

(3/19/25) This continuing education resource is from the national
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA

Featured

(1) *It's not about just throwing money at problems: Making Money Matter*

(2) *Working on Recovery*

And, as always, you will find

(3) *Links to a few other resources relevant to continuing education*

**This community of practice *Practitioner* is designed
for a screen bigger than an iPhone.**

For discussion and interchange:

>*It's not about just throwing money at problems: Making Money Matter*

While it's obvious that just "throwing" money at a problem is inappropriate, it is equally obvious how under-supported are efforts to address the problems faced by so many schools, staff, and students. As long as this is the case, school improvements require using existing resources in smarter ways, and leaders for school improvement need to keep advocating for the type of funding that is essential if all students are to have equity of opportunity to succeed at school and beyond.

Bruce D. Baker & David Knight ask and answer:

DOES MONEY MATTER IN EDUCATION?

"A publicly funded, open education system is a cornerstone of a democratic society. To provide equal access to high-quality instruction, school systems require basic resources to support personnel and physical infrastructure. Yet there exists no federally guaranteed fundamental right to an education in the United States. The responsibility for providing equal access to high-quality instruction falls largely to individual states.

The U.S. system of financing schools leaves much of the responsibility to states and local school districts, which, on average, collectively pay for about 90 percent of K-12 funding, with the federal government accounting for the other 10 percent....

Money matters more—and has a more profound impact—for children experiencing poverty and in school districts and communities in which states have historically underinvested. Several studies validate that spending more on schools and communities that have previously been deprived of resources yields greater returns on investment than spending where prior investment has been high and student need relatively lower. These findings validate the importance of promoting funding progressiveness in state school finance systems, with the goal of equal educational opportunity for all...."

Our Center stresses that equity of opportunity requires fundamental changes in how schools play their role in addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Currently, student and learning support initiatives, programs, and services are not well-conceived, are stuck onto schools and districts, and are implemented in piecemeal and fragmented ways. As a result, while such efforts may have a small positive effect, the tendency is to see much of the work as dispensable when budgets must be cut. ***What gets lost in all this is that recovery efforts at so many schools must address a multitude of barriers to learning and teaching if they are to succeed.*** We discuss this next.

For more on making money matter, see our Center resources

- >[*Rethinking District Budgets to Unify and Sustain a Critical Mass of Student and Learning Supports at Schools*](#)
- >[*Fiscal Cliff Threatens Student/Learning Supports: It's Time to Braid and Rethink Resource Use*](#)
- >[*Financial Strategies to Aid in Addressing Barriers to Learning*](#)

The Center also has a Quick Find on >[*Funding and financing*](#)

For discussion and interchange:

>[*Working on Recovery*](#)

Recovery efforts have been hampered by the increased number of students experiencing emotional, behavioral, and learning problems. Overlapping this is the almost overwhelming number of students who need to be reengaged with their schooling. All this is related to the concerns about mental health. Use of the pandemic relief funds to address the above matters tended to focus on adding a few more personnel and adding a couple of new ad hoc initiatives. The problem with this is that schools always have had more students in need than they could help. A new direction in providing student and learning supports has long been necessary.

Minimally, stakeholders need to rethink state and district budgets to unify and sustain a critical mass of student and learning supports at schools. Long-term budget policy and current budget cutbacks marginalize such supports. Rethinking how to blend and use existing school and community resources is essential.

Maximally, our Center stresses that equity of opportunity requires (1) expanding school improvement from a two-to-a-three component policy framework and (2) transforming student/learning supports so that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school and beyond. See:

- >[*Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions*](#)
- >[*Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Starting the Process*](#)
- >[*Building on MTSS to Enhance How Schools Address Barriers to Learning*](#)

From: [*A deep dive on U.S. reading and math scores, and what to do about them*](#)

"... the Education Recovery Scorecard looks at student learning at the district level in some 8,700 school districts. The Scorecard is a joint venture between Harvard University's Center for Education Policy Research and The Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University....

According to the Scorecard, the nation's highest-income districts were "nearly 4 times more likely to recover" in math and reading than the lowest-income districts. Since the pandemic started, the disparity in math scores, specifically, has grown by 11%. A score disparity between students in predominantly nonminority versus minority districts has also increased 15%....

In response to the pandemic, Congress poured \$190 billion into the nation's schools.... districts were only required to spend 20% on academic recovery. Many districts prioritized adding mental health supports for students or upgrading aging facilities. The Scorecard doesn't argue that those were poor choices, only that it's not realistic to expect that kind of spending to improve learning the way a tutoring program can. According to the report, "student achievement grew more in districts that spent more on academic interventions, such as tutoring or summer school."...

The Scorecard offers a few prescriptions for educators, administrators and lawmakers:

- >Without more federal help, states and schools should focus as much of their own funding as they can on academic recovery.
- > Communities should turn their attention to talking up the importance of daily school attendance. This kind of messaging shouldn't just be left to schools.
- >Research suggests that parents don't always know when their student is struggling, so the Scorecard encourages teachers to communicate directly with families. ..."

We add: Research has clarified that a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports requires enhancing how schools conceive the continuum of interventions and organizes them into the following domains that schools deal with on a daily basis to provide a supportive, caring, and safe learning environment:

- >enhancing supports in regular classrooms to enable learning
- >supporting transitions
- >increasing home and school connections
- >responding to and, as feasible, preventing school and personal crisis and traumatic events
- >increasing community involvement
- >facilitating student and family access to effective services and special assistant as needed.

Successful recovery efforts and ongoing student progress require *well-designed transformative* changes in how schools work with their community to address barriers to learning and teaching.

News Report 3/11/25

Department of Education lays off nearly 50% of its workforce
"Reduction in force" notifications went out to 1,315 employees Tuesday.

So one of the questions that arises is: *How will recovery efforts be affected?*

Are you thinking about increasing the capacity of a district or school to develop a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports?

We have many resources to help in moving forward.

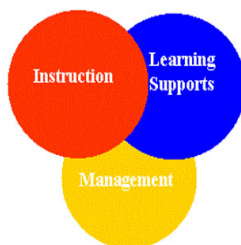
For example, see our recent guides that provide a roadmap for moving in new directions:

- (1) ***Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions***
- (2) ***Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Starting the Process***
- (3) ***Building on MTSS to Enhance How Schools Address Barriers to Learning***

These works provide prototypes for new directions and first steps for moving forward on a monthly schedule. The first steps outlined involve

- (a) mapping existing student support activities and operational infrastructure,
- (b) analyzing what has been mapped,
- (c) identifying priorities for and clarifying the benefits of system changes,
- (d) developing recommendations for system changes,
- (e) building a critical mass of support

Links to resources are provided to aid in carrying out each task.



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.
National Initiative for Transforming Student/Learning Supports

For some brief Center documents to stimulate local discussions of related matters, see

- >*Teachers Can't Do it Alone!*
- >*Classroom based learning supports*
- >*Enhancing Student/Learning Supports in Classrooms*
- >*Tutoring*
- >*College Mentors for High School Students*
- >*University Volunteer Tutor Programs and Secondary School Classrooms*

How are these topics being discussed in our locale?

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

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Investments and Financial Planning



“You’re confused. That means I explained it properly.”

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

- >>Systemic Factors Associated With Student Psychological Well-Being
- >>Family Factors Related to Children's Intrinsic/Extrinsic Motivational Orientation and Academic Performance
- >>School-based suicide prevention: Promising approaches and opportunities for research
- >>Partnering, Co-learning, and Co-creation: Cornerstones of Teacher Well-being, Innovation, Learning, and Leadership
- >>“Why is this relevant for me?”: increasing content relevance enhances student motivation and vitality
- >>Launching Lifelong Health by Improving Health Care for Children, Youth, and Families
- >>The Engagement In Action (EnAct!) Framework -- One Big Doable Thing!
- >>How to change the narrative about college
- >>School ‘Pairings’ Can Foster Racial, Socioeconomic Integration

A Few Upcoming Webinars

For links to the following and for more webinars, go to the Center's Links to [Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts](#)

- 3/19 Strengthening school and community connections
- 3/19 Questions to ask during the special education process
- 3/19 Promoting Young Children's Achievement
- 3/20 Leading a middle school
- 3/20 Student centered actions
- 3/24 How to recognize children's goals
- 3/26 Environmental change for prevention
- 3/26 Emerging technology in education
- 4/1 Preparing students to thrive /
- 4/2 Creating a culture of consistency
- 4/2 Understanding loneliness
- 4/3 Sustainability planning
- 4/3 Confidence and self-esteem
- 4/9 Addressing bullying
- 4/16 A crisis plan for mental health problems
- 4/22 Telling stories with data /
- 4/22 Student led initiatives
- 5/7 Racial Justice in Discipline
- 5/8 Creating conditions for healthy disagreement

How Learning Happens (Edutopia's updated series of videos explores how educators can guide all students, regardless of their developmental starting points, to become productive and engaged learners.

Webinar recording: [*Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth*](#)

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

Looking for information? (We usually can help.)

Have a suggestion for improving our efforts? (We welcome your feedback.)

We look forward to hearing from you! Contact: 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/>)**