

**School Practitioner Community of Practice**  
(A network for sharing & exchange)  
(9/8/21)

**Contents**

- >What's planned for students (and teachers/staff) who are quarantined?
- >About Improving Mental Health Support at Schools: *Meeting Immediate Needs, Rebuilding Systems to Enhance Capabilities*
- >Follow up on mask bullying
- >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](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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

\*\*\*\*\*

**For discussion and interchange:**

- >What's planned for students (and teachers/staff) who are quarantined?

**Headlines as schools start the new year:**

From the Washington Post:

*As schools reopen, more than 10,000 students and teachers across 14 states are quarantined for coronavirus exposure*

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/08/13/covid-school-outbreak-quarantine/>

From the Mississippi Free Press:

*Mississippi Has Quarantined 15% of All K-12 Students For COVID Cases or Exposures*

<https://www.mississippifreepress.org/15173/mississippi-has-quarantined-15-of-all-k-12-students-for-covid-cases-or-exposures/>

Here are a couple of examples of how districts have planned for this inevitability:

1. From: *From 'quarantine academies' to virtual substitutes, how schools are teaching students in isolation because of COVID-19*  
<https://www.chicagotribune.com/coronavirus/ct-covid-19-schools-quarantine-teachers-20210823-ptisak3uvbhxfkldxdtqugguyy-story.html>

As Illinois schools welcome students back to fully reopened classrooms this month amid another coronavirus surge, educators face a thorny question: How do you teach students who are quarantined by COVID-19?

Remote instruction can be offered to students while they are under quarantine, Illinois State Board of Education Superintendent Carmen Ayala said earlier this summer. But despite pleas from some parents who want a full-time e-learning option to continue, districts including Chicago Public Schools are reserving their virtual programs for students who qualify as medically fragile and have documented health conditions.

Students who test positive for COVID-19 in Arlington Heights School District 25 will be able to attend their classes online through the district's new Quarantine Academy. The district recently hired four "quarantine teachers" for the academy, which will run on Zoom and instruct students in a multigrade format.

Teachers at River Trails School District 26 will open up a virtual window to the classroom via Google Meet for students in quarantine to observe lessons and classroom activities.

At Palatine-based Township High School District 211, each of the district's five high schools has hired a quarantine instruction coordinator tasked with organizing tutoring services for students in quarantine and serving as a liaison for tutors, students and parents

2. From: *As quarantines send students home, what's the plan to keep them learning?*  
<https://www.chalkbeat.org/2021/8/17/22628684/quarantine-schools-covid-delta-cdc>

In Florida's Hillsborough County, some 5,600 students — or about 2.5% of the student body — were in quarantine or isolation as of Monday. The district's fully virtual option is set up as its own school, so it's not open to in-person students quarantining. District officials, realizing the scope of the academic challenge ahead, are now strongly encouraging teachers to post assignments online. The district is also hiring 10 part-time teachers to host live video sessions for elementary schoolers stuck at home and plans to contract with a virtual tutoring company to help older students. ...

Some districts are planning a return to simultaneous instruction if necessary. In Selma, Alabama, superintendent Avis Williams said when students are quarantining, teachers will have to teach remote and in-person students at once....

In Baldwin Union schools on Long Island, New York, middle and high school students at home will be able to stream lessons online.

### **Is this topic being discussed in your locale?**

Please let us know what supports are being provided for those in quarantine so we can share the info widely. Send to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)

### **>About Improving Mental Health Support at Schools: Meeting Immediate Needs, Rebuilding Systems to Enhance Capabilities**

We are seeing many recommendations for dealing with immediate concerns. We are not seeing recommendations for parallel pursuit of rebuilding systems to better address learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Rather than mainly reacting to the crisis, this is a time to view crises as an opportunity to proactively take steps toward first unifying student/learning supports, and then developing a comprehensive and equitable system.

#### **(1) Dealing with immediate concerns about mental health**

A colleague in Texas shared the following example of what many schools are focusing on :

From: *Back to School Basics: How TX Schools Can Support Mental Health as Kids Return Amid the Pandemic*

<https://txchildren.org/posts/2021/8/20/back-to-school-basics-how-tx-schools-can-support-mental-health-as-kids-return-amid-the-pandemic>

Starting a new school year as COVID case numbers skyrocket and hospitals fill up is far from business as usual. But what hasn't changed is that Texans want every student to have the opportunity to do well in school, in spite of challenges students are facing inside or outside of their classrooms. As the pandemic continues to affect children and families across the state, more students will enter their classrooms with a cascade of challenges that are unprecedented. Schools must be ready to meet students where they are — academically, socially, and emotionally — because the more supported students both are and feel, the faster they will get back on track.

Schools can expect students to come back to their classrooms with feelings of worry, frustration,

disconnection, grief, and even anger. They're uncertain about their health, grades, friendships, and family. Losses in income and jobs have strained their families. They're watching parents get sick and grieving when their loved ones die. The pandemic and its mental health consequences have an impact on students of all backgrounds. Additionally, students living in poverty, students of color, students with disabilities, emergent bilingual students, and students with a history of mental health concerns or trauma are among groups most likely to be adversely impacted and in need of support....

Schools are facing some big challenges, too, and managing competing priorities. Keeping students and staff healthy amid the current surge of COVID cases while moving quickly to address learning is certainly on the top of the minds of school leaders....

Here are three things school leaders should focus on to support every student in their district, including those who have been significantly affected by the pandemic.

1. *Re-establish school as a safe, positive space for students (and teachers).* School climate is a critical component in setting the conditions for learning, especially for students affected by trauma. School-wide implementation of restorative discipline practices, social-emotional learning strategies, positive behavior interventions and supports, and engaging families all promote positive school climates.
2. *Prepare and support teachers and other school staff.* Make sure the adults within a school understand (A) the ways that students of different ages are likely to respond to uncertainty, fear, and stress and how trauma-informed practices can help students be better learners; (B) how to identify students who may be struggling and need more support; and (C) how to request assistance.
3. *Have systems in place to identify and respond to students who need additional support.* Recognizing the students who need support won't always be easy. That's why it's important for school leaders to have multi-tiered systems of support in place to identify students who may be struggling and to provide them with interventions, including referrals to services in the community when needed...."

## **(2) Rebuilding systems to better address learning, behavior, and emotional problems**

Our Center stresses the need for institutional and structural changes so that schools can address the needs of the many and not just the few. Most of what we are seeing in the relief funding and other initiatives to support kids and youth this coming year and beyond calls for expanding and enhancing mental health in school, with an emphasis on more of the same. This amounts to tinkering rather than transforming.

We discussed this in the following recent commentary:

### **About the Growing Demand for Mental Health in Schools**

During the COVID 19 crisis and the renewed protests about racial injustice, widespread statements have appeared anticipating the growing number of learning, behavior, and emotional problems schools will need to address this year. In particular, concern for mental health has grown exponentially.

How schools plan to address these matters remains a controversial matter.

In the past, many well intentioned initiatives and policy reports focused on expanding mental health services in schools. But schools in most locales never had the resources to scale up the type of clinical approach usually advocated. And using the pandemic relief funds and increased reliance on Medicaid reimbursements just to underwrite staffing to provide more clinical services ignores the existing opportunity to transform student/learning supports.

Increasing the numbers of personnel can help, but not if all they do is provide services for a few more students. Also, past history suggests that there inevitably will be a return to tightening budgets and layoffs of staff hired by the temporary funds.

And the promising movement forward in adding social and emotional learning (SEL) to the curriculum is helpful but insufficient

(see [http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practitioner\(8-4-2021\).pdf](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practitioner(8-4-2021).pdf) ).

Our position is that it is clear that schools have an important role to play in addressing mental

health concerns, but conceptualizing that role mainly as a component of the mental health care delivery system contributes to the marginalization and fragmentation of efforts to address the wide range of factors interfering with school learning and teaching (e.g., see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/12-23.pdf>). The challenge at this time is to escape old ways of thinking about mental health in schools. New directions are needed.

A promising new direction is to ensure mental health concerns are fully embedded in efforts to transform how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students. Pursuing such a transformation calls for innovative, big picture thinking about revamping available student and learning supports. The aim of the transformation is to respond effectively in classrooms and schoolwide (and, as appropriate, online) to the overlapping emotional, behavior, and learning problems that interfere with the best teaching practices. The intent is to help all students who are not doing well and enhance equity of opportunity for success at school and beyond.

The above matters are discussed in some detail in

- >Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change
- >Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide
- >Improving School Improvement  
(available at this time as free resources  
[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving\\_school\\_improvement.html](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html)).

And for information about the research and lessons learned from the *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports*, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

### How is the above being discussed in your locale?

Please let us know what guidance schools are being provided to support students/families/school staff.

We will can share the info widely. Send to [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)



### >Follow up on mask bullying

In response to the last community of practice item *What plans are in place to address "mask bullying"?* [http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practitioner\(8-25-2021\).pdf](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practitioner(8-25-2021).pdf), we received requests for more. Here are a couple of additional resources:

1. From: *Bullied over masks: Concerns arise as parents make different choices for kids*  
<https://www.winknews.com/2021/08/10/bullied-over-masks-concerns-arise-as-parents-make-different-choices-for-kids/>

Parents are making choices about whether to send their kids to school with a mask or not as COVID-19 cases rise, and it could lead to another challenge: bullying.

More than 10,000 Lee County parents – roughly 12% of the district’s student population – opted out of masking up their kids as school started Tuesday.

Every school year, we worry about our kids being bullied, teased, taunted, or excluded. That isn’t new, but add masks to the mix, and it could lead to exactly what parents fear....

“I don’t want a child to be bullied because they’re wearing a mask, and I don’t want a child to be bullied because they’re not wearing a mask,” said Interim Superintendent Ken Savage, who has kids in the district himself. He said he had school principals meet ahead of the first day to prep them on how to look for and address mask-related bullying, teasing, or taunting....

2. From: *'Mask bullies' concern state parents as fall semester looms*  
<https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/2021/08/02/mask-bullies-concern-oklahoma-parents-fall-semester-looms/5401237001/>

With the COVID-19 delta variant surging and no mask mandate in place for Oklahoma public schools, parents are not only talking to their children about health risks and whether to wear a mask when classes resume this month, but also how to deal with potential bullying over their decision. ...

In Edmond schools and elsewhere, harassment over wearing a mask or not wearing a mask will be addressed under policies already in place. "We always want students to feel supported and welcome," Crystal Raymond, media relations manager for Oklahoma City Public Schools, said. "As with any kind of bullying, students would be disciplined according to our student code of conduct.

Listserv participants: ***How is the problem being handling in local classrooms and schools?***

Send info to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

*To think is easy. To act is hard. But the hardest thing in the world is  
to act in accordance with your thinking.*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

### >Links to a few other relevant shared resources

Guidance for supporting attendance

<https://www.sswaa.org/resolutionstatements>

School-based Strategies for Addressing the Mental Health and Well-being of Youth in the Wake of Covid-19 <https://www.nap.edu/>

About Student Mental Health and the COVID-19 Pandemic

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/mhccovid.pdf>

Thriving schools <https://thrivingschools.kaiserpermanente.org/>

Back to School After COVID-19: Supporting Student and Staff Mental Health

Childhood-Trauma Learning Collaborative Toolkit

<https://mhccnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/B2S%20Toolkit%20-%20Print%20Ready3.pdf>

Strategies for Using American Rescue Plan Funding to Address the Impact of Lost Instructional Time <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/lost-instructional-time.pdf>

Adolescents' Online Coping: When Less Is More but None Is Worse

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/21677026211028983>

What to Expect and Ways to Prepare for the Return to In-Person Learning

[https://mhccnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/Behavioral%20Health%20Impacts%20During%20and%20After%20COVID-19\\_%20Return%20to%20School%20Document%20%2817%29%20%281%29.pdf](https://mhccnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/Behavioral%20Health%20Impacts%20During%20and%20After%20COVID-19_%20Return%20to%20School%20Document%20%2817%29%20%281%29.pdf)

Strengthening School Communities for a Safe, Supportive Return: Part 2

<https://mhccnetwork.org/centers/southeast-mhcc/product/strengthening-school-communities-safe-supportive-return-part-2>

Why This Stage of the Pandemic Makes Us So Anxious

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/08/11/pandemic-anxiety-psychology-delta/>

Influence of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) on Students' Academic Achievement and

Prosocial Behaviors: An Overview

[https://www.academia.edu/50939222/Influence\\_of\\_Social\\_and\\_Emotional\\_Learning\\_SEL\\_on\\_Students\\_Academic\\_Achievement\\_and\\_Prosocial\\_Behaviors\\_An\\_Overview](https://www.academia.edu/50939222/Influence_of_Social_and_Emotional_Learning_SEL_on_Students_Academic_Achievement_and_Prosocial_Behaviors_An_Overview)

4 ways schools are enhancing parent relationships in the return to classrooms

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/4-ways-schools-are-enhancing-relationships-with-parents/605897/>

The Landscape of Federal K-12 School Health Efforts, 2010-2020

<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/the-landscape-of-federal-k-12-school-health-efforts-2010-2020>

Community Schools: Supporting One Another As A Blueprint for the Future

<https://www.communityschools.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/08/CS-Brief-for-AECF-Joses-version-16.pdf>

Six Strategies To Build Empowering Youth Engagement

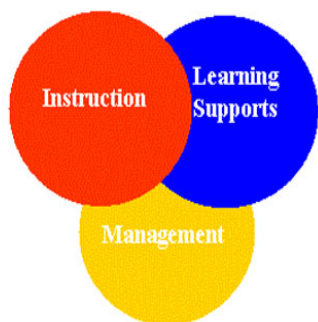
<https://www.communityschools.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/07/Six-Strategies-to-Build-Empowering-Youth-Engagement-1.pdf>

## 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>

- 9/8/21 Strategies and best practices for returning to school
  - 9/9 Reimagine How We Support Students
  - 9/9 It's About More Than Showing Up: Improving Attendance through School Connectedness
  - 9/9 Leading with Equity
  - 9/10 Opening more doors with dual enrollment: expanding access to college
  - 9/15 Behavioral Strategies to Win in Discipline
  - 9/16 Promote Healing and Hope for Students
  - 9/16 Mindsets & Behaviors for Student
  - 9/16 Back to School: Tips for Re-entry Success
  - 9/21 Suicide Prevention and Mental Health During COVID-19
  - 9/22 What Great Assistant Principals Do Differently
  - 9/22 Leadership for Racial Equity in Schools and Beyond
  - 9/23 From Strategic Planning to Strategic Practice
  - 9/23 Create Compassionate and Connected Communities
  - 9/29 Fully Present: Leveraging Attendance Data to Ensure Ongoing Success
  - 9/30 Restore Staff Wellness <https://mhctnetwork.org/centers/global-mhctc/training-and-events-calendar>
  - 10/4 Working with Struggling Students During a Pandemic
  - 10/11 Teen Dating: Keeping Teens Safe
  - 10/20 Build Advocacy Plans for LGBTQ Students
  - 10/20 Strategies & Best Practices for Returning to School
  - 10/28 Loss and Healing after a Pandemic: Supporting Youth After an Unprecedented Year
- 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.

\*\*\*\*\*



**Invitation to Listserv Participants:**

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](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

**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 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/> )**