non-Regulatory Guidance in
Ways that Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/briefs/DOEGuidance.pdf>

(3) **Stressing the need for a Unifying Framework.** See:

- > *Another Initiative? Where Does it Fit? A Unifying Framework and an Integrated Infrastructure for Schools to Address Barriers to Learning and Promote Healthy Development*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/infrastructure/anotherinitiative-exec.pdf>
- > *a call to action . . . School Improvement: Where's Student Support?*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/Newsletter/summer06.pdf>

Corwin Publications on New Directions written by the Center's Co-directors:

>>> *The School Leader's Guide to Student Learning Supports: New Directions for Addressing Barriers to Learning* – <http://www.corwinpress.com/book.aspx?pid=11343>

>>> *The Implementation Guide to Student Learning Supports: New Directions for Addressing Barriers to Learning* – <http://www.corwinpress.com/book.aspx?pid=11371>

The attached letter was delivered to the NC Congressional Delegation via email.

December 26, 2006

Dear Rep. McIntyre, Senator Dole and Senator Burr:

As Congress approaches the task of reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (currently referred to as No Child Left Behind (NCLB)), the New Hanover County Schools (NHCS) School Mental and Behavioral Health Committee would like to share some concerns with the current NCLB Act that should be given consideration in the upcoming reauthorization process.

In an excellent report prepared by the Center for Mental Health in Schools at the University of California at Los Angeles (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/nclbra.pdf>), the Center analyzes three major hearings and reports on ESEA reauthorization. The findings of this analysis are that “there has been no major discussion of the need for a systematic focus on learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching.” Our School Mental and Behavioral Health Committee finds this very disturbing and requests your assistance in addressing the matter.

The term learning support refers to school-based programs and services promoting healthy physical, cognitive, social and emotional development and resiliency. Learning support also includes programs and services addressing barriers to student learning such as health and psychosocial problems, external stressors and psychological disorders.

Currently, the prevailing emphasis of NCLB is on increasing student accountability and the quality of instruction with goals of increasing academic achievement for all students and eliminating the achievement gap between groups of students. These are important and significant aims for improving public education in America and strengthening our role as world leaders. The Center and the School Mental and Behavioral Health Committee maintain that these lofty gains are essentially unattainable without a great deal of attention to a complimentary system of learning supports which addresses significant barriers to student learning. A failure to do so will insure our frustration with attaining the important performance outcomes for all our nation’s children.

The Center has prepared recommendations that will promote a system of learning support and address barriers to learning and teaching. (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/PromotingaSystematicFocus.pdf>) Several states have developed such systems that could serve as guidance and information for consideration of the learning support component. The School Mental and Behavioral Health Committee also is available to provide information to you and others in Congress on the importance of the learning support component to addressing barriers to learning and improved student achievement.

Specifically, the School Mental and Behavioral Health Committee requests that upcoming Congressional hearings on reauthorization of the NCLB Act include a thorough review of the learning support component. This is a major omission in the current act. If our nation’s leaders are serious about improving public education, this information is critical to a comprehensive education system that attains the goals we have for each and every child.

We appreciate your consideration of this information and our request. If our committee can assist you in anyway with this issue, please do not hesitate to call upon us.

Thank you,
NHCS School Mental and Behavioral Health Committee

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