

**25 Years &
Counting**



ENEWS

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange



January, 2012 (Vol. 16 #4)

ENEWS is one of the many resources provided by the School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. This electronic newsletter is sent to those concerned with enhancing policies, programs, and practices related to addressing barriers to student learning and to promoting mental health in schools.

For more on what our national Center offers, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>



**We encourage you to forward this to others. If you have been forwarded this
ENEWS and want to sign up to receive it directly, please let us know.**

Contact smhp@ucla.edu



WHAT'S HERE THIS MONTH

****Challenge for 2012**

**>Expanding the 2012 School Improvement Agenda to Encompass Development
of a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports**

****News from around the country**

****Recent publications relevant to**

>Child and adolescent mental and physical health

>School, family, & community

>Policy, systems, law, ethics, finances & statistics

****This month's focus for schools to address barriers to learning**

>January – Re-Engaging Disconnected Students

****Other helpful Internet resources**

****UCLA Center Update**

****Links to**

>Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops

>Upcoming and archived webcasts, video, and online professional development

>Calls for grant proposals, presentations & papers

>Training and job opportunities

****Comments, requests, information, questions from the field**



CHALLENGE FOR 2012

Expanding the 2012 School Improvement Agenda to Encompass Development of a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports

The focus on improved curriculum, standards, teacher quality, and accountability have all shaped school improvement efforts over the past few years. Each state has worked with all districts on implementing these reforms. While moving some schools forward, the momentum has been limited in many schools. According to a Center on Education Policy Report, half of America's public schools didn't meet federal achievement standards this past year.

So everyone wants change. However, most discussions about reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are seen by many primarily as recipes for maintaining the unsatisfactory status quo.

What's missing? – The dominant answers to this question usually emphasize a variety of instructional and management concerns. For a relatively small group of educators, the answer goes further. What's fundamentally missing is an in-depth focus on enhancing school improvement policy and practice to move forward in comprehensively addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

There have been marginal discussions about this (especially with respect to the dropout data). Moreover, policy makers like to point to pilots and projects that have focused on specific problems and have had some impact on some students. And, the marginal discussions make it likely that Congress will continue to parse out grants to a few states and districts and provide mega-grants to a few communities.

In 2012, the big challenge is to move out of the margins and expand the school improvement agenda to include development of a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports. In doing so, there are many lessons that have been and are being learned for the many pilots, projects, and other "experiments" designed to enhance the ability of schools to increase equity of opportunity for students to succeed at school and beyond.

See, for example:

- >the current state education agency initiative for a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports in Louisiana –

- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing2.htm#louisiana>

- >the current district-wide initiative in Gainesville City Schools (GA) –

- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/aasa/aasagainesville.pdf>

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Half of U. S. Schools Fail Federal Standards – The Center on Education Policy report shows more than 43,000 schools, or 48%, did not make “adequate yearly progress “ this year. State’s scores varied wildly. That’s because some states have harder tests or have high number of immigrant and low income children. It’s also because the law requires states to raise the bar each year for how many children must pass the test and some states put off the largest increase until this year to avoid sanctions. 12/15/11.
[Http://www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com)

Plan Would Turn Away Hundreds of Aspiring Teachers – College students who apply to Iowa’s teacher preparation schools would need a minimum grade point average of 3.0, a B average, under the proposal that was part of the Governor’s education blueprint. The change would give Iowa one of the most selective teacher preparation programs in the United States. Legislators, who must approve the change, will have to decide if turning away hundreds of aspiring teachers each year, including a disproportionate number of minorities, is an acceptable price to pay for more stringent standards. 12/4/11. [Http://www.desmoinesregister.com](http://www.desmoinesregister.com)

More than 40% of Low Income Schools Don’t Get a Fair Share of Funds – A new report from the U. S. Department of Education documents that schools serving low income students are being shortchanged because school districts across the country are inequitably distributing their state and local funds. This leaves students in high poverty schools with fewer resources than schools attended by their wealthier peers. 11/30/11
<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/>

State to Require Students to Pick Career Path – Following a national trend, Georgia is about to start requiring its ninth graders to pick a career path and follow a class schedule that’s at least partially tailored to it. The objective is to raise career and college readiness for all students. Public school students will pick a potential job to pursue in one of 17 broad career categories, known as career pathway clusters. Teachers would start talking to students about potential career opportunities, starting as early as fifth grade. 12/12/11
<http://www.ajc.com>

Schools’ Healthful Lunch Menu Panned by Students – For many students, Los Angeles Unified’s introduction of healthful lunches, part of a campaign against obesity, diabetes and other problems, has been a flop. Many of the meals are being rejected en masse. Participation in the school lunch program has dropped by thousands of students. Principals report massive waste. Students are ditching lunch, and some say they’re suffering from headaches and stomach pains. At many campuses, an underground market for chips, candy, fast food burgers and other taboo fare is thriving. Acknowledging the complaints, the district announced that the menu would be revised. 12/18/11.
<Http://www.latimes.com>

Penn State to Donate to Help Sex-abuse Victims – Penn State University will divert \$1.5 million from its athletics programs and donate it to groups that help victims of sexual violence. The University president has increased the university’s visibility on the issue, appearing at a forum pledging to raise ethical standards so that anyone who witnesses abuse would know the morally correct response, not just the legally required action. 12/1/11. <Http://latimes.com>

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Quote from Penn State story, above

“As a university and as people within a caring community we believe it is essential to take a deeper look at the core issue of child sexual abuse and to openly acknowledge the scope of the problem. Our own experience shows that child sexual abuse greatly impacts individuals and entire communities, It is now our responsibility to assist in raising awareness and in helping fight this insidious and often secrete crime.”

Rodney Erickson, Penn State’s new president

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Among the sources used in gathering the above items are:

- >The ECS e-clip at <http://www.ecs.org>
- >The Public Education Network Newsblast at <http://www.publiceducationorg>
- >The Update from the American Orthopsychiatric Association at <http://www.aoatoday.com/news.php>

Note: Each week the Center highlights newsworthy stories online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/linkstolatest.htm>

If you see a story that should be included, let us know. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu or smhp@ucla.edu

RECENT PUBLICATIONS (In print and on the web)

Child, Adolescent, Young Adult Mental and Physical Health

>School-based mental health programs for students who have emotional disturbances: Academic and social emotional outcomes (2011) K. Kutash, et al. *School Mental Health* 3(4) 191-208. [Http://www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com)

>The role of ecological assets in positive and problematic developmental trajectories (2011) E. Bowers, et al. *Journal of Adolescence*, 34 (6) 1151-1165. [Http://www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

>Treatment effects for common outcomes of child sexual abuse: A current meta-analysis (2011) E. Trask, et al. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 16(1) 6-19. [Http://www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

>Victimization, aggression, and visits to the school nurse for somatic complaints, illnesses, and physical injuries (2011) E. Vernberg, et al. *Pediatrics*, ePub.

[Http://www.pediatrics.org](http://www.pediatrics.org)

>Mental health promotion and problem prevention in schools: What does the evidence say? (2011) K. Weare & M. Nind. *Health Promotion International*, 26 Suppl 1 (epub) 129-169. [Http://heapro.oupjournals.org](http://heapro.oupjournals.org)

>The role of teachers in school-based suicide prevention: A qualitative study of school staff perspectives (2011) E. Nadeem, et al. *School Mental Health*, 3(4) 209-221.

[Http://www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com)

Schools, Family & Community

>The protective influence of gangs: Can schools compensate? (2011) J. Sharkey, et al. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 16(1) 45-54. [Http://www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

>Classroom context, school engagement, and academic achievement in early adolescents (2011) A. Dotterer & K. Lowe. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 40 (12) 1649-1660.

[Http://www.metapress.com](http://www.metapress.com)

>Do schools differ in suicide risk? The influence of school and neighborhood on attempted suicide, suicidal ideation and self-harm among secondary school pupils. (2011) Young, R. et al. *BMC Public Health* 11(1) 874. [Http://www.biomedcentral.com](http://www.biomedcentral.com)

>Creating taxonomies to improve school-home connections with families of culturally and linguistically diverse learners (2011) C. Linse. *Education and Urban Society*, 43, 651-670. [Http://eus.sagepub.com](http://eus.sagepub.com)

>Primary-secondary transition: Differences between teachers' and children's perceptions. (2011) K. Topping. *Improving Schools*, 14, 268-279. [Http://imp.sagepub.com](http://imp.sagepub.com)

>Utilizing the School Health Index to build collaboration between a university and an urban school district. (2011) J. Butler, et al. *Journal of School Health*, 81(12) 774-782.

[Http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com)

Policy, Systems, Law, Ethics, Finances & Statistics

>Healthy people: A 2020 vision for the social determinants approach (2011) H. Koh, et al. *Healthy Education and Behavior* 38 (6) 551-557. [Http://www.heb.sagepub.com](http://www.heb.sagepub.com)

>High school gay-straight alliances and young adult well-being: An examination of GSA presence, participation, and perceived effectiveness. (2011) R. Toomey, et al. *Applied Developmental Science* 15(4) 175-185. [Http://informaworld.com](http://informaworld.com)

>Cyberbullying school bullying, and psychological distress: A regional census of high school students (2011) S. Schneider, et al. *American Journal of Public Health*, ePub. [Http://www.ajph.org](http://www.ajph.org)

>A national evaluation of Safe Schools/Healthy Students: Outcomes and influences. (2011) J. Derzon, et al. *Evaluation of Program Planning*. Epub. [Http://www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

>Prevalence, persistence, and sociodemographic correlates of DSM-IV Disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication Adolescent Supplement (2011) R. Kessler, et al. *Archives of General Psychiatry*. Online first. [Http://www.archgenpsychiatry.com](http://www.archgenpsychiatry.com)

>Healthy people 2010 objectives for unintentional injury and violence among adolescents: Trends from the national youth risk behavior survey, 1999-2099. (2011) E. Olsen, et al., *American Journal of Prevention Medicine*, 41(6) 551-558. [Http://sciencedirect.com](http://sciencedirect.com)

FYI: Safety Lit is a useful resource for abstracts related to injury prevention policy and practice. [Http://www.safetylit.org](http://www.safetylit.org)

If you see a publication we should include in ENEWS, please let us know. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu or smhp@ucla.edu

Note: The Center's Quick Find online clearinghouse at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> is updated regularly with new reports and publications such as those listed above. Currently there are over 130 alphabetized topic pages with direct links to Center materials and to other online resources and related centers. Let us know about publications and reports that should be included in this dedicated online clearinghouse. Smhp@ucla.edu

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New Year's Resolution:

I will accomplish this year every thing I resolved to do last year (and the year before ... etc. etc. etc. ...)

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THIS MONTH'S FOCUS FOR SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LEARNING

January– Re-engaging students

Mid-year provides a critical opportunity to reflect on how well the school year is going. After appreciating the success of some students and programs, it is time to face up to the students who aren't doing well and who seem to have given up. Some are passively disengaged and seem bored or burned out; others are actively disconnected; some have stopped coming to school.

Since giving up on these students is not an option, the focus turns to re-engagement. The key is to establish a positive relationship with an adult (teacher, support staff, administrator) to explore what changes are needed. Hawkins and Catalano describe how such bonds between students and adults are established:

“Research shows that a child living in a high risk environment can be protected from problem behaviors by a strong, affectionate relationship with an adult who care about, and is committed to, his or her healthy development. This can be any caring adult – a parent, a teacher, an extended family member, a coach, an employer or an adult from the child's faith community. The most important part of this relationship is that the you has a long-term investment in it, or believes the relationship is worth protecting, and so is motivated to follow the healthy beliefs and clear standards held by the person.”

Building a strong, positive relationship with difficult students is a challenge. Looking for the strengths, building on the competence, and re-establishing relationships of mutual respect is best achieved when support staff and teachers work as a team.

For some students, the key is to engage the family in supporting learning and participation in classroom and school. For more on this see the new Center report *Enhancing Home Involvement to Address Barriers to Learning: A Collaborative Process* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/homeinv.pdf>

For resources related to re-engaging students, see the Center's online clearinghouse Quick Finds on:

>Motivation – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/motiv.htm>

>Response to Intervention – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/responsetointervention.htm>

If you need ideas for students who have become disengaged, let us know. Describe the problem and let us know what you have tried. Send your request to ltaylor@ucla.edu
If you have suggestions on what is working in your schools to re-engage students, send them as well so we can share with others.

Note: Integrating support for learning and teaching into the natural opportunities and phases of the school year provide unlimited opportunities. For a range of ideas organized by each month, see our home page “Ideas for Enhancing Learning Supports at your School this Month” on the homepage at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

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Teacher:

“You haven’t been to school since before the winter break? Where have you been?”

Student:

“I was doing everything so well outside of school I wanted to put off feeling like a failure as long as I could.”

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OTHER HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES

- >Analysis of state bullying laws and policies –
<http://ww2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oepd/ppss/reports.htm1#safe>
- >Bullying in schools: An overview – <http://ojjdp.gov/pubs/234205.pdf>
- >Act out, get out? Considering the impact of school discipline practices in Massachusetts – <http://renniecenter.issuelab.org>
- >Building a grad nation – <http://www.every1graduates.org>
- >America’s Youth: Transitions to Adulthood –
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2012026>
- >Monitoring the Future Survey, Overview of findings 2011 –
<http://www.nida.nih.gov/newsroom/11/mtf11overview.html>
- >Income and education as predictors of children’s school readiness –
http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2011/1215_school_readiness_isaacs.aspx
- >National Center for Special Education Research – <http://ies.ed.gov/ncser>
- >Final regulations amending the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act –
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>

Note: For a wider range of relevant websites see our *Gateway to a World of Resources* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/gateway/gateway_sites.htm

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With all the *new* information coming in by email and available on the Internet, it's getting harder to justify continuing with the same *old* practices.

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UCLA CENTER UPDATE

New Report

> *Enhancing Home Involvement to Address Barriers to Learning:
A Collaborative Process* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/homeinv.pdf>

New Guidance Notes

> *Engaging and Re-engaging Families When a Student Is Not Doing Well* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/familyengage.pdf>

New Collaborative Network – Update and Opportunity to Join

District and State Collaborative Network for Developing Comprehensive Systems for Learning Supports – see the information exchanges and participant list at
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/network/network.html>

Upcoming Winter Journal/Newsletter

Watch for this next week. The winter issue contains excerpts from our latest work on enhancing home involvement and engagement. Also read about the work on unifying and developing a comprehensive system of learning supports in the Gainesville City Schools (GA). And there are updates on the UCLA/AASA/Scholastic collaborative and the new district and state collaborative network focused on new directions for student and learning supports.

Featured Center Resource

Net Exchange: A collection of practitioner questions and responses by topic.

Net Exchange captures the interactions between the Center and those requesting technical assistance. Read posts on what practitioners have asked and the responses from the Center and others. If you would like to respond to any of the questions posted or ask new questions, you can use the online option “submit a question” or send directly to Ltaylor@ucla.edu. New questions are included in the weekly Practitioners’ listserv. See – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm> And if you would like to join the weekly Practitioners listserv, send a note to smhp@ucla.edu

LINKS TO:

- >Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm>
- >Calls for grant proposals, presentations, and papers – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm>
- >Training and job opportunities – [Http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm)
- >Upcoming and archived webcasts and other professional development opportunities – <http://smh.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

Note: These links are on our homepage for easy access. Each is updated regularly. Just click on the indicated URL or go to our homepage at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

If you would like to add information to these, send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu

COMMENT FROM THE FIELD

Regarding learning support leadership teams

“My experience with the types of teams you have mentioned seem to undervalue support staff and teachers in noncore academics. Children are academically challenged for a variety of reasons and often a “hook” is needed. Including a cross section of staff on these teams can have tremendous benefit to the climate as a whole as well as to individual children. Be it a gym coach, sports coach, music teacher, cafeteria staff, bus driver, etc. These individuals know the students in a way that typical classroom teachers do not. When the teams only include core academic teachers they can miss avenues of solutions or understanding the barriers to success.”

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF E-NEWS

Who Are We? The *national Center for Mental Health in Schools* 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 Project and Center are co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

For more information about the Center and its many resources, go to the website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> or email Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.ucla.edu

Send info to share with others or ask for specific resources by email to smhp@ucla.edu