

(11/16/22) **This resource is from the national Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA**

Featured:

>Community-school collaboration:

An essential part of a student support system

>Evolving Community Schools and Transforming Student/Learning Supports

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

For discussion and interchange:

>Community-school collaboration:

An essential part of a student support system

Every school outreaches to students' homes with the hope of involving parents in various ways. In addition, some schools recruit volunteers from the community and solicit other forms of resource contributions from a variety of community stakeholders. Some pursue ways to link community social services and physical and mental health services to schools and seek community providers for afterschool programs. And when there is a school-related ballot measure, schools outreach for voter support.

For school policy makers, connecting school-home-community is seen as an essential facet of promoting the well-being of children and youth and enhancing equity of opportunity for them to succeed at school and beyond. For community agencies, connection with schools is seen as providing better access to families and their children, promoting greater engagement, and enhancing opportunities for having an impact on hard-to-reach clients. Moreover, the hope is that integrated interventions will increase the pool of resources for student and learning supports and address disparities.

The downside of current outreach is that it reflects a narrow vision about the role and functions of school-community collaboration for school improvement in general and for transforming how schools provide student and learning supports in particular. There are a great many community resources that can significantly help improve schools and that will strengthen the community. By adopting a broad vision, school improvement actions can increase school-community connections in ways that substantively weave together a wide range of resources.

Where Community Involvement and Engagement Fit in a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Student/Learning Supports

As schools address concerns about learning loss and mental health, those that have adopted an MTSS framework now need to rethink student and learning supports.

MTSS highlights that a full continuum of interventions is essential. However, addressing barriers to learning and teaching also requires organizing the supports cohesively into a well-designed and delimited set of interventions that reflect a school's efforts to provide student and learning supports in the classroom and schoolwide.

Our analyses indicate the supports can be grouped into the following six domains.

- *In-classroom supports*
- *Supports to increase home connections and engagement with the school*
- *Crises assistance and prevention*
- *Supports to increase community involvement and engagement with schools*
- *Facilitating student and family access to special assistance*
- *Supports for transitions*

In the last three issues of the Center's Practitioner, we featured strengthening *in-classroom supports, increasing home connections and engagement with the school, and crises assistance and prevention*. This week we focus on *increasing community involvement and engagement*. In coming weeks, we will feature the remaining two domains.

Enhancing School-Community Collaboration

School-community collaboration benefits from a comprehensive vision about the shared role schools, communities, and families can play in strengthening youngsters, families, schools, and neighborhoods. Such a vision encompasses safe and healthy schools and neighborhoods, positive development and learning, personal, family, and economic well-being, and more. 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.

Achieving all this involves

- (a) outreach to a wide range of community resources
- (b) developing a school and community collaborative infrastructure that can weave together participant resources.

Efforts of schools/districts to enhance community connections include:

- (1) outreaching to a broad range of community entities
- (2) establishing immediate links and connections with community resources to achieve mutual benefits
- (3) establishing an effective operational infrastructure for a school-community collaborative
- (4) blending/weaving/redeploying school and community resources where feasible to help fill gaps and for system development

In practice, all four activities often are not pursued, especially when the focus is mainly on connecting a few community services to a school. However, all are vital in developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports.

We caution against limiting school-community connections to co-locating a few service agencies on a few school sites. Such an approach tends to undervalue the role of existing school resources and other human and social capital found in homes and communities and downplays what is needed to effectively address learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Increasing access to a few more services is only one facet of developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for enhancing equity of opportunity.

Opening up school sites as places where the community can engage in learning, recreation, enrichment, and connect with needed services can accelerate the impact of social marketing and outreach. Combining school and community resources heightens feasibility for increasing on-and off-campus opportunities that enhance equity for students to succeed at school and beyond. Over time, the impact of school-community outreach and engagement can enhance school climate and move schools closer to becoming the heart of the community.



"Thanks for the invite, but I prefer to collaborate by myself."

Outreach to the Community

Potent school-community collaboration requires multifaceted connections among a wide range of resources. Districts/schools need to consider outreach to the full range of resources that exist, especially in neighborhoods where poverty reigns. Researchers have mapped the range of community entities whose missions overlap that of the local schools. These include county and municipal agencies, mutual support/self-help groups, service clubs and philanthropic organizations, youth organizations, community based organizations, faith institutions, legal assistance groups, ethnic associations, artists and cultural institutions, businesses/corporations, unions, media, family members, local residents, senior citizens groups, and more.

For a more detailed discussion of this domain as a facet of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports, see

“Enhancing School and Community Collaboration” Chapter 14 in

Improving School Improvement

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

And, for more resources, go to the Center Quick Find on
Collaboration - School, Community, Interagency; Community schools

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p1201_01.htm

(Center Quick Finds cover over 130 topics providing links to a host of resources, some developed by the Center as well as online resources from many other sources.)

Two Examples of Center Resources included in the Quick Find for School-Community Collaboration

- >A *self-study survey* on enhancing school-community connections
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/toolsforpractice/communityoutreachsurvey.pdf>
- >*Fostering School, Family, and Community Involvement*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/publications/44_guide_7_fostering_school_family_and_community_involvement.pdf

How do schools pursue broad and effective community collaboration in your locale?

Please let us know so we can share the info widely. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

Evolving Community Schools and Transforming Student/Learning Supports

The federal Full-Service Community Schools Program (FSCS) and state and district efforts to promote community schools have resulted in requests to our Center such as the following:

Our organization is preparing to work with the county office of education in supporting TA to schools receiving Community Schools grants. We decided to start with a landscape analysis survey to understand current practices, needs and assets. The goal is to leverage these findings and our collective expertise to advise schools on how to (1) connect students with the right services and (2) integrate those services with the larger system of integrated student supports, expanded learning, instruction, etc. I would love to hear your thoughts on the effort more broadly.

Here is the Center's response:

The perspective we have reached based on our Center's research concludes that *whole child well-being* requires community schools to move beyond the current way they are conceived. (This perspective includes all schools that are focusing on integrated supports and MTSS.)

We are concerned that current thinking about community schools overemphasizes integrating services rather than building a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports. See the Center's report related to these concerns:

Evolving Community Schools and Transforming Student/Learning Supports
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/evolvecomm.pdf>

In moving forward, we encourage all schools to engage in mapping and analyzing what they are doing with a view to developing a more comprehensive and equitable vision and priorities for moving forward. To this end, we developed a set of "Self-Study Surveys." And we include a focus on building an operational infrastructure that is much more potent than a coordinator and a team for Coordination of Services.

Here are some mapping tools included in our Center's *System Change Toolkit*:

- > *Tools to Aid Mapping and Analyses of Intervention Resources*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf>
 - > *An Aid for Initial Listing of Current Resources Used at a School for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching* (i.e., the names, roles, functions, and schedule of student and learning supports staff at a school)
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/listingresources.pdf>
 - > *Leadership Infrastructure: Is What We Have What We Need?* (a four step process that can be used to map and analyze current infrastructure)
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20infrastructure.pdf>
- For more on reviewing and changing the current infrastructure for school-community collaboration see Chapter 14 of *Improving School Improvement* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/improve.pdf>.

There are many resources on our website that can be useful with respect to enhancing student/learning supports at any school. We do encourage folks to move beyond tinkering with what's in place and work toward the transformation of student/learning supports. (And we note that, unfortunately, grant money often tends to work against fundamental systemic change.)

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

All the Voices: Statewide Collaborations for School Leadership

<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/all-the-voices-statewide-collaborations-for-school-leadership-under-essa.aspx>

Supporting primary school students' mental health needs: Teachers' perceptions of roles, barriers, and abilities <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/pits.22648>

The Effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning Approach as a Way to Engage Students in Learning <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244020938702>

Project based learning: a literature review <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED578933.pdf>

Beyond Chronic Absenteeism: The Dynamics and Disparities of Class Absences in Secondary School <https://doi.org/10.26300/z1fp-0b98>

Advancing the Study of Resilience to Daily Stressors <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35748196/>

A Brief Overview of Anti-Racism Among Youth

<https://newsletter.sccap53.org/in-focus-a-brief-overview-of-anti-racism-among-youth/>

Only Human: Mental-Health Difficulties Among Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychology Faculty and Trainees <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35731143/>

In 1 classroom, 4 teachers manage 135 kids -- and love it <https://apnews.com/article/science-education-arizona-teaching-20d634aa0e8f6af162c57db6e95f5547>

What Does Research Say About Grade Retention? A Few Key Studies to Know <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/what-does-research-say-about-grade-retention-a-few-key-studies-to-know/2022/11>

The Case For Universal Kindergarten <https://seattlemedium.com/the-case-for-universal-kindergarten/>

Middle School Strategy: Leveraging the Science of Learning and Development to Inform Education in Middle School <https://www.k12dive.com/news/Supporting-middle-school-students/635787/>

Leveraging Technology for Smarter School Decision-Making <https://information.ascd.org/october-2022-el-topic-select>

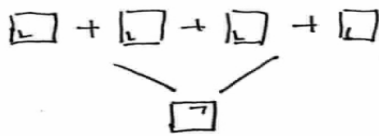
A Few Upcoming Webinars

For links to the following and for more webinars, go to the Center's Links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

- 11/17 Building bridges to equity: part four
- 11/17 Serving grieving students
- 11/17 Transformational change for mentoring
- 11/30 What educators needs from their administrators
- 11/30 Understanding Doubled Up
- 12/7 When kids lead
- 12/8 Peer Mentoring - Creating a Culture of Youth Empowerment
- 12/8 Mental health and the holidays
- 12/8 Building bridges to equity: part five
- 12/8 McKinney-Vento School Selection Rights
- 12/14 Promoting Community Based Violence Intervention Success: Meaningful Measures and Effective Communication
- 12/20 Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness

COOPERATIVE V. COLLABORATIVE

By John Spencer @spencerideas



COOPERATION

- Mutual respect
- Transparency
- Shared goals
- Independent and dependent
- Loose network
- Short-term
- Sharing of ideas as a group
- engagement



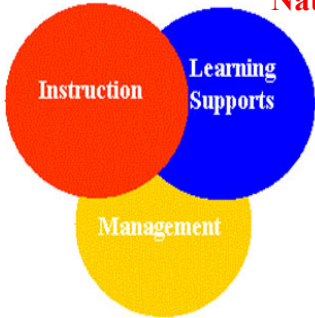
COLLABORATION

- Mutual trust
- Vulnerability
- Shared vision and values
- Constant state of interdependence
- Tight culture
- Long-term
- Generation of new ideas as a group
- empowerment

For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports

go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>



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.

Invitation to Listserv Participants:

Everyone has a stake in the future of public education. This is a critical time for action. Send this resource on to others. Think about sharing with the growing number who are receiving it. AND Let us know about what we should be including.

Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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

For new sign-ups – email Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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/>)