

(8/6/25) This continuing education resource is from the national
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA

Featured

(1) Addressing Student Mobility

(2) Is Empathy Important to Student and School Success?

(3) AASA survey reveals real-world impact of federal funding freeze

And, as always, you will find

(4) 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

>Addressing Student Mobility

Student mobility and school changes often contribute to learning, behavior, and emotional problems. School systems and individual schools are quite variable in the degree to which they are prepared to address the transitional needs of mobile students, including recent immigrants and other newcomers. Some new students enter friendly and inviting settings; others encounter unaccommodating or even hostile situations. And, of course, newcomers vary in terms of their capability and motivation with respect to transitioning (e.g., some do not want to move, some are shy, some need additional coping strategies). All of this impacts a student's adjustment in a new school and their engagement in learning.

From: *The Extent of Student Mobility Among Vulnerable Groups*

"Nonstructural student mobility—school changes not tied to grade-level promotion—is common and consequential yet remains underexamined in recent research....

By 5th grade, nearly half of all students have made at least one nonstructural move. Annually, about 9% move during summer and 6% midyear, illustrating persistent churn. While historically marginalized groups—including African American students, and students experiencing homelessness or foster care—exhibit higher rates of nonstructural school mobility other findings challenge common narratives....

These findings complicate prevailing narratives and underscore the need for targeted, evidence-based interventions. Addressing school mobility effectively requires understanding not only student characteristics, but also the structural constraints—like housing and neighborhood dynamics—that shape mobility decisions and could limit access to more advantaged school settings...."

From: *Who Transfers and Where Do They Go? Identifying Risk Factors Across Student, School, and Neighborhood Characteristics*

"...This study emerged from a research-practice-partnership, which began by school leaders and teachers identifying a key problem area: disruptions to the teaching and learning environment spurred by the constant shuffling of students in and out of school, often occurring between schools in the same neighborhood and district.

Within-school-year mobility can be a particularly difficult event for teachers attempting to maintain continuity in their curricula and classroom culture, as well as for students who must adjust to changing curricula and learning environments, as well as new peers....

Our findings provide a nuanced understanding of risk factors, while also highlighting novel and yet—at times—unsurprising inequalities. For example, we were unsurprised to find higher likelihoods of transferring for students with unstable housing, as well as for students who qualified for free and reduced-price lunch. However, a closer look reveals novel inequalities: Black students were more likely to transfer within districts but less likely to transfer to a private school. Furthermore, we observed that students who qualified for special education services were also more likely to transfer.... Higher suspension rates were also associated with increased odds of transferring to another district, which may imply instances of students being “pushed out” of the district. ...

Concerning policy and practice, our findings highlight ways in which schools and districts can work intentionally to not only mitigate instances of transfers but also to support students who do transfer. By identifying risk factors across contexts, policies and practices can be developed for and deployed to student groups, schools, and neighborhoods most at risk for experiencing transfers. For example, the extremely high rates of transfers among students who are in shelters can be used to design interventions, while higher rates of transfers in high school can be used to deploy interventions in particular schools... For instance, schools may consider developing mechanisms to share relevant academic information for students that transfer and adopting common curricular and instructional elements. In addition to schools, local governments should also consider interventions to smooth the process of transfer students, such as public transportation for all students in a given region.”

For more on this concern, see our Center Quick Finds. For example:

- >[*Supports for Transitions /Grade Articulation/Welcoming*](#)
- >[*Foster Care*](#)
- >[*Homeless children and youth*](#)

Here are direct links to a few relevant Center developed resources

- >[*Transitions are critical times; addressing transitions*](#)
- >[*Transitions: Turning Risks into Opportunities for Student Support*](#)
- >[*About School Adjustment*](#)
- >[*Addressing School Adjustment Problems*](#)
- >[*Self-study survey: Supports for Transitions*](#)

For discussion and interchange

>*Is Empathy Important to Student and School Success?*

In schools, much of the concern about enhancing empathy stems from the need to reduce student and staff problems. To these ends, schools draw on a robust body of research suggesting that empathy can motivate prosocial behavior and can be a protective factor in coping with problems and enhancing school connectedness and successful learning.

From: [*The Challenges and Opportunities of Empathy & Prosocial Behavior in Middle School*](#)

“...This study provides a nuanced understanding of cognitive empathy and prosocial behavior in middle school: one that is both realistic and optimistic. Students reported a plethora of experiences practicing cognitive empathy and supporting their peers with prosocial behavior. Their stories also revealed challenges—and therefore opportunities for targeted support. These findings provide an exceptional first step towards more adaptive and effective support of cognitive empathy and prosocial behavior development in middle schools.

Our first recommendation is to frame empathy teaching practices in the three components: prioritizing not just the process of cognitively empathizing, but the practice of preparing and

responding prosocially. For instance, when teaching empathy, start back a little further and help students identify their peers who could use some support and practice checking in and listening without judgment. Additionally, there are many ways to support the process of cognitive empathy and its translation to prosocial behavior, including modeling, coaching, and opportunities to practice....

Our second recommendation is to address cognitive empathy and prosocial behavior challenges in each of the components via three elements: skills, relationships, and social environment. Too often, skills are the key focus of any empathy teaching, ignoring the relationships and social environment within which these skills will be practiced. Take opportunities to develop closer, more meaningful relationships between students and staff. Knowing and caring about one another sets community members up to practice cognitive empathy more easily and effectively. While often overlooked, an empathetic social environment is crucial to the teaching of empathy... it is creating a norm of empathy across the school that can lead to positive peer pressure.

Our third recommendation is to remember that there are occasions when the adaptive and healthy response is to create boundaries.... Most of the cost of empathy is avoided if we learn to properly "calibrate" the level of empathy in each circumstance....

Early adolescence is a special time of both immense challenges and incredible opportunities. Supporting the development of cognitive empathy and prosocial behavior is critical to the success and wellness of young people now and in the future...."

From: *An Empathy Intervention Reduces the Gender Gap in School Discipline and Facilitates Belonging*

"Many children begin school with the best intentions and a motivation to learn. Teachers, meanwhile, typically enter their profession to facilitate this learning and to help their students flourish. However, as time goes by, classes tend to become increasingly disrupted by poor behavior, until an eventual peak in school exclusion rates around the age of 14. These increasing interferences impede both students' learning and teachers' ability to support it. Furthermore, poor behavior and school exclusion are also linked to a myriad of deleterious outcomes in later life....

Research has suggested that many teachers are unaware of the psychological causes of disruptive behavior. However, by taking the perspectives of their students into account, teachers stand to gain a clearer understanding of the underpinnings of their students' behavior, leading to greater feelings of empathy. This, in turn, may help teachers respond to disciplinary infractions with a greater respect for the needs of their students, thereby resulting in improved behaviour in school...

When teachers were encouraged to take perspective and empathize with their students, it enhanced students' perceptions of being respected and valued, thus leading to a stronger sense of belonging. This, in turn, was linked to improved behavior, which transcended individual classrooms or teachers, and contributed to a reduction in suspensions. Therefore, the presence of even a single teacher who demonstrates respect and understanding to a student may help to improve that student's behavior across the whole school....

Previous attempts to improve behavioral outcomes have tended to require a large time investment from schools and often fail to align with adolescent students' desire for respect and status. The empathic mindset intervention, on the other hand, is brief, promotes respect and has considerable scope for real-world impact. If correctly harnessed in schools, students could spend more time learning, thereby mitigating some of the deleterious outcomes associated with exclusion. Moreover, as student misbehavior is one of the most common causes of teacher stress, another potential downstream consequence of the empathic mindset may be improved teachers' working conditions.

This brief intervention did not teach the skills of empathy per se, rather it aimed to encourage teachers to use their existing powers of empathy and perspective-taking through first-hand reminders of the positive links between empathy, respect and students' well-being in school. Indeed, it is likely that many teachers enter the profession already possessing skills in empathy and perspective-taking, yet over time, challenging behavior may erode their readiness to empathize with students who (perhaps repeatedly) misbehave. The intervention aimed to change this by simply reminding teachers of the importance of making their students feel heard, valued

and respected. These subtle reminders can lead to recursive downstream effects by creating virtuous cycles between the students themselves, their teacher(s) and their environment..."

For more on this, see the following Center resources

- >[*Empathy, Compassion, and Addressing Student Misbehavior*](#)
- >[*Natural Opportunities to Promote Social-Emotional Learning and MH*](#)
- >[*Schools as Caring, Learning Communities*](#)
- >[*Improving Working Relationships Inside the Classroom*](#)

AASA survey results from 628 superintendents across 43 states reveal the real-world impact of the FY25 federal funding freeze.

"...Eighty-five percent of respondents said they have existing contracts paid with federal funds that are currently being withheld, and now have to cover those costs with local dollars. Respondents shared what will be cut to cover this forced cost shift:

Nearly three out of four respondents said they will have to eliminate academic services for students. The programs include targeted literacy and math coaches, before and after school programming, tutoring, credit recovery, CTE and dual enrollment opportunities.

Half of respondents reported they will have to lay off teachers and personnel. These personnel include those who work specifically with English-language learners and special education students, as well as staff who provide targeted reading and math interventions to struggling students.

Half of respondents said they will have to reduce afterschool and extracurricular offerings for students. These programs provide STEM/STEAM opportunities, performing arts and music programs, and AP coursework.

Four out of five respondents indicated they will be forced to reduce or eliminate professional development offerings for educators. These funds are used to build teachers' expertise such as training in the science of reading, teaching math, and the use of AI in the classroom. They are also used to ensure new teachers have the mentors and coaching they need to be successful.

As federal funding is still being withheld, 23% of respondents have been forced to make tough choices about how to reallocate funding, and many districts are rapidly approaching similar inflection points.

Notably, 29% of districts indicated that they must have access to these funds by August 1 to avoid cutting critical programs and services for students. Twenty-one percent of districts will have to notify parents and educators about the loss of programs and services by August 15. ..."

Without timely disbursement of funding, the risk of disruption to essential educational supports for children grows significantly.

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

- >>[*The Challenges and Opportunities of Empathy and Prosocial Behavior in Middle School*](#)
- >>[*The promise & process of adaptive teacher empathy to support equity in classrooms*](#)
- >>[*Outcomes associated with school mobility*](#)
- >>[*After School Calls for Transition Supports*](#)
- >>[*Resilience as a professional competence: a new way towards healthy teachers*](#)
- >>[*Individual and classroom-level associations of within classroom friendships, friendship quality and a sense of peer community on bullying victimization*](#)
- >>[*How to help kids cope with ongoing ICE raids, deportations | Quick Guide*](#)
- >>[*About Students' Death-Related Grief & Bereavement*](#)

- >> **Preparing the next-generation manufacturing workforce**
- >> **Authentic Youth Engagement in Policy**
- >> **About Student Voice and Participation**
- >> **Screening for Mental Health Problems in U.S. Public Schools**
- >> **About the recent RAND report on schools screening for mental health**
- >> **2024 NSDUH Annual National Report**

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>

- 8/6 Student Connectedness Fosters Attendance and Engagement /
- 8/7 School counselor/principal relationships
- 8/7 Supporting multilingual student success
- 8/12 Supporting students with disabilities
- 8/13 Redesigning school in an era of declining enrollment
- 8/14 Building resilience: How families can prepare for the uncertain school year ahead
- 8/20 Mental health and special education
- 8/20 Understanding anxiety
- 8/20 Inviting yourself to the table
- 8/20 Building resilient teams
- 8/20 Classroom participation and engagement
- 8/21 From Classrooms to Careers: Preparing Students for a Changing Workforce
- 8/21 Making the case for prevention
- 8/25 Understanding anxiety in children and youth
- 8/26 Building strong prevention partnerships
- 8/27 Homeless youth: scenarios and solutions
- 8/27 Social media impact on youth
- 8/27 Understanding depression
- 9/4 Social media and teen mental health
- 9/9 Ensuring literacy success across the disciplines for students with disabilities
- 9/10 Theories of change
- 9/10 Homeless youth: McKinney-Vento basics
- 9/15 Responding to children in crisis
- 9/16 Creating a low stress environment
- 9/17 Understanding grief
- 9/17 Strategies to improve student engagement
- 9/17 Supporting Unaccompanied youth
- 9/18 How parents can help anxious children
- 9/18 The power of emotion regulation to drive k12 wellbeing
- 9/24 Family Engagement is the Foundation for Attendance and Learning
- 9/29 De-escalating children in distress
- 10/1 Determining McKinney-Vento eligibility with care

How Learning Happens (Edutopia's series on developing productive and engaged learners.)

Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth (Webinar recording)

Ready for the new school year?



Sure, if by 'ready' you mean emotionally fragile and clinging to my beach towel.

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 work of the **National Initiative for Transforming Student/Learning Supports** emphasizes that:

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.

Our research indicates that transforming student/learning supports involves

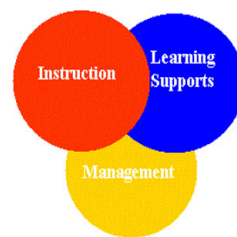
>moving school improvement policy from a 2 to a 3 component framework

and

>unifying and developing student/learning supports into a comprehensive and equitable intervention system

See:

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



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>