

Summits Initiative:

New Directions for Student Support

Six State Regional

Kansas City

September 9, 2003

Attached is a brief summary from the Six State Regional held in Kansas City on September 9, 2003. This Summit was co-hosted as a collaboration with the Region VII Comprehensive Education Center (funded by the U.S. Department of Education). The six participating states were Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Missouri.

Interest in upcoming Regional and State Summits continues to grow. The next State Summit is in Wisconsin on November 5. Tentatively, the next Regional will be on the west coast. Various states are exploring possible dates for State Summits.

While all Summit information can be accessed at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> and many stakeholders already have received the introductory pamphlet on the initiative and some other documents, we enclose with this report several key documents for sharing with others. These are (1) the concept paper entitled *New Directions for Student Support*, (2) a document outlining *Guidelines for a Student Support Component*, (3) the Executive Summary of the Report from the National Summit, and (4) a recent news release.

Please feel free to copy and share any of these and refer colleagues to the information on the website (which includes examples of “Where it’s Happening” and a growing tool kit to facilitate the process.

And, please contact our Center at any time with ideas and information.

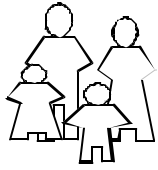
The Summits' Initiative is sponsored by the national Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project, Department of Psychology, UCLA.

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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.





Summits Initiative:

New Directions for Student Support

About the Summits Initiative

In response to widespread interest for mounting a strategic initiative for new directions for student support, the Summits Initiative began in October 2002 with a national Summit. The plan is to continue the initiative with a series of regional and state-wide summits. These will be designed to encourage advocacy for and initiation of *New Directions for Student Support* and will build a leadership network. The focus also will be on delineating specific action steps for getting from here to there. At an appropriate time, the leadership network will organize a policy makers' summit on student support to clarify new directions and encourage adoption of major recommendations.

Throughout the process, efforts across the country to move in new directions will be identified and showcased. And, technical assistance and training for localities and states moving in new directions will be provided. And, mutual support networks will be developed for sharing of effective practices, lessons learned, and data on progress.

The Summits' Initiative is sponsored by the national Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA* and co-sponsored by:

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Six State Regional Summit: New Directions for Student Support

Brief Summary

The third Regional Summit was held on September 9, 2003 in Kansas City, MO. Attached to this summary are lists of attendees and others in the six states who expressed interest in the Summits Initiative.

Objectives

As at the National Summit, the purpose of the Six State Regional was threefold:

(1) to clarify four fundamental problems that must be addressed in pursuing *New Directions for Student Support*

 C the policy problem

 C the intervention frameworks problem

 C the infrastructure problem

 C the systemic change problem

(2) to review the recommendations formulated at the National Summit¹

(3) to ratify and enhance next steps for the Summits Initiative.

In addition, a major focus of the afternoon was to clarify which of the six states might be ready to pursue a State Summit.

Six State Regional Summit Outcomes

Participants at the six state regional summit confirmed that the problems noted at the other regional summits were consistent with the experiences in their states. It was stressed that the current culture in their schools doesn't emphasize student support efforts as a high priority. Rather, discussion of student support tends to arise as an after thought.

When the need to improve student support is discussed, the tendency is to think in terms of enhancing coordination of "services" and connecting with community agencies. The focus is *not* on rethinking how a school's counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, and other student support staff could be used to greater effect. And, there is little discussion about mapping

¹Recommendations from the national summit are available online in an Executive Summary and full report (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>). Click on the green button on the homepage (labeled Summits for New Directions). Also online are a concept paper and resource aids compiled in a separate document entitled: *Rethinking Student Support to Enable Students to Learn and Schools to Teach*. The aids include examples of policy, infrastructure, and other resources that can be adapted locally.

resources or of ways existing resources might be redeployed and braided to enhance effectiveness and scope of impact.

The participants indicated general support for (a) the analyses and recommendations emerging from the National Summit and (b) an Outreach Campaign to ensure wider circulation for the recommendations and Guidelines for a Student Support Component.² It was emphasized that outreach must find ways to connect with superintendents, school boards, and legislators.

Participants agreed to begin identifying key leaders in their states who could help organize a state summit. Attendees from Kansas indicated the belief that their state is ready to organize a state summit planning team; Indiana was viewed as a likely candidate in the near future; and Illinois is on the cusp of readiness. While there are signs of interest in the other three states, more outreach is needed to enhance readiness. (See Appendix A for guidelines on moving forward with a state summit; also online.)

Discussion at the summit focused on the importance of

- C connecting new directions for student support with school improvement planning and formulating a strong, data based argument that student support is essential to improving student achievement and closing the achievement gap
- C using the Guidelines for a Student Support Component as a basis for developing a set of standards relevant to new directions for student support (and staff wellness) and doing so in ways that clarify for teachers, administrators, and policy makers how essential learning supports are to ensuring that students engage and re-engage in classroom learning
- C adding to the compilation of places where it's happening, enhancing the tool kit, and establishing a listserv for those interested in communicating regularly about new directions
- C identifying districts that have incorporated a major focus on data relevant to student support accountability into their plans for improving their information management systems
- C building district's capacity to facilitate the type of systemic changes necessary for overcoming resistance to and moving effectively in new directions for student support
- C involving leadership from the community and higher education in the initiative.

Finally, specific recommendations were offered about additional organizations that should be invited to co-sponsor the initiative.

²The materials for the Outreach Campaign and the Guidelines for a Student Support Component are also online.

Appendix A

~~~~~ **Do You Want a State Summit for *New Directions* for Student Support?** ~~~~~

If you want leaders in your state to focus on enhancing the impact for student support, here are some steps you can take:

1. Act as a Catalyst for Creating a State Summit

Are you in a position to contact high level leaders across the state to discuss the value of a State Summit and to establish a planning group? (Such a group should include high level personnel concerned with learning supports from the state department of education, large districts, state associations.) If not, contact one or more of the state/local associations who are concerned with student support and ask them to take the lead in establishing a State Summit.

- C In making contacts, it may be useful to share the Executive Summary of the report from the National Summit and/or the concept paper developed for the Summits' Initiative (*New Directions for Student Support*). Both these documents are online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>
- C Highlight that success in meeting the demands of the *No Child Left Behind Act* requires a focus on developing a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated approach for addressing barriers to student learning at every school.
- C Stress that accomplishing this requires rethinking student supports in ways that end the policy marginalization of student supports and current fragmentation, counterproductive competition, and over-specialization.

2. Suggest the Following as Guidelines for Summit Planning

- C Limit attendance to those who can lead in new directions, and take special steps to ensure that key decision makers attend.
- C Add influential co-sponsors from around the state to the existing list of associations and centers that have signed on as co-sponsors.
- C As pre-summit preparation, provide all participants with the agenda, Executive Summary for the report from the National Summit, and/or the concept paper developed for the Summits' Initiative. (Our Center can supply copies of these documents and help with mailings.)
- C Plan the Summit as a *strategic intervention* (not another conversation). The goal of the day is for leaders to leave with action plans for next steps and a high level of motivation to follow through. The day should be designed to (a) convey a clear statement of need for change, (b) present frameworks for moving forward, (c) provide examples of places that are moving toward major new directions for providing learning supports to address barriers to learning, (d) highlight ways that new directions will connect with and enhance other high profile efforts to improve outcomes for children and youth, and (e) facilitate discussion of and commitment to specific next action steps and mechanisms for ensuring actions are taken.
- C Plan to end the day with sharing next steps and the mechanisms for change at state and local levels.

3. Use Our Center as a Resource for Planning the Summit and for Post Summit Action

- C We will be pleased to be a resource as you consider a State Summit, and if you want, we can help with planning and implementation (including supplying documents, preparing and mailing invitations and meeting materials, developing a Summit report, and much more).

Let us know if you are interested in further exploring any of this. You can contact us by:
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