

What We are Learning from the Award Nominees

We were pleased to receive 28 nominations for the *National Award for Work on Transforming Student/Learning Supports*.

All expressed feelings of pride about how well those nominated were doing in working to strengthen student/learning supports.

As was expected, the challenge of identifying who will receive the award is a bit daunting, but the process is underway, and we will announce the results in the first week of January.

At this point, we can note that our initial analyses indicate:

(1) The nominees shared a common understanding that

- prevailing approaches to student/learning supports needed rethinking in order to more effectively address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnect students
- prevention begins with fostering an empowering school climate that enhances interpersonal connections and produces a caring sense of community
- students who are not doing well require personalized supports that address specific needs and build on their assets and interests
- community collaboration and family engagement are invaluable supports
- improvements benefitted from available R&D efforts.

(2) Nearly all referred to specific programs/focus of their work

(e.g., improving attendance, personalizing learning, mentoring, student/family resources and family engagement, mental health services, outdoor learning, service learning, community partnerships, staff wellness, afterschool programs)

(3) Most indicated they had some form of a work groups that met together on a regular basis

(e.g., a wellness committee, student support team, mental health workforce, intervention team, threat assessment team, problem solving team, multi-disciplinary team).

(4) Nine referred to using a multi-tiered continuum of supports framework, citing specific programs at each level.

(5) Nine shared data on improved outcomes for students

(6) Six specifically mentioned professional development related to enhancing student/learning support
More to come.