October, 2008

From: Howard Adelman & Linda Taylor Co-Directors of the Center at UCLA

Re: Update National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support

Across the country, concerns about addressing barriers to learning and engaging and reengaging students in classroom learning are increasing.

As a result, discussion of *new directions* for student and learning supports is becoming an essential topic related to school improvement.

And, the Center at UCLA is doing many things to move the work forward.

(1) Two weeks ago we formally announced the public-private collaboration our Center has formed with Scholastic, Inc.'s Community Affairs Unit.

(Scholastic has created an initiative called: Rebuilding for Learning.TM It is designed to help state and school district leaders "rebuild" school and district infrastructure. Our Center is collaborating with this initiative to improve learning supports for all children.)

See the announcement online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/announcement(10-14-08).pdf

And, see the response form to let us know your interest in this.

(2) Last week we sent out a brief about the increasing stream of statements related to the ESEA reauthorization calling for "a comprehensive approach" to student supports.

We did so because, too often, what is being identified as comprehensive is not comprehensive enough.

The brief conveyed our perspective of what does and doesn't constitute a comprehensive system, and we are soliciting and synthesizing other views about how to get beyond

limited and limiting approaches that tend to focus primarily on: >connecting some community services to schools >enhancing coordination of fragmented efforts >grouping existing programs under some form of a three tier continuum (The continuum is necessary but insufficient for moving beyond a fragmented listing of the many programs, services, and initiatives related to student and learning supports.)

All these are relevant matters. But, a comprehensive approach must include a concept that organizes what might be thought of as the content focus of student and learning supports.

See: What is a Comprehensive Approach to Student Supports? http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whatiscomp.pdf

And, let us know about any places that have gone beyond the three tier continuum in framing a comprehensive system.

(3) Beyond framing intervention in a comprehensive way, the need is to help schools escape old ways of thinking about what is needed and provide frameworks for new directions. For a fuller appreciation of what is involved in developing a comprehensive *system*, see:

Frameworks for Transforming How Schools Offer Student and Learning Supports http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/frameworksforsystemictransformation.pdf

Also, see the resources for new directions that have been gathered together as a "toolkit." All are free and easy to access online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm

And, remember that the Center continues to develop new and free resources related to efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching, including motivational factors. (For easy online access, go to the Center homepage at <u>http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/</u> – click on *Resources and Publications*; for the new resources, click on *What's New*.) The online clearinghouse Quick Finds also provide ready access to key Center resources as well as to links to resources and other centers around the country.)

(4) READY TO MOVE FORWARD?

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

For details about the *National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support*, go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ndannouncement.htm

A brief overview is provided below:

In 2002, our Center at UCLA launched the National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support. We began with a national Summit and followed this (in 2003) with several regional Summits to raise awareness and create readiness for change. In 2003 we also began a targeted set of state Summits (these have occurred in 13 states to date)

Then, in 2005, we added strategies not only to enhance dissemination but to encourage and support diffusion as we provide indepth follow up for those places indicating readiness to move forward in developing a comprehensive new directions approach. To date, this work has included providing (1) Leadership Institutes for district teams and (2) onsite capacity building with specific state departments of education and districts.

In 2006, encouraged by the growing success of the New Directions initiative, the Center at UCLA established a public-private collaboration with Scholastic, Inc. as part of Scholastic's Community Affairs *Rebuilding for Learning* initiative. In 2007 and the first

part of 2008, Scholastic has been (1) preparing a handbook based on our work related to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging students and (2) developing a special website. In the last part of 2008, we will begin to conduct a series of Leadership Institutes beginning in the Gulf states and also for national and state superintendents/administrators associations, Council of Chief State School Officers, etc.

Over 2007 and 2008, we increased our outreach to district superintendents/leaders and began to focus on higher education's role in personnel preparation for educators.

Superintendents Initiative. With respect to district leaders, widespread outreach mailings were sent including a range of brief resources and with follow up materials sent to those who responded. As of August, 2008, the focus on connecting with superintendents will be expanded into a formal Superintendents Initiative. The initiative will be inaugurated with national distribution of a Center report entitled: Transforming School Improvement to Develop a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: What District Superintendents Say They Need to Move Forward.

Higher Education Initiative. With respect to higher education's role in personnel preparation for educators, July 2008 inaugurated a *Higher Education Initiative*. This began with a first Leadership Institute for Higher Education Personnel Preparation and with the national distribution of the report entitled: *Preparing All Education Personnel to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching*. In addition to policy makers, a key audience for this report is deans, department chairs, and faculty in personnel preparation and leadership programs, district personnel responsible orientation/induction, inservice, and continuing education.

In October, 2008, the Center at UCLA formally announced the public-private collaboration it has formed with Scholastic, Inc.'s Community Affairs Unit which will connect with and enhance the New Directions initiative. (Scholastic has created an initiative called: Rebuilding for Learning.TM It is designed to help state and school district leaders "rebuild" school and district infrastructure. The UCLA Center is collaborating with this initiative to improve learning supports for all children.)

See the announcement online at

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/announcement(10-14-08).pdf

Each year, the Center has continued to produce resources and tools for those ready to move in New Directions for Student Support (e.g., see the online toolkit at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm)