

from the Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at

UCLA Learning Loss: What Needs to be Done?

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results should be a rallying cry to local, state, and national leaders to redouble their efforts to support learning recovery. Secretary of Education Cardona

*While the investment in ESSER was incredible in scale, it pales in comparison to the negative impact on the economy if a generation of children does not recover from what this pandemic has done to them academically. Kenneth Shores**

As everyone calls for schools to address learning loss, it should be clear that the need involves more than redoubling the same strategies.*

It is essential not to ignore the history surrounding the achievement and opportunity gaps.

Remediating learning loss requires addressing a variety of barriers to learning and teaching. And it is essential to counter the myth that more and more instruction will correct the situation.

Extra and excellent instruction clearly is needed (e.g., tutoring, personalized instruction). And for some students, this will be sufficient to bring them back up to grade level. However, for too long, teachers have borne the brunt of responsibility when it comes to initiatives for reducing the long-standing achievement and opportunity gaps. The reality is that instruction alone can't and shouldn't be expected to solve these chronic problems.

With the impending school budget reductions, effectively dealing with learning loss for a great many students will require both (a) braiding resources and (b) rethinking student/learning supports.

Braiding Resources

The Every Student Succeeds Act calls for state plans to include assurances that the SEA will modify or eliminate state fiscal and accounting barriers so that schools can easily consolidate funds from other federal, state and local sources to improve educational opportunities and reduce unnecessary fiscal and accounting requirements.

The act also calls for "Coordination of Federal Programs." Coordination in the act refers to how funding across multiple federal program areas, in combination with state and local funds, can be braided together to better support students.

This includes each new grant that schools access.

The bigger point is that the need and the opportunity is to do more than coordinate among federally funded programs. In the long run, the emphasis is on braiding all overlapping resources at state, district, and school levels - including a wide variety of community resources and in the process, use the resources to expand thinking about how to improve student and learning supports. See:

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

Rethinking Student/Learning Supports

Braiding funds is an imperative opportunity not to be ignored, and it is essential in reducing the achievement gap. Reducing the achievement gap requires a laser-like focus on closing the opportunity gap. Reducing the opportunity gap involves transforming the role schools play in addressing barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging disconnected students.

In essence, the need is for fundamental changes in the way student and learning supports are conceived and structured.

Our Center has developed many resources related to the needed changes. For a brief overview, see

>*Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefguide.pdf>

The guide provides material for helping others understand the need for major changes, offers a blueprint for rethinking student and learning supports, and delineates first steps in making changes. And it provides direct links to online aids for more in-depth details.

Part I highlights the current state of affairs and old ideas that must be escaped. This material is intended as an aid in helping other stakeholders understand why major changes are needed.

Part II provides prototypes for rethinking how districts and schools – working with communities – address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students and families.

Part III outlines major phases in making sustainable systemic changes and first steps to take in making the changes a reality.

We concur with AASA Executive Director Dan Domenech in hoping the NAEP data *sends a signal to create an education system that is better aligned to meet the current needs of our students and staff.*

Please share with interested colleagues.

*K.A. Shores & M. P. Steinberg (2022). Fiscal Federalism and K-12 Education Funding: Policy Lessons From Two Educational Crises. Education Researcher.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/default+domain/URBVWZEWN9WPP2XICYQR/full>