

To: Those who Attended or Expressed Interest in the Hawai'i Leadership Institute held in Honolulu on March 19.

From: Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor

Re: Follow-up

Hi,

We are pleased with the interest displayed in the Institute and that it was so well-attended – see lists online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/leadershipinstitute/hileadershiplistings.pdf>

And, the feedback we have been receiving in the aftermath indicates that the Institute content was right on target in emphasizing that

- (1) school improvement planning has paid too little attention to the many well-known external and internal barriers to learning and teaching that stem from various societal, neighborhood, familial, school, and personal conditions
- (2) these factors clearly interfere with student success at school – contributing to active disengagement from classroom learning and leading to major achievement gaps and high student dropout rates
- (3) addressing barriers to learning and teaching has become not only an *imperative*, but an and *urgent* agenda item for schools because of the need to
 - reduce student dropout rates
 - reduce teacher dropout rates
 - re-engage students in classroom learning
 - narrow the achievement gap
 - eliminate the plateau effect related to efforts to improve achievement test performance
 - reduce the growing list of schools designated as low performing
 - minimize the degree to which high stakes testing is taking a toll on students
- (4) current policy needs to do more to ensure that a *comprehensive* focus on addressing barriers to learning and teaching is fully integrated into school improvement planning, implementation, and evaluation to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed at school
- (5) a comprehensive intervention framework is used by every school in developing a comprehensive system of student/learning supports encompassing the full continuum of interventions organized in terms of about six arenas of activity for enabling learning
- (6) the infrastructure at school, district, and state levels needs to be reworked to ensure full and integrated development, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of a comprehensive system of student/learning supports at every school
- (7) strategic planning and delineated systemic change mechanisms are needed to ensure that all of the above happens.

In addition to the material shared at the Institute and this follow-up report, you may find the attached brief document worth sharing with others interested in moving forward with how schools address barriers to learning and teaching. And, there is more on the Center's website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> . Please feel free to share anything and everything.

Next Steps for Hawai'i

From the discussions and feedback, we also heard the readiness to take next steps in developing Hawai'i's *Comprehensive Student Support System* (CSSS). Development of CSSS to date has improved its ability to link *specific* students and their families to an array of formal and informal supports in a timely and effective manner and has been developing an electronic system (eCSSS) for inputting student support data. Now, it is time to move forward in developing a system that enables *all* students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at schools. This encompasses matters such as those highlighted below.

- (1) Using the CSSS intervention framework to guide development of a full array of classroom and school-wide interventions to effectively address barriers to learning and teaching. The framework (see attached matrix) calls for organizing interventions across the five levels of student support and the following six critical elements that define CSSS
 - >Personalized Classroom Climate and Differentiated Classroom Practices.
 - >Prevention and Early Intervention
 - >Family Involvement and Participation
 - >Supports for Transition
 - >Community Outreach and Support
 - >Specialized Assistance and Crisis and Emergency Support
- (2) Enhancing the focus on CSSS in school improvement planning, implementation, and evaluation in ways that fully integrate with effort to improve instruction and management/governance
- (3) Reworking the infrastructure at school, district, and state department levels to fully develop the CSSS infrastructure and fully integrate it with mechanisms for planning, implementing, evaluating, and improving instruction and management/governance
- (4) Given that the function of the CSSS School Cadre is to ensure effective development, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of CSSS, it is essential that they have the training and resources to effectively assist school leaders in
 - (a) building the CSSS infrastructure in ways that ensure systemic development of programs and services,
 - (b) preparing a strategic plan for developing the CSSS component at the school in ways that fully integrate it with school improvement planning,
 - (c) mapping and analyzing the current status and major gaps in CSSS,
 - (d) analyzing appropriate data to assist the school in setting priorities,
 - (e) prioritizing next steps in developing the school's CSSS in ways that address the school-wide issues that interfere with student learning
- (5) Expanding the evaluation and accountability framework for CSSS to facilitate formative evaluation and to ensure data are gathered and reported on all facets of CSSS -- see the framework shared at the Institute.

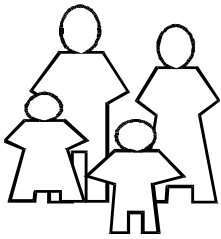
As we indicated at the Institute, we have a long-standing commitment to Hawai'i, and we want to do whatever we can to assist as schools across the state move forward in development a CSSS component. So, please let us know what you think would be most helpful at this time. (email: Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.ucla.edu)

We, of course, will share this follow-up document with Kathy Kawaguchi and through her with Pat Hamamoto.

Matrix for mapping, analyzing, and reviewing nature and scope of CSSS school improvement planning and implementation.

		LEVELS OF SUPPORT (Scope of Intervention)				
		(1) Basic Support (Systems for Promoting Healthy Development & Preventing Problems)	(2) Informal Additional Support	(3) Individualized Programs (Systems for Early Intervention – Early after problem onset)	(4) Specialized Services (Systems of Care)	(5) Intensive Services
CSSS Arenas of Content/ “Curriculum” (an enabling or learning supports component for addressing barriers to learning & promoting healthy development)	Personalized classroom climate and differentiated classroom practices					
	Prevention/early intervention					
	Support for transitions					
	Family/home participation					
	Specialized assistance and crisis/emergency support					
	Community outreach and support					
		Accommodations for differences & disabilities			Specialized assistance & other intensified interventions (e.g., Special Education & School-Based Behavioral Health)	

*Specific school-wide and classroom-based activities related to positive behavior support, “prereferral” interventions, Response to Interventions, and the eight components of CDC’s Coordinated School Health Program are embedded into the above six CSSS content/“curriculum” arenas.



School Improvement? . . . fully addressing barriers to learning and teaching is the next step!

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/schoolimprovement.pdf>

Like many of you, we are flooded each week with new reports analyzing public education and what needs to be done.

Most of these contain good ideas that are worth pursuing.

But, too often, the list of recommendations pays too little attention to the many well-known external and internal barriers to learning and teaching that stem from various societal, neighborhood, familial, school, and personal conditions. These factors clearly interfere with school success – contributing to active disengagement from classroom learning and leading to major achievement gaps and high dropout rates.

Given the data on how many students are not doing well, it is imperative and urgent for schools to place a high priority on *directly* addressing as many barriers to learning and teaching as feasible.

Why aren't current approaches sufficient?

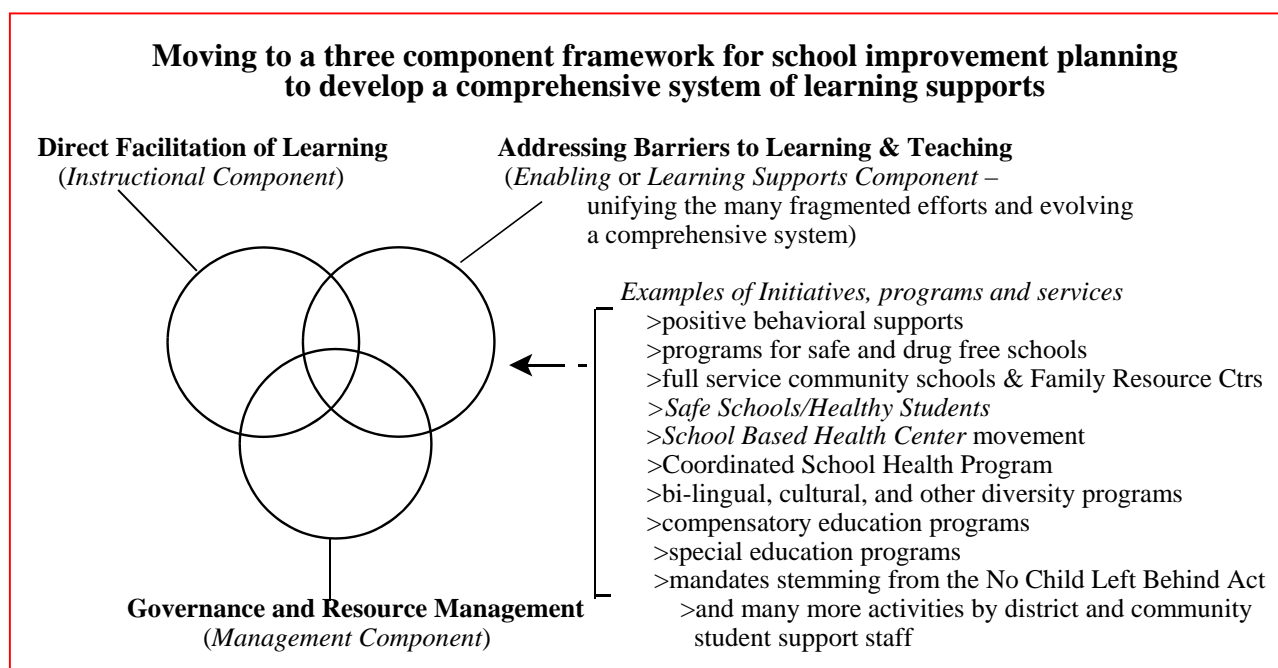
Most school improvement efforts *primarily* focus on enhancing instruction and school management/governance. Because of concerns for school safety and greater family and community involvement, schools also embed a few scattered programs and services to address these matters.

No one argues against the necessity of good instruction or good school management. The problem with the current state of affairs is that improved instruction alone does not address many barriers to learning and teaching. And, analyses indicate that the student “support” programs and services that schools do add to address such barriers are too limited, fragmented, and marginalized.

It is commonplace for those staffing such interventions to be organized and function in relative isolation of each other and other stakeholders. Furthermore, a great proportion of existing student support is oriented to discrete problems and over-relies on specialized services for individuals and small groups.

All this not only is expensive in terms of direct costs, it produces inappropriate redundancy and counter-productive competition and works against developing cohesive approaches to maximize results. Continued limited efficacy and cost effectiveness seem inevitable in the absence of significant systemic change.

The time is long overdue for escaping old ways of thinking about student supports. Leaders at all levels need to move school improvement efforts in substantively new directions for addressing barriers to learning and teaching. The foundation for doing so involves adopting a three component conceptual framework to guide development of a comprehensive enabling or learning supports component at every school. Such a framework is illustrated on the next page.



Addressing barriers to learning and teaching is an imperative and urgent agenda item

Student supports as they currently operate can't meet the needs of the many whose problems are affecting their learning at school. The realities are the problems are complex and complex problems require comprehensive solutions. School improvement and capacity building efforts (including pre and in service staff development) have yet to deal effectively with these matters.

Most school improvement plans do not effectively focus on enhancing student outcomes by *comprehensively* addressing barriers to learning and teaching. For many students, such a focus is essential to (re)engaging them in classroom instruction and enabling classroom learning.

And, the straight forward psychometric reality is that in schools where a large proportion of students encounter major barriers to learning, test score averages are unlikely to increase adequately until barriers are effectively addressed.

So, school policy makers and administrators must respond to the imperative for rebuilding supports for learning as an essential component in enabling *all* students to have an equal opportunity to learn at school.

This calls for ensuring schools develop the type of *Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* that enables them to

- reduce student dropout rates
- reduce teacher dropout rates
- re-engage students in classroom learning
- narrow the achievement gap
- eliminate the plateau effect related to efforts to improve achievement test performance
- reduce the growing list of schools designated as low performing
- minimize the degree to which high stakes testing is taking a toll on students

**School systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students.
But when the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge.**

Carnegie Task Force on Education

How does this fit with current efforts to improve schools?

Most policy makers and administrators know that good instruction delivered by highly qualified teachers alone cannot ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. As a result, most schools already are concerned about improving how a variety of barriers to learning and teaching are addressed.

Now is the time for schools to plan and develop more effective and comprehensive systems for directly dealing with factors that keep too many students from doing well at school. Such efforts can draw on pioneering work from across the country that is moving learning supports to a prominent place in improving schools and student outcomes.

What are learning supports?

Ultimately, all school interventions to address barriers to learning and teaching are about supporting learning. As defined for policy purposes, *learning supports* are the resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual supports intended to address barriers to learning and teaching in ways that enable all pupils to have an equal opportunity for success at school. To be most effective, learning supports should be woven into a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system of classroom and school-wide interventions and should be fully integrated with instructional efforts.

What's the specific focus in moving in new directions to enhance learning supports?

Moving in new directions means fully integrating into school improvement a systematic focus on how to:

- reframe current student support programs and services and redeploy the resources to develop a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive component to enable learning
- develop both in-classroom and school-wide approaches – including interventions to support transitions, increase home and community connections, enhance teachers' ability to respond to common learning and behavior problems, and respond to and prevent crises
- revamp district, school, and school-community infrastructures to weave resources together to enhance and evolve the learning supports system
- pursue school improvement and systemic change from the perspective of learning supports and the need to engage and re-engage students in classroom learning

Note: These matters are incorporated into recommendations for consideration by Congress as they discuss reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (e.g., No Child Left Behind)

>see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/nclbra.pdf>

>see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/congress%20letter.pdf>

and into proposed legislation in California

>see [http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/sb288\(2-15-07\).pdf](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/sb288(2-15-07).pdf)

**What the best and wisest parent wants for his [or her] own child,
that must the community want for all of its children.
Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely;
acted upon, it destroys our democracy.**

John Dewey, *The School and Society*, 1907

For specific frameworks and aids to guide school improvement planning for developing a comprehensive system of learning supports, see the “Rebuilding Tool Kit.”

Online for free and easy access, the tool kit provides frameworks and aids that can be readily adopted or adapted in designing, implementing, and sustaining a comprehensive component for learning supports at every school.

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

Included in the tool kit is an example of a proposal and answers to frequently asked questions about developing a comprehensive component for addressing barriers to learning.

>>*Prototype for a school district proposal to stakeholders about developing a comprehensive system of learning supports.* See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentsupport/toolkit/aidj.pdf>

>>*Q & A Notes*

>See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/q&a.pdf>

>See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/Q&ASchoolImprove.pdf>

For more on all this and on the *National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support*, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ndannouncement.htm>

The next decade must mark a turning point for how schools and communities address the problems of children and youth. Needed in particular are initiatives to reform and restructure how schools work to prevent and ameliorate the many learning, behavior, and emotional problems experienced by students. The end product must be schools where everyone – staff, students, families, and community stakeholders – feels supported. This will require reshaping the functions of all school personnel who have a role to play in addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. And, it requires fully integrating all this into school improvement planning.

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