

Policy Report

How Well Do State Legislatures Focus on Improving School Efforts to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching & Re-engage Disconnected Students?

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Contents

Introduction

Sample

Brief Analysis

Recommendations

Exhibit: Prototype for an Act to Add to the Education Code

Previous Legislative Efforts to Transform Student/Learning Supports

Exhibit: Lessons Learned

Can the Transformation Happen Without Legislation?

Concluding Comments

Appendices

A. Summary of Findings for States Sampled

B. Sample of 2018 Annual Summary Reports of State Legislation

Emphasizing Acts Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching

*The policy research was done as part of the
National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports.
see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

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How Well Do State Legislatures Focus on Improving School Efforts to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching & Re-engage Disconnected Students?

The federal *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) has stimulated states to revisit school improvement. Previously, our Center analyzed ESSA and the related consolidated state plans using the lens of how the federal legislation and state plans address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. Such analyses provide a critical look at school improvements meant to reduce the opportunity and achievement gaps. (Links to these previous analyses are at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>.)

The analyses of ESSA indicates the focus on student/learning supports continues to be ad hoc, piecemeal, and scattered. The analysis of state plans indicates poorly conceived approaches that continue the long-standing fragmentation and marginalization of efforts to improve how schools address barriers to learning and teaching. In general, the plans emphasize pursuing discrete problems with discrete interventions. In doing so, student and learning supports for addressing complex learning, behavior, and emotional concerns often are implemented redundantly, with counterproductive competition for sparse resources and poor outcomes. This tends to maintain the marginalization of student and learning supports with respect to the school improvement agenda.

To round out our analyses of state efforts to improve how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students, we have now surveyed state legislation. This report highlights what we found and offers some suggestions for legislative attention.

Sample

We focused on state legislative education committees. These committees tend to play three roles: (1) providing input to guide the legislature's passage of the state budget, (2) shaping specific legislation, and (3) holding public hearings and roundtables. Minimally, such committees are advocates for providing necessary resources so that all students in the state receive a basic education. More broadly, as stressed by New York State Assembly's education committee, some view their purpose as pursuing "legislation ensuring all students are provided the educational opportunities and resources they deserve [and] ... to fight for fair, equal and adequate funding for educational resources, especially in our state's most struggling schools, and ensure that our students will be college and career ready upon graduation."

The source material for this study is 2018 annual summary reports of legislation for preK through high school. We set out to sample 20 states randomly chosen. Of these, we found that 15 had online analyzable summaries prepared directly by legislatures or by external stakeholder bodies (e.g., state boards of education). After analyzing 10 of these summaries, our review of the other 5 indicated that further analyses would be redundant. The primary emphasis of these reports is on indicating legislation that was passed. Where a report provides information on bills that were introduced but not enacted or were vetoed, we include these data.

Brief Analysis

The picture that emerges from the states sampled is that every education committee focuses on a variety of valid and pressing matters. The volume of activity varies considerably. Some summaries simply list out the acts; other organize them into categories.

For example, California categorized the focus of its education bills as follows:

Accountability	Local Control Funding Formula/local Control
Alternative Education	and Accountability Plans
Attendance, Suspensions, and Expulsion	Pupil Health and Nutrition
Career & Technical Education & College Readiness	Pupil Performance and Assessment
Charter Schools, School Choice, and Transfers	Safe Schools, Pupil Rights, and Pupil Protection
District, School and State Governance	School Employees
Early Childhood Education	School Facilities
English Learners/migrant and American Indian Education	Special Education
Expanded Learning	Teaching Profession .
Financing Schools	Technology and Data
Instruction and Curriculum	Transportation
	Other Legislation

Across states, one sees a similar focus on a great many discrete matters. The volume of activity certainly keeps education committees busy despite the fact that, in any legislative session, a relatively small set of *major* education bills can be generated.

We take as given that it is critical for an education committee to ensure that the state's budget for existing education efforts is at least maintained and, where politically feasible, enhanced. We also recognize that many administrative, governance, and facilities measures require legislative attention. And, of course, a major concern is instruction and curriculum legislation.

While analyses of these matters certainly is warranted, we restricted our focus to those bills that had a relatively direct focus on improving how schools provide student/learning supports for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. Our primary emphasis was on whether attention was given to

- (a) ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching,
- (b) minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, and emotional problems,
- (c) developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.

Our analysis indicates that the various acts dealing with some aspect of addressing barriers to learning and teaching had a narrow and highly delineated focus and reflected a reactive concern for specific problems brought to the committee. For example, there are bills focused on use of corporal punishment, restraints, exclusion, suspensions and expulsions; penalties for hazing; prevention of sexual abuse and harassment, substance abuse, bullying; school safety drills; armed security guards; concerns related to foster youth, migrants, homeless students; students in special education, English learners, immigrant youth, native Americans, those in the juvenile justice system, pregnant and parenting students; concerns about school start time; funding for preschool (see Appendix A).

In this sample, the closest legislation focused on dealing with the fragmentation (but not the marginalization) of student supports was a California grant program (AB 2471 – the School-Based Pupil Support Services Program Act). However, as with previous efforts along these lines in the state and in other states, this act is for a limited set of schools and stresses improving traditional services rather than transforming how student/learning supports are provided. (See our Center's discussion of initiatives designed to integrate services – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/integpolicy.pdf>.)

A summary of the findings is given in Appendix A. A compilation of the bills is presented in Appendix B which can be accessed as a separate document at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/legis.pdf>. In general, the various bills reflect ad hoc efforts to deal with discrete matters (often immediate problems) usually advocated by a particular subgroup of stakeholders.

We do not mean to suggest that any of what is addressed in current legislation is irrelevant. Much of the focus is on important matters. Our concerns are that the body of legislation does not reflect a broad vision for school improvement nor an appreciation of the critical role addressing barriers to learning plays in enhancing equity for success at school and beyond. These concerns stem from

- the absence of legislation designed to (a) end the *marginalization* of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching or (b) even to deal with the *fragmented* approach to policy making and related interventions for improving how schools prevent and correct learning, behavior, and emotional problems
- the lack of attention paid to legislating policy to stimulate enhancement of the *effectiveness* of student/learning supports.

Our analysis of state legislation, combined with our previous analyses of prevailing state and local school improvement policy, plans, and practices, highlights the degree to which existing student/learning supports (and the personnel providing such supports) are marginalized and fragmented. As long as this is the case, it seems unlikely that schools will play a sufficient role in reducing the opportunity and achievement gaps.

Current Efforts Continue the Legislative Trend to Pursue Narrow and Highly Delineated Acts

Here are three examples:

Michigan – In 2018, the state Legislature approved \$5 million for the Department of Health and Human Services to provide 60 schools \$100,000 a year to staff and equip a mental health specialist.

Delaware – In January, 2019, Gov. John Carney proposed \$60 million for a Opportunity Funding initiative that would give schools additional funds for each low-income and English learner student over the course of three years. In June, he proposed giving an additional \$15 million for mental health and reading supports in high-needs schools.

Arizona – The state has decided to invest \$60 million over the next three years for more school counselors and resource officers.

Time to Stop Thinking the Problem is Just About Unfunded Mandates and Finding Time for Implementation

The following article provides another current example of ad hoc and piecemeal legislation.

Note, however, that the analysis only stresses insufficient funds and time as the resulting problems for schools. And the answer to the problem is seen as reducing the number of legislation acts and especially unfunded mandates.

In contrast, our several analyses underscore the need for expanding school improvement policy and practices in ways that can unify approaches for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and develop them into a comprehensive and equitable system of student/learning supports.

Excerpts from June 22, 2019 article in the *Tribune Star* by Sue Loughlin.

<https://www.tribstar.com/news/local%e2%80%94news/schools-struggle-with-unfunded-mandates/article%e2%80%9494054f37f5-a786-5787-ae06-18fb7696da9a.html>

By law, Indiana teachers require regular training in such areas as suicide prevention, child abuse and neglect, CPR, bullying prevention and human trafficking. In the 2019 General Assembly, a new law passed, which takes effect July 1, 2020, that requires seizure awareness training for all employees who have direct, ongoing contact with children.

While the various training requirements address important needs, the state laws often are passed without added resources to pay for the training or programs required, something often referred to as “unfunded mandates.”

Rick Stevens, Vigo County School Corp. assistant director of student services, sees the impact. The training requirements do address important issues and needs, he said. But with the requirements ever increasing, “The two issues we struggle with are paying for the programs ... and finding the time to implement them,” he said. “I think we are getting to a point where we are saturated with mandated programs.” ...

The Indiana School Boards Association is concerned about the increase in unfunded mandates and a spike in new laws impacting public education. ... In 2019, the Indiana General Assembly passed 53 new laws, including the state budget, that impact public education. ... During the 2018 short session, the Legislature passed 21 new laws impacting public education. ... In addition to state laws, schools also must abide by administrative rules adopted by the state Board of Education as well as laws and regulations at the federal level. ...

What’s the answer to increasing mandates? ... In the last legislative session, HEA 1400 requested an education summer study committee — over a period of years — look at unfunded mandates and required teacher training “and all of these items that have just piled up over the years,” said Mike Brown, Indiana Department of Education director of legislative affairs. However, when the legislative council met a few weeks ago, that topic was not assigned to a summer study committee, Brown said.

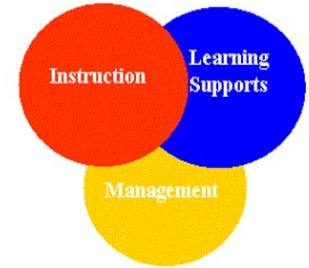
Still, he believes the law shows legislators realize it needs to be addressed. “They realize that one item here or there, yeah, OK, we can get that through, but if you go back over the number of mandates we’ve placed on schools over the past 10 years, obviously it adds up,” Brown said. ...

Adam Baker, IDOE press secretary, [states]: “I think we have kind of reached the point ... where everyone is realizing — wait a minute. We’ve been asking all of these things for so many years, they have kind of compounded on each other.”

***The following recommendations are offered as
steps legislatures can take toward these ends.***

Recommendations

- (1) A critical step toward guiding school improvement efforts to focus more effectively on addressing barriers to learning and teaching would be to enact state legislation that reframes school improvement from a two to a three component approach. That is, the need is for a policy that makes efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching a primary component of school improvement that is treated as essential and fully integrated with the instructional and management/governance components.*



(A prototype for such legislation is offered in Exhibit A)

- (2) Short of that, we recommend that legislatures hold hearings on the marginalization of policy and practices that address barriers to learning and teaching since these are among the major deterrents to enhancing equity of opportunity for student success.
- (3) Minimally, we suggest that concerned legislators share this report with colleagues and staff to stimulate discussion of the need for framing future legislation within a broad vision for school improvement and an appreciation of the critical role addressing barriers to learning plays in enhancing equity for success at school and beyond.

*See the following brief documents for details:

- > *School Improvement Policy Needs to Move from a Two to a Three Component Guiding Framework* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/why3comp.pdf>
- > *Prototype Guide for Reframing Fragmented Student and Learning Supports into a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable Learning Supports System* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/reframing.pdf>

Exhibit A

Prototype for an Act to Add to the Education Code

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching: Ensuring a Three Component Approach to School Improvement

Existing law establishes various educational programs for pupils in elementary, middle, and high school to be administered by the State Department of Education.

This bill would require that districts institutionalize and develop a cohesive and comprehensive component for addressing barriers to learning and teaching. The component is to be developed as the third primary and essential facet of school improvement and fully integrated with the existing instructional and management/governance components.

The third component is to be designed in ways that end the fragmentation and marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching by focusing schools on the need to (1) unify all student/learning supports, (2) institutionalize a leadership infrastructure for developing, over time, a comprehensive and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching, and (3) weave together available school, home, and community resources to build and sustain the system.

The bill would require the State Department of Education to adopt regulations and guidelines for districts to (1) adopt the third component as a primary and essential facet of school improvement and (2) assist schools in uniting and consolidating all efforts to prevent and minimize the impact of problems interfering with learning and teaching.

To these ends, the bill would require each elementary, middle, and high school to develop a school plan based on State Department of Education guidelines. The bill would require school plans for addressing barriers to learning and teaching to include (1) multi-tiered continuum of integrated intervention subsystems that interweave school-community-home resources to promote healthy development, prevent problems, respond quickly when problems arise, and play an appropriate role in helping students with severe and chronic problems and (2) a circumscribed set of specific arenas for supportive interventions that enhance the capacity of each school to provide in-classroom supports to enable learning, provide supports for transition concerns confronting pupils and their families, enhance home involvement, respond to and prevent crises, outreach to increase community engagement, and provide special assistance to students and families.

By imposing additional duties on school districts, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program. Therefore, the state will reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state.

Previous Legislative Efforts to Transform Student/Learning Supports

Both Hawai'i and California developed legislation to unify and develop a comprehensive system of learning supports.

Hawai'i legislation. In 1999, Hawai'i passed *A Bill for an Act Relating to a Comprehensive Student Support System*. The act “requires the department of education to establish a comprehensive student support system (CSSS) in all schools to create a school environment in which every student is cared for and respected” (see https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session1999/bills/sb519_.htm).

After passage, the State Department of Education immediately adopted student supports as a third primary and essential component of school improvement and proceeded to implement the new system at schools. The process went well until there was a state superintendent change.

As per the legislation, the term Comprehensive Student Support System (CSSS) continues to be used by the department and schools throughout the state, but over ensuing years, CSSS has been narrowed in nature and scope. As currently described by the department, “Schools use the Comprehensive Student Support System to provide proactive, positive, customized and timely interventions, services and support — compassionately — so all students will succeed to their greatest potential.” The major facets of CSSS are listed as (a) high quality instructional leadership, (b) curriculum, instruction and assessment, and (c) a comprehensive student supports continuum (<http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/StudentLearning/Supports/Pages/home.aspx>).

California legislation. In 2007, A bill (SB 288) was introduced to add Chapter 6.2 to the Education Code establishing a *Comprehensive Learning Support System*. (See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/wheresithappening/calegislation.pdf>)

In introducing the bill, the sponsor stated: “In order for all students to have equal opportunity for success, we not only need to provide books and teachers but also the necessary and adequate support resources. Numerous studies show that when schools have a comprehensive plan to offer students physical, social, emotional, and intellectual support, student success rate in school and later in life dramatically increases.” The legislation defines learning supports as “the resources, strategies, and practices that ... enable all pupils to have an equal opportunity for success at school. To accomplish this goal, a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive learning support system should be integrated with instructional efforts and interventions provided in classrooms and schoolwide to address barriers to learning and teaching.”

The bill was to establish a Comprehensive Pupil Learning Support System (CPLSS) pilot program in five school districts. While the initial draft stressed the system was to be implemented through redeployment of already allocated resources, the state department of education insisted on a rewrite that added significant new funds for department staff. Given the tight state budget at the time, the bill was killed by the Appropriation Committee.

In recent years, the department of education has adopted the term “learning supports” but continues to fragment and marginalize efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching. (See the department’s website display of Learning Supports <https://www.cde.ca.gov/l/>.)

See Exhibit B for lessons learned about legislating substantial and sustainable school changes.

Exhibit B

Lessons Learned About Developing Legislation to Transform Student/Learning Supports

Legislation to move from a two to a three component framework for school improvement should emphasize that the third component is to be a primary and essential feature of school improvement and fully integrated into all codes and regulations on a par with efforts to improve instruction and management/governance.

Note: Hopefully, such legislation reflects the input of the boards of education, education agency leadership, and other key stakeholders (e.g., power brokers, associations, guilds, unions).

Legislation designed to unify student/learning supports and develop them into a comprehensive and equitable learning support system should address matters related to (a) system change, (b) implementation of the new system, and (c) sustainability of the system transformation.

Note: Substantive and sustainable system changes requires resources not only for direct implementation, but critically for the processes involved in facilitating the transformation. Given that budgets for schools are always tight, this means identifying ways to redeploy, realign, and pull together existing resources and weave them together. Of course, any new funds that can be mustered (including extra-mural supports) can enhance efforts as long as the added resources support establishment of the unified, comprehensive, and equitable system or learning supports.

Effective *system change, implementation, and sustainability* require regulations that specify

- creating readiness among a critical mass of key stakeholders in settings where changes are to be introduced
- developing a design document delineating a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports
- developing a multi-year strategic plan for system changes, implementation, and sustainability
- developing a set of standards and formative evaluation indicators to monitor progress (see example at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/commcore.pdf>)
- expanding school accountability to include direct indicators related to addressing barriers to learning and teaching (see prototype at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/account.pdf>)
- reworking SEA, LEA, and school level daily operational infrastructures to support substantive development, ongoing improvement, and sustainability of the transformed system (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkitb3.htm>)
- redeploying, realigning, and weaving together school and community resources already allocated for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/fundinginteg.pdf>)

Can the Transformation Happen Without Legislation?

Even without legislation, SEAs, LEAs, and schools have been attracted to the idea of unifying and then developing a comprehensive and equitable system of learning supports. Unfortunately, after superintendent and principal changes, designed changes have faded away. This trend underscores the importance of legislative action.

Iowa, Louisiana, and Alabama provide examples of states that developed designs for comprehensive systems of learning supports and proceeded with large-scale implementations. While the advances were allowed to lapse, we learned invaluable lessons that are outlined in resources developed by the Center (see examples listed at the end of this report).

Iowa. In 2003, the state's department of education working with the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development prepared a design for *Enhancing Iowa's Systems of Supports ...* (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/iowasystemofsupport.pdf>). The stated aim was to "develop, integrate, and oversee cross-agency implementation of a comprehensive system of supports to promote healthy development and address barriers to learning, thereby ensuring that all children and youth have an equal opportunity to succeed in school and in life."

Remnants of the design are seen in the work of the Great Prairie Area Educational Agency (see <https://www.gpaea.org/services/learning-supports/>) and the Cedar Rapids Community School District (see <http://www.cr.k12.ia.us/departments-services/learning-supports/>).

Louisiana. In 2009, the state's department of education worked statewide with stakeholders to develop a design for a Comprehensive Learning Supports System (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/brochure.pdf>). A learning supports system was defined as "...a process by which schools, families and communities facilitate learning by alleviating barriers, both external and internal, that can interfere with learning and teaching." Over a two year period, steps were taken to implement the design with the goal of going to scale. Then, there was a superintendent change, after which only the Grant Parish kept on working to implement the design (see the 2017 letter from the parish superintendent <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/grantparish2017.pdf>).

Alabama. In 2013, under a new state superintendent, the department of education moved toward a comprehensive system of learning supports as an innovative approach to addressing barriers to teaching and learning. An inclusive process was used to develop a design document (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/aladesign.pdf>). Ambitious plans were formulated to move rapidly to implement the design in every district as part of the superintendent's strategic Plan 2020 for improving academic outcomes for all students. The state employed a cohort model, and self-selecting districts received coaching to implement the approach in ongoing, multi-year phases. As of 2017, 69 districts had joined one of the 5 cohorts of districts for training.

After a superintendent change and some personnel problems in 2018, the status of the initiative devolved. Available indications are that the department is once again fragmenting and marginalizing student/learning supports.

For other examples of pioneering and trailblazing efforts across the country, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing.htm>.

Concluding Comments

At the state level, legislating systemic change in schools is controversial. However, it is clear that current legislative action at all levels is maintaining and probably exacerbating the fragmentation and marginalization that pervades school efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

Ending the marginalization and fragmentation of student/learning supports is essential to enhancing equity of opportunity for success at school and beyond. Enhancing equity of opportunity is essential for reducing the opportunity and achievement gaps. Transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to promoting whole child development and enhancing school climate.

Without legislation focused on (a) unifying efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and (b) developing such interventions in a comprehensive and equitable system, it is unlikely that equity of opportunity at schools will be significantly achieved. And while such legislation inevitably will encompass measures to ensure accountable compliance, its main emphasis needs to be on providing guidance and capacity building support for system development, implementation, and sustainability. To do less is to maintain an extremely unsatisfactory status quo.

Examples of Resources Developed to Aid in Establishing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Learning Supports

To aid SEAs, LEAs, and schools, we have organized system development resources into a toolkit <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>.

Usually, the move to a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports begins with a small group who recognize the need to transform student/learning supports and champion the change. To garner support and develop a proposal, it is essential to initiate discussions with stakeholders who will be affected by the changes (including those wanting change and those who don't). Resources to aid at this stage are included in Section A of the toolkit: Overview, Q &A, and Initiating the Work – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaidsA.htm>.

The process continues with designing and planning the changes. Aids for this work are in Section B of the toolkit – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaidsB.htm>.

Section C provides a range of resources for phasing in the new system – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaidsC.htm>.

Because of the many problems that arise in making major system changes, Section D provides some introductory resources for planning and implementing essential systemic changes and for using change agents and coaches to facilitate and sustain transformative changes – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaidsD.htm>.

Among the specific resources that can be accessed through the Center's System Change Toolkit or the Center's resource catalogue are:

>*First Steps at State Ed Agencies and School Districts in Developing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports as an Essential Component for School Improvement & Student Success*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/firststeps.pdf>

>*Developing a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: First Steps for Superintendents Who Want to Get Started* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/superstart.pdf>

>*Guide for Planning Coaching for SEAs/LEAs to Establish a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/coaching.pdf>

>*Standards for a Learning Supports Component* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/commcore.pdf>

>*Expanding the Accountability Framework for Schools*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/account.pdf>

>*Aids for Reworking Leadership Infrastructure* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkitb3.htm>

>*About ESSA Funding and Funding Integration*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/fundinginteg.pdf>

>*Enhancing a School Board's Focus on Addressing Barriers to Learning & Teaching*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/schoolboardfocus.pdf>

For more in-depth discussions, see:

>*Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*

>*Improving School Improvement*

Both these resources can be accessed at

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Appendix A

Summary of Findings for States Sampled

New York

Of 28 education acts and amendments finally introduced, 15 became law.

Of the eleven we have listed as arguably most focused on matters affecting public school student/learning supports staff and interventions, eight became law. All eleven primarily addressed administrative/technical concerns (salaries, reporting, taxes, compliance concerns, pilot program time extension, inclusion in graduation and related activities); three were related to special education concerns.

[Note that legislation related to the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) was vetoed. Even if it had not been vetoed, BOCES membership is not currently available to the “Big Five” city school districts: New York City, Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers, and Syracuse so any legislation that is passed related to BOCES does not apply to these districts.]

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

Washington State

Of 18 bills passed by the legislature, eight have content of direct relevance to how public schools address students experiencing barriers to learning. These eight include acts to

- >improve students' mental health by enhancing nonacademic professional services
- >promote student health and readiness through meal and nutrition programs
- >improve the free and reduced-price meals program
- >review existing curricula related to the prevention of sexual abuse of students
- >define the process for best interest determinations of students in out-of-home care
- >expand statewide career and technical education course equivalency options
- >create a pilot project for tribal compact schools
- >define dyslexia as a specific learning disability and requiring early screening for dyslexia

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

Tennessee

Of the 75 bills reported, 33 arguably have direct relevance to problems that can interfere with learning and teaching. To facilitate our analysis, we categorized the acts as follows:

School Safety & Health

- School safety drills
- Creates the Class C misdemeanor criminal offense of hazing
- Second Amendment Protections Act- Constitutional Carry
- Notification of unsafe drinking water at schools

Assessment & Student Information

- Use of TNReady assessments for student growth data in teacher evaluations
- Requirements for requests for eligible student information
- Payment for college entrance exams for students who want to take the exam a second time

- Eleventh grade assessments
- Alterations to a student's transcript
- State assessments in grades 3-8 and end of course examinations in high school
- End-of-course examinations for grades 9-12 prohibited

Reports, Guidelines, & Requirements

- Report on traineeships and fellowships for students in training programs for the education of students with disabilities
- Reports on LEA's use of corporal punishment
- Guidelines for employers of work-based learning students
- Requirements for recovery high schools
- Reduces resident requirements for grant students
- Extending of career and technical education (CTE) class sizes

Instruction

- Family life curriculum - child sexual abuse prevention instruction
- Use of excess instructional time
- Education of children in state custody
- Individualized implementation plans for RTI² education

Special Populations/Problems

- Tennessee Hunger-Free Students Act
- Funding for educational facilities that are recipients of juvenile justice prevention grants
- Special education services association - charter schools
- Prohibits the use of corporal punishment against a student with an IEP
- Expands the offense of female genital mutilation

Interventions for Priority School

- Shared governance model as an intervention strategy for priority schools
- Public charter school identified as a priority school to develop a school improvement plan

Personnel Matters

- Suspension or revocation of professional licensure for defaulting on a student loan
- Teacher's bill of rights
- Low performing teachers and student assignment
- Expelling of student for offenses committed against teacher or LEA employee

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

Louisiana

Of the 70 bills reported, 26 have some direct relevance to this analysis:

- >3 related to special education
- >2 related to commissions and advisory councils
- >penalties for hazing
- >handgun rules and permission for students to wear bullet-resistant backpacks
- >investigation, reporting, and required mental health evaluations related to threats of violence or terrorism
- >Updates terminology, regulations, citations, damages
- >providing information about
 - >>responses to emergencies
 - >>reporting potential threats to school safety
 - >>immunizations
 - >>parent rights and notifications
- >reporting child abuse and neglect
- >requirement of sexual harassment policies and training
- >providing instruction about
 - >>shaken baby syndrome
 - >>personal financial management
- >literacy screening
- >access to behavioral health services providers in schools

- >potential support for foster care students still in school after age 18
- >creation of an education savings program

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

Colorado

Ten bills were passed pertaining to early childhood education, school safety, workforce readiness programs in schools, and incentive programs for teachers; eight were relevant to our analysis.

Early Childhood Education

House Bill 18-1393 makes changes to state law regarding the implementation of the Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act.

House Bill 18-1134, a child must satisfy certain eligibility requirements for a district to use funding under the Colorado Preschool Program to enroll that child in the district's existing full-day kindergarten program.

School Safety

Senate Bill 18-269 creates the School Security Disbursement Program in the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to provide funding to local education providers to improve security within public schools.

Senate Bill 18-229 allows a student in an educator preparation program who is seeking field experience to request that the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) process a fingerprint-based criminal history record check for the student when he or she seeks field experiences in a public school

Senate Bill 18-151 requires CDE to research approaches, policies, and practices in other states related to bullying prevention and education.

Workforce Readiness

House Bill 18-1266 extends the Career Development Success Program, created in 2016, through September 1, 2024. The program provides financial incentives for school districts and charter schools that encourage high school students to complete qualified industry credential programs, internships, residencies, construction pre-apprenticeship, or apprenticeship programs or qualified Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

Teacher Programs and Incentives

House Bill 18-1130 changes the experience requirement for professional teacher and special services licenses for teachers coming to Colorado Education from other states.

Senate Bill 18-085 increases the number of available financial stipends from 20 to 60 for teachers in rural schools or school districts who are seeking certification as a national board certified teacher or concurrent enrollment teacher.

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

Alabama

Of the 37 legislative actions, only the following focused specifically on matters relevant to this analysis.

HB0009 Youth Sports Act-coach Safety Act.

HB0179 Supplemental Appropriation - ETF Advancement & Technology Fund.

HB0366 Cyber Bullying - Jamari Terrell Williams Act.

SB0026 Annalyn's Law - Juvenile Sex Offenders - Local Board Policy.

SB0028 Education Employees Due Process - Sexual Crimes.

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

Arizona

Of 44 bill enacted, only the following focused specifically on matters relevant to this analysis.

- HB 2085 (Chapter 78) schools; emergency epinephrine admin
- HB 2086 (Chapter 197) schools; diabetes management policies; pharmacists
- HB 2088 (Chapter 292) pupils; concussions; parental notification
- HB 2323 (Chapter 183) schools; inhalers; contracted nurses
- HB 2657 (Chapter 329) interscholastic activities; health dangers; information

One other was focused on illegal substances education was vetoed.

Two others were introduced but not enacted:

- HB 2343 schools; child abuse hotline
- SB 1138 county jail education programs; age

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

California

Of 166 bills listed across categories by the assembly, there was duplication (some bills appeared in more than one category). Fifty-eight separate bills focused on matters judged especially relevant to this analysis. As categorized by the legislature, the 58 bills covered a wide range of specific concerns related to:

Alternative Education

- >Education finance: Opportunity Youth Reengagement Program

Attendance, Suspensions, and Expulsion

- >Pupil attendance: school start time.
- >Pupil discipline: suspensions and expulsions: willful defiance.

Early Childhood

- (3 relevant bills listed -- e.g., California state preschool programs: general child care and development programs: mental health consultation services: adjustment factors)

English Learners/migrant and American Indian Education

- (5 relevant bills listed -- e.g., Education finance: local control funding formula: unduplicated pupils: foster youth: Indian tribe placement; Pupil instruction: coursework and graduation requirements: currently migratory children)

Expanded Learning

- >After school programs: substance use prevention: funding: cannabis revenue.
- >After School Education and Safety Program
- (Several others listed, but covered in other categories)

Financing Schools

- (Covered in other categories)

Instruction and Curriculum

- >Pupil instruction: human trafficking: use of social media and mobile device applications;
- >Pupil instruction: sexual health education: sexually suggestive or sexually explicit materials

>Pupil instruction: economics: completion of applications for student financial aid

Pupil Health and Nutrition

(18 relevant bills listed -- only one focuses on supporting support services development -- AB 2471 - *School-Based Pupil Support Services Program Act*. This is a grant program for defined schools and stresses improving traditional services rather than transforming how student/learning supports are provided)

Pupil Performance and Assessment

>Education finance: local control funding formula: supplemental grants: lowest performing pupil subgroup or subgroups

Safe Schools, Pupil Rights, and Pupil Protection

(10 relevant bills listed – e.g., School safety: armed security guards and school resource officers; Pupil rights: pregnant and parenting pupils; School safety: bullying; Pupil discipline: restraint and seclusion)

Special Education

(6 unduplicated bills listed – e.g., Individuals with disabilities: special education and related services: interagency agreements; Special education: due process hearings: extension of hearings; Special education programs: Family Empowerment Centers on Disability; Special educ. funding)

Teaching Profession

>Teachers: in-service training: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning pupil resources.

>Special education: teachers: grant program.

>School districts: certificated employees: dismissal or suspension proceedings: testimony of child witnesses: pupil information.

Other

>Adult Education Block Grant Program: immigration integration.

>Literacy education: pupils from extremely low income communities (grants)

>Taxation: tax-defaulted property sales.

>Retroactive grant of high school diplomas: deported pupils.

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

Connecticut

Of 63 major bills listed by the assembly, 21 focused on matters judged especially relevant to this analysis. As categorized by the legislature, the 21 bills covered specific concerns related to:

Curriculum and Instruction

>Opioid Use Instruction Requirement

Early Childhood

>OEC Funds for Service-Delivery Pilots and Program Evaluation

>School Readiness Grant Funds Allowed for Evaluation and Administration

Grants and Funding

>School Readiness Grants

>School Security Grants

Health and Safety

>Adult Education Teachers and Background Checks

>Exclusionary Time Out

>Fingerprinting and Criminal History Check Task Force

>Life-Threatening Food Allergies in Schools

>Oral Health Assessments

>School-Based Health Center (SBHC) Advisory Committee

>School Bus Driver Training for Allergic Reactions

- >Sports Helmet Safety Working Group
- >Suspended Bus Driver Report Check

Special Education

- >Contracts Required for Private Special Education Providers
- >Special Education Services Documentation
- >Student Data Privacy and Special Education
- >Truancy Interventions for Students with Disabilities

Teachers and Other Education

- >Revoking, Suspending, or Placing a Teacher’s Credential on Probation
- >School Social Workers
- >Timeframe for Mandated Reporters of Abuse and Neglect

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

Oregon

Of 19 bills listed by the legislature, 5 focused on matters judged especially relevant to this analysis.

- >Relating to Developmental Delays
- >Relating to The Juvenile Justice Information System
- >Relating to School Sexual Harassment Policies
- >Relating to Children (Clarifies provisions related to child abuse investigations conducted on school premises and modifies definitions of "adult," "community program," and "sexual abuse" for purpose of reporting abuse of adults with mental illness or development disabilities.)
- >Relating to Concussion Sustained by Youth

Did any of the school improvement legislation focus on

	Yes	No
ending the marginalization of efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching?		X
minimizing fragmentation of interventions for learning, behavior, & emotional problems?		X
developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports?		X

NOTE: Appendix B is provided as a separate document at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/legis.pdf>