

## FROM CENTER AT UCLA - 2015 Initiative\*

### ***What we are hearing about transforming student and learning supports . . .***

Recently a colleague indicated: “Everyone we talk to agrees about the need to transform student and learning supports, but many don’t immediately see how to do it.”

We always stress that the first steps include (a) understanding the *imperatives* for transformation, (b) committing to a *vision* for change, and (c) ensuring the sustained engagement of a cadre of high-powered *Champions* who function as a steering body.

We find that those moving to transform student and learning supports usually have a good appreciation of the imperatives for developing better ways to enhance equity of opportunity for all students to succeed at school and have a vision for doing so. They soon realize, however, that essential system changes cannot happen without the continuous championship and guidance of the superintendent and cabinet. Moreover, we find that the process is strengthened when several school board members and community leaders add their ongoing advocacy and support. Such a group of champions provides the motivational driver for policy making and for establishing essential planning and implementation mechanisms.

What differentiates successful from unsuccessful system changes is the depth of understanding and sustained engagement of the cadre of champions guiding and steering the work. The depth of understanding comes from expanded learning; sustained engagement comes from a commitment to the vision.

### **Making it Happen**

(1) Formalize the cadre of champions to function as a steering body for transforming student and learning supports. See:

>Facilitative Mechanism's Functions and Interrelationship.

Appendix E in Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System –

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf>

(2) Provide resources for deepening understanding about what is involved in implementing, replicating, and sustaining the transformation.

For example, see:

>Processes and Lessons Learned in Facilitating Systemic Transformation.

Chapter 12 in Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System –

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf>

(3) Provide resources for establishing policy to drive the work. For example, see:

>Board Policy for a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/policyproto2012.pdf>

>Other policy examples are offered in Section A of the Center's System Change Toolkit -  
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

(4) Encourage school board champions to establish a board subcommittee focused on transforming student and learning supports. See:

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

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## **\*About the 2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student & Learning Supports**

As a key component in school improvement and renewal, the Center stresses the imperative of transforming student and learning supports. Such a transformation is seen as essential in addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students and families. The emphasis is on unifying student and learning supports and then over a period of several years weaving school and community resources together to develop a comprehensive system of supports that enhances equity of opportunity for all students to succeed at school and beyond. For more on this, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf> .

*Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;  
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to  
enabling equity of opportunity and promoting whole child development.*

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**Please forward this to a few colleagues you think might be interested.**

**For those who have been forwarded this and want to be part of the ongoing exchanges,  
send an email to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu) .**

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**Looking forward to hearing from you.**