



Louisiana's Comprehensive Learning Supports System: AN OVERVIEW

“ Children are the living message we send to a time we will not see. ”

- John W. Whitehead

Why? Research provides evidence that students learn best when their academic, emotional, physical, and social needs are met. Educating the whole child, one who is **healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged**, is a prerequisite to creating a world-class educational system. In response to the need for improved cohort graduation rates in Louisiana, a Design Team has been assembled

to enhance the prevailing two-component approach to school improvement. The current approach primarily emphasizes:

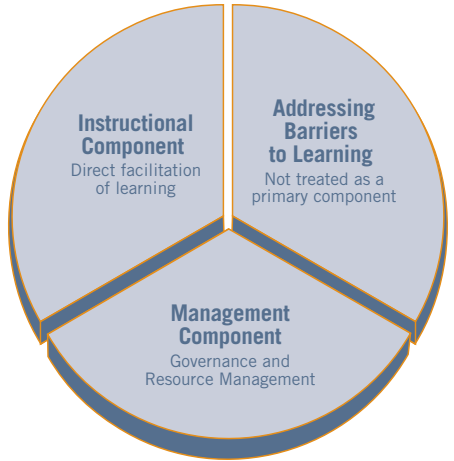
- » Instructional Component – direct facilitation of learning
- » Management/Governance – administrative guidance and resource management

The enhancement emphasizes a third component:

- » Learning Supports - a comprehensive approach focused on overcoming barriers to learning and teaching.

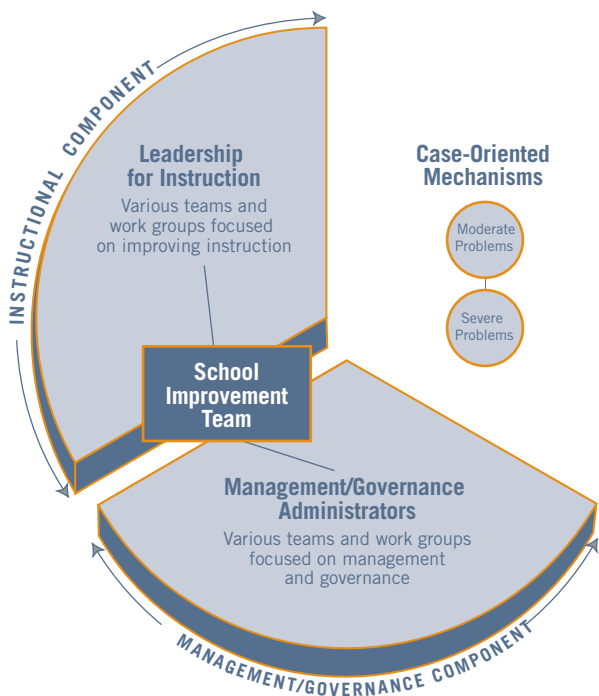
There are many barriers that interfere with ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. Some are associated with the neighborhoods in which they live, others are associated with family conditions, others are associated with school and peer factors, and for some students there are personal conditions.

A comprehensive learning supports system is essential to ensuring higher academic achievement, closing the achievement gap, and preparing students to be effective citizens in a global market.



The Prevailing Two-Component Approach to School Improvement

What? The Louisiana Comprehensive Learning Supports System is a comprehensive and systemic approach to ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. Learning Supports are the resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, and emotional support to directly address barriers to learning and teaching and to reengage disconnected students.



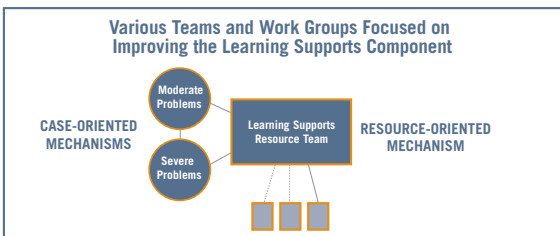
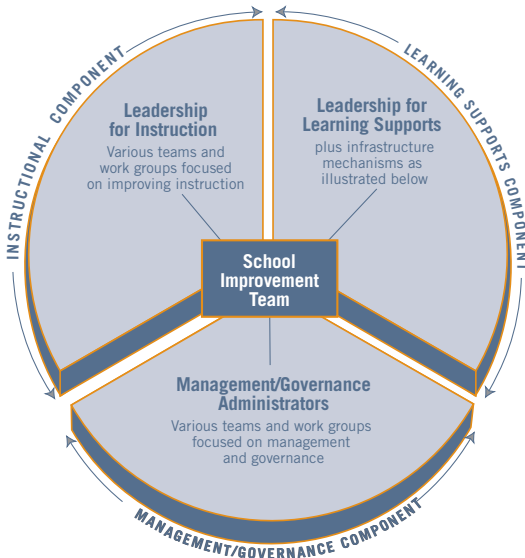
What Student Support Infrastructure Looks Like at Most Schools

What a Comprehensive Learning Supports System *Is Not*

- » A case-by-case approach that focuses only on individual students with problems and is unable to meet the needs of many students.
 - » A fragmented set of student and family services.
 - » A marginalized and highly restrictive set of student and family services and crisis responses.
 - » An approach that mostly focuses on using outside providers.
 - » An approach that is unable to meet the needs of most students, even with capacity building.
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What a Comprehensive Learning Supports System Is

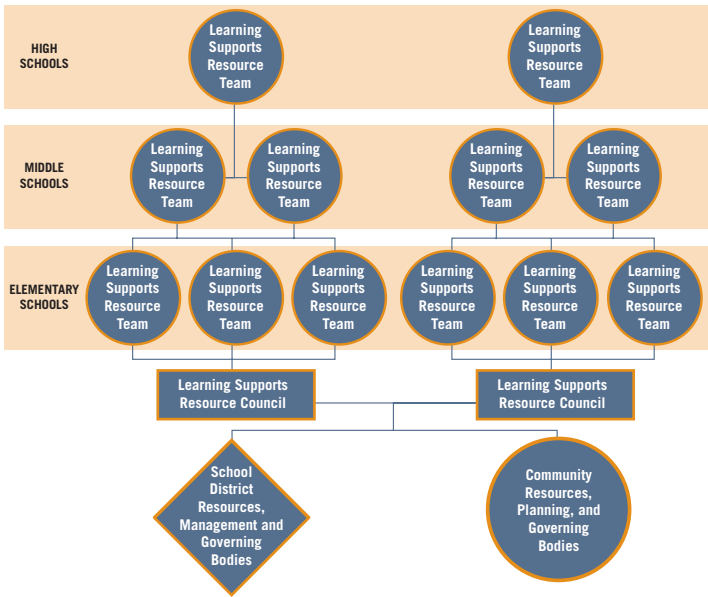
- » A resource-oriented approach that uses aggregated school and student data and maps and analyzes resources to clarify what learning supports a school needs.
 - » An operational infrastructure at a school designed to recommend priorities for alignment and redeployment of resources to develop a comprehensive system of learning supports.
 - » A continuum of interventions that encompasses prevention and early intervention and is fully integrated into school improvement.
 - » A system that emphasizes both school-wide and classroom supports, learns from best practices in our High Poverty/High Success schools, and seeks to weave in community supports.
 - » A system that can benefit from regional and state-level capacity building.
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Integrated Infrastructure at the School Level

How? The Comprehensive Learning Supports System provides a framework to guide education agents (state, district, and school) through a process of identifying and eliminating existing barriers to learning by:

- » Redistributing existing funds and organizing resources.
- » Building and/or enhancing existing learning supports.
- » Prioritizing and streamlining efforts and initiatives.
- » Transforming fragmented and disjointed programs into cohesive, relevant, and sustained supports for learning.



Enhancing a System of Learning Supports by Connecting Resources Across a Family of Schools, a District, and the Community

Outcomes:

- » Increased graduation rates & reduced student dropout rates
- » Reengaged students
- » Reduced number of schools designated as low performing
- » Narrowing of the achievement gaps
- » Countering of student achievement plateau effect

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