Students & Schools: Moving Forward

Featured

Addressing Stress to Prevent Student and Staff Burnout

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Addressing Stress to Prevent Student and Staff Burnout

From: *Many Frustrated Teachers Say It's Not Burnout — It's Demoralization*

"I did get to a point where I saw that the kids were coming in and their love of reading and writing was just slowly going out the door. They were just coming in and sitting down, reluctantly opening up their books. But I felt the same way."

One thing teachers, students, and families agree on: Winter break can't come soon enough!

A school that wants to prevent burnout needs to be experienced by staff and students as a caring, learning environment in which there is a strong collegial and social support structure and meaningful ways to participate in decision making.

As with so many problems, it is easiest to view burnout as a personal condition. and, as in many other instances, this would be the least effective way to understand what must be done over the long-run to address the matter. The problem is multifaceted and complex. while stress-reduction activities often are prescribed, they are unlikely to be a sufficient remedy for the widespread draining of motivation.

Reducing environmental stressors and enhancing supports are more to the point, but again, alone these are insufficient strategies. The solution requires reculturing schools in ways that minimize the undermining and maximize the enhancement of intrinsic motivation. this involves policies and practices that ensure a daily focus on (1) promoting staff and student well-being and (2) addressing barriers to teaching and learning.

Four key elements are well-designed and implemented programs for
- inducting newcomers into the school culture in a welcoming and socially supportive way
- transforming working conditions by opening classroom doors and creating appropriate teams of staff and students who support, nurture, and learn from each other every day
- transforming inservice training into personalized staff development and support from first induction into a school through ongoing capacity building
- restructuring school governance to enable shared decision-making.

Reculturing Classrooms

Think in terms of strategies to engage student interest and attention, one-to-one or small group instruction (e.g., tutoring, cooperative learning groups), enhancing protective factors, and assets building (including use of curriculum-based approaches to promote social emotional development), as well as varied forms of special assistance.

All this expands definitions of good teaching to encompass practices that enable teachers to be effective with a wide range of students. From this perspective, good teaching involves fostering a caring context for learning; it encompasses development of a classroom infrastructure that

transforms a big classroom into a set of smaller units; it encompasses many strategies for preventing and addressing problems as soon as they arise.

Results: more positive feelings of choice, relatedness, and competence for all involved.

Our Center has a Quick Find on *Burnout prevention for staff and students*

Here are three examples of Center resources listed on that Quick Find:

>*Understanding and Minimizing Staff Burnout*

>*Improving Teacher Retention, Performance, and Student Outcomes*

>*Addressing Student Burnout*

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I try to take one day at a time, but sometimes several days attack me at once.

Jennifer Yane

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>Quick Links to Online Resources

>>**Social-emotional wellbeing of high school students**

>>**Under the Law: Grade retention and the law**

>>**Reimagining the roles of state and local education agencies**

>>**Associations of threat and deprivation-related childhood exposures with children's mental health and flourishing: The moderating role of family resilience**

>>**Implementing Effective School-Based Mental Health Services: A Guide for School Counselors**

>>**A tool-kit to help students from low socioeconomic status background: a school-based self-regulated learning intervention**

>>**How schools are implementing AI**

>>**A Toolkit for Safe, Ethical, and Equitable AI Integration**

>>**AI-Class Framework for Educators and Administrators**

>>**Black Families Define Protective Community Resources That Support Their Well-being**

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We want children to fall in love with reading in a way that opens doors to new ideas and connections to the world, While the digital options like tablets have their place, enjoying a physical book allows children to share their reading experience with a caregiver or friend who can prompt discussions and further learning. Every child deserves to be a reader. Jack Neafsey

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Here's what was discussed in the *Community of Practice* during November

>*Day after the election: How will you address the elephants in the room?*
>*Colleague asks for "real" examples of schools addressing prevention*
>*About Engaging students in active learning*
>*Demonstrating that mental health in schools is worth the investment*
>*Promoting positive mental health in schools*
>*Preventing truancy*
>*About Addressing Poverty: What's a School's Role?*
>*Thanksgiving includes thanks for public schools*

Note: *All community of practice editions contain Links to relevant shared resources*.

If you missed the resources and news in previous issues of the Community of Practice, see
https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

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>For more resources in general, see our website
https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

>For info on the status of upcoming conferences
https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm

>For info on webinars
https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm

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Engaging in learning environments outside of school can help raise a student's confidence and success, and public libraries are at the forefront of these kinds of educational opportunities... "It's great to see kids sharing their knowledge and strengths, learning new skills and working together as a group, just like they'll have to do in the workplace.

Jessica Hughes, King County Library System

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>Calls for grant proposals
https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm

> job and training opportunities
when available
https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm

>A Few News Stories (excerpted from various news sources)

Public libraries level the playing field for students and job seekers. King County Library System (WA) provide free, hands-on STEM learning opportunities and access to equipment such as 3D printers, recording studios, laser cutters and more. Community members can gain valuable skills at the library to set them up for success inside and outside of the classroom. KCLS offers free learning resources for students in grades K-12 through Study Zone. This volunteer-driven program includes tutoring, homework help, math clubs, programs to practice reading out loud and English language learning classes. College students and adult learners may access free online learning support, get assistance with résumés and cover letters, finish high school through the library, and find entrepreneurial training to launch a small business.

Schools celebrates year-round safety commitment. Beyond physical safety, Jefferson County School District (CO) is investing heavily in building a school culture that emphasizes mental and emotional well-being. A big part of that culture means that students have a trusted adult in the school they can go to with concerns if they've seen or heard something concerning. While the Safe2Tell platform is a valuable tool for anonymous reporting, face-to-face communication is a quicker and often more effective method of preventing incidents from escalating.

Sussex Tech partners to offer ESL classes for district parents. Sussex Tech Adult Education (DE) announced a new partnership with the Indian River School District to offer three English as a Second Language classes for the parents of students in the Indian River School District. Classes are staffed with Indian River employees to include three teachers, a paraprofessional, and a site coordinator. Sussex Tech Adult Education will oversee the program, curriculum, testing and enrollment, and manage attendance. This collaboration allows for the accommodation of an additional 60-75 students.

Employers show students local job opportunities. About 200 mostly high school sophomores and juniors throughout Vermilion County (IL) are on a two-day Tour of Industries with the goal of learning more about local jobs and career opportunities. This year's tours are not just manufacturers. There are also health care tours. Industry and area school district representatives as part of the Vermilion Advantage Workforce Education Committee goals

are to decrease local job openings, have a pipeline of skilled workers, increase graduation rates, have local businesses see growth and offer career pathway endorsements. Career exploration will begin with sixth-graders, and job shadow opportunities could occur in high school.

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From above news story

> *Sussex Tech Adult Education is thankful for Indian River's partnership as we work toward our common goal of equipping members of our community with the necessary tools to obtain better jobs and provide for their families.*

<div align="right">Kelly Whaley, director, Sussex Tech Adult Education</div>

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>Comments and sharing from the field

(1) Comments from a Principal

"We need to further analyze what type of poverty we are talking about in relation to students not being successful. Many Americans in the past only went to the 8th grade and grew up in poverty but still became some of the greatest citizens in our nation. They fought in WWII and came back to be productive and successful citizens contributing positively to their communities and our nation. Poverty is not a direct correlation to lack of education. I think understanding the culture of poverty is a better way to approach poverty....   We need to bring back accountability for parents and students. We should be instilling in students that it doesn't matter where they come from, it is where they are going. The past can't be a crutch for the future. Generations of Americans have proved this to be true. We need to teach overcoming adversity not wallowing in it. We need to teach resilience and perseverance. I am sure you remember the slogan, "Don't ask what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." It's time for students and parents to ask what they can do to engage in learning and what learning can do for them, not what we can do for learning. While it is our responsibility to provide a safe, supportive and caring environment, in addition to providing engaging learning experiences, learners must be motivated to learn. All of us as learners have had to have motivation to learn. Someone else can't do that for us. Poverty does not equate to students not being successful."

Center response: You are absolutely right in stating that Poverty does not equate to students not being successful. But, of course, money plays a big role in all our lives and in public education. And a lot of students growing up in poverty end up not doing well at school. These are other matters we have focused on for many years. See our Quick Finds on

> ***>Children and Poverty***

> ***>Funding and Financing of schools***

See, for example,

> ***>About Addressing Poverty: What's a School's Role?***

> ***>Inequitable Funding in Public Education***

(2) Responses to 10/31/24 email: ***Open letter to to Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching***

> >From a Principal: "I appreciate this open letter being shared. Your feedback is relevant and your perspective on what is needed for authentic transformation in schools is relevant, accurate and paramount to student growth and achievement. Thanks."

> >From a state department of education student support administrator: "Great response. One of the greatest challenges in education is policy 'experts' who don't get into the weeds of real school experience."

(3) Response to 11/7/24 mailing: ***Why Are Teachers Expected to Be Successful When They Aren't Receiving Essential Supports?***

    From a school board member: "Thank you for this list of information to support our professionals. Much of this is known but none of this is supported financially. Everything on this list requires support staff, not volunteers but PAID and trained support staff. The federal government and the Texas Legislature do little to financially support public education at a basic level much less a wish list. Also, where in this list is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide their student with the basic tools to be successful at school? I honor your contribution to the discussion."

To Listserv Participants

- **Please share this resource with others.** (Everyone has a stake in the future of public education and this is a critical time for action.)
- **Let us know what's going on** to improve how schools address barriers to learning & teaching and reengage disconnected students and families. (We can share the info with the over 130,000 on our listserv.)
- **For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu**
- **Looking for information?** (We usually can help.)
- **Have a suggestion for improving our efforts?** (We welcome your feedback.)

We look forward to hearing from you!

Send to **ltaylor@ucla.edu**

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS

Who Are We? Recently renamed the Center for MH in Schools and Student/Learning Supports, our national Center was established in 1995 under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project (which was established in 1986). We are part of the Department of Psychology at UCLA. The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

For more information about the Center and its many resources, go to the website at https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu or email Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.ucla.edu

Send info to share with others or ask for specific resources by email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu