

School-Community Collaboration is Essential to Improving Student/Learning Supports

Schools and the community in which they reside deal with multiple, interrelated concerns – poverty, child development, literacy, violence, safety, substance abuse, housing, employment. School and neighborhood improvements are mutually enhanced through effective school-community collaboration. See *[Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement](#)*

Potent school-community collaboration requires multifaceted connections among a wide range of resources. The goal is to maximize mutual benefits, including better student progress, positive socialization of the young, higher staff morale, improved use of resources, an enhanced sense of community, community development, and more.

While it is relatively simple to make informal linkages, major long-term formal working relationships are driven by a comprehensive vision about the shared role schools, communities, and families can play in strengthening youngsters, families, schools, and neighborhoods. This encompasses a focus on safe schools and neighborhoods, positive development and learning, personal, family, and economic well-being, and more.

Effective pursuit of joint functions requires establishing effective school-community collaboratives at school and district levels. To these ends, mutual outreach and development of a well-conceived operational infrastructure for collaboration are foundational.

Below are examples of resources developed as part of our work with community stakeholders collaborating with schools.

- >Schools, Families, and Community Working Together: Building an Effective Collaborative*
- >Self-study survey: Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement*
- >Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement*
- >Evolving Community Schools and Transforming Student/Learning Supports*
- >Restructuring Education Support Services and Integrating Community Resources: Beyond the Full Service School Model*
- >Agencies Addressing Problems of Children and Youth: Pursuing a Continuum of Interventions and Working with Schools*
- >School-community relations: Policy and practice*
- >Want to Work With Schools? What is Involved in Successful Linkages?*
- >School-Community Partnerships from the School's Perspective*
- >Pursuing Promise Neighborhoods: With or Without the Grant Program*
- >School-Based Health Centers*
- >Integrated Student Supports and Equity: What's Not Being Discussed?*
- >Moving Beyond the Concept of Integrated Student Supports*

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

- >Collaboration - School, Community, Interagency; community schools*
- >Community Outreach for Involvement and Support*
- >Business Support for Schools*
- >Mapping Existing School and Community Resources for Addressing Barriers to Learning*
- >Memoranda of Agreements (including joint agency agreements, MOU's)*
- >School-Linked Services*

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*