

**To: District and State Collaborative Network for
Developing Comprehensive Systems for Learning Support**

From: Howard Adelman & Linda Taylor

12/19/11

Re: **A Few Examples of Indicators That New Directions for Student and Learning Supports Are on the Cusp of a Major Policy and Practice Breakthrough**

(1) Report from the December 15th Baton Rouge Meeting of the UCLA-AASA-Scholastic Leadership Initiative

The meeting at the Louisiana Department of Education was another clear indication that initiatives for new directions for student and learning supports are on the cusp of a major policy and practice breakthrough. Some indicators from this initiative are:

- The Louisiana Department has begun work with several districts to implement its design for a *Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* (see design at <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/15044.pdf>). Three identified at the meeting are Grant, Jefferson, and Red River. As part of the department's roll out strategy, they have developed a guidance for *Funding Stream Integration to Promote Development and Sustainability of a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/fundingstream.pdf>).
- With a view to moving in new directions for learning supports, Tommy Bice, the newly appointed Alabama superintendent of education, attended along with the Eric Mackey, Executive Director of the School Superintendents of Alabama.
- Gainesville City Schools (GA) has implemented its design and is now deepening the work and focusing on sustainability. They report that referrals for disciplinary action for the middle and high schools have dropped from 91 disciplinary tribunals in 2008-09 to 47 in 2010-11, and the elementary schools saw a 75% decrease. Graduation rates have increased from 73.3% in 2009 to 81.3% in 2010 and 84.9% in 2011. (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/aasa/aasagainesville.pdf>). A case study on the district's work has been developed by the Education Development Center (EDC) and will soon be online.
- Stillwater School District 834 (MN) has begun designing its new directions. As they pursue the process, the district leaders indicate they want to learn more about how to do the work in ways that ensure sustainability (e.g., identify a champion on the school board, broad-based professional and other stakeholder development at district and school levels, clarity about relevant process and outcome data).
- UCLA Center has incorporated the AASA Lead Districts into the new, broad-based *District and State Collaborative Network for Developing Comprehensive Systems for Learning Support*.

- Scholastic is planning ways to expand its efforts to facilitate the national focus on how schools can address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. And in addition to the handbook (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/rebuild/rebuildingtoc.htm>) and online leadership institute modules (<http://rebuildingforlearning.scholastic.com/>), they will shortly have a practitioners' guide online.
- AASA is planning ways to fully integrate its focus on district development of a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports into its flagship initiative, *Educating the Total Child*. The AASA Lead Districts will again convene at the mid-February AASA meeting in Houston.

We encourage any of the participants in *District and State Collaborative Network for Developing Comprehensive Systems for Learning Support* who may be attending the AASA conference to join in this special opportunity for face-to-face sharing and learning about moving student and learning supports in new directions.

(2) Tucson Unified School District's New Directions for Student and Learning Supports

TUSD is committed to becoming a model 21st century urban school district that ensures every student has an equal opportunity to succeed at school. To these ends, the district has begun a process of developing a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports at its schools and has employed a cadre of Learning Supports Coordinators to work with every school. TUSD has adopted frameworks developed by the Center at UCLA and have hired change agents designated as Learning Supports Coordinators to facilitate the transformation. Last year we provided training to the first cadre and to their principals. We were invited to return to Tucson on December 9th to provide training for the latest cadre of Learning Supports Coordinators hired by the district.

(3) District and State Collaborative Network for Developing Comprehensive Systems for Learning Support

In the brief period since this collaborative network was established, (a) inquiries to the Center for information about new directions for student and learning supports have escalated, (b) direct sharing among those moving forward is increasing, and (c) the opportunities to influence policy are growing.

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Please share this with other interested parties.

And let us hear about your work and needs so we can share it with the network.

As always, send communications to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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This document is also online at the collaborative network website:

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/network/network.html>