

School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(7/21/21)

>About legislative efforts for mental health in school

>In the News:

Youth helping older adults access resources

Reductions in school staffing

Funds for homeless students

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

(Scroll down to read about the above and for hotlinks to resources)

Note: Go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> for links to other Center resources.

**This resource is from the
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA**

So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).

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

**For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>**

For discussion and interchange:

>About legislative efforts for mental health in school

Request from a colleague: “Do any states have good student mental health laws in statute/code, especially those that have language regarding prevention?”

From: the Education Commission of the States
State Approaches to Addressing Student Mental Health

<https://www.ecs.org/wp-content/uploads/State-Approaches-to-Addressing-Student-Mental-Health.pdf>

Since the beginning of 2019, Education Commission of the States has tracked more than 600 bills related to student mental and behavioral health across nearly every state. More than 30 states enacted at least 72 bills. In that same period, governors across the country have identified student mental health and wellness as emerging or priority issues for their states. ...

Recent state action has focused primarily on the following areas:

- Mental health and wellness curricula.
- Suicide prevention programs and services.
- Staff training and professional development.
- Mental health screening.
- Mental health professional staffing ratios.
- School-based mental health programs and services

... During summer 2020, as states began planning for schools to reopen, at least 43 states included social and emotional learning and/or mental health and wellness in reopening plans and guidance to districts. The plans addressed teacher training and professional development, providing services and referrals to community resources, encouraging schools to identify a services approach, and screening students and staff for mental health and wellness upon returning to the classroom.

Center Comments: Legislation for mental health in schools tends to perpetuate the adhoc and piecemeal approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging disconnected students. By doing so, it contributes to the marginalization of student and learning supports in school improvement policy and planning.

Our analyses of school improvement policies and practices highlights the irony that some of the legislative efforts focusing on MH in schools work against enhancing every student’s civil right to equity of opportunity for success at school and beyond.

Our research stresses advancing *a broad approach to mental health in schools that is fully embedded in school improvement efforts*. To these ends, the concept of mental health needs to be framed broadly so that it encompasses not only psychopathology but also (a) addresses the wide range of psychosocial and educational problems schools are confronted with on a regular basis and (b) encompasses promoting healthy development (i.e., positive social and emotional development). In this context, the need is for legislation that ensures schools

- coalesce efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching into a unified component and integrating the component as a primary and essential facet of school improvement policy (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/figure2of4.pdf>)
- move beyond a limited MTSS framework to build the continuum of interventions into a consolidated set of subsystems weaving together school and community resources (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/figure3of4.pdf>)
- organize the supports needed each day at schools into a delimited set of domains crossing the continuum to establish a framework for developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports over several years (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/figure4of4.pdf>)

Previous comment from the Center:

Don’t Leave Improving Mental Health in Schools Up to Proposed Legislation

Rep. Trone has introduced legislation to direct the Secretary of Education to establish a pilot grant program to develop, implement, and evaluate “comprehensive mental health services programs” in elementary and secondary schools.

<https://trone.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Comprehensive-Mental-Health-in-Schools-Pilot-Program-Act-of-2021-One-Page-1.pdf>

Over recent years, other bills have been proposed to expand mental health efforts in schools. Whether or not this bill is passed, schools are already focusing on what to do with COVID relief funds and funds currently allocated for student and learning supports. (And the need is for much more than pilot programs in a few schools.)

In moving forward to meet the increased demand for addressing students' mental health, schools need to avoid five potential pitfalls, and they need to plan changes that can be sustained after the temporary relief funds are no longer available (see the Hot Topic discussed at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/hottopic.htm>).

To help schools as they address the challenges ahead, see the free resource the Center has developed as a guide for

- (a) reframing student/learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system,
- (b) redeploying available school resources to develop the transformed system,
- (c) weaving in community resources to fill gaps in the system.

Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Also see: **An adaptable prototype of a state legislative bill for improving school improvement.**

Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching: Ensuring a Three Component Approach to School Improvement <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/draftbill.pdf>

Know of other information about legislation? Share it so we can add it to the Quick Find on *Legislation* related to student support & MH in schools <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/legislation.html>

In the News

>Youth helping older adults access resources

From: *Need a home COVID-19 vaccination? Need a ride? Youth help senior citizens get vaccinated*
<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/phoenix/2021/06/29/phoenix-youth-assist-elderly-get-covid-vaccines-duet-elevate/7779626002/>

The immense loss the COVID-19 pandemic brought worldwide did not spare Phoenix nonprofit Duet: Partners in Health and Aging, which serves senior citizens...The same kind of tragedy affected students served by Elevate, a nonprofit that supports K-12 youth in underserved communities...

The groups are collaborating and creating a bridge between the people they serve. The two nonprofits see it as an opportunity to foster community between their different demographics.

"Both organizations already understood the powerful benefits of connecting young people to older adults," said Ann Wheat, executive director of Duet. "It opens the door for a conversation with someone who comes from a different background from you."

Seniors who need assistance making an appointment, arranging transportation or scheduling a home vaccination will be able to work with the nonprofits to get vaccinated. Elevate's adult students will provide rides, while Duet will work out the details of their appointments.

This vaccination program aims to bridge people from different generations, foster new relationships and better support the needs of seniors. Elevate stays in touch with its students long term and encourages a lifelong passion for serving others.

>Reductions in school staffing

From: *During the pandemic, 'lost' education jobs aren't what they seem*
<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2021/03/02/during-the-pandemic-lost-education-jobs-arent-what-they-seem/>

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data available ...on March 11, 2021,... suggest that layoffs in public education rose 57% from 2019 to 2020; voluntary "quits" rose 16%; and "other" separations (including death, disability, and retirement) rose 53%. However, even with the revisions, a slowdown in hiring continues to explain a significant portion of the job losses in public education. According to the revised data, layoffs represented about one-third of the total job losses in public education in 2020; higher employee turnover in the form of voluntary "quits" and death, disability, and retirement contributed another third; and the slowdown in hiring accounted for the final third.

>Funds for homeless students

From: *U.S. Department of Education Invites States and School Districts to Apply for Additional \$600 Million in American Rescue Plan Funds for Students Experiencing Homelessness*
<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-invites-states-and-school-districts-apply-additional-600-million-american-rescue-plan-funds-students-experiencing-homelessness>

To help support the needs of students experiencing homelessness, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) today is inviting states to complete the application for their share of the second disbursement of \$800 million in funding under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021's Homeless Children and Youth Fund....

This additional funding will be used by states and school districts to identify homeless children and youth, provide wraparound services in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide assistance to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and participate fully in school activities.

"Every child deserves to have a warm place to sleep and a roof over their head every night. But for 1.5 million children across America and over 10,000 children in my home state of West Virginia, that is not the case. The COVID-19 pandemic made this heartbreaking and dire issue much worse for many of our families and children in need. Since the pandemic kept most students at home, schools have struggled to track students experiencing homelessness," said Sen. Joe Manchin...."

"This past year has been so difficult for every student, parent and educator across the country—but what students experiencing homelessness have gone through is unthinkable. The first thing we told people during this pandemic was to 'stay home.' But so many students don't have a safe place to call home, access to internet, devices, or critical services that students have relied on to learn during this pandemic," said Sen. Patty Murray. "We fought hard to make sure the American Rescue Plan includes

dedicated funding for students experiencing homelessness, and I'm so pleased the Department of Education is acting quickly to get these resources to our communities. The crisis of youth homelessness is especially acute for LGBTQ young people and children of color, and I'll keep fighting to make sure students experiencing homelessness not only get enrolled in school, but also get the kind of support and stability they need so they can learn and grow in the classroom."

Following a brief application, states will receive funds that will be awarded to school districts through formula subgrants.

About Homeless Students, see the Center Quick Find at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/homeless.htm>

Invitation to Listserv Readers:

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

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

Kids count data book 2021

<https://www.aecf.org/resources/2021-kids-count-data-book>

State Approaches to addressing student mental health

<https://www.ecs.org/state-approaches-to-addressing-student-mental-health/>

State funding for student mental health

<https://www.ecs.org/state-funding-for-student-mental-health/>

Student mental health services ecosystem

<https://www.ecs.org/student-mental-health-services-ecosystem/>

State legislative action to support student mental health

<https://ednote.ecs.org/state-legislative-action-to-support-students-mental-health/>

My Child Is a Bully: What Should I Do?

<https://childmind.org/article/what-to-do-if-your-child-is-bullying/>

6 communication and technology trends worth keeping

<https://smartbrief.com/original/2021/07/6-communication-and-technology-trends-worth-keeping>

2021 ASCD Summer Reading List <https://inservice.ascd.org/2021-ascd-summer-reading-list/>

Tips for Raising Generous Children <https://childmind.org/article/tips-for-raising-generous-children/>

Anti-LGBTQ Policy Proposals Can Harm Youth Mental Health

<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/anti-lgbtq-policy-proposals-can-harm-youth-mental-health>



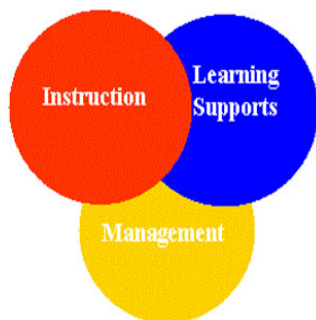
A Few Upcoming Webinars

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>

- 7/23 Fostering Equity in Community Wellness and Peer Support Programs Affinity Groups
- 7/28 Asset-Focused Ecological Supports for Vulnerable Youth During COVID-19 and Post-Pandemic
- 7/28 Peer Networking for Family Leaders who Foster and Support Family Engagement
- 7/28 Expecting and delivering equitable opportunities for learning
- 7/29 Addressing learning loss
- 8/4 Welcomed: Embracing Students, Families and Educators in the New School Year
- 8/5 Reimagining learning: starting with students in the center
- 8/5 Adapting Prevention Interventions to Better Serve Vulnerable Populations
- 8/16 Positive community norms

Webinar recording: *Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth*

<https://preventioninstitute.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4bf5a36bd9f72789255d49a&id=17f472fea9&e=b6757fd9d7>



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.

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/>)