School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
June 20, 2018

Some Resource Updates From the Field

This practitioner provides links to the following resources:

(1) **New, free book** *Improving School Improvement*
(2) *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance —— United States, 2017*
(3) *What do students across the nation think about mathematics, reading, and science?*
(4) *Opportunities for Improving Programs and Services for Children with Disabilities*
(5) *What Adolescents Seeking Help Teach us About a School -Based Counseling Service*
(6) *Texas School Safety Plan* (May 2018)
(7) *Illinois Terrorism Task Force's School Safety Working Group* (April 2018 report)
(8) *School Safety Strategies and Their Effects on the Occurrence of School-Based Violence in U.S. High Schools* (2018)

Topic for Exchange:

>Next steps in enhancing school safety

Learning from Others:
>Research expands thinking about the range of effective strategies
>Newly released district and state school safety plans

Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives

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**

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

Some Resource Updates From the Field:

(1) New, free book *Improving School Improvement*
   http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/improve.pdf

(2) *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance —— United States, 2017*
   https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/ss/ss6708a1.htm?s_cid=tw-CDCYRBS-6142018-10

(3) *What do students across the nation think about mathematics, reading, and science?*
   https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/sq_students_views_2015/

(4) *Opportunities for Improving Programs and Services for Children with Disabilities*
https://www.nap.edu/

(5) *What Adolescents Seeking Help Teach us About a School -Based Counseling Service*
   https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10560-017 -0503 -7

(6) *Texas School Safety Plan* **(May 2018)**
   https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/School_Safety_Action_Plan_05302018.pdf

(7) *Illinois Terrorism Task Force's School Safety Working Group* **(April 2018 report)**
   https://www.iasaedu.org/cms/lib/IL01923163/Centricity/Domain/4/ITTF%20School%20Safety%2
   0Working%20Group%20Recommendations%20-%20Final%20draft%20040318.pdf

(8) *School Safety Strategies and Their Effects on the Occurrence of School-Based Violence in*
   U.S. High Schools **(2018)**
   https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15388220.2016.1193742

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Topic for Exchange:
>Next steps in enhancing school safety

Schools, districts, communities, and state departments of education across the country are working to upgrade school safety plans. In many place new funding is available for this work. The question arises: *What is the most effective intervention to invest in?*

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A Related News Story
With Shootings on the Rise, Schools Turn to 'Active Shooter' Insurance
http://www.governing.com/topics/education/gov-cost-of-active-shooters-insurance.html

After every mass shooting, more calls come in: from private companies, from large stadiums, and -- increasingly -- from government agencies and public schools. They all want to talk about the same thing.... Since the February attack on Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., which killed 17 and launched a nationwide push for additional gun control measures, at least seven South Florida school districts have purchased about $3 million worth of "active shooter" coverage. ...

The tangible costs alone can overwhelm a government: litigation, compensating victims, paying for funerals, providing trauma counseling, reconstructing or refurbishing buildings, and investing in new security measures to prevent another attack, to name a few. The impact of intangible costs to a community -- reputational damage, loss of tourism revenue and high turnover among workers -- is impossible to measure, according to experts.... Some insurance companies that offer this kind of coverage also offer risk assessment and mitigation strategies to organizations trying to prevent an active shooter attack....

That aspect of the coverage was one of the main reasons that Palm Beach County School District, the fifth largest district in Florida and the 10th largest in the country, decided to purchase

active shooter insurance last summer. Dianne Howard, the district's director of risk and benefits management, says Palm Beach was one of the first jurisdictions to adopt this kind of insurance in her state. "We wanted the risk assessment and training service" that came with the coverage, Howard says. "Sometimes, departments tell you that they're doing everything they need to do, but when you look at other places where [attacks] have happened, you see there was actually a problem. So I wanted an outside perspective to see what else we could do." Howard purchased the district's insurance from McGowan, and she said the company found some "areas where we could improve" in terms of mitigating risk....

Some risk mitigation techniques, however, can actually interfere with their insurance policies. Arming teachers is one such security strategy. When some Kansas school districts considered letting teachers and campus administrators carry concealed weapons after the Sandy Hook massacre, their insurance companies pushed back. "Concealed handguns on school premises pose a heightened liability risk. We have chosen not to insure schools that allow employees to carry concealed handguns," EMC Insurance Companies wrote to Kansas districts. Several districts abandoned their plans to arm teachers as a result....

Behavioral interventions -- like identifying potentially violent students and intervening before anything takes place -- are by far the most effective strategy for stopping violence on school property. They're also less expensive than physical solutions such as bulletproof glass and metal detectors....

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Learning from Others:

>Research expands thinking about the range of effective strategies

To bring a evidence-based perspective to this work, here are excerpts from recent research:

>*School Safety Strategies and Their Effects on the Occurrence of School-Based Violence in U.S. High Schools* (2018) –
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15388220.2016.1193742
Excerpt
... Empirical research concerning school safety strategies has primarily focused on individual effects of certain strategies on students and school context and fails to demonstrate how different types of strategies might collectively reduce school violence....
Discussion:
Perhaps the most interesting finding is the negative association between parental involvement and number of violent incidents, number of disciplinary actions for weapons not including firearms or explosive devices, and number of physical attacks or fights... Parental involvement can reduce student behavior problems and improve student academic success. Such effects of parental involvement are likely influential to the occurrence of school-based violence by increasing student order and promoting student success, resulting in improved student connectedness and a decrease in the occurrence of violent incidents. These findings suggest that parental involvement might positively influence school context and culture and could be beneficial in school administrators' efforts to reduce school-based violence.... This understanding might result in more improved and sophisticated methods of preventing school-based violence that integrate programs and practices centered on improvement or increase of parental involvement in student curricula....

An additional association of interest is the positive association between physical strategies and the number of incidents for severe violence and physical attacks and fights. [These strategies can include metal detectors, surveillance cameras, locked or controlled school access (e.g., gates or locked doors), emergency alert systems, and blast-proof windows or doors].... Findings here suggest that physical strategies collectively are associated with increased violent incidents and physical attacks and fights in schools. These findings might be explained by the need for schools with high rates of violence to implement physical strategies. Conversely, this also suggests physical school safety strategies might negatively influence the school context by promoting an institutional context that is counterproductive to school safety efforts...."

>*Teachers Need New Tools to Make Discipline Fair*
  https://www.realcleareducation.com/articles/2018/05/15/teachers_need_new_tools_to_make_school_discipline_fair_110276.html
Excerpt
Safety is, rightly, a key priority and responsibility for teachers and school leaders as they work to foster a school climate that is welcoming, protective, and supportive of all students. Disciplinary policies are at the nexus of our ability to foster this school climate. Effective and equitable discipline practices not only keep students safe; they can also contribute to a learning environment that promotes engagement, trust, and academic achievement among all students.

In many schools, however, exclusionary measures and other forms of harsh discipline have become the norm rather than a last resort to protect students from threats to their safety. Minor misbehaviors, such as dress code violations, inappropriate language, and disrespect, now routinely result in exclusion from the classroom or school. Too often, these disciplinary measures substitute for approaches and strategies that help students improve their behavior and address underlying causes.

Widespread disparities in disciplinary outcomes, which manifest prominently in terms of race, gender, and disability status, have been well documented by researchers and policymakers. Despite decades of concern about this issue, and policies and professional development aimed at reducing these disparities, the gap has actually increased. Black students, especially black males, continue to be significantly more likely to be suspended than their peers. Native Americans, Hispanics, and students with disabilities also face a much higher risk of suspension, while white students are suspended at the lowest rates....

New findings ... show that coaching elementary and middle school teachers in cultural responsiveness and student engagement strategies can significantly lower rates of discipline referrals for black students, who might have otherwise been subject to suspension or exclusion from the classroom. It is hard to overstate the importance of this work. Disparities in school discipline practices have the potential to exacerbate academic achievement gaps that already separate students along the lines of race, gender, and disability status. Students who are excluded from school suffer in terms of academic performance and are more likely to fall behind or, especially at the high school level, drop out of school entirely. Moreover, the frequent and disproportional use of exclusionary discipline does not just harm the students who are removed from the classroom or the school. It also can have negative impacts on school climate and academic performance school-wide. Schools with high suspension rates, for example, tend to have diminished levels of student engagement.

The disparities in disciplinary outcomes that we see in school systems across the country lay bare an uncomfortable truth: Teachers and administrators are not well equipped to manage student behavior in ways that are equitable and that contribute to a positive, inclusive learning environment. It is increasingly clear that ongoing coaching and professional development opportunities that equip teachers to implement culturally responsive practices in their classrooms, as well as other approaches that seek to engage students rather than exclude them from school, are essential to preparing the educator workforce. Our teachers can then have the tools to support all students in the efforts to bridge the achievement gap and counteract disproportional disciplinary outcomes.

>Newly released district and state school safety plans

Here are a few examples from across the country:

>**Broward County, FL (June, 2018)** – Broward County Schools Superintendent Robert Runcie has sent a letter to all parents outlining new school safety measures being undertaken in the district. The changes to district policy include:
  >An independent security firm has been selected to conduct risk assessments on all schools and district policies.
  >The district is currently in the process of making sure every school has a school resource officer or armed security guard before the new school year.
  >Students and staff must wear ID badges on campus at all times, and visitors must wear visitor passes
  >Classroom doors must be locked at all times.
  >Exterior doors and gates must be locked and secured throughout the day.

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>Emergency preparedness training will be conducted on a regular basis for faculty, staff and students.
>An active assailant training curriculum is being developed now, and will be ready for all staff for the 2018-19 school year. Students will also receive additional training in the next school year.
>Real-time surveillance camera systems are being updated, with work to be finished by the end of the month.
>Mental health services will be expanded for next school year.
>Over the next several months, the district will review its discipline policies. Starting immediately, all school administrators must properly report all discipline incidents. School audits will now look to see whether a school is keeping up with the district's student code of conduct and discipline policies.
>A single point of entry system will be completed for all schools in the district no later than the first quarter of 2019.
http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/sound-off-south-florida/fl-reg-runcie-school-security-20180604-story.html

>New Rochelle School District (NY) (May, 2018) – A task force of New Rochelle school district and community members that has studied safety and security in the city and its schools for the last three months released its report... The group was formed after a series of violent incidents in January involving New Rochelle High School students, including the fatal stabbing of a student and a knife attack in a classroom that left another student seriously wounded. The district also hired a consultant to review school policies and practices related to security. Here were some of the suggestions:
>Expand student and school staff training related to mental health, implicit bias and other programs to address behavioral issues in schools
>Enforce the district's long-standing "closed campus" policy with the exception of seniors considered "in good standing," who could leave for lunch during the school day
>Have an armed school resource officer assigned to New Rochelle High School
>Use an online discipline referral process at the high school that requires administrators to quickly address concerns raised
>Improve communication and access to city programs, resources and events for youth..."
https://www.lohud.com/story/news/education/2018/05/29/new-rochelle-security-task-force-releases-report/644897002/

>**Illinois Terrorism Task Force's School Safety Working Group (April 2018 report)** –
(see report for details)
BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT
1 Behavioral Threat Assessment Teams
2 Behavioral Threat Assessment School Policy
3 Information Sharing Between Schools and Law Enforcement
4 Information Sharing Among Schools
5 Student Reporting of Threats
6 Student School Safety Tip Line
HARDENING OF FACILITIES
7 Priority List for Hardening of School Facilities
8 Regional Site Assessment Teams
9 Amending School Facilities Sales Tax Law to Expand Use
RESPONSE PROTOCOL IN SCHOOLS
10 Core Principles of Quality Active Violence Response Program
11 Active Shooter Drills in Schools
12 Fire Alarm Protocols
13 Trauma Management Training for Schools
https://www.iasaedu.org/cms/lib/IL01923163/Centricity/Domain/4/ITTF%20School%20Safety%20Working%20Group%20Recommendations%20-%20Final%20draft%20040318.pdf

>Michigan School Safety Plan (April 2018) –

Preparation – Schools to develop comprehensive school safety plans, including behavioral health policies, student reporting mechanisms, emergency response and building safety requirements require that schools be audited and submit incident reports to law enforcement
    $20 million for immediate and long-term, comprehensive improvements to school facilities
    $2 million in Fiscal Year 2018 to secure schools that require basic security upgrades, such as functioning, locking doors
    $18 million in Fiscal Year 2019 for school safety grants to strengthen buildings, improve lock systems, and upgrade communications to be prepared for emergencies
    Update and strengthen Michigan's All Hazards Emergency Operations Planning Guidance for Schools
    Establish a temporary School Safety Task Force made to develop specific recommendations before the end of this year to launch these initiatives and provide additional best-practice recommendations
    Establish a permanent Safe Schools Commission to review and help update the state's School Safety Plan annually
Intervention – Ensure school teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and families have the requisite training to identify when students are in need of mental or emotional counseling and support
    Pilot a $2 million grant program this year in which Intermediate School Districts can apply for a competitive grant for behavioral assessment training for their administrative and academic teams
    Triple the funding for exposure of the OK2Say program and requiring student-led awareness programs, as well as resources to address the increasing volume of tips from students
    Require all schools to provide the state with basic information on their tip lines to ensure the appropriate resources are available
Response – Direct the Michigan Council on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) to create a tiered training for school resource officers
    Direct MCOLES to develop a second, advanced standard for active violence response training into the curriculum for certified police officers
    Incorporate best practices to improve local and state cooperation during incident response
Recovery – Work with local and state health agencies to ensure they are prepared to provide emergency counseling services to all those affected in an active violence situation
    Provide guidance on training for teachers, parents, and administrators to identify when students and others might need help accessing resources after an event has occurred
    Ensure the recovery component of school safety plans are robust in both the planning guidance and audit review process
    https://www.michigan.gov/snyder/0,4668,7-277-57573-466381--,00.html

>Texas School Safety Plan (May 2018) – (see report for details)
Better Protecting Our Students & Teachers
    Immediate Funding Assistance to Santa Fe
Making Schools Safer
    Immediately Increase Law Enforcement Presence at Schools
    Train More School Marshals And Improve The Program
    Provide Active Shooter And Emergency Response Training
    Hardening Of Campus Facilities
    Prioritize Increased Federal Funding Toward Immediate School Safety Improvements
    Strengthen Existing Campus Security Programs
Preventing Threats In Advance
    Provide Mental Health Evaluations That Identify Students At Risk Of Harming Others And Provide Them The Help They Need
    Increase Mental Health First Aid Training

Provide Schools With Behavioral Threat Assessment Programs
Better Utilize and Expand On-Campus Counseling Resources
Expand Campus Crime Stoppers Programs
Use Digital Technology To Prevent Attacks
Deploy More Fusion Centers To Monitor Social Media For Threats
Improve Mental Health Crisis Response Infrastructure
Increase The Safety Of Charter Schools
Remove From The Classroom Students Who Threaten Teachers
Enhancing Firearms Safety
Close Critical Information Gaps To Help Prevent Shootings Like That In Sutherland Springs
Study A Protective Order Law To Keep Guns Out Of The Hands Of Those Mentally Unfit To Bear Arms, But Only After Legal Due Process Is Allowed To Ensure Second Amendment Rights Are Not Violated
Mandate A 48-Hour Reporting Period To Close Gaps In Federally Mandated Background Checks
Strengthening The Safe Firearm Storage Law
Promote Awareness of Safe Storage Practices
Mandatory Reporting Of Lost Or Stolen Guns

https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/School_Safety_Action_Plan_05302018.pdf

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Invitation to Listserv Participants to Share Perspectives

Now it's your turn!

What can you share about safety measures in local schools? What's missing when the emphasis is mainly on "hardening" schools?

Send your responses to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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I feel much safer since they locked up all the other kids.

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From our perspective, this is an important time for schools to avoid adding yet one more special initiative; the need is to embed the many concerns about addressing barriers to teaching and learning and re-engaging disconnected students into a transformed system of learning supports.

*For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
go to **http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html**

Just published:
>*Transforming Student and Learning Supports:*
Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System –
https://titles.cognella.com/transforming-student -and learning -supports -9781516512782.html

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If you missed the following, you can access them and more from the Center's homepage –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

>**The *quarterly ejournal* for Spring 2018.**
Contents:
>*Time for Straight Talk about Mental Health Services and MH in Schools*
>*Improving School Climate Starts with Understanding that it's an Emerging Quality*
>*Hot Topics & Hot Issues*

>**The June *ENEWS'* discussion of:** *Using the Summer to do More to Keep Students from Falling Behind*

>**The new, free book: *Improving School Improvement***
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/improve.pdf

Also the free book on: *Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom & Schoolwide*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/barriersbook.pdf

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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/)

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