Featured

An ongoing issue for schools

>*Will Tier 3 interventions reduce school shootings?*

Also of concern:
>*About Relationship Building at School*

And, as always:
>*Links to a few other resources relevant to continuing education (including some resources for responding to and coping with Hurricanes)*

This Community of Practice *Practitioner* is designed for a screen bigger than an Iphone.

For discussion and interchange:
>*Will Tier 3 interventions reduce school shootings?*

Request from a colleague:

Responding to 9/5/24 email: *While we grieve...*

"Thank you for your emails and the resources you provide - I always look forward to them! Your recent email and the GA tragedy highlights my frustration of our (the education system) failure to address trauma and antisocial behaviors among our youth. Using Pawson & Tilley's context + mechanism = outcome framework to identify supports within tier 3 programming, I want to understand what works for who and under what conditions so we can better serve our students who are struggling emotionally and behaviorally, most often due to trauma.

I strongly feel tier 3 programming for students who are exhibiting internalizing and externalizing behaviors must be required for every middle and high school. Too often students are referred to special education for behavioral or emotional disorders when what they need cannot be properly supported by a special education teacher (I say this with the utmost respect for our specialists). By placing them into a special education class, we further isolate and marginalize these students by telling them they don't belong in general education so we're putting you in a class (or multiple classes) with students with learning disabilities. As a friend of mine and school psychologist says, 'trauma is not a disability.'

While we can influence gun control measures, we cannot change the laws, so why are we not doing something across the board within our control? Tier 1 SEL 'lessons' are not going to influence or change the social dynamic of our most emotionally and behaviorally vulnerable students - more must be done.

Beyond speaking with my district, I don't know what to do to change the system so I thought I would lament to you and look for advice. As long as we continue doing what we're doing, we will continue to see these violent behaviors play out. I'm not so naive as to believe that there is one magic solution but we do know that early identification and intervention does help to build community and reduce risk-taking behaviors - why must there be so many inconsistencies within the educational system that does not guarantee the right support for every student?

Thank you for reading my "soapbox" and keep advocating for change!"

Schools (and society at large) certainly must enhance safety. However, plans for responding to shooters and other crises must reflect concern for a healthy and caring school climate. School climate suffers from an overemphasis on "hardening" schools.

Healthy and caring schools don't wait to react to tragic events. They are proactive in working with their surrounding community to improve schools in ways that promote positive social-emotional development and prevent problems, as well as having a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of supports in place to address the many barriers to learning and teaching that are encountered each day.

All efforts to make schools safer must fully reflect our society's commitment to equity, fairness, and justice. And, if the commitment to ensuring equity, fairness, and justice is to be meaningful, it cannot be approached simplistically. With these matters as context, safe school practices must be embedded into improvements that contribute to transforming schools in ways that more effectively close the all to prevalent opportunity and achievement gaps.

Here are excerpts from two articles that can stimulate mush needed discussion about what school do to related to addressing the problem.

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(1) From: *School shootings: What we know about them, and what we can do to prevent them*
by Robin M. Kowalski

There is no true profile of a school shooter. Plenty of people are bullied in middle and high school without entertaining thoughts of shooting classmates. Similarly, making and breaking relationships goes along with high school culture, yet most people who experience a break-up do not think of harming others. Anxiety and depression are common, especially in adolescence, and countless adolescents play violent video games without committing acts of violence in real life. Even if some commonalities are evident, we must recognize their limits.

What can we do?
... First, the problems that appear to underlie some school shootings, such as bullying and mental-health challenges, need attention—and there's a lot we can do. School administrators and educators need to implement bullying prevention programs, and they need to pay attention to the mental-health needs of their students. One way to do this is to facilitate "psychological mattering" in schools. Students who feel like they matter—that they are important or significant to others—are less likely to feel isolated, ostracized, and alone. They feel confident that there are people to whom they can turn for support. To the extent that mattering is encouraged in schools, bullying should decrease. Typically, we don't bully people who are important or significant to us.

Second, because most of the perpetrators of K-12 shootings are under the age of 18, they cannot legally acquire guns. In our study, handguns were used in over 91% of the K-12 shootings, and almost half of the shooters stole the gun from a family member. Without guns, there cannot be school shootings. Clearly more needs to be done to keep guns out of the hands of youth in America.

Third, students, staff, and parents must pay attention to explicit signals of an imminent threat. Many shooters leak information about their plans well before the shooting. They may create a video, write in a journal, warn certain classmates not to attend school on a particular day, brag about their plans, or try to enlist others' help in their plot. Social media has provided a venue for children to disclose their intentions. Yet, students, parents, and educators often ignore or downplay the warning signs of an imminent threat. Students often think their peers are simply expressing threats as a way of garnering attention. Even if the threats are taken seriously, an unwritten code of silence keeps many students from reporting what they see or hear. They don't want to be a snitch or risk being the target of the would-be shooter's rage. With this in mind, educators and administrators need to encourage reporting among students—even anonymously—and need to take those reports extremely seriously. Helpful information for teachers, administrators, and parents can be found at

SchoolSafety.gov. In addition, Sandy Hook Promise provides information about school violence and useful videos for young people about attending to the warning signs that often accompany school shootings.

Fourth, school leaders should be aware that not every apparent act of prevention is worth the costs. Some people believe that lockdown drills, metal detectors, school resource officers, and the like are useful deterrents to school shootings and school violence more broadly. However, researchers have also demonstrated that they can increase anxiety and fear among students. Students may also become habituated to the drills, failing to recognize the seriousness of an actual threat should it arise. Additionally, most K-12 shooters are students within the school itself. These students are well-versed in the security measures taken by the school to try to deter acts of violence by individuals such as themselves. While few would suggest getting rid of lockdown drills and other security measures, educators and administrators need to be mindful of the rewards versus the costs in their selection of safety measures.

Ultimately, our goal should be creating an environment in which school shootings never occur. This is an ambitious aim, and it will be challenging work. But addressing some key issues, such as mental health, will go a long way toward preventing future tragedies in our schools. As so aptly demonstrated in the Ted Talk, "I was almost a school shooter," by Aaron Stark, making someone feel that they have value and that they matter can go a long way toward altering that individual's life and, consequently, the lives of others.

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(2) From: ***U.S. Schools focus on "hardening" buildings against mass shootings. Data show they're missing where most gun violence is happening.a news story***

".... Last academic year, more than one-third of shootings at U.S. schools happened in parking lots, where often there is little security or attention from school administrators.... Jason Stoddard, chair of the National Council of School Safety Directors said "When we start parsing through the data, we have to look at all the variables and come up with any solutions from that information," Some solutions he's implemented cost little to no money, but most schools around the country haven't implemented them yet.

   Examples include:
   >Staff patrolling parking lots
   >Mandatory ID's worn by everyone (students, staff and visitors) all the time
   >Doors locked to the outside
    >Room lettering or numbering on paper placed in windows so emergency responders
        can see from outside the school
    >Radios on which administrators can talk immediately with local police, not just among
        themselves
    >Camera systems that allow security professions to see all of the campus, not just
        hallways and classrooms..."

Comments from the Field:

(1) We are all saddened and angered by yet another shooting. As one Uvalde parent put it, we pull ourselves together but do nothing. Then it happens again and we're outraged. I share the concerns and frustrations of the person who wrote you. Given some of the concerns s/he shared, a few things came to mind.

   First of all, the concerns s/he expressed about special education referrals jumped off the page for me. The school psychologist is absolutely correct about trauma not being a disability. Unfortunately, students get "channeled" into special education services not because of a disability, but because there are no other options readily available. I believe it would be helpful to know how many referrals are made and what the major concerns are. That data could be aggregated to show the need for more

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supports unrelated to special education. Once the school can verify student problems, school/community partnerships can be developed to meet student needs, or the district can leverage resources to help support students. It's difficult to argue with hard data.

My second thought has to do with the "tiers" or levels of need. Yes, it's critical to meet the needs of those students exhibiting chronic problem behaviors. It's just as important to provide supports for those who have problems that are less severe or perhaps "temporary" to ensure they don't grow into something worse. And while you're working with "problems" students exhibit, remember there are students without problems that could benefit from resiliency supports. All three tiers are important. So while you're looking to help the students that are most needy, don't overlook those that may also be headed down that path.

And finally, if this person wants to take action, s/he should think about relationships. There is nothing more powerful than building a relationship with a student who believes no one cares. This could be done by anyone on the staff that wants to participate. Encourage others to get involved and take action along with you. Get a class list and ask these colleagues to mark off the names of students they DON'T worry about because they have friends, a supportive family, and are doing relatively well in school. The names that are left on the class list are the students that need a connection to someone at school. Divide those names up among the staff members willing to participate and get each adult to reach out to one or two of these students to get to know them. Be a support for them. Be genuine. Care and let them know it. Building relationships doesn't cost anything but can make a world of difference in the lives of students.

There are plenty of political battles to be fought regarding this sad state of affairs, but individually we can find a way to make a difference every day. Each of us needs to look for those opportunities and not wait for someone else to make change.

(2) Coming out of the pandemic, it seems the focus was on learning recovery without much regard to mental health. We did not prepare our children to learn. We just pushed them and teachers to "catch up" and even after millions of dollars there is scant evidence that they have caught up. We basically dismissed the fact that our children were traumatized every day for two years. It's difficult to learn when you're not engaged. We were so glad to be out of the pandemic we downplayed the pandemic and traumatic effect it had on our children. Look at the behaviors being reported: anxiety, changes in behavior, problems with self-regulation, difficulty forming relationships and renewing old relationships, lack of focus, low energy, sudden impulsive behavior, depressive episodes – all of which under other circumstances we would view as trauma reactions, but we don't now because there are so many children manifesting these behaviors.

More troubling is that there were signs of increasing mental health issues before the pandemic, making the pandemic's effects even worse. Consequently, the climate of schools is more important than ever, which means that there must be an on-going efforts to improve and sustain a positive school climate where mental health services are readily available and signs are posted around the school that if they need help or just need to talk a phone number is provided and/or a safe place at the school is identified. How many schools have you been in where you see notices like that posted all over the school – probably only a few. I've been in over 40 schools this year and only one school had posters up like that – and they make certain that students are seen when they ask for help and when they refer other students for help and that hotline is 24/7 and is answered.

A few schools are using at least one staff member, depending on the size of the school, whose only task is to look for students who seem downcast, moody, withdrawn, angry and then talk to them or refer them or take them to the counseling office or call the parents. Their job is to notice students. Other schools send information home to parents via students, emails, texts, and social media letting parents know about mental health resources, 988, and hotline numbers established by the school that parents can call when they have concerns about their child. The Handle With Care program is working well in schools and has also served to bridge the gap between law enforcement, DFCS, and schools. Every school should have that strategy.

I have to add too that schools need to be the homebase for mental health services. There are so many obstacles in communities and unless we shift our thinking from in-person therapy where students have to leave school to telemental health in schools so they can remain there, we will continue to lose children to mental health issues and sometimes see the consequences. Delays in appointments, high turnover rates of therapist, lack of access during the school day are all impediments of a model that does not work any longer for many our children. Their "community" is the

internet, the laptop, whether we like it or not. There is not much sense of community as we knew it when we were children. So, we need to make some hard choices, use lateral thinking, change the dynamic and recognize that we need to bring services into their "community," such as providing telemental health in every school and use cellphones as a quasi-therapeutic device where we send text messages routinely to our students reminding them that help is always close by, so close by and so readily available and so much a part of the norm that seeking help is not even a decision any longer – it's a reaction. In a recent group session with students, they told me the most important thing in their life is acknowledgment, because it messages reassurance.

As you know, many schools are providing trauma-informed training for all staff members - the teaching staff and support staff and offering the same training for parents and volunteers. The difference is this: the training should no longer focus on the lone child that might be suffering the effects of trauma – it's many if not most of the students in class. Recently, a teacher said at the end of one session, "Why didn't we all receive this training before students returned to school after the pandemic? This is what I'm seeing in my classroom with several students not just one or two."

As I suggested to a superintendent recently, Tier 3 is now Tier 2; Tier 2 is now Tier 1; and Tier 1 has to be reimagined so every part of Tier 1 is related to the climate of the school – everything. A positive school climate needs to shift from being a goal to being an expectation.

(3) In my school district, the number of firearms we confiscated increased each year, so we decided something must be done. I started with asking two questions: (1) Why are students bringing firearms to school [reasons] and (2) what are the conditions that leads to firearms at our schools. After reviewing records and interviewing students, law enforcement, juvenile judges and others, we found three primary reasons for students bringing firearms to school: retaliation, attention-seeking, and showing off.
>Retaliation was based on primarily on being bullied, being intentionally isolated, or due to an extremely embarrassing event/incident.
>The attention-seeking was based primarily on a cry for help – as in negative attention is better than no attention.
>And the third reason, showing off was just that – just trying to impress classmates.

The primary condition was access to the firearms. We found that over 90 percent of all firearms that came to our schools over a five year period of time came from the student's home or a relative of the student's home.

After identifying the reasons and the conditions, we had elements that our epidemiologists friends would say are determinants.

To address bullying, we focused on developing and implementing (using implementation science) frameworks in each school to improve school climate, because we learned from research that a negative school climate is an incubator for bullying. We implemented PBIS, since it is research based, and developed measures to monitor school climate throughout the school year utilizing tactics such as regular small group meeting with students – only students fully know what is going on behind the scenes. Improving school climate also helped address in part attention-seeking but it took more than school climate.

We found that students seeking attention we are really asking for help in inappropriate ways, so we tried to make it easier for them to find help so they didn't have to employ attention-seeking behaviors. That's when we developed a mental health support plan for each school that included MTSS, adding access to mental health services from the community service board, and displaying posters around the schools based on ideas from students that messaged that help was available at school, and by phone, and in the community. The posters were displayed in hallways, cafeterias, locker rooms, and even on school buses. We refreshed the posters every three months. The posters also included "No Bullying Zone" posters to send the collective message that bullying is not acceptable and no one will ignore bullying if it does occur. Schools also more intentionally and actively recruited students to participate in school activities and clubs.

To address students who bring a gun to school to show off, we worked with a local men's association to create a rewards program so that if a student reports another for having a firearm at school the reporting student receives a reward of $100 (we developed a process method that kept the reporting student's name confidential).

For the condition focusing on the access to firearms at home, we stayed clear of the gun control issue, and instead focused on gun safety. Over a two-year period of time, I spoke at 60 PTA meetings,

community meetings, Rotary Clubs, and other places about school safety, which included a report on what we were doing as noted above, but my presentation also included firearm safety, with the main message being that parents and relatives are endangering their children and all children at school and others if they are not securing their weapons.

   As we know, causation is difficult to prove, but after implementing many strategies based on causes and conditions, the number of firearms went from 92 to 9 over a two-year period.   And by the way, for those who think rewarding students was a bad idea, only one student received a reward, because the incentive to show off was overridden by the realization that even a friend will turn another friend in for $100. I can also add that the number of discipline referrals declined, including bullying incidents, which was sustained over several years; the number of students informing staff members about other students they were worried about increased; teacher retention improved; and there was a marked increase in the number of students participating in some form of school activities. And, in most schools, parent participation increased.

   Schools still had plenty of issues to address and no one will say everything was resolved, but at least we were focusing on what seemed to be the primary determinants, because there is always a cause and always a pattern, but most importantly, we can address many of the underlying issues.

> **How is this topic being discussed in your locale?**
> Please let us know so we can share the info widely. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

For relevant resources from the Center and other sources, see the following online clearinghouse Quick Finds:

>*Crisis response and prevention*
>*Prevention for Students "At Risk"*
>*Threat Assessment: Resources and Cautions*

Some examples of what is included in these Quick Finds:

>*A self-study survey on crisis prevention and preparedness*

>*Violence Prevention and Safe Schools*

>*Assessing Whether a Student Might Commit a Violent Act*

>*Threat Assessment In Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates. U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education*

6

>About Relationship Building at School

> Student-teacher relationships develop over the course of the school year through a complex intersection of student and teacher beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and interactions with one another. Forming strong and supportive relationships with teachers allows students to feel safer and more secure in the school setting, feel more competent, make more positive connections with peers, and make greater academic gains. In contrast, conflict with teachers may place students on a trajectory of school failure in which they are unable to connect to academic and social resources offered within classrooms and schools. Hamre, Pianta, Bear, & Minke

> A positive relationship with a teacher can protect against numerous other negative influences including maladaptive behaviour, negative life events, poor quality child–parent relationships, and referral to special education settings. It can also predict a range of behavioural and academic outcomes: not just within the school years, but perhaps also in adulthood. For example, those with negative student–teacher relationships may be more likely to be unemployed in adulthood, whereas those with positive relationships may experience a higher degree of success. The predictive and protective functions of the student–teacher relationship suggests that one positive relationship may be sufficient to alter the trajectory of a student at risk of negative outcomes. McGrath & Van Bergin

Students with learning, behavior, and emotional problems tend to have negative feelings about school and teachers. Helping them begins with establishing a positive working relationship with a teacher or student support staff member – ***based on mutual trust and respect.***

From the perspective of intrinsic motivation, there are two sets of fundamental intervention concerns in connecting and staying connected with students:

- minimizing experiences that threaten feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to significant others
- maximizing experiences that enhance feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to significant others

Here are some examples of school experiences that reportedly can enhance efforts to build working relationships in classrooms.

- Ensuring accommodations for individual differences in both motivation and capability (e.g., personalizing instruction to ensure an appropriate fit – neither too easy nor too hard – for each learner, building on a student's strengths. providing special learning assistance when needed)
- Providing a broad range of options from which learners can make choices and participate in decision making (e.g., with respect to learning content, activities)
- Implementing cooperative learning in ways that promote academic, social, and emotional learning and peer connectedness
- Using natural events as opportunities and teachable moments
- Frequently, consistently, and authentically conveying welcoming, respectful, supportive, nurturing, and validating messages and encouraging students' appropriate expression and participation related to decision making about classroom concerns and making contributions to their own and others learning and development and to a positive climate
- Using individual conferences to promote communication and connection with each student (e.g., regular use of informal and formal conferences for discussing options, making decisions, exploring learners' perceptions, and mutually evaluating progress)
- Pursuing classroom management primarily in terms of practices that guide and support and establishing a sense of community (e.g., mutual caring and responsibility)
- Mutually (staff and students) formulating rules and logical consequences with an emphasis on safety, social and restorative justice, guidance, and support, rather than social control

- Using preventive steps and teachable moments to minimize noncompliance with rules and interpersonal crisis situations (ensuring and encouraging safe interactions between students; monitoring high risk areas, such as bathrooms and playgrounds)
- Monitoring applications of consequences for noncompliance to ensure fairness and due process and to use them as teachable moments
- Regular reevaluations of decisions, reformulation of plans, and renegotiation of agreements based on mutual evaluations of progress, problems, and learners' perceptions of "fit"
- Ensuring support for the wide range of transitions that occur daily and over time
- Outreaching to enhance home involvement and engagement
- Providing student and family assistance as soon as feasible after a problem arises
- Structuring school staff as a community of colleagues – teachers network, collaborate, participate substantively in school decision making, have opportunities for personalized professional learning

From: *Improving Working Relationships Inside the Classroom*

There are, of course, instances when a student needs help overcoming a serious problem. In such cases, relationship building can be especially difficult and essential. As discussed below, clinicians refer to this as developing a therapeutic alliance.

From: *Therapeutic alliance in the treatment of adolescent substance misuse*

"...One psychological variable that has been found to be related to treatment outcomes in various domains, is the therapeutic alliance. This refers to the relationship between caregiver and receiver and is categorized by a multitude of factors, including mutual collaboration, respect, and trust. One of the most commonly used definitions of therapeutic alliance comes from Bordin. His definition encapsulates three interdependent components.
> The first refers to the level of agreement for the in-session tasks of the therapy. In the case of a strong therapeutic alliance, both parties perceive these tasks as beneficial and worthy of effort.
> The second component refers to the agreement over the goals of the therapy and the changes that are required for progress.
> The final component refers to the interpersonal bond between the client and therapist, characterized by mutual trust, acceptance, and respect.
  Regardless of treatment modality or the difficulties being treated, higher ratings of therapeutic alliance are associated with positive treatment outcomes in all ages...
  Therapeutic alliance has also been found to have important impacts on retention and engagement in treatment. When therapeutic alliance is not prioritized, dropout rates in adolescent therapy are higher. This is important as research consistently shows that increased levels of retention and engagement are associated with positive treatment outcomes.
  Research demonstrates that adolescent therapeutic alliance differs in several ways from adult alliance, resulting in relationship variables being "equally, if not more critical" to positive treatment outcomes. This is because, unlike adults, adolescents are not typically self-referred and may disagree with the need to receive therapy. Developmentally, the emerging need for autonomy can cause challenges in the agreement over the goals of the therapy. While therapist assistance with goal identification may bode helpful for adults, adolescents may feel this process is patronizing, conflicting with independence building. They may also struggle with authority and have a different view of their difficulties, serving to complicate the alliance. It is consistently reported that given the high likelihood of adolescent resistance to therapy, the formation of a strong therapeutic alliance is essential....
  This systematic review found significant alliance–outcome associations for adolescents in treatment for substance misuse. Such that higher ratings of therapeutic alliance usually predicted better post-treatment outcomes, along with increased retention and engagement in treatment...."

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

First, here are some resources for responding to and coping with hurricane related events:

>>**A list of resources for students, mental health practitioners and school staff dealing with the hurricane's aftermath**

>>**Hurricane Resources from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network**

>>**The Ultimate Guide To Hurricane Preparedness, Recovery & Relief**

>>**Helping Students Cope with the Preparation and Aftermath of Natural Disasters**

On other matters:

>>**Will charging the parents of school shooters help prevent school shootings?**

>>**Section 504 Protections for Students with Depression**

>>**"We're All Pretty Welcoming": Inclusion of Children With Disabilities in Library Storytime Programs**

>>**A New School, a Fresh Start? Change and Stability in Peer Relationships and Academic Performance in the Transition from Primary to Secondary School**

>>**Exploring adolescent-adult connections, coping, and safety among minoritized youth in neighborhoods impacted by community violence**

>>**AI & Accessibility in Education**

>>**Let's stop tinkering and really change how schools address mental health**

>>**National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)**

>>**Adolescent Mental and Behavioral Health, 2023**

A Few Upcoming Webinars
For links to the following and for more webinars, go to
Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts

10/16 Cooperative activities
10/16 Principal pipelines
10/16 Is AI out to take your job or help you do it better
10/17 Understanding learning differences
10/17 Promoting the wellbeing of students
10/17 Wellness and resilience
10/23 Protective factors and social development
10/23 Addressing challenging behaviors
10/24 Effective communication with the IEP team
11/7 How to get all teachers to be the best teachers /
11/13 Addressing at risk factors for youth /
11/14 Balancing academics, extracurriculars and college application stress
11/20 Coordinated care for eating disorders
12/4 Shaping AI for human centered education
1/23 Leveraging evaluation for transformative growth
    Webinar recording: *Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth*

<p style="text-align:center; color:red; font-weight:bold">What are education leaders doing about transforming the way schools
address learning, behavior and emotional problems?</p>

The current answer, it seems, is: *not much!*

We do see increasing discussions among education leaders about transforming education in general. Naturally, much of the focus is on improving instruction and making major changes in how schools are managed (e.g., financed, administered, held accountable). However, when it comes to improving how schools play their role in providing support when students are not doing well, proposals for transformative changes generally are not forthcoming.

The result: **As the number of learning, behavior and emotional problems increases, schools continue to react in inadequate ways.**

> See the commentary: ***Let's stop tinkering and really change how schools address mental health*** for a brief discussion of (1) *What's wrong with what schools are doing now* and (2) *What changes are needed.*

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To Listserv Participants

- **Please share this resource with others.** (Everyone has a stake in the future of public education and this is a critical time for action.)

- **Let us know what's going on to improve how schools address barriers to learning & teaching and reengage disconnected students and families.** (We can share the info with the over 130,000 on our listserv.)

For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

<p style="text-align:center"><strong style="color:red">Looking for information? (We usually can help.)</p>

<p style="text-align:center"><strong style="color:red">Have a suggestion for improving our efforts? (We welcome your feedback.)</p>

<p style="text-align:center; color:teal; font-weight:bold">We look forward to hearing from you!
Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu</p>

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<p style="text-align:center; color:red; font-weight:bold">Center Renewal Activity</p>

As part of our Center's 2024-2025 school year renewal, we have reached out to school board members and superintendents with the following message:

> In order to enhance the support we provide to schools, districts, and state departments of education, it would be extremely helpful if you would take a few minutes to share about the following matter.
>
> 1. What learning supports have been most effective in your district to help all students succeed?
>
> 2. What additional learning supports are needed?
>
> <p style="text-align:center">Send responses to Ltaylor@ucla.edu</p>
>
> We Look forward to hearing from you, and we thank you for all you do for the young people across the country
>
> ***We now invite all who are willing and able to respond. We will report what we learn.***

Hurricanes: Can't Prevent them, but ...

As we did last week, we have included links to some resources for responding to and coping with hurricanes. And we need to reiterate that all such disasters are another indicator of the need for education leaders and policy makers to end the longstanding marginalization in school improvement policy related to the role schools must play in addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

Schools committed to the success of all children must be redesigned so that teachers, student support staff, and others at the school must be prepared to help students and staff not only after problems arise, but as early as is feasible when they become aware of behavior, emotional, and learning problems. Such a redesign can minimize the impact of such problems and appropriately stem the tide of referrals for out of class specialized assistance (e.g., mental health services) and special education.

Through the *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports*, our Center emphasizes the opportunity to start now to transform how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students.

If you are aware of efforts underway to transform how schools address barriers to learning and teaching, please share with us.

And if anyone is thinking about increasing the capacity of a district or school with respect to developing *a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports*, we have many resources to help in moving forward. For example, see our recent guides:

>*Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions*

>*Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Starting the Process*

Send all info and requests to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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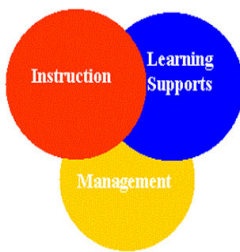
Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights; transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to promoting whole child development, advancing social justice, and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.

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THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES!

Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing.

We post a broad range of issues and responses to the Net Exchange on our website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm
and on Facebook (access from the Center's home page http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/ **)**