
about responding to the drop of math, reading scores

From the national Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA

Last week's press coverage cried out:

12th-grade drop of math, reading scores "truly a 5-alarm fire"

Here's how ASCD SmartBrief summarized it:

Education experts name the long-term decrease of foundational skills, increased absenteeism and reduced engagement as just a few of many likely reasons for the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores for the class of 2024: Only 22% of the seniors were proficient in math and 35% in reading -- the lowest levels in decades. Forty-five percent of the 12th-graders, who started high school during the COVID-19 pandemic, scored below basic in math and 32% below basic in reading, both more than in 2019.

The familiar solutions offered include better instruction, enhanced teacher quality and training, more detailed assessment of students' skills (especially for struggling students), and more accountability for adults in the system.

Of course, everyone notes the problem of low student engagement and chronic absenteeism and that factors outside of instruction likely play a role.

What's missing? A lack of serious attention to improving student/learning supports.

This seems astounding. Where are the voices who understand the role schools must play in addressing barriers to learning and teaching?

If there is a five alarm fire, the continuing marginalization of student/learning supports is unconscionable, and those who are proposing ways to fight the fire must treat such supports as a primary component of the solutions discussed.

To ensure this is the case, it is time to move school improvement policy and practice from a two to a three component framework and operationalize the third component. See

An Agenda for Improving Student/Learning Supports:
A Month by Month Guide for Systemic Change with Existing Resources
<https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/agendapaper.pdf>

Best wishes and be well,

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