

Enhancing Home Involvement is a Focus all Efforts to Improve Student/Learning Supports

Since primary child caretakers differ, our Center generally uses the term home involvement. See *Home Involvement, Engagement, and re-engagement in schooling*.

When we focus on enhancing family involvement with schools, we think about parents and also about students being raised primarily by other family members (e.g., grandparents, aunts, older siblings), as well as “nannies” and the agencies concerned with foster care, juvenile justice, and the homeless. All these child/youth caretakers have a stake in how schools play a role in addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

Over the years, the agenda for home involvement in schooling has reflected multiple aims and contrasting but not necessarily mutually exclusive rationales. For example, parents may be viewed as consumers, citizens, or both. At the root of the matter are debates about the role of schools as political and socialization agents, as a marketplace, and as a source of helping, especially for those with specific needs.

Despite the long-standing call by policy makers and researchers for schools to enhance parent involvement, the challenges in doing so have confounded many. Enhancing home involvement requires greater attention to the full range of caretakers. Interventions include schoolwide and classroom-based efforts designed to (a) enhance family problem solving capabilities and strengthen the home situation, (b) increase support for student development, learning, and well-being, and (c) strengthen schools and the community. The emphasis in designing involvement interventions is on activity that is mutually beneficial, equitable, and engaging. Ultimately, enhancing home involvement requires establishing authentic collaborations, countering inherent inequities in power and resources, and empowering homes and communities, especially in impoverished neighborhoods.

Below are examples of resources developed as part of our work on enhancing home involvement with schools.

- >*Engaging the Strengths of Families, Youth, and Communities in Rebuilding Learning Supports*
- >*Home Involvement in Schooling: A Self-Study Survey*
- >*Enhancing Family Engagement and Re-engagement*
- >*Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement*
- >*The Role of School and Home in Promoting Student Engagement*
- >*Volunteers as an Invaluable Resource*
- >*Helping with homework*
- >*School-Based Mutual Support Groups*
- >*Overparenting as a Barrier to Development, Learning, and Well-being*

More on all this can be accessed from our Center’s online clearinghouse Quick Finds. For example, see

- >*Parent/Home Involvement and Engagement in Schools*
- >*Parenting Skills and Parenting Education*
- >*Student and Family Assistance*

Pioneering Examples of State and District Work on Transforming Student/Learning Supports are Documented in

> *Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Lessons Learned from Trailblazing and Pioneer Initiatives*

These examples underscore how essential student and learning support leadership is for such work. Unfortunately, we have found that places that moved forward to transform student/learning supports ended their transformative efforts as superintendents changed. When new superintendents arrive, sustaining promising system changes requires leaders who recognize the importance and support their ongoing development and implementation. (See *Leadership Changes: Minimizing the Downside* .)

Recently, we reported major lessons we have learned about sustaining system changes. See

> *Transforming Student/Learning Supports & Enhancing Equity of Opportunity: A Journey of Lessons Learned*

And, of course, a fundamental lesson learned is that those involved in making systemic change, must pay closer attention to implementation science. See

> *Implementation Science and School Improvement*

For system change examples and tools related to transforming existing student supports into a unified, comprehensive, equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching, see the Center's *System Change Toolkit*.

And there is much more available

The above are just a few examples of the many free resources developed by our Center. For more from us and from a variety of other sources, our online Clearinghouse menu offers over 130 Quick Find topics. <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/quicksearch.htm>

We also have put online for free and easy access the following three books:

> *Improving School Improvement*

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

> *Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*