

## **January 2005 Update: *New Directions for Student Support . . . Connecticut's Initiative***

Hopefully, you had a wonderful holiday season.

### **I. Progress:**

Current plans call for sending this type of formal progress update every other month. Other contacts will be made as often as is appropriate. You can always check for the most recent info on progress and about the steering and work groups by going to

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

- C ***Network Continues to Grow.*** The network of key leaders following up on planning and implementation in the state has expanded. See, for example, the growing list of members on the steering group – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/currentstatus.htm>  
Remember: the Steering Group is an inclusive body, so please feel free to join (contact – [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)).
- C ***Social Marketing Efforts.*** Summit participants continue to request materials to share with colleagues, with district staff and board members, and at conferences. Besides conferences for student support staff, it is wise to circulate the generic brief and flyer at Superintendent and Principal Conferences/Institutes, teacher conferences, conferences for board members, etc. In addition to overview material for enhancing understanding of the initiative and new directions for student support in general, several requests have focused on materials for use restructuring student support at school and district levels.
- C ***Informing State Legislators.*** Several folks have reported contacts with legislators who have special interest in education. As part of such outreach, they report that sharing the legislation from Hawaii and the pending legislation in California is very useful.

### **II. Suggestions for next steps:**

Now is the time for some indepth strategic planning for the state-wide initiative. The following have emerged in other states as potential ideas upon which to build action plans and establish work groups:

#### **(1) Social Marketing and Creating Readiness**

a. The national document "Assuring No Child is Left Behind: Enhancing our Learning Support System.."provides a starting point for developing a brief for the state-wide initiative. The content can be adopted, adapted, or completely revised to create a state-specific brief. You should have received a hardcopy by mail. It is online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/assuringnochild.pdf>

b. Similarly, the national initiative flyer that is online can be adapted for the state.

If you look at the online state-specific briefs and flyers adapted by CA, IN, WI, and TX, you will see they have felt the national versions were right on the mark and mainly have adapted the title and, in the case of TX, added two figures from the Summit presentation.

c. Once the state-specific brief and flyer are ready, the Center can distribute them to a wide range of education leaders across the state.

d. The next step is to pursue a strategic approach to mobilize key leaders, such as

- >Relevant state organizations (e.g., student support associations, administrators, unions, teachers, PTA)
- >Superintendents' tables
- >Boards of Education

- >Principals
- >Legislators
- >Other influential stakeholders (e.g., regional service centers)

One way to approach this is to organize work groups to establish timelines and pursue steps for each of the above six groups (if volunteers for work groups are limited, one work group might pursue all six key leader groups in a sequential way).

The types of steps that might be planned are to:

- >>Send personalized letters with a copy of the state document, state flyer, response form – in the letter, indicate a desire to follow-up with a meeting after they have had a chance to discuss the information.
- >>After a few weeks, have a representative of the steering group call to arrange a meeting
- >>In preparing for the meeting, see talking points and Q and A developed for the initiative by the Center at UCLA at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/q&a.pdf>  
There is also a powerpoint presentation online that you might find helpful.
- >>At the meeting, clarify specific follow-up steps, e.g.,
  - >With school boards, explore establishment of a committee for Addressing Barriers to Learning;
  - >With superintendents, ask to create a blue ribbon commission to formulate specific recommendations for new directions for student support;
  - >With Principals, discuss a leadership institute for planning and implementing new directions for student support.

NOTE: At any point, the Center at UCLA is ready to help in any way feasible. This includes preparing resources, doing mailing, making strategic presentations, etc. etc. Also, if there is a need and interest, follow-up conference calls and face-to-face sessions can be arranged.

### **III. Info on what other's are doing:**

- >The section on the website that reports the initiative's "Current Status" now includes links that feature relevant information, policy documents, position statements, etc. from each state. These include documents from the resource entitled: "Where's it Happening?", state-specific briefs and flyers as they are developed, and statements relevant to new directions. Examples of the last item are seen in the position statements from the Connecticut State Board of Education on (1) Student Support Services and (2) Creating a Healthy School Environment (which also can be accessed directly at <http://www.state.ct.us/sde/board/stusuptserv.pdf> and at [http://www.state.ct.us/sde/board/school\\_environment.pdf](http://www.state.ct.us/sde/board/school_environment.pdf)).
- >Other material will be added as it becomes available, e.g.,
  - >> material from Wisconsin's Pupil Services Roles Delineation Project and the paper being updated on Collaborative Pupil Services.
  - >>information on school improvement plans that include new directions for addressing barriers to learning and teaching

NOTE: It would be invaluable if you would share work being done on:

- >>integrating new directions for student support into school improvement plans and information management systems
- >>integrating new directions for student support with the work related to Title I (e.g., examples of support service and Title I directors working together to enhance learning

supports systems)

#### IV. Other matters of Interest:

- C Many participants are using information about the “plateauing” of test scores as a way to introduce the importance of New Directions for Student Support. Others are stressing the focus on “Response to Intervention” in the reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as an opportunity to strengthen the continuum of learning supports.
- C There have been requests for examples of “what it might look like in practice.” The material (just updated) in the “Where’s It Happening?” document (online -- accessible from the section on the Initiative) may be helpful. At the same time, the Center has just developed a brief description of what it might look like at a school; this document is online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/whatmightfully.pdf>
- C There has been several requests for expanding communication among those involved in the State’s initiative for new directions. Specifically, in addition to email and snail mail, some would like some conference calls and a follow up meeting with the steering group in the state. To determine how widespread the interest is in these interactions, please send your input to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)
- C While there are over 30 co-sponsors for the Initiative, steering group members have stressed the importance of state groups signing on as co-sponsors of the State’s initiative. If you represent a state chapter of an organization that might be interested in being a co-sponsor, it would be good to suggest to the group that they consider signing on. Then, let the Center know and a follow-up contact will be made.
- C An example of a direct effort to encourage higher education to play a role in new directions for student support is reported from Texas where a faculty member is in discussion with her dean about establishing a university-based support center for the state’s New Directions Initiative.
- C Concerns have been raised about the need to make a concerted effort as soon as feasible to include other stakeholders. Examples of such concerns are reflected in the following comment: “We need all the key folks at the same table when discussing the academic, emotional, social, and physical needs of kids. I think that more of those of us with main responsibility for the teaching and learning component of our organization need to be willing to be part of this effort or it will be the student support leaders talking to themselves while the teaching and learning leaders continue to ignore them.” Other folks indicate “we really need people in strategic positions in the state department of education and regional education support” units.

Clearly, strategic planning of next steps needs to establish ways to bring more key leaders on board. In the meantime, everyone interested in moving the initiative forward should reach out to colleagues to invite them to join in. Or, ask the Center to send them information and invite their participation.

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Send any suggestions, comments, information, relevant documents, etc. to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu) for sharing with the Steering Group and other initiative participants.

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