School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)

November 15, 2017

Topic: *Creating a family of schools to enhance student/learning supports*

Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives

Featured Center Resources

>*for creating infrastructure for a family of schools*

Seeking info about:

>*Who is working to transform student/learning supports?*

Note: *Go to* http://smhp.psych.ucla **for links to other resources including**
>**Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops**
>**Calls for grant proposals, presentations, and papers**
>**Training and job opportunities**
>**Upcoming webcasts & other professional development opportunities**

This resource is from the
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

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Given shrinking education budgets, we have been asked to increase our outreach to make our free resources more available (e.g., for planning, professional development, etc.).

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).

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For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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

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Note: In keeping with the *National Initiative for Transforming Student & Learning Supports*, this is being sent to and forwarded by over 100,000 school and community stakeholders concerned about (1) daily matters confronting schools, (2) promoting whole child development and positive school climate, and (3) the transformation of student and learning supports.

Topic for this week: *Creating a family of schools to enhance student/learning supports*

We receive frequent requests about the value of and steps for establishing a collaboration to facilitate schools working together. So here's our perspective and some Center resources:

Center perspective: Schools in the same community have a number of shared concerns. Feeder schools often enroll students from the same family. Some programs and personnel are (or can be) shared by several neighboring schools. Through networking, a cluster of schools can decrease problems, reduce redundancy, achieve economies of scale, establish equitable ways to share district and community resources, and improve results.

As an initial focus, we suggest building the network around the goal of improving how participating schools work together to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

Effective and sustainable networking requires developing a collaborative operational infrastructure. Given the above goal, the first step for each school that wants to network involves reworking its leadership infrastructure so that improving student/learning supports component is a high order priority – see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20infrastructure.pdf. A core mechanism to be established is a school-based learning support leadership *team*. This team provides what often is a missing link for managing and enhancing interventions and eventually developing them into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student/learning supports. Examples of team functions include (a) mapping and analyzing activity and resources to improve their use in preventing and ameliorating problems and to assess gaps and clarify priorities, (b) enhancing procedures for management of programs and information and for communication among school staff and with the home, and (c) exploring ways to redeploy and enhance resources – such as clarifying which activities are nonproductive, suggesting better uses for resources, and establishing priorities for developing new interventions, as well as reaching out to connect with additional resources in the school district and community to fill gaps. (For a description of this team, see the section below on featured resources.)

Once each school has a well functioning team, the process of connecting with other schools in the neighborhood can begin. In general, a group of schools can benefit from a multi-site resource mechanism designed to provide leadership, facilitate communication and connection, and ensure quality improvement across sites. Networking can be particularly useful for high schools and their feeder middle and elementary schools. (This clearly is important in addressing barriers with those families who have youngsters attending more than one level of schooling in the same cluster. It is neither cost-effective nor good intervention for each school to contact a family separately in instances where several children from a family are in need of special attention.)

The core of the infrastructure at this level is a multi-site team. Such a team (e.g., a *Learning Supports Leadership Council*) brings together one-two representatives from each school's Learning Supports Leadership *Team*. The group provides a useful mechanism for leadership, communication, maintenance, quality improvement, and ongoing development of a system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Such a group can meet about once a month to help (a) coordinate and integrate programs serving multiple schools, (b) identify and meet common needs with respect to guidelines and staff development, and (c) create linkages and collaborations among schools and with community agencies. In this last regard, it can play a special role in community outreach both to create formal working relationships and ensure that all participating schools have access to such resources. (With respect to linking with community resources, multi-school councils are especially attractive to community agencies who often don't have the time or personnel to link with individual schools.)

In general, the group's functions parallel those of the school-based teams – with a particular emphasis on helping to ensure cohesive and equitable deployment of resources and pooling of

resources to achieve economies of scale. Natural starting points for councils are the sharing of needs assessment, resource mapping, analyses, and recommendations for reform and restructuring. Specific areas of initial focus may be on such matters as addressing community/school violence and developing prevention programs and safe school plans.

At the district level, the need is for administrative leadership and capacity building support that helps maximize development of the school teams and multi-school councils.

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Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives

What can you share about creating a network of schools?

Send your responses to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Featured Center Resources

>>for creating infrastructure for a family of schools

Well-designed, compatible, and interconnected operational infrastructures at schools, for school complexes, at the district level, and for school-community collaboratives are essential for improving efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. Each plays a key role in weaving together existing school and community resources and developing a full and cohesive continuum of interventions over time.

The following resources provide details and guidelines for developing an effective and sustainable operational infrastructure at each level.

>*Key Leadership Mechanisms for Enhancing Student & Learning Supports* –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/report/resource_oriented_teams.pdf

>*What is a Learning Supports Leadership Team*?
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/resource%20coord%20team.pdf

>*Notes on Infrastructure for Learning Supports at District, Regional, and State Offices* –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentsupport/toolkit/aidk.pdf

>*Guide to Enhancing School-community Infrastructure and Weaving Resources Together* –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentsupport/toolkit/aidg.pdf

>*Frameworks for Systemic Transformation of Student and Learning Supports* –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/frameworksforsystemictransformation.pdf

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Did you miss the quarterly ejournal for fall 2017? It had articles on:

*E*XPANDING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UNDER ESSA
>*Revitalizing Local Control: Transforming Student/Learning Supports
and Enhancing Equity of Opportunity*
>*Escaping Old Ideas to More Effectively Address Barriers to
Learning and Teaching*
>*Saving Starfish ls Not Enough!*
You can access this resource and more from the Center's homepage
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/

Who is working to transform student/learning supports?

As you may know, our Center has been facilitating the National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports.* The initiative's recent Call to Action has stimulated inquiries to us about how school districts, state departments of education, and leadership organizations are pursuing the opportunity to transform the way schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

In response, we are in the process of preparing a report for wide circulation about this matter. Our intent is to analyze what leaders across the country indicate about how to transform student and learning supports as a key facet in enhancing students' equity of opportunity for success at school and beyond. We will connect the analysis to our previous reports on ESSA and addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

We very much want to account for a wide-range of perspectives on this critical facet of school improvement.

To this end, we are asking you to direct us to any online material or send us copies of what is available from school districts, state departments of education, and leadership organizations you know about that are relevant to this set of concerns.

Please send the information to us at Ltaylor@ucla.edu .
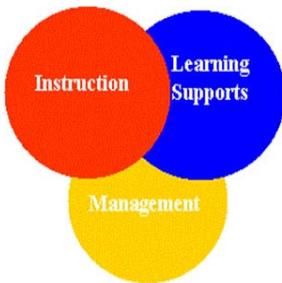
Information is online about the
National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

**THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND
INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES**!

For new sign-ups – email 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/)