

(8/21/24) **This continuing education resource is from the national Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA**

Featured

>Request from a colleague

Looking for a list of behavioral/mental health evidence based interventions for use in schools

Also for discussion:

>Does MTSS contribute to the marginalization of disabled students?

And, as always:

>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: a request from a colleague:

“Is there a list of Evidenced Based (behavioral/mental health) Interventions that are used in schools at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 level? In our county we are currently supporting districts in selecting interventions and progress monitoring but could always use more resources to help guide this work. “

Center Response:

The call for schools to become more science-based has led to our receiving many requests such as this. Here’s how we respond:

There are many lists of discreet intervention and programs. Here are a few examples:

- >[*Healthy people 2030: Schools Evidence-Based Resources*](#)
- >[*Evidence-Based and Emerging Best Practices*](#)
- >[*Evidence-Based Programs Implemented by Expanded School Mental Health*](#)

Also see our Quick Find on [*Empirically Supported Interventions*](#)

Besides providing links such as those above, we have emphasized that schools have to consider many issues about this matter. For example, see

- >[*Being Rational and Analytical in Bringing Evidence-Based Practices into Schools*](#)
- >[*Bringing Empirically Supported Prototypes/Practices to Schools*](#)

The reality for schools is that most empirically supported practices are so narrowly focused that they are of use with relatively few of the students who are of concern at school. And adopting such approaches in a piecemeal and ad hoc way just adds to what already is a too fragmented approach to student and learning supports.

We value the demand that school become more science-based; and we see it as an opportunity to reframe student and learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system and fill out the new system framework with empirically supported interventions as much as is feasible. See:

- >[*Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions*](#)

As the above referenced guide illustrates, framing an intervention system provides an essential tool for

- >mapping existing student support activities and operational infrastructure and then
- >analyzing what has been mapped to identify
 - *what's working* – accessing available “data” on effectiveness of current interventions, general system status, and infrastructure for leadership and operations
 - *what's not working* – clarifying which are worth improving and which are wasted resources (including redundancies)
 - *gaps* – identifying current gaps with specific reference to pressing needs
 - *fragmentation* – degree to which the approach is uncoordinated
 - *policy support* – is the emphasis on student/learning supports marginalized in school improvement policy? how much is being spent on addressing barriers to learning and teaching?
 - *implications for intervention improvements* – which are and are not worth keeping; which are worth taking steps to improve; which gaps need immediate attention; what is needed to increase cohesion and enhance policy support
 - *needed operational infrastructure changes* – identifying weaknesses in the operational infrastructure for student/learning supports

Done properly, mapping and analyses of resources provide a foundation for making decisions about how to move forward in improving student/learning supports. The objectives are to (a) clarify gaps with respect to assessed needs, (b) identify immediate priorities for improvement and system development, and (c) recommend (re)deployment of resources to best meet priorities and to do so in a cost-effective manner.

Finally, we do understand that the big push these days is focused on students' mental health problems. So we hope schools will at least move beyond the listings of empirically supported practices to improve the *general processes* in use at schools to identify and help such students. Here are some resources that cover these matters:

- >[*Overview of Practices for Problem Identification, Triage, Referral, and Monitoring*](#)
- >[*Identifying and Clarifying Need*](#)
- >[*Triage*](#)
- >[*Consultation and Referral*](#)
- >[*Monitoring/Managing Care*](#)
- >[*Interviewing and Monitoring Tools*](#)

Send us links to any resources you can share in response to this colleague's request

Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

For discussion and interchange:

>Does MTSS contribute to the marginalization of disabled students?

From: *No “Top of the triangle kids”: Toward conceptual clarity of students, behavior, and tiers in MTSS to advance social justice*

“...Multitier frameworks date back at least 50 years. The concepts and processes of RTI in educational settings first gained traction in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the field of special education and in the study of learning disabilities. Initiated in literacy to support students who struggled academically, this approach aimed to address early controversies in the conceptualization and identification of students with learning disabilities, as articulated in the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. Scholars emphasized the need for pre-referral interventions, greater focus on the classroom environment, and integrated service delivery, establishing the conceptual underpinnings of Response to Intervention....

There is ample justification to avoid categorizing students in MTSS as labeling facilitates pervasive adverse effects on educators' perceptions of and interactions with students and reinforces deficit ideologies rooted in racism and ableism. Shifting away from the widely familiar tiered triangle representation is one important step in reducing inclinations to categorize and label students....

MTSS acts as a means of marginalizing disabled students when classification ignores their complex strengths and support needs and instead relies only on perceived deficits to assign them to tiers and associated opportunities or spaces... This practice may be related to assumptions that disability equates with the most intensive tier, that students no longer engage in less intensive supports as more intensive ones are provided, or that students with complex needs do not require access to the full continuum of supports ...

MTSS has the potential to provide a framework for meaningfully leveraging school resources to support the needs of every student. However, implementation of these frameworks may drift from their original or positive intent when categorizing students becomes a focus, hindering the extent to which schools foster significant beneficial change for minoritized students or advance social justice.....

It is incumbent for both practitioners and researchers to approach MTSS with the understanding that the manifestation of various contextual forces, including influences of racism, ableism, and other systems of oppression, within schools are the targets of intervention—not simply students themselves—to enhance student outcomes and promote justice in educational spaces....”

For more on MTSS, see

- >*The MTSS Continuum: Essential but Not Comprehensive Enough – How to make it Better*
- >*MTSS: Strengths and Weaknesses*
- >*Rethinking MTSS to Better Address Barriers to Learning*
- >*Examples of MTSS in Practice*

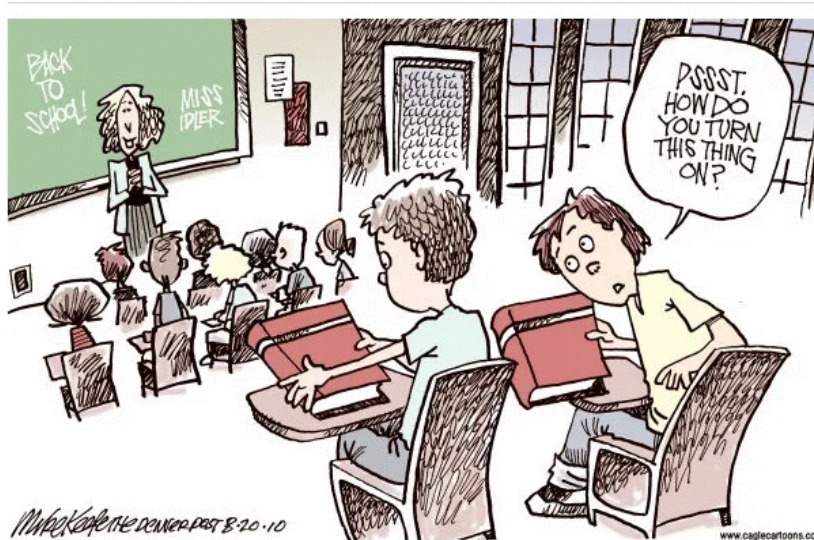
Are the above topics being discussed in your locale?

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

Now that adaptation of some form of a continuum of interventions is so widespread, it is time to broaden the framework in ways that can significantly improve the role of schools in addressing barriers to learning and teaching and reengaging disconnected students. Doing so is fundamental to enhancing school attendance, safeguarding schools from violence, enabling academic, social, emotional, and physical development, and addressing learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

- >>Just a Label? Some Pros and Cons of Formal Diagnoses of Children
- >>Disparities in the Implementation of School-Based Mental Health Supports Among K–12 Public Schools
- >>A School-Based Evaluation of the FRIENDS Resilience Programs: Implications for Mental Health Concerns in Rural Students
- >>Myths about multi-tiered systems of support
- >>Teacher Well-Being and Intentions to Leave
- >>A Case for Systems Change in Special Education
- >>Thriving Schools Go the Extra Mile to Welcome and Bond With Parents and Families
- >>Quick Start Guide for Districts to Improve Attendance
- >>Educators concerned about how ‘pandemic babies’ are faring in school
- >>Tools for the Diagnosis of ADHD in Children and Adolescents: A Systematic Review
- >>Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013-2023



Few Upcoming Webinars

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

- 8/21 De-escalation and personal safety
- 8/21 Inclusive learning
- 8/21 Hospital to school transition
- 8/22 Re-entry from juvenile justice
- 8/22 Compassionate leadership
- 8/26 Giving effective feedback
- 9/5 Parental Rights: Special education
- 9/12 How can we disagree better?
- 9/12 Evaluation and eligibility: special education
- 9/19 The IEP: special education series
- 9/19 Empowering grassroots mentoring
- 9/26 Organizational culture
- 10/17 Wellness and resilience

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***

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

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!

Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

Schools committed to the success of all children must be redesigned so that teachers, student support staff, and others at the school can help students as early as is feasible when they become aware of a behavior, emotional, learning, and/or physical problem. 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.

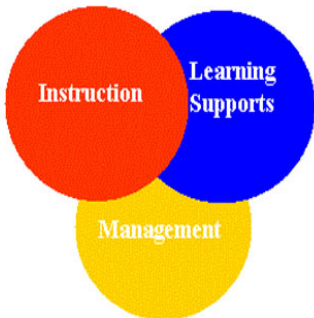
Through the **National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports**, our Center emphasizes the opportunity to start now to transform how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students.

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 guide:

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

Send all info and requests to ltaylor@ucla.edu



**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 resource ideas, requests, comments,
and experiences for sharing.**

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF THE PRACTITIONER

Who Are We? Recently renamed the Center for MH in Schools and Student/Learning Supports, our national Center was established in 1995 under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project (which was established in 1986). We are part of the Department of Psychology at UCLA. The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.