

Student and Learning Supports: Needed -- More than a Few Added Services

As we read about school improvement in report after report and an array of articles, blueprints, plans, etc. etc., we find growing agreement that schools need to enhance student supports.

However, the trend is for most advocates mainly to call for schools to link with their communities to adopt a "wrap-around" or "full services" approach (e.g., see Simmons, 2013).^{*} Such recommendations simply do not go to the heart of transforming schools in ways that will significantly improve efforts to address barriers to learning/teaching and re engage disconnected students.

While expanded services are needed for students who are doing poorly, more fundamentally the need is for a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports that can enable schools to be more effective with all students in preventing and correcting learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

Such a "new directions" approach is a particular focus of our Center (e.g., see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ninhome.htm>). In assisting state departments and districts across the country, our work stresses moving in systemic new directions for student and learning supports by

- (1) expanding school improvement policy from a two to a three component framework
- (2) operationalizing the third component as a unified and comprehensive system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re engaging disconnected students,
- (3) reworking school leadership and infrastructure and the infrastructure for school community collaboration to ensure the component's development by redeploying and weaving together existing resources,
- (4) establishing effective mechanisms for systemic change, scale up, and sustainability.

Our Center provides free and easy access to details about all this.

For example, the policy shift is outlined briefly in

>Common Core Standards for a Learning Supports Component
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/commcore.pdf>

Frameworks for operationalizing the component are presented briefly in

**>The Challenge of Addressing Equity of Opportunity for All Students:
Broadening the Work of the Equity and Excellence Commission**
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/spring13.pdf>

and in

**>Toward Next Steps in School Improvement: Addressing Barriers to Learning
and Teaching**
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/towardnextstep.pdf>

>Book length discussions have been published by Corwin -
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/corwin/bookannouncement.htm>

- >Scholastic provides a free online leadership institute and handbook - <http://rebuildingforlearning.scholastic.com/>
- >American Association for School Administrators (AASA) provides a free introductory webinar - <https://scholastic.webex.com/scholastic/lsr.php?AT=pb&SP=TC&rID=48915112&rKey=09f14db0881f5159&act=pb>

For a sense of what has been and is going on with SEAs and LEAs, see

- >***Where's It Happening? Trailblazing and Pioneer Initiatives***
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing.htm>

And we have many other free and easily accessible resources to share as more and more SEAs, LEAs, and schools strive to enhance equity of opportunity for all students to succeed at school and beyond.

Our intent and hope in sending this is to engage you and others in deepening the discussion of what is needed to enhance equity of opportunity for all students to succeed at school and beyond. Such a discussion is essential as Congress returns to its discussion of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

*cited reference is to Warren Simmons (ed.), 2013. The Next Four Years: Recommendations for Federal Education Policy, *Voices in Urban Education, Number 36*
<http://vue.annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/issuePDF/VUE36.pdf>