NEW DIRECTIONS FOR STUDENT SUPPORT INITIATIVE

Report from the
Iowa Statewide Summit in Des Moines on April 18, 2005

The following is a brief summary from the statewide Iowa Summit on New Directions for Student Support.

Also included are additional copies of some key initiative materials for you to share with others.

As the report indicates, the process has begun to establish a network of core advisors throughout the state. The UCLA Center will work with this group in taking next steps to create readiness for new directions for student support in Iowa and in continuing the work across the country. Some work groups will be established as specific tasks are identified.

You will be sent updates as the initiative moves forward in Iowa and nationally, and hopefully you will be part of the initiative network’s core of advisors or a work group.

At the end of the report is a response form to help expand and guide next steps. Please take a few minutes to fill it out and fax it back.

As always, thanks for all you do in the interest of the well-being of children and adolescents.

Howard Adelman & Linda Taylor, facilitators for the initiative*

*The New Directions for Student Support Initiative is facilitated by the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. 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 (contact: smhp@ucla.edu). 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.
National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support*

Iowa’s Statewide Summit
Des Moines, April 18, 2005

Brief Report

A wide range of key leaders in education participated in the Summit and expressed commitment to establishing an ongoing and sustainable initiative to strengthen learning supports for all students. Appendix A lists those who participated on April 18 and those who, although unable to attend, expressed their interest in participating in the next steps as the initiative evolves.

Unlike the seven statewide summits that preceded this one, the group of Iowa leaders who met on April 18th already were thinking about proposed new directions for student supports in the state’s schools. Prior to the meeting, the state’s Department of Education sent participants the document describing the exceptional design work related to systems for learning supports produced by the department, working with the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development. The design reflects the input over a year and a half of a wide spectrum of school and community stakeholders and national leaders. The result is a prototype for creating systems of learning supports that ensure all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school and to do so in a safe, supportive, and caring school environment.**

In the letter accompanying the document, the department noted that the Iowa summit signals the fact that the Iowa design reflects a larger national effort to move learning supports forward and that the national initiative will continue to assist Iowa’s pioneering work.

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*The New Directions for Student Support Initiative is sponsored and facilitated by the national Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. For a brief, overview description of the initiative and a list of the over 30 organizations that have joined in as co-sponsors to date, see Appendix B. More information on the Initiative is at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ndannouncement.htm

Objectives for the day were to:

C Articulate why new directions for student support are an imperative

C Clarify four fundamental of concern that must be addressed in pursuing an initiative for new directions (i.e. the policy problem, the intervention frameworks problem, the infrastructure problem, the systemic change problem)

C Highlight ways to enhance priorities related to policy and practice for addressing barriers to student learning

C Foster an exchange of information about policy and practice around the country

C Facilitate proactive strategic planning and problem-solving for next steps statewide and at local levels related to moving student support from the margins to a central position in school improvement policy and planning

Related to these objectives, there was an in-depth focus on

> basic frameworks for new directions in student support

> where new directions are being pioneered

> local action toward new directions for student support

> resource aids for moving forward

> a mechanism within the state for supporting new directions for student support.
Iowa Participants' Perspectives on New Directions for Student Support

Based on the discussion and written input from participants, the following were identified as key comments and suggestions related to moving forward in pursuing new directions for student support in Iowa schools.

1. Creating readiness at state, district, and school-community levels

Participants noted:

- The key is to be certain to address the needs of all students
- Proactively market the urgency of addressing barriers to learning
- The need becomes more critical as more schools fail to meet yearly progress

and they stressed that it is important to:

- Focus on enhancing leaders understanding of the need for learning supports
- Focus the marketing of learning support on enhancing community involvement and commitment
- Use the design work delineated in Enhancing Iowa’s Systems of Supports for Development and Learning as the focus
- Link learning supports to the data on student needs and outcomes
- Stress classroom-focused enabling as being of the highest priority (since academic achievement is driving priorities)
- Focus on economic factors (what we have, what we save if we use existing resources in more effective ways)
- Recognize the work across the state that provides the base
- Map the resources at AEA, District and school levels – this would provide “aha” insights; then rethink resource use for all kids and teachers
- Move from data collection to problem analyses and identify those stakeholders who are interested in problem solving
- Stress system change focused on prevention and show the links to improving student performance in schools and districts: highlight data on how learning support links to academics
- Adopt a vision of learning support from the school to district, then to AEA, and finally to State level
- Help stakeholders understand how it might look in small districts, mid-size, large/rural, suburban, urban
- Build as a grassroots partnership in communities

2. Strategies for moving forward with a new directions initiative

Participants stressed the importance of:

>>Leadership Training (e.g., superintendents, school boards, principals, directors, coordinators, union leaders) focused on

- Rethinking use of existing financial resources and braiding funds
- Mapping how resources are allocated using the matrix; setting priorities in developing a system of learning supports
- Enhancing collaboration between and among building administrators
- Developing a common vision of learning supports at all levels
- Integrating learning supports into school improvement planning
Other stakeholder training and development

Beginning with communicating basic information about learning supports to administrators, teachers, the business community, and community agencies.

Providing guidance for activities and agendas to facilitate district and building focus on learning supports and ensure time to do the work.

Establishing a process for ongoing capacity building of leadership for learning supports.

Using a train-the-trainers approach to teach teachers to personalize instruction.

Providing inservice and tools to help teachers re-engage dis-engaged youth.

Moving special ed teachers and learning supports into general ed classes; need more direction/training on co-teaching for general ed teachers, special ed staff, AEA staff.

Delineating the important role of families and students as partners and as resources in this work.

State, AEA, and district roles in moving things forward

AEA support and resources need to be organized into a framework to support learning supports.

Need to identify funding mechanisms for change agents and state and federal guidelines that provide opportunities to work on learning supports.

Put research regarding learning supports on the Iowa Department of Education website.

Link with Iowa’s Community Ed initiatives.

Integrate the focus and language of learning supports into the IDM model.

Need a Learning Supports model from the state that clearly integrates special ed., IDM, at-risk programming and specifies indicators of success in implementation of effective learning supports.

Enhancing collaboration networks

Work with Neighborhood Networks/Local Decision making Team and DHS Community Partnerships.

Need to understand the community communication forums and share information there.

Pursue legislative action and funding for pilots.

3. Anticipating and addressing potential barriers to moving forward

Participants noted:

Lack of clarity re. infrastructure (what we have, what we need at state, AEA, District, and school levels).

Need a unified message from all areas of the Department of Ed to the field.

Systems are dynamic and often defy artificial bureaucratic compliance actions.

Need to stop new initiatives coming from the top down.

“We all need to give up the ‘power’ of having control over small pieces in order to make learning supports powerful for all students.”

Local control of the process is very important.

Need frameworks that would be the organizer to keep all parts of this and other initiatives together.

Need help in coordination of programs and services.

Need to make special education regs and allowable growth fund more flexible.
>The large numbers of students arriving behind in skills and lacking in resources
>Amount of personnel consistently available to provide learning supports
>Need supportive policy
>Principals are flooded with new things that are mandated; will have to seed this very carefully
>Re. systemic planning, “we have many experts with many different points of view; need time to coordinate across levels, buildings, etc. to put our collective heads together and tackle this issue”
>People need more guidance about how to facilitate systemic change (e.g., examples, tools, etc.)
>Will need help through transition; can’t be an add on
>Getting out of crisis mode will be a challenge
>This will take time and energy to flesh out and operationalize; we have to be ready to start slow and small and build from there pulling in supporters and resources as we go
>Must be able to self assess and make adjustments
>Need more support for small rural schools

4. Additional brainstorming about moving forward in Iowa

Participants stressed:
>Everyone needs to see the time we now spend in responding to crises as better spent on change to strengthen learning supports
>Need broader scope to address barriers. Now we mostly focus on services, not a continuum for pooling money for early intervention. Programs are too marginalized and competitive
>Incorporate National PTA Parent & Community Involvement Schools of Excellence Certification and the Building Successful Partnerships Programs
>Professional Learning Communities is a start, but we must systematically map all resources, not just instructional mapping
>Need data on what schools and student performance results look like when effective learning supports are implemented
>Need to work harder to include the parents of the students we are most concerned about in the planning for learning supports
>Must deal with culture in schools and how white privilege interferes with progress
>People know they need to do something, but they think only more money will make it possible
>The problem lies with problem analysis – We have a lot of data about how kids are doing, we aren’t good at analyzing why and what we should do about it.
Next Steps in Iowa

What next? Moving ideas into action and setting initial priorities.

(1) Steps participants indicated they were ready to do individually

>>In Districts

- Share information on learning supports with principals, superintendent
- Use information to help us with our systemic planning and organization
- Share info with stakeholders in school and community to implement district-wide
- Include in strategic planning process
- District study group to review Iowa concept paper
- Proposal to key administrators about forming a district level learning supports leadership team to support implementation at building level
- Use with common language framework
- Use framework with our community resource mapping process
- Use framework when we look at resource development: time, finances, programs
- Provide professional development to community agencies on learning supports
- Make the connection between academic achievement and learning support
- Identify leaders and champions for learning supports
- Interest surrounding districts in this work so agencies we all use help us function in similar fashion to be more effective as a region and in sharing resources
- Incorporate learning supports into strategic planning of school climate components
- Share information at district level; begin to build a support system at building level
- Go through materials and pick out something to focus in sharing with others
- Connect with similar size districts for discussion and networking
- Use overheads/slides to share information
- Discuss with curriculum cadre/association advisory; AEA; Healthy County committee to integrate in current work; not a new thing
- Connect with district people to incorporate these ideas with other committee work
- Redesign and reframe the role of our district Learning Services Team
- Start with our district Student Services Core Teams, share learning support frameworks and decide how to move forward
- Resource mapping with Youth Development Task Force and Secondary Schools
- Propose Resource Coordinating Teams and Professional Development activities
- Develop learning support standards and evaluate ourselves against these
- Include learning supports with the upcoming career/guidance review
- Discuss the fragments that currently provide support
- Organize reviews (for at risk, special ed, guidance) around learning supports frameworks
- Map resources; organize resource teams
- Reassess present structure or lack of infrastructure
- Develop work plan, mobilize community, rethink and construct
- Use learning support frameworks to review our design work and implementation
- Give information on barriers to be address to the Board to point out plateau effect
- Add addressing barriers into our work on alignment and strategic curriculum
- Share information on learning supports with all decision makers
**In Area Education Agencies**

> Design infrastructure and model for learning supports as a part of the new AEA infrastructure
> Organize AEA work around the three components; begin resource mapping
> List out steps for capacity building with the AEA; who will be our champions
> Develop class focus on planning learning supports
> Discussion group to develop action plans to reduce fragmented approaches
> Integrate with mandated school improvement advisory committees
> Discussion within management group. Figure where this will take the agency, what will these concepts mean for staff development and implementation at AEs and schools
> Establish a learning supports working group
> Present information on learning supports to school teams to mobilize them
> Work through my AEA and with the state associations for support services and teacher associations to create awareness about learning supports
> Develop and maintain community partnerships for learning supports
> Begin to work with school districts that are ready through Principals Leadership
> Talk with Superintendents clarifying roles of existing teams and activities
> Work with Superintendents about framework for future discussion in each district
> Create gatherings of multiple community groups and districts by county
> Meet with AEA social workers about learning supports and working on this within our agency
> Allocate staff to assist schools with learning supports

**In the State Department**

> We need to get on the same page as a state department
> Relate and connect the learning supports to Iowa’s Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Process, Instructional Decision Making, and Title V Innovative Programs
> Serve on Department of Education Learning Supports Work Group
> Integrate internal initiatives
> Model resource planning

**In Associations and Organizations**

> Talk to my co-workers about what our role is in implementation
> Develop a set of materials we can use with various levels within school districts (board, administrators, teachers, and other professional and support staff)
> Develop a statewide group to get political and administrative support for these changes
> Create a network of people with knowledge and expertise to produce these changes
> Meet with legislators and the governor related to the frameworks for learning support
> ICN networking/update sessions
> Use champions; leadership has to be charismatic
> Recognize what has been done and draw this into the new vision for learning supports
> Help parents understand that they need to be advocates for their children and schools; give them the tools to do so
> Promote home life/school life/community life partnerships
> Will do all we can to help membership see the need to move forward
> Presenting on learning supports at the state associate conference to get the word out
**In Higher Education**

> Discuss ways university, community, families, and school can work together.  
> Meet with graduate students, faculty to share information  
> Relate learning supports to the work of Iowa Behavioral Alliance  
> Explore ways of integrating information into preservice programs

(2) Organized Steps Related to supporting the work

**Core Advisors** – a group of participants indicated readiness to be core advisors to guide next steps. This group will play a key role in advising the national and state efforts and championing, leading, and guiding the process in ways that ensure effective systemic change and sustainability. Its first functions include:

- identifying, establishing, and providing directions related to tasks and next steps
- ratifying a "brief" that provides an overview of the need for and encapsulates Iowa’s approach to learning supports
- supporting, reviewing, and, as appropriate, ratifying work group products

**Action step:**

- Over the next 1-2 months, the UCLA Center, in collaboration with the Learning Support Team of the Iowa Department of Education, will facilitate the initial work of the network’s Core Advisors. The initial group of core advisors will evolve over time. Ultimately, the advisors need to help establish a Steering body consisting of a high level group of "power brokers" who have the vision, commitment, position, and status to lead in new directions and also clear away barriers to progress.

The following individuals already have indicated interest in being Core Advisors:

Barbara Brunkan, Mississippi Bend AEA  
Patrick Clancy, Waterloo CSD  
Jim Clark, Heartland AEA 11  
Craig Cornick, Fort Madison CSD  
Gary Curtis, Iowa School Counselor Association  
Jean Drey, Sioux Central CSD  
Cyndy Erickson, Des Moines Public Schools  
Mary Gannon, Iowa Association of School Boards  
Del Hoover, Iowa Department of Education  
Carol Johnson, Loess Hills AEA 13  
Dewitt Jones, Waterloo CSD  
Linda Linn, Prairie Lakes AEA  
Kathy Lockard, Green Valley AEA 14  
Susie Meade, West Des Moines Community Schools  
Eric Neessen, School Psychology Consultant, Iowa Department of Education  
James O'Hare, Mississippi Bend AEA 9  
Gayle Olson, Great River AEA 16  
Cinda Rachow, Loess Hills AEA 13  
Brent Robins, West Des Moines Community Schools  
Diane Stegge, Sioux Central CSD  
Cindy Swanson, Mississippi Bend AEA 9  
David VanHorn, Green Valley AEA 14  
Debra Werning, Tri County Community School
Work Groups – As needed, work groups will be formed to flesh out specific ideas about new directions and about how to get from there to there. Facilitators for each work group will be established to ensure group effectiveness and cross-group communication and to interface with core advisors. Given that groups will include individuals from across the state, the process will 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. These could

> 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)

**Action step:**

- As soon as the Core Advisors identify specific tasks, they will help establish work groups to pursue top priority tasks. Here, too, the UCLA Center in collaboration with the Learning Support Team of the Iowa Department of Education will facilitate the organization and initial activity of the work groups.

**In addition to those volunteering as core advisors, the following indicated interest in participating on work groups:**

Kay Augustino, Institute for Character Development
David Christensen, Mt. Pleasant CSD
Maggie Conrad, Des Moines Public School
Kit Gerken, University of Iowa
Sandy Potter-Marquardt, Scott County Kids
Charlene Thiede, Iowa Department of Education
Jim Wise, Urban Education Network of Iowa

(3) Steps for immediately informing and including others in the initiative

Participants identified the following as organizations that should be contacted as potential co-sponsors or partners of the initiative and as useful resources in moving in new directions for student support in Iowa:

Area Education Agencies administrators, special ed directors, superintendents, school boards, principals’ organizations, Urban Education Network of Iowa, Iowa Collaborative for Youth Development, Governor’s Cabinet, faith community, state associations for support services (counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses), Rural School Association of Iowa, School Administrators of Iowa, Iowa Special Ed Advisory Panel, Iowa State Education Association, Iowa School Administrators Association, Iowa Association of School Boards, Iowa Youth At Risk Consortium, Partnership Network through ISU, Health and Human Services, Juvenile Justice, Resources for the homeless, Partnerships for Safe Families, NAESP, DHS, Social Services, American Counseling Association, Children’s Mental Health Design Team, Businesses/Chamber of Commerce,
ISU Extension, Principal Financial, Farm Bureau, Community Colleges, NASSP, America’s Promise, IASCĐ, Children and Families of Iowa, Lutheran Services, Hospitals, Iowa Council of International Understanding, Y’s, National Community Education Association, Tri-Co Health, Casey Foundation, Disproportionate Minority Representation, Juvenile Court Services, De Cat – Empowerment Boards, Center for Alcohol and Drug Services

**Action steps:**

- As a participant or someone interested in *New Directions for Student Support*, you can make an important contribution by informing 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. You can send a copy of any of the materials associated with the work or let us know who to contact and we will send them information about Iowa’s design and the National Initiative.

- As soon as a "brief" that provides an overview of the need for and general concepts for moving in new directions is ratified, the UCLA Center will facilitate its dissemination, along with an invitation to recipients to become part of the initiative.

In addition to core advisors and volunteers for work groups, the following participants expressed interest in working to provide information about strategies for moving forward in the state:

- Jane Caraway, Grant Wood AEA/Cedar Rapids Community Schools
- Jo Ann Christofferson, Mississippi Bend AEA
- Peggy Colton, Louisa-Muscatine CSD
- Pam Dick, Iowa School Counselor Association/Urbandale CSD
- Pam Ehly, Iowa City CSD
- Lowell Ernst, Pella CSD
- Aaron Green, Cedar Rapids CSD
- Kimberly Peterson, Des Moines Public Schools
- David Quinn, Mississippi Bend AEA
- Alan Rowe, College Community Schools
- Rhoda Shepherd, Cedar Rapids CSD
- Morris Stole, Iowa City CSD
- Kathy Utterback, Southern Prairie AEA
- Kim Winterhof, Iowa PTA

(4) **Recommended steps to enhance technical assistance for information sharing, networking, and capacity building**

- establish Email listserv for the initiative
- facilitate linkages with UCLA Center and others doing this work
- provide in-depth strategic workshops related to moving a new directions for student support agenda forward (e.g., on designing learning support infrastructure at district, school, and state department; on systemic change methods; on phasing in new directions; on capacity building of support staff for new roles and functions)
- develop specific examples of what new directions would look like for students, staff, and families (video)

As one participant noted: “The more experts with a vested interest and passion in this topic we can get together and collaboratively move forward the better: This is how change happens.”
Appendix A

Summits Initiative:
New Directions for Student Support
Iowa: April 18 2005

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*Unable to attend due to last minute scheduling conflict
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Summits Initiative:
New Directions for Student Support
Iowa, April 18, 2005
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Appendix B

About the Summits Initiative and its Co-Sponsors

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 33 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. Iowa was the eighth of these, following Minnesota, Wisconsin, California, Indiana, Texas, Connecticut, and New York. 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.
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:

- American School Counselor Association
- American School Health Association
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- California Association of School Psychologists
- California Center for Community School Partnerships
- California Department of Education
- Center for Cooperative Research and Extension Services for Schools
- Center for Prevention of Youth Violence, Johns Hopkins University
- Center for School Mental Health Assistance at the University of Maryland at Baltimore
- Center for Social and Emotional Education
- Coalition for Cohesive Policy in Addressing Barriers to Development & Learning
- Coalition for Community Schools
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
- Education Development Center
- Indiana Department of Education
- Institute for the Study of Students at Risk, University of Maine
- Johns Hopkins University Graduate Division of Educ.
- Minnesota Department of Public Instruction
- National Alliance of Pupil Service Organizations
- National Association of Pupil Services Administrators
- National Association of School Nurses
- National Association of School Psychologists
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of Social Workers
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Center for Community Education
- National Middle Schools Association
- Policy Leadership Cadre for MH in Schools
- Regional VII Comprehensive Center
- School Social Work Association of America
- Texas Association of Student Assistance Professionals
- Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative
- 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 Fax: (310) 206-8716 E-mail: smhp@ucla.edu Website: http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu – 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.*
Iowa  New Directions for Student Support
Next Steps Response Form

(1) If you have not already done so, please indicate:

(a) Would you like to be part of the network’s core advisors (see description in the Report)?
   YES     NO

(b) Any others who should be asked to be part of the network’s core advisors:
   Name                     Contact Info

(c) What types of work products do you think are needed to move things forward?

(d) Which of these products would you be willing to help develop as part of a workgroup?

(2) Other Comments:

Your Name _____________________________ Title ____________________________
Organization __________________________________________________________
Address ________________________________________________________________
City __________________________ State _______________ Zip _____________
Phone __________________ Fax _______________ E-Mail ____________________

Thanks for completing this form. Return by FAX to (310) 206-8716.

The Center for Mental Health in Schools is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project in the Dept. of Psychology, UCLA. Support comes in part from the Office of Adolescent Health, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration. Co-funding comes from the Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Both HRSA and SAMHSA are agencies of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.