

Trend toward School Funding Formulas that Address Barriers to Equity of Opportunity?

Now that California is pursuing its Local Control Funding Formula, other states are taking note. This approach to financing public schools and making decisions provides a renewed focus on meeting the needs of underserved students and generally enhancing equity of opportunity.

However, analyses of what is transpiring in California suggests that it is a mistake to think that this type of shift is sufficient to transform how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. Moreover, trailblazing efforts in other states indicate that a new funding formula is not even necessary for the needed changes to be accomplished.

Transforming student and learning supports mainly involves unifying the currently fragmented efforts and then developing them over a period of years into a comprehensive system. This can be done through redesign, redeploying currently allocated resources, and moving the unified component out of the margins of school improvement policy and planning.

Making It Happen

Help establish a learning supports development workgroup that is charged with

- (1) mapping and analyzing all supports being used to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students
- (2) making recommendations about unifying such supports into a learning supports component that is fully integrated into school improvement policy and practice

For a brief guide, see

>Education Leaders' Guide to Transforming Student and Learning Supports –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/transguide.pdf>

Whether or not transforming student and learning supports are on the agenda, here are a few aids to use in mapping and analyzing resources with a view toward enhancing cost-effectiveness:

>Analyzing What is Being Spent in Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching –

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

>Example of Funding Stream Integration -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkita6.htm>

>Tool for Mapping and Analyzing Student/Learning Supports –

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf>

*For more information on the 2015 National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html> .

**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.