

(8/7/24) **This continuing education resource is from the national  
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA**

## **Featured**

### **>Student voice and mental health in schools**

Also for discussion:

**>Prevention, promotion, & strength-based approaches to youth mental health**

**>What's involved in recruiting and retaining school professionals?**

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:**

#### **>Student voice and mental health in schools**

**S**tudent have thoughts and feelings about what's affecting their learning and behavior and what needs to happen to make things better. We view listening and validating student voices as an invaluable part of efforts to improve how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students. And in helping students who are experiencing problems, empathically hearing what students have to say also is an essential facet of building a sense of trust and engaging and reengaging students. Proactively eliciting a student's perceptions is especially critical to establishing the type of collaborative relationship with a teacher or other adult at school that aids problem-solving and can be a significant protective buffer when problems arise.

From: ***Coproduction with peer support groups: A new approach to culturally responsive social services***

"...Coproduction is growing in social services, supporting people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Coproduction ... refers to the interdependent work of service users and service providers to design, deliver, and assess social services. ... Inviting people to participate in joint action demonstrates the service providers' awareness of their need to challenge their assumptions and potential biases (cultural cognition) and their willingness to learn about cultural diversity through the joint action .... Findings reinforce research about good peer support providing information, emotional support, and social connections for peers. Peer support empowers individuals and enhances their capacity to express their support needs and seek solutions, especially for people from culturally diverse backgrounds. ...Peer support groups can independently address some users' preferences and needs and thus ease the organization's obligations to address all needs...."

For more on this, see the following Center resources:

**>About Student Voice and Participation**

**>Youth Participation: Making It Real**

**>About Promoting Youth Development in Schools**

“... mental health frameworks and practices often neglect youth and family perspectives in contextualizing research and findings. Without inclusion of those experiencing mental health challenges or well-being within the communities where treatments will be delivered, the ultimate impact of research on the burden of youth mental health will be limited....” **Giusto, Triplett, Foster, & Gee, 2024**

### **For discussion and interchange:**

#### **>Prevention, promotion, & strength-based approaches to youth mental health**

From: *Future Directions for Community-Engaged Research in Clinical Psychological Science with Youth*

“Community engaged research amplifies prevention, promotion, and strength-based approaches to youth mental health research and services. These approaches have public health potential and are often preferred by communities. Working with communities often leads to an increased focus on prevention, promotion, and strengths first, indicating more potential acceptability and relevance of evidence to community members. First, we focus here on the topic of prevention, followed by strength-based promotion....

To address youth mental health needs at scale, clinical science needs to prioritize prevention of youth mental health problems. Prevention is essential for changing health outcomes. It can be especially powerful when embedded in youth contexts, building on existing social strengths (e.g., religious or community organizations, school and after-school programs) Prevention programs can also facilitate better identification of youth intervention needs and connection to care....

In regard to mental health, strengths-based and promotion-focused approaches are distinct but related approaches. These approaches include focusing on individual or community strengths and building upon those strengths; exploring mental health constructs; and prioritizing adaptive processes and well-being over a deficit-based focus....

We need renewed emphasis on prevention, promotion, and strength-based approaches to youth mental health. Increased efficacy in addressing youth mental health necessitates moving beyond deficit-focused models that only tell one side of the story and may not resonate with communities. Communities can help guide science’s understanding of ways forward in these approaches, which in turn will increase the likelihood of their acceptability, use, and precision...”

### **For discussion and interchange:**

#### **>What’s involved in recruiting and retaining school professionals?**

Shortages of school professionals raise the question: *How can education compete better with other career options?* Policy recommendations for recruitment emphasize ideas such as offering financial incentives and a variety of non-financial incentives, alternative credentialing pathways, reductions in job demands, mentoring and other job supports. Also, recommended are marketing campaigns, recruitment fairs, “priming the pipeline” by reaching into middle and high schools to inspire future recruits for education.

High rates of leaving the field exacerbates the challenge of recruiting newcomers. So one aspect of increasing recruitment is to increase personnel retention.

About 13 percent of the American workforce of 3.4 million public school teachers either moves (227,016) or leaves (230,122) the profession each year. This costs the United States about \$2.2 billion annually. “This high turnover rate disproportionately affects high-poverty schools and seriously compromises the nation's capacity to ensure that all students have access to skilled teaching. ... The estimate of the percentage of new teachers leaving teaching after five years ranges from 40 percent to 50 percent, with the greatest exodus taking place in high-poverty, high-minority, urban, and rural public schools.”

<http://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/PathToEquity.pdf>

Common reasons reported for leaving include

- inadequate support from the school administration
- problems with students (e.g., dealing with discipline, lack of motivation, accommodating individual differences and learning problems)
- dealing with parents
- insufficient resources and support
- late placement and split grade assignments
- too limited faculty input into school decision-making
- low salaries

To address the problems of recruitment and retention, considerable consensus has formed around the need to address seven basic interrelated matters. They involve improving: (1) salaries, (2) recruitment processes, (3) preservice professional preparation, (4) induction into the profession, (5) personalized on-the-job (inservice) learning, (6) student and learning supports, and (7) a career ladder.

From: *What Future Teachers Can Tell Us About Why People Enter the Profession Today*

“...The series, called “America’s Future Teachers,” comes at a time when the teaching profession is in turmoil. Many current teachers report high levels of stress and dissatisfaction in their roles. Some have left the field. School districts are often not able to fill every open position, or not able to fill them with qualified candidates. And the rate of individuals enrolling in teacher preparation programs has dropped precipitously in the last couple of decades, resulting in too few incoming teachers to serve the student population. The U.S. Education Department even started airing TV ads to encourage people to enter the profession.

That complex landscape only makes the perspectives of those who have decided to pursue a career in teaching anyway all the more interesting. The 10 future teachers we interviewed span different geographies, backgrounds, education experiences and motivations. Each story — each person — is unique. Some took a traditional path, from high school straight to college and then the classroom. Others found teaching as a second career, after trying out baking, or corporate America, or mental health fields. Many have long known this was their calling, while others needed more time and perspective to realize it.

Yet several themes emerged...

- >Future teachers told us that they are drawn to the field because of the relationships they get to build and maintain with students. They view that student-teacher connection as core to their work and critical to helping students succeed. ...
- >When we asked aspiring educators to pinpoint the moment they realized they wanted to become a teacher, most shared a memory from their childhood or adolescence that cemented it. Even those who didn’t become teachers right away — starting their careers in other fields for a host of reasons — had identified teaching as their preferred career path early on....
- >About half of the people we interviewed were taking advantage of one of the growing number of flexible, alternative pathways to teaching. Several were turning to teaching as a second career...
- >Most of the aspiring teachers we talked to loved school and consider themselves lifelong learners. And they want to impart that same passion for learning to their students. ...”

***Are any of 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](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)

A recent Gallup poll reported that 44% of K-12 workers in the U.S. say they "always" or "very often" feel burned out at work; this is more than all other industries across the nation. [Marken & Agrawal, 2022](#)

### >Links to a few other relevant resources

For more on recruiting and retaining school staff, see our Center resources

- >>[Improving Teacher Retention, Performance, and Student Outcomes](#)
- >>[Teachers Can't Do it Alone!](#)
- >>[A Sample of What Teachers/Researchers Say about Teacher Burnout](#)

And here are a few resources on the topic from other sources:

- >>[Teacher recruitment, retention, and shortages](#)
- >>[Recruit and retain educators](#)
- >>[Aspiring teachers, financial incentives, and principals' recruitment practices in hard-to-staff schools](#)

Also see the Center's clearinghouse Quick Find on [Burnout](#).

Other topics:

- > [From 'pushed out' to reengaged: Experiences from a flexible learning program](#)
- > [Shifting perspectives: High school students' evaluations of a social norms campaign to reduce bullying and sexual harassment and promote helping behavior](#)
- > [Report on Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2023](#)
- > [Pursuing Equity for Neurodivergent Students](#)
- > [2023 National Survey on Drug Use and Health \(NSDUH\) Releases](#)
- > [Toolkit: Stop Closing Public Schools](#)

***The teacher punished me  
for something I didn't do!***

***What didn't you do?***

***My homework.***



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

- 8/7 Attending to non-academic factors
- 8/13 Natural approaches to improve depression
- 8/13 Administrator Basics for Supporting English Learners with Disabilities
- 8/14 Responding to bias and discrimination in schools
- 8/15 Managing challenging behavior
- 8/15 Conversations with youth
- 8/20 Welcoming students through transitions
- 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 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>

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**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](mailto: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](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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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.

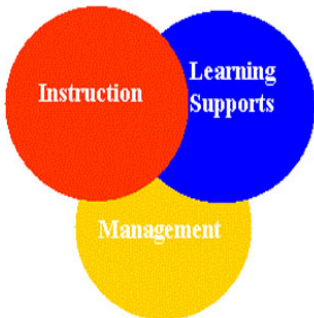
Through the **National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports**, our Center emphasizes the opportunity to start now to transform how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students.

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](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)



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

**For new sign-ups – email [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto: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.