



National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support

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

June, 2006: Brief Update on Status and Opportunities

(Full information online at: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ndannouncement.htm>)

About Strengthening Learning Supports in the Reauthorization of No Child Left Behind

Anticipating Congressional hearings related to reauthorizing NCLB, we have prepared a policy analysis brief on how the focus on learning supports can be enhanced in the reauthorized law. The document is entitled: **For Consideration in Reauthorizing the No Child Left Behind Act . . .**

Promoting a Systematic Focus on Learning Supports to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching

By now you should have received the draft we have circulated for widespread reaction. (Just in case you missed it, it is online at – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> – see the box under the icons on the homepage.) We will incorporate feedback and then send the final report to the House and Senate Education Committee members and circulate it widely.

If there are others you think would have useful feedback, please alert them to this.

>>Related to all this is the Center’s recent report – “Designing Schoolwide Programs in Title I Schools: Using the Non-Regulatory Guidance in Ways that Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching.”

The report focuses on the USDOE's 2006 Non-regulatory Guidance “Designing Schoolwide Programs” – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/DOEguidance.pdf>

This brief analysis highlights ways to enhance how schools can better address barriers to learning and teaching through school improvement planning that fully integrates development of a system of learning supports.

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) 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.

Next Leadership Institutes

>>National Leadership Institute in DC. “Call to Action . . . Student Support Staff: Moving in New Directions through School Improvement” July 21, 2006. Teams from major associations and education agencies will focus on how those in leadership positions across the country can mobilize school support staff to engage productively in school improvement planning and decision making.

>>Related to this national summit, the lead article in the Center’s summer newsletter is “a call to action . . . School Improvement: Where’s Student Support?.” This edition has just been mailed and can be accessed online at – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Newsletter/summer06.pdf>

>>In Hartford CT in August (a follow up to the CT Summit). Teams from schools and districts will plan ways to strengthen learning supports.

>>Leadership Institute for Area Education Agency #9 in Iowa June 16 – related to their implementation of the Iowa Design for a system of learning support

>>New Britain, CT. school district Aug. 21

What Next?

A series of four sessions are planned over the coming year in Iowa. Discussions are underway about a Washington State Summit, and more. Any other suggestions?



Ongoing Training and TA

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 And, 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.

As you can tell, efforts to move in new directions continue to burgeon.

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.

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!*
(URL is on the next page)

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

Where's It Happening?

One of the resources we developed some time ago was the document *Where's It Happening?*. <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/wheresithappening.htm>

We amassed information describing major examples of trailblazing and pioneering efforts that reflected major new directions for student support. Work carried out at school, district, state, and national levels is described. What is presented includes pilots that were not sustained and early versions of major initiatives that continue to evolve. (To account for the fact that some worthy new directions are not sustained for a variety of reasons, we are thinking of renaming the document *What's Happened, What's Happening, and Where?.*)

It is now time to update and expand this resource aid.

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 in the revision.

We look forward to hearing from you about this. (Contact: ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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>

Schools as Businesses

In a recent article, Larry Cuban recalled a story that Jamie Vollmer had shared with educators a few years ago about when he made a presentation to a group of teachers as a representative of a group of business people dedicated to improving public schools.* Below is an abridged version.

"I was an executive at an ice cream company that became famous in the middle-1980s when *People* magazine chose its blueberry flavor as the 'Best Ice Cream in America.' I was convinced of two things. First, public schools needed to change. They were archaic selecting and sorting mechanisms designed for the Industrial Age and out of step with the needs of our emerging 'knowledge society.' Second, educators were a major part of the problem. They resisted change, hunkered down in their feathered nests, protected by tenure and shielded by a bureaucratic monopoly. They needed to look to business. We knew how to produce quality. Zero defects! Total Quality Management! Continuous improvement!

As soon as I finished, a woman's hand shot up. She began quietly, 'We are told, sir, that you manage a company that makes good ice cream.'

I smugly replied,

'Best ice cream in America, ma'am.'

'How nice,' she said. 'Is it rich and smooth?'

'Sixteen percent butterfat,' I crowed.

'Premium ingredients?' she inquired.

'Super-premium! Nothing but triple-A.'

I was on a roll. I never saw the next line coming. 'Mr. Vollmer,' she said, leaning forward with a wicked eyebrow raised to the sky. 'When you are standing on your receiving dock and you see an inferior shipment of blueberries arrive, what do you do?'

In the silence of that room, I could hear the trap snap.

I was dead meat, but I wasn't going to lie.

'I send them back.'

'That's right,' she barked, 'and we can never send back our blueberries. We take them big, small, rich, poor, gifted, exceptional, abused, frightened, confident, homeless, rude and brilliant. We take them with attention deficit disorder, junior rheumatoid arthritis and English as their second language. We take them all. Every one. And that, Mr. Vollmer, is why it's not a business. It's school.'

In an explosion, all 290 teachers, principals, bus drivers, aides, custodians and secretaries jumped to their feet and yelled, 'Yeah! Blueberries! Blueberries!'

And so began my long transformation [from business executive into school reformer]."

*Cuban's article is entitled "Why Can't Schools Be Like Businesses?" and can be found in the School Administrator (Feb., 2006) online at: <http://www.aasa.org/publications/saarticledetail.cfm?ItemNumber=5212&snItemNumber=950&tnItemNumber=951>