

(8/12/26) **This continuing education resource is from the national Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA**

Featured

(1) Retaining teachers: The role of student and learning supports

(2) Can one principal effectively lead more than one school?

(3) Report on New Directions to Strengthen Student/Learning Supports

And, as always, you will find

(4) Links to more resources

This community of practice *Practitioner* is designed for a screen bigger than an phone.

For discussion and interchange:

>Retaining Teachers: The role of student and learning supports

First, here's a synthesis of the main findings from:

Why teachers stay: Lessons from high-retention districts

Teacher shortages are driven in part by attrition, especially among novices, with about 40% leaving within their first five years. Research suggests that retention is influenced less by simple job satisfaction and more by job embeddedness: the degree to which teachers experience fit (alignment with school values and goals), links (strong personal and professional relationships), and assets (benefits they would lose if they left).

In high-retention districts, teachers consistently pointed to six factors that encouraged them to stay:

1. Supportive relationships. Collegial, trusting relationships with fellow teachers and administrators provided both professional assistance and emotional support.
2. Systems and a culture of support. Schools invested in structures such as induction programs, mentoring, collaboration time, and personalized assistance that demonstrated genuine care for teachers.
3. Autonomy and professional agency. Teachers were trusted to make instructional decisions, pursue meaningful professional learning, and have a voice in shaping their work environment.
4. Adequate resources. Teachers had access to instructional materials, classroom supplies, counselors, and other supports, reducing the need to spend personal funds and helping them meet student needs.
5. Opportunities for growth. Professional development was collaborative, relevant, and teacher-directed, supporting both skill development and professional community.
6. Race-conscious leadership. School and district leaders openly addressed issues of race and racism and implemented practices that supported students and educators of color.

The study concludes that schools can strengthen teacher retention by fostering professional connections, helping educators find a good fit within the school and community, and ensuring they experience meaningful professional and personal benefits from remaining in the profession. These strategies are especially important for new teachers as they develop lasting commitments to teaching, their schools, and their communities.

We have this to add:

Center Commentary

The findings from high-retention districts reinforce a lesson that our Center continues to emphasize: teacher retention is deeply connected to how schools address barriers to learning and teaching. Many of the factors teachers identify as reasons for leaving reflect concerns that are addressed through a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports. Such a system helps create conditions that provide needed resources, foster a culture of caring, promote positive outcomes, and strengthen supports for staff, students, families, and the broader community. Among the key relationships that must be cultivated are collegial partnerships between teachers and student/learning support staff. These partnerships enhance collaborative problem-solving, strengthen connections with families and communities, and advance equity in ways that help students succeed and teachers thrive.

The implication is clear: investments in student and learning supports are also investments in teacher retention. Efforts to improve teacher retention, therefore, should explicitly include efforts to strengthen student and learning supports. A unified, comprehensive, and equitable system increases a school's capacity to address barriers to learning and teaching, promotes staff and student well-being, and fosters the sense of connectedness, effectiveness, and support that encourages educators to remain in the profession and continue to grow within it.

For more on retaining teachers and the role of student and learning supports, see our Center resources. For example:

- > *Understanding and Minimizing Staff Burnout*
- > *Personalizing Personnel Development at Schools: A Focus on Student Engagement and Re-engagement*
- > *Working Collaboratively: From School-Based Teams to School-Community Connections*
- > *Opening the Classroom Door*
- > *Teachers Can't Do it Alone!*

For discussion and interchange:

>Can one principal effectively lead more than one school?

From: *Leading multiple schools*

"Changes in school policies and practices have compelled today's school principal to go well beyond its traditional role of manager. As standardized assessments and accountability plans demand better and more equitable student outcomes, principals have increasingly been given more autonomy over school budgets, personnel, and school improvement plans ...

> Public Impact, has implemented a model where various schools are led by one school leader. The Multi-School Leader (MSL) initiative proposes these leaders must be high-performing instructional leaders who can lead using teacher-led instructional teams, know how to use data to drive decision-making, can lead other principals, is a good communicator, and can relate to students and families and members of other cultures and personal characteristics.

The Multi-School Leaders are in charge of 2–8 schools and are solely responsible for the academic performance of all the schools under their purview. However, each school is reconfigured to have a manager replacing one assistant principal, a teacher leader for each grade level or content area,...

> These model schools are a new school configuration and the principals are leaders who are already successful at their own schools and have now been tasked with leading other schools which have not seen successful student outcomes...

When asked what characteristics or skills were needed to successfully lead these model schools, teachers expressed that principals had to be willing to defy the status quo and be a leader who embraces challenges. Principals needed to be willing to experiment, be flexible, and open to new ideas, practices, and procedures. ...

Data analysis indicated principals established structures of collaboration and distributive leadership throughout the schools... Several described the distributive leadership process as a 'transition of institutional knowledge from the flagship school to other schools' with 'teachers going back and forth' to the various campuses to help support and 'share documentation, lesson plans, and communication'...

The manner in which collaboration was conducted between schools seemed to go beyond the traditional format. The notion of collaborating with nearby schools, even if they are not part of a model, is a novel concept that should warrant research for its potential to amplify the sharing of best practices within the school community..."

Center Comment

Having one principal lead multiple schools is not simply an administrative innovation. The question always is how the approach affects the schools. The important innovation may not be one principal leading several schools. Rather, it is the emphasis on distributed leadership, collaboration across schools, and sharing effective practices. As the preceding excerpt suggests, the potential benefits stem less from one leader overseeing several campuses and more from building collaborative structures, shared expertise, and teacher leadership.

From the Center's perspective, any administrative restructuring should be judged by the extent to which it strengthens teaching, learning, and the system of supports available to staff, students, and families.

For *Resources to aid Principals in Improving How a School Addresses Barriers to Learning/Teaching*, see <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Webprincipal.pdf>

For more on innovation in school leadership and collaboration that enhances an effective focus on student and learning supports, see

- >***Key Leadership Infrastructure Mechanisms for Enhancing Student & Learning Supports***
- >***Connecting Schools in Ways that Strengthen Learning Supports***

For discussion and interchange:

>**Report on New Directions to Strengthen Student and Learning Supports**

As is the situation for many of you, we have long been concerned about how efforts to improve school have chronically marginalized work on improving student/learning supports. Our recently released report ***New Directions for Student and Learning Supports: From Fragmented Initiatives to System Transformation*** is designed as a catalyst for discussion among educators about how schools can strengthen student and learning supports through systemic change using existing resources.

Any way you can connect the report to the broader conversations you have about equity, student well-being, and improving student and learning supports will help. Be sure to let us know about any opportunity to share the report with your colleagues; and we hope you will share it as well.

Given your concerns about addressing barriers to learning and teaching, we also would appreciate your reaction to the report's call for a unified system of student and learning supports. We look forward to gaining your perspective.

We look forward to hearing from you. Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

For more on New Directions

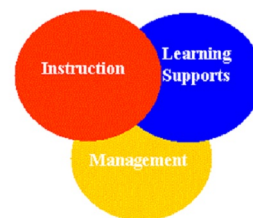
The Case for Systemic Redesign of Student/Learning Supports

Fundamental, systemic redesign is urgently needed for how schools address factors interfering with learning and teaching. Immediate action is essential to move beyond crisis driven responses toward a cohesive, proactive, and equitable system of student/learning supports.

For guidance and resources on how to pursue this transformation, see the

>**National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports.**

Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights; transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to promoting whole child development, advancing social justice, and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.



>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

- >>Mental Health Promotion: Strategies for School Nurses When Supporting Students
- >>Illinois State Board of Education guidance for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in elementary and secondary education
- >>Effects of adverse childhood experiences and childhood socioeconomic disadvantage on youth depression
- >>Centering Youth Voice in Culturally Responsive School Mental Health
- >>Cost-Effective Ways to Rethink School Staffing
- >>School cellphone bans don't boost scores or attendance, study finds
- >>Miami-Dade schools no longer offering free meals districtwide
- >>Evidence-Based Parent Training Programs for those Raising a K-5 Student

A Few Upcoming Webinars

For links to the following and for more webinars, go to the Center's Links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

- 8/12 Communicating clearly under stress
- 8/12 Strategies for Supporting New Teacher Happiness and Success
- 8/19 Eating disorders
- 8/24 Supporting emotional regulation in kids
- 8/25 How AI is being incorporated into tools that support reading, writing, communication
- 8/25 Adapting prevention programs
- 9/16 Rethink Classroom Management
- 9/16 Communicating with the IEP team
- 9/23 Navigating IEP disagreements
- 9/29 Leading Teams: Building Capacity for Teacher Leaders
- 10/7 How AI can help you build flexible options for diverse learners

How Learning Happens (Edutopia's series of videos explores guiding all students, regardless of their developmental starting points, to become engaged learners).
Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth (Webinar recording)

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To Listserv Participants

We hope you will share this resource with others who may find it helpful.

And let us know what's going on to improve how schools address barriers to learning & teaching and reengage disconnected students and families. (We can share the info with the over 140,000 on our listserv.)

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

Send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

@#@#@#@#

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

>Looking for information? (We usually can help.)

>Have a suggestion for improving our efforts? (We welcome your feedback.)

We look forward to hearing from you! Contact: Ltaylor@ucla.edu

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF THE PRACTITIONER

Who Are We? Our national Center 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 Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and now is named the *Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports*.