

**Report from the National Summit on
ESSA and Learning Supports: Addressing Barriers to Learning
and Teaching to Enhance Equity of Opportunity**

(held on January 23rd, 2017 at UCLA)

***Why do you think we'll do
better at school this year?***

***Because I heard that Congress passed a law
that says every student will succeed!***



*Convened as part of the *National Initiative to Transform Student and Learning Supports*. See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

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Website: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> Send comments to ltaylor@ucla.edu

Feel free to share this with concerned stakeholders

*Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to
enabling equity of opportunity, promoting whole child development,
and enhancing school climate.*

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Introduction

Student and learning supports have long been marginalized in school improvement policy and practice. As a result, such supports are developed in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner. Implementation is fragmented and at times redundant. Those involved often are counterproductively competitive, especially when funding is sparse (and when isn't it?).

All this needs to change. Yet, most of the widely circulated reports about improving schools pay little or no attention to the role of school student and learning support staff.

A major aim of the *National Initiative to Transform Student and Learning Supports* is to make the marginalization a major issue and end it. This involves continuous efforts to mobilize direct action focused on (a) elevating school improvement policy discussion about ending the marginalization of student and learning supports and (b) moving toward transformation of such supports. [For more on the national initiative, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>]

Passage of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) provides opportunities to improve how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students and families. Of particular relevance to these concerns, ESSA replaces what has been described as a maze of programs with a “Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant” that provides states and districts with flexibility in how students and families are assisted. Unfortunately, however, the legislation continues the piecemeal approach to providing student and learning supports. [See the analysis of *ESSA’s Focus on Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanalyses.pdf> .]

As states and districts pursue higher curriculum standards and transition to more local control, the challenge is to move forward with an agenda to transform student and learning supports. As stressed at the summit, this is a critical time for focusing stakeholder attention on this essential facet of school improvement. As also stressed, it is important to underscore that the necessary systemic changes can be accomplished by redeploying existing resources and garnering economies of scale.

The Summit’s focus was on the solid and substantial groundwork that has been laid for moving forward. To date, pioneering state and district initiatives are unfolding across the country – implementing learning supports as a third component of school improvement policy; see

>*Trailblazing Initiatives* -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/summer14.pdf>

These initiatives are using frameworks, prototypes, and resources developed by the Center at UCLA. And they are drawing on the Center and other sources for coaching and technical assistance.

The Summit highlighted work accomplished to date, focused on next steps for moving forward, and shared resources to draw on in transforming student and learning supports. This report summarizes the event, suggests some next steps, and provides information and direct links to online resources.

Summit Day

The National Summit was designed as a major kick off for moving forward in 2017.

75 leaders from 20 states and D.C. accepted the invitation and represented state education departments, county and regional offices, districts (large/small, urban/rural), schools, the U.S. Department of Education, and other institutions (see list in Appendix D.)

Prior to the summit, a special edition of the UCLA Center's quarterly e-journal was prepared as a resource for anyone concerned with improving how schools address barriers to teaching and learning. The topics covered in the article are:

- > *Concerns about ESSA Planning Related to Addressing Barriers to Learning*
- > *The Need to Transform Student and Learning Supports*
- > *Delineating the Nature and Scope of a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Learning Supports*
- > *Personalization and Special Assistance: An Intervention Sequence and Hierarchy*
(see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/Winter17.pdf>)

The agenda for the day is online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/summitagenda.pdf>.

In brief, the theme for the day emphasized that planning for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides a renewed opportunity for innovation in revisiting school improvement policy and practice. There was considerable interest in using the opportunity to move forward with unifying and then developing a comprehensive and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

In addition to group discussions, presentations at the summit stressed:

- > *Re-envisioning How to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching at Schools*
- > *Expanding School Improvement Policy to Make it Happen*
- > *State Adaptation and Scale-up in Alabama*
- > *A Georgia District's Implementation Experiences*
- > *A Federal Perspective on ESSA and Learning Supports*
- > *About Funding Stream Integration*
- > *About the Necessity of Implementing Essential Elements to Ensure Substantive and Sustainable Transformative Changes*

There also was a three district panel discussing lessons learned during early implementation.

The day ended with a discussion of *Next Steps for Supporting Those Moving Forward*. The next section of this report highlight examples of such next steps.

Re. Next Steps, it was exciting that so many participants indicated that they wanted access to additional resources about transforming how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and asked to be contacted to engage in further discussion to aid in moving forward.

2017 – Next Steps

Based on input from the National Summit and from sources around the country, it is clear that a significant number of folks are ready to begin working toward transforming student and learning supports. In doing so, there are immediate opportunities related to influencing ESSA state planning. Beyond ESSA, opportunities exist with respect to all school improvement planning efforts.

WITH RESPECT TO ESSA PLANNING -- the focus needs to be on the section entitled: "Supporting all Students." Possible steps for strengthening this section are:

- 1) Share basic information about desired systemic changes with stakeholders to expand the discussion around ESSA planning. One easy way to do this is to forward them a copy of the pre-summit article: *Every Student Succeeds Act: Planning is an Immediate Task, But . . . Addressing Barriers to Learning is the Pressing Imperative* - <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/Winter17.pdf>

Alternatively, just let us know who you want to inform, and we'll take care of it. (Send names and emails to Ltaylor@ucla.edu.)

- 2) Provide direct stakeholder input about expanding how ESSA focuses on Supporting All Students (e.g., Section 5.A. "Well Rounded Education and Support for Students"). For example, to ensure a deeper and direct focus on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re engaging disconnected students, suggest adopting a three component framework for school improvement. And, in a state's consolidated ESSA plan, suggest splitting "Section 5.A. Well Rounded Education and Support for Students" in two as follows:

5.A.1 Well Rounded Education

5.A.2 Support for Students

See example in *Improving ESSA Planning for Student and Learning Supports* - <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/improveessa.pdf>

- 3) Suggest framing "Support for Students" in terms of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable intervention system. Frame the section on Support for Students in terms of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable intervention system. For example, expand the focus on the multitier student support (MTSS) model to move beyond the simple focus on levels to a framework that emphasizes

- subsystems of school community interventions
- a systematic organization of intervention content that directly reflects what schools need to do each day to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students (and staff).

This also is illustrated in *Improving ESSA Planning for Student and Learning Supports* - <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/improveessa.pdf>

- 4) Suggest expanding the discussion of Title II to include a focus on enhancing transformative school leadership that can drive innovation related to student and learning supports. For example, stress
 - transforming student and learning supports in all teacher, principal, and other leader personnel development planning
 - developing student and learning support staff as leaders for transforming student and learning supports.

With Title II in mind, see:

>*What Do Teachers, Administrators, and Other School Leaders Need to Learn about Transforming Student and Learning Supports?*

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/teachers2.pdf>

Note: States can work to improve school leadership by: (a) devoting a significant portion of its state activities funds; and (b) considering its flexibility to reserve an additional three percent of Title II, Part A district subgrants for state activities to improve school leadership.

WITH RESPECT TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING IN GENERAL, the Center has a variety of resources online. Start by reviewing the System Change Toolkit -

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

See for example the step-by-step guides –

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

Or just contact us for free consultation and TA (see information below).

About Free Distance Technical Assistance and Coaching from the Center

We want to help! Transforming student and learning supports is challenging (especially with everything else that has to be done on most days). To aid the efforts of those moving forward to develop a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports, the Center offers free mentoring, coaching, and technical assistance primarily by email and phone. Those making such systemic changes have found it particularly helpful when we work with them in preparing a design document and strategic plan for the work in ways that integrate the transformation into district and school strategic plans and implementation. Interested? CONTACT: Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Note: Various vendors are offering coaching. While these can be helpful (if they can be afforded), working directly with the Center, at least at the start, can ensure that the frameworks and essential system elements are understood and systemic changes are designed in ways that ensure substantive transformation, scalability, and sustainability.

Let us hear your views about direct action to end the marginalization and transform student and learning supports. Also, let us know if you are ready to move forward to develop a Learning Supports Component to better address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu or to adelman@psych.ucla.edu

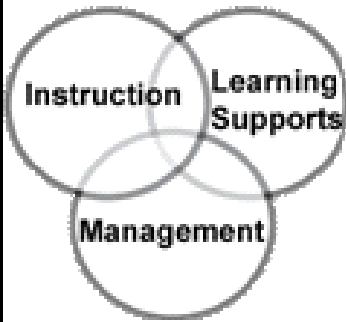
There is a tendency in efforts to improve schools to call for simple solutions to complex matters and focus on seeking low-hanging fruit. It will take more than an elevator speech and another round of tinkering to save public education. We think Mencken was right when he said: *For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong.*

Transforming how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students is not a simple process. As the discussion at the summit underscored there are complex challenges ahead. But they are doable with perseverance and good will. And they must be done if we are to enhance equity of opportunity and not simply assert an empty promise to have every child succeed.

Appendices

- A. Handouts from the Day's Introductory Presentation
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Appendix A



ESSA and Learning Supports: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching to Enhance Equity of Opportunity

Handout for the Introductory Presentation

- I. Background and Introduction to the Imperative for Major Changes
- II. The ESSA Planning Challenge
- III. Re-envisioning How to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching at Schools
- IV. Expanding School Improvement Policy to Make it Happen

I. Background & Intro

A. About the research and development over the years.

B. What we all know

>Lot's of kids are having trouble at school.

>There are many factors causing this.

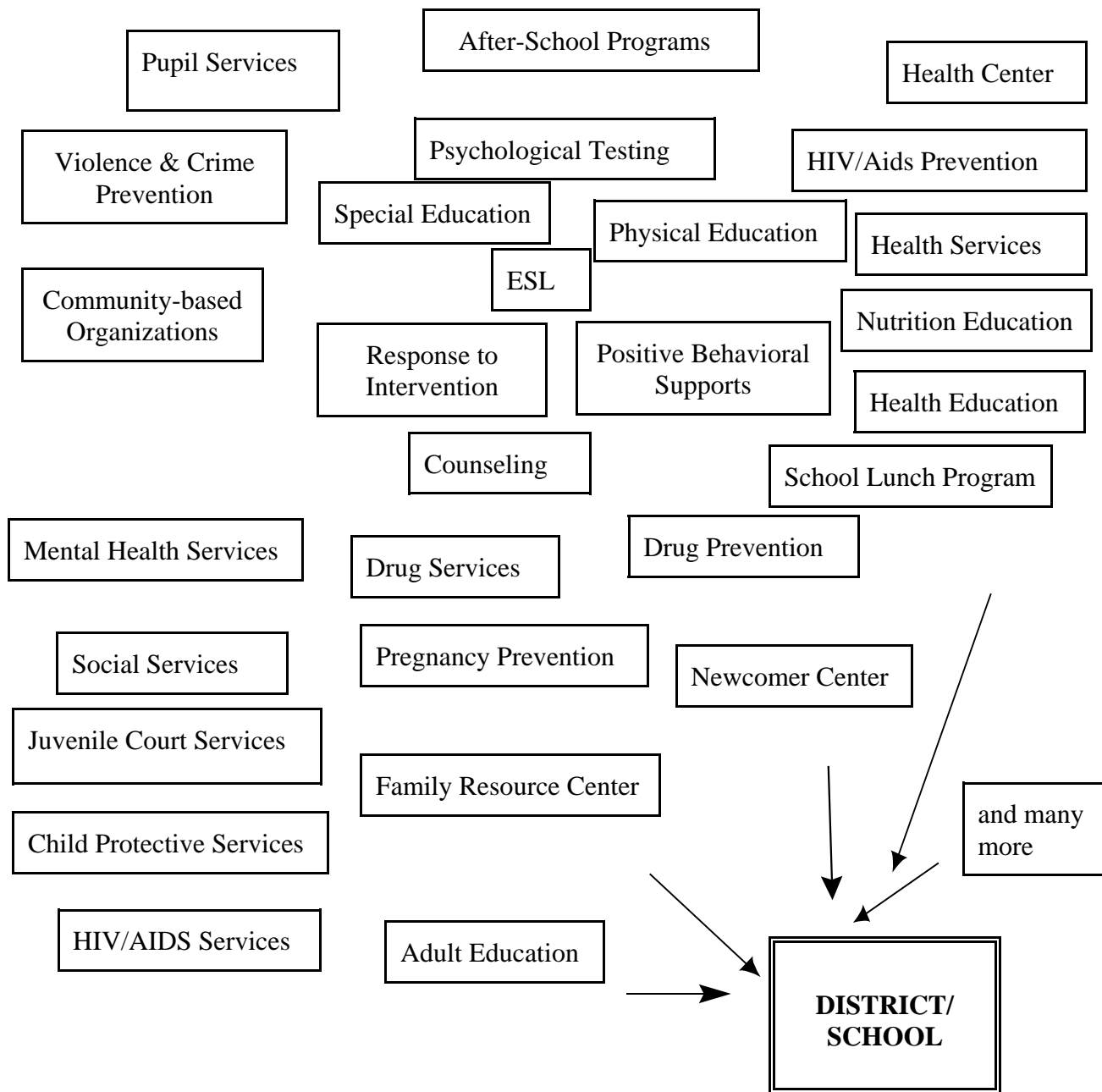
And as a Carnegie Task Force on Education stressed, we all know that

*While school systems are not responsible for
meeting every need of their students,
when the need directly affects learning,
the school must meet the challenge.*

But we also all know schools and teachers can't do this alone.

Mapping a district's existing efforts to address problems yields a consistent picture of many practices and fragmented, piecemeal, and usually disorganized activity (as illustrated below). The range of such learning and student supports generally is extensive and expensive.

What Schools try to do to address barriers to learning Student and Learning Supports: Much Activity, Much Fragmentation!



Underlying the fragmentation

Our research has established that current efforts are Marginalized in policy and practice. This leads to not only to Fragmentation, but also to

- Poor cost-effectiveness (up to 25% of a school budget used in too limited and often redundant ways)
- Counterproductive competition for sparse resources (among school support staff and with community-based professionals who link with schools)

The aim of all such efforts is to address barriers in order to

- enhance graduate rates and successful transitions to post secondary opportunities
- narrow the achievement gap
- reduce unnecessary referrals for special assistance and special education
- counter the school to prison pipeline
- reduce the number of low performing
- reduce teacher dropout rates.
- improve school climate
- reduce the loss of good teachers
- re-engage students in classroom learning
- produce sustainable progress (eliminate plateauing and cyclical effects)
- increasing equity of opportunity for every student to succeed

BUT there is a serious disconnect between what is in place and what is needed!

And, for the most part, a relatively few students are provided essential supports.

So some major system changes are needed –

not just minor improvements --

system transformation!

And when it comes to system change, some words to live by:

*The real difficulty in changing the course of any enterprise lies
not in developing new ideas but in escaping old ones.*

John Maynard Keynes

II. The ESSA Planning Challenge

Our ongoing analysis of ESSA state plans and other initiatives being developed around the country makes it clear that the following matters are of major concern:

(1) *Support for students continues to be fragmented and marginalized as states respond to sections of federal guidance.* References to student and learning supports are scattered throughout five sections and are combined with “well rounded education” in Section 5, *Supporting All Students* (i.e., Section 5.A. Well Rounded Education and Support for Students).

Also, short shrift is given to student and learning support personnel. Moreover, too little attention is being given to how to pull together parallel and redundant interventions and how to reduce the counterproductive competition for sparse resources for student and learning supports. All of this is a recipe for continuing the unsatisfactory status quo and poor outcomes related to enhancing equity of opportunity for success at school by addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

To ensure a deeper focus on student and learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students, we are recommending introducing an emphasis on a three component framework for school improvement and splitting “Section 5.A. Well Rounded Education and Support for Students” in two as follows:

5.A.1 Well-Rounded Education

5.A.2 Support for Students

(2) *The focus on the multitier student support (MTSS) model is not accounting for its severe limitations as a framework for student and learning supports.* The problems with MTSS include that

- it is an inadequate depiction of an intervention continuum (e.g., delineating levels of school interventions, rather than subsystems of school-community interventions)
- it does not systematically organize the content of what schools do each day to address learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

(3) *With respect to Title II, Part A’s focus on “Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-quality Teachers, Principals, or Other School Leaders,”* the concern is that little or no attention is given to matters such as:

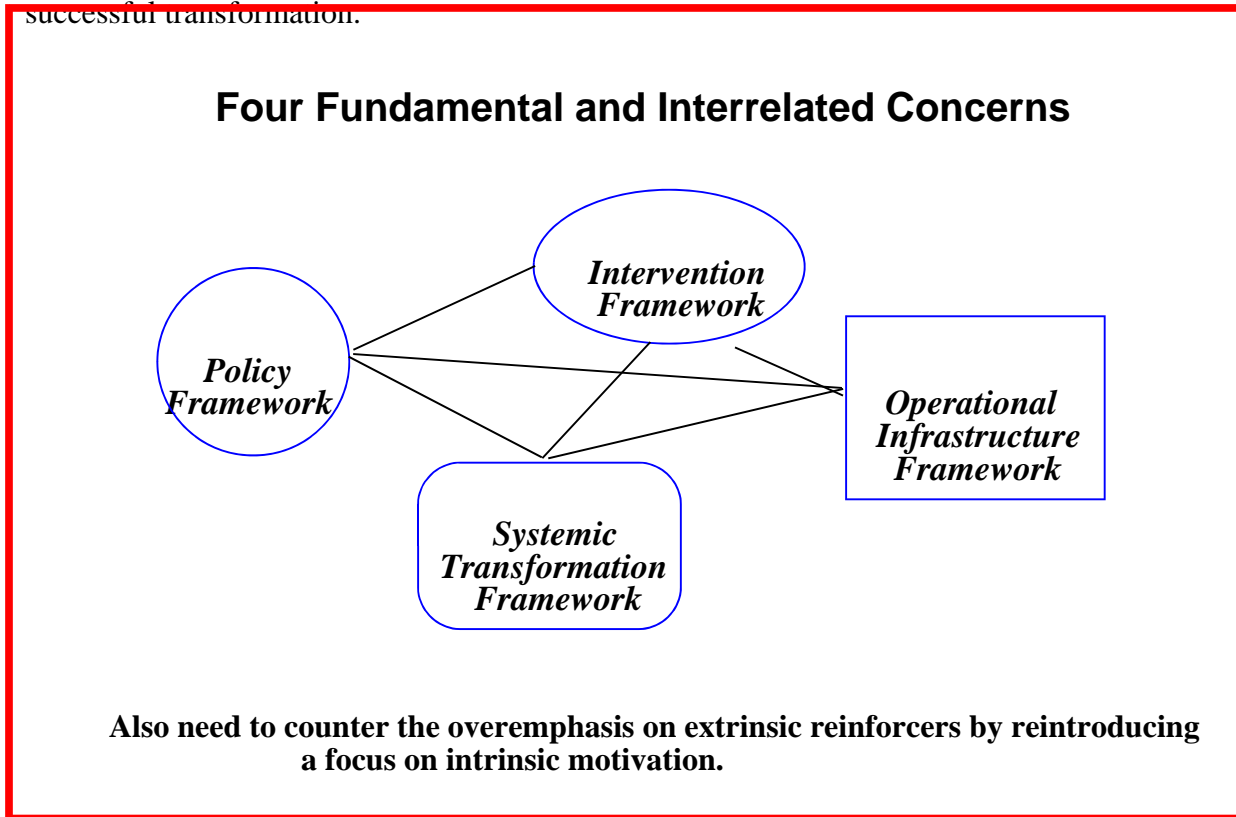
- broadening teacher collaboration to address barriers to learning and teaching and to re-engage disconnected students
- enhancing classroom-based student and learning supports
- improving essential school-wide student and learning supports
- developing major leadership roles for student/learning supports personnel
- rethinking the roles and functions of student/learning supports personnel

In general, if ESSA planning is to effectively enhance equity of opportunity for success in school and beyond, it must address these and related concerns if there are to be significant improvements in how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. And we suggest that the need is to formulate an ESSA plan in ways that begin the process of *transforming* student and learning supports.

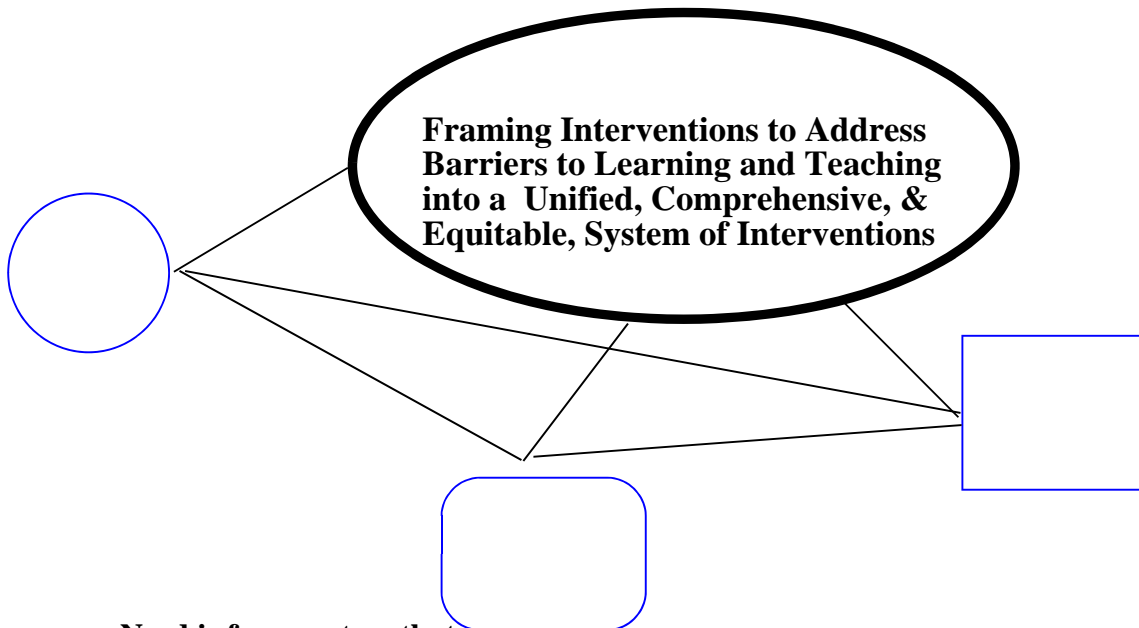
For more discussion of concerns related to ESSA’s focus on addressing barriers to learning and teaching, see our analyses – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanalyses.pdf> .

III. Re-envisioning How to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching at Schools

We have identified 4 interrelated systemic considerations as essential for accomplishing a successful transformation.



What follows is how we frame these concerns.

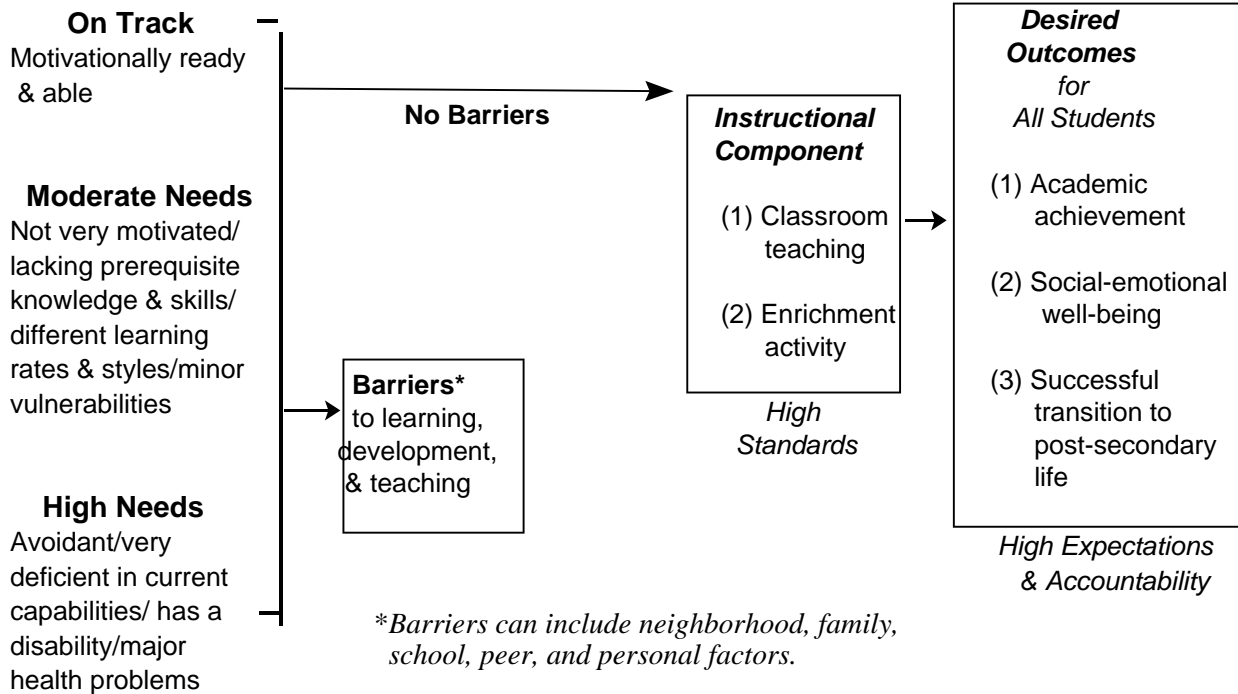


Need is for a system that
 >works for all, not just some students
 >addresses a wide range of barriers
AND
 >re-engages disconnected students in classroom learning

How can we enable students to get around barriers?

Range of Learners

(based on their response to academic instruction at any given point in time)



Examples of *Risk-Producing Conditions* that Can be Barriers to Development and Learning

Environmental Conditions*

Person Factors*

Neighborhood

- High poverty
- High rates of crime, drug use, violence, gang activity
- High unemployment, abandoned/floundering businesses
- Disorganized community
- High mobility
- Lack of positive youth development opportunities

Family

- Domestic conflicts, abuse, distress, grief, loss
- Unemployment, poverty, and homelessness
- Immigrant and/or minority status
- Family physical or mental health illness
- Poor medical or dental care
- Inadequate child care
- Substance abuse

School and Peers

- Poor quality schools, high teacher turnover
- High rates of bullying and harassment
- Minimal offerings and low involvement in extracurricular activities
- Frequent student-teacher conflicts
- Poor school climate, negative peer models
- Many disengaged students and families

Internal Student Factors

- Neurodevelopmental delay
- Physical illness
- Mental disorders/addictions/Disabilities
- Inadequate nutrition and healthcare
- Learning, behavior, and emotional problems that arise from negative environmental conditions exacerbate existing internal factors

Examples of *Protective Buffers*

Conditions that prevent or counter risk producing conditions – strengths, assets, corrective interventions, coping mechanisms, special assistance and accommodations

Environmental Conditions*

Person Factors*

Neighborhood

- >strong economic conditions/emerging economic opportunities
- >safe and stable communities
- >available & accessible services
- >strong bond with positive other(s)
- >appropriate expectations and standards
- >opportunities to successfully participate, contribute, and be recognized

Family

- >adequate financial resources
- >nurturing supportive family members who are positive models
- >safe and stable (organized and predictable) home environment
- >family literacy
- >provision of high quality child care
- >secure attachments – early and ongoing

School and Peers

- >success at school
- >safe, caring, supportive, and healthy school environment
- >positive relationships with one or more teachers
- >positive relationships with peers and appropriate peer models
- >strong bond with positive other(s)

Individual

- >higher cognitive functioning
- >psychophysiological health
- >easy temperament, outgoing personality, and positive behavior
- >strong abilities for involvement and problem solving
- >sense of purpose and future
- >gender (girls less apt to develop certain problems)

Examples of Conditions for *Promoting Full Development*

Conditions, over and beyond those that create protective buffers, that enhance healthy development, well-being, and a value-based life

Environmental Conditions*

Person Factors*

Neighborhood

- >nurturing & supportive conditions
- >policy and practice promotes healthy development & sense of community

Family

- >conditions that foster positive physical & mental health among all family members

School and Peers

- >nurturing & supportive climate school-wide and in classrooms
- >conditions that foster feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness

Individual

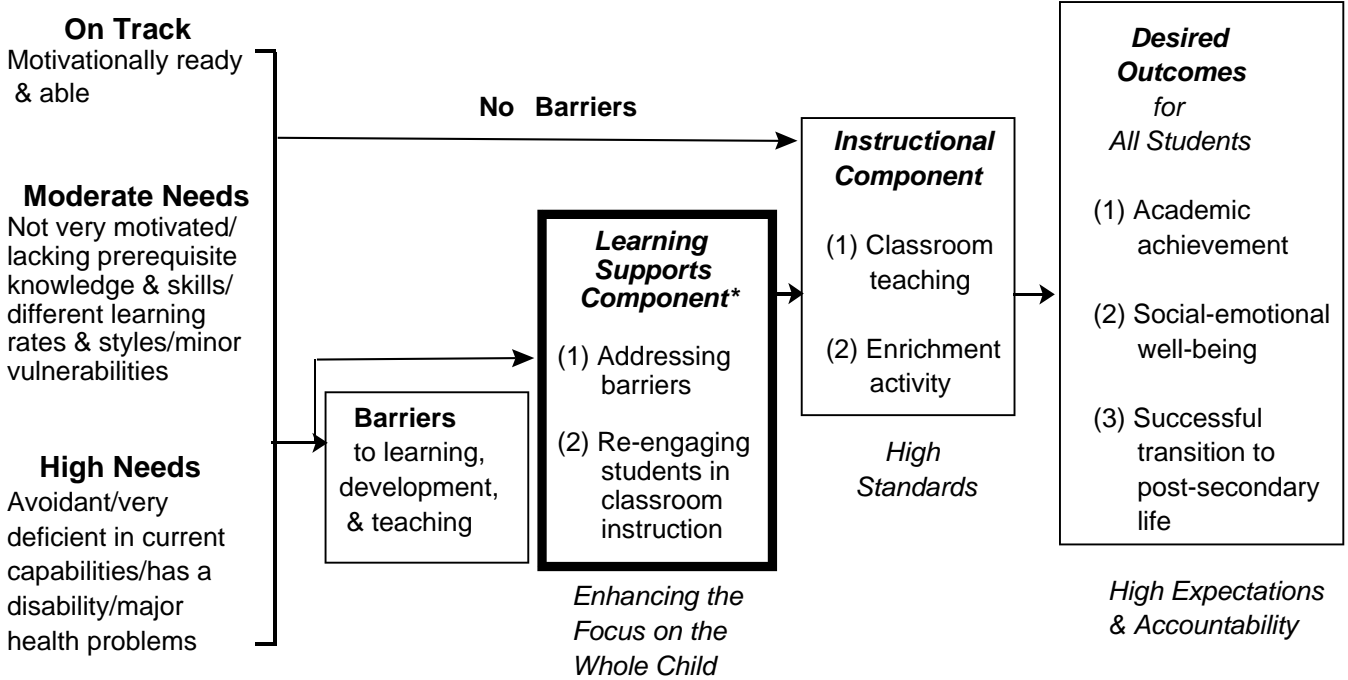
- >pursues opportunities for personal development and empowerment
- >intrinsically motivated to pursue full development, well-being, and a value-based life

*A reciprocal determinist view of behavior recognizes the interplay of environment and person variables.

Our research has developed an intervention prototype for schools to enable learning.

Range of Learners

(based on their response to academic instruction at any given point in time)



*States and districts have chosen to use the term Learning Supports

Here’s a definition of Learning supports:

Learning Supports are the resources, strategies, and practices that support physical, social, emotional and intellectual development and well-being to enable all students to have an equal opportunity for success at school.

- To enable effective use of learning supports, school and community resources are unified in a learning supports component and fully integrated with instructional efforts and interventions and professional development.
- Learning Supports are deployed in classrooms and schoolwide to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

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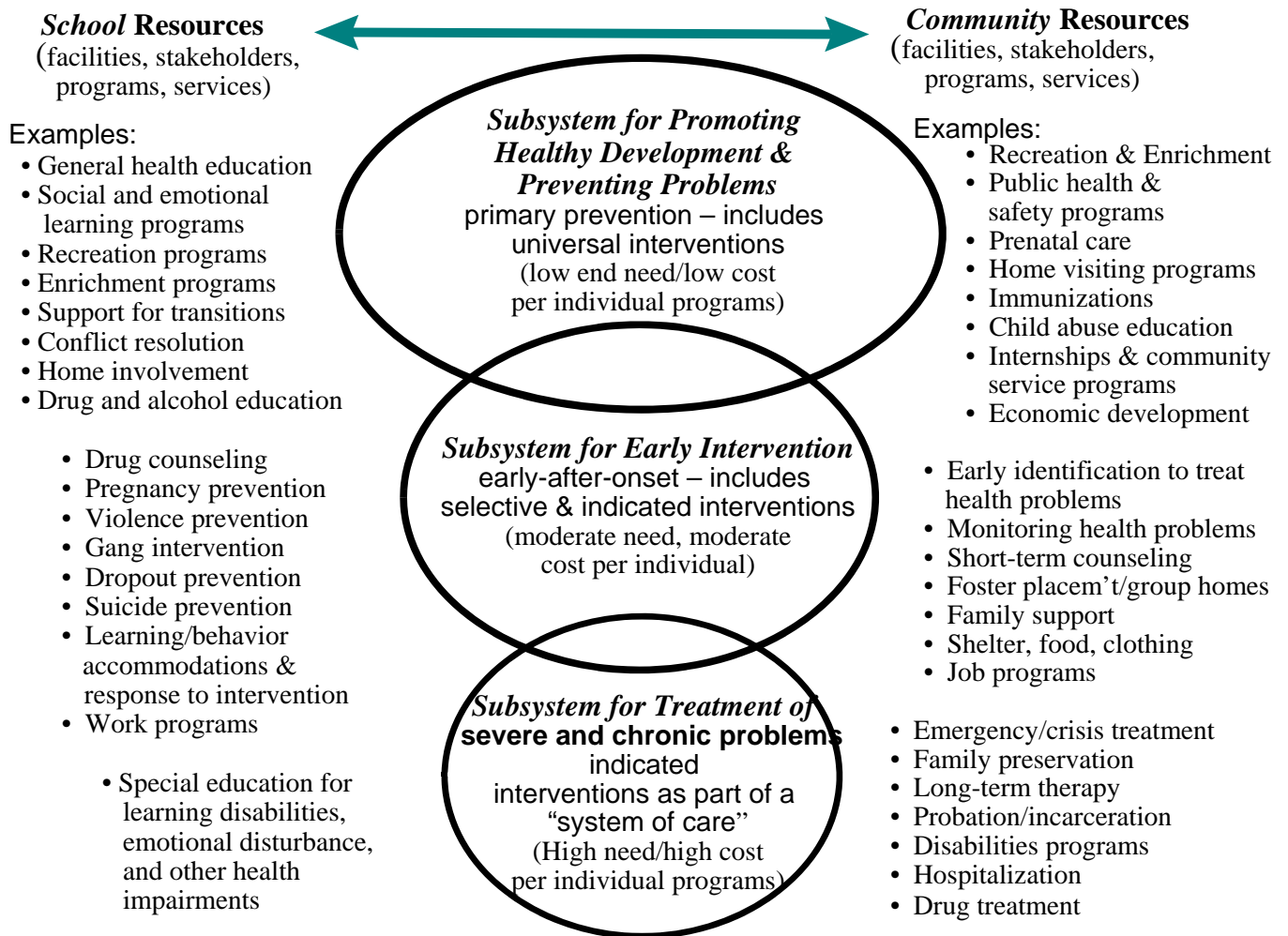
The prototype framework for a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports consists of

- >a full continuum of interventions
- &
- >an organized set of content arenas

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Reframing MTSS' Levels into a School-Community Intervention *Continuum of Interconnected Subsystems*

An example of another way to conceive the levels is in terms of what they aim to do and as an interrelated and overlapping continuum of braided school and community subsystems. The subsystems focus on promoting effective schooling and whole child development, preventing problems experienced by teachers and students, addressing such problems as soon as feasible after they arise, and providing for students who have severe and chronic problems.



As illustrated above, we operationalize these as three subsystems. Each subsystem is seen as weaving together a wide range of school and community resources. The interrelated and overlapping subsystems are illustrated as tapering from top to bottom to indicate the view that if the top is well designed and implemented, the numbers needing early intervention are reduced and then, as more are helped through early-after-onset assistance, fewer students will need “deep-end” interventions.

Note: Efforts to enhance positive development and improve instruction clearly can improve readiness to learn. However, it is frequently the case that preventing problems also requires direct action to remove or at least minimize the impact of barriers, such as hostile environments and intrinsic problems. Without effective direct intervention, such barriers can continue to get in the way of development and learning.

Appreciating the Range of Community Resources for Outreach

County Agencies and Bodies

(e.g., Depts. of Health, Mental Health, Children & Family Services, Public Social Services, Probation, Sheriff, Office of Education, Fire, Service Planning Area Councils, Recreation & Parks, Library, courts, housing)

Municipal Agencies and Bodies

(e.g., parks & recreation, library, police, fire, courts, civic event units)

Physical and Mental Health & Psychosocial Concerns Facilities and Groups

(e.g., hospitals, clinics, guidance centers, Planned Parenthood, Aid to Victims, MADD, "Friends of" groups; family crisis and support centers, helplines, hotlines, shelters, mediation and dispute resolution centers)

Mutual Support/Self-Help Groups

(e.g., for almost every problem and many other activities)

Child Care/Preschool Centers

Post Secondary Education Institutions/Students

(e.g., community colleges, state universities, public and private colleges and universities, vocational colleges; specific schools within these such as Schools of Law, Education, Nursing, Dentistry)

Service Agencies

(e.g., PTA/PTSA, United Way, clothing and food pantry, Visiting Nurses Association, Cancer Society, Catholic Charities, Red Cross, Salvation Army, volunteer agencies, legal aid society)

Service Clubs and Philanthropic Organizations

(e.g., Lions Club, Rotary Club, Optimists, Assistance League, men's and women's clubs, League of Women Voters, veteran's groups, foundations)

Youth Agencies and Groups

(e.g., Boys and Girls Clubs, Y's, scouts, 4-H, Woodcraft Rangers)

Sports/Health/Fitness/Outdoor Groups

(e.g., sports teams, athletic leagues, local gyms, conservation associations, Audubon Society)

Community Based Organizations

(e.g., neighborhood and homeowners' associations, Neighborhood Watch, block clubs, housing project associations, economic development groups, civic associations)

Faith Community Institutions

(e.g., congregations and subgroups, clergy associations, Interfaith Hunger Coalition)

Legal Assistance Groups

(e.g., Public Counsel, schools of law)

Ethnic Associations

(e.g., Committee for Armenian Students in Public Schools, Korean Youth Center, United Cambodian Community, African-American, Latino, Asian-Pacific, Native American Organizations)

Special Interest Associations and Clubs

(e.g., Future Scientists and Engineers of America, pet owner and other animal-oriented groups)

Artists and Cultural Institutions

(e.g., museums, art galleries, zoo, theater groups, motion picture studios, TV and radio stations, writers' organizations, instrumental/choral, drawing/painting, technology-based arts, literary clubs, collector's groups)

Businesses/Corporations/Unions

(e.g., neighborhood business associations, chambers of commerce, local shops, restaurants, banks, AAA, Teamsters, school employee unions)

Media

(e.g., newspapers, TV & radio, local access cable)

Family members, local residents, senior citizens groups

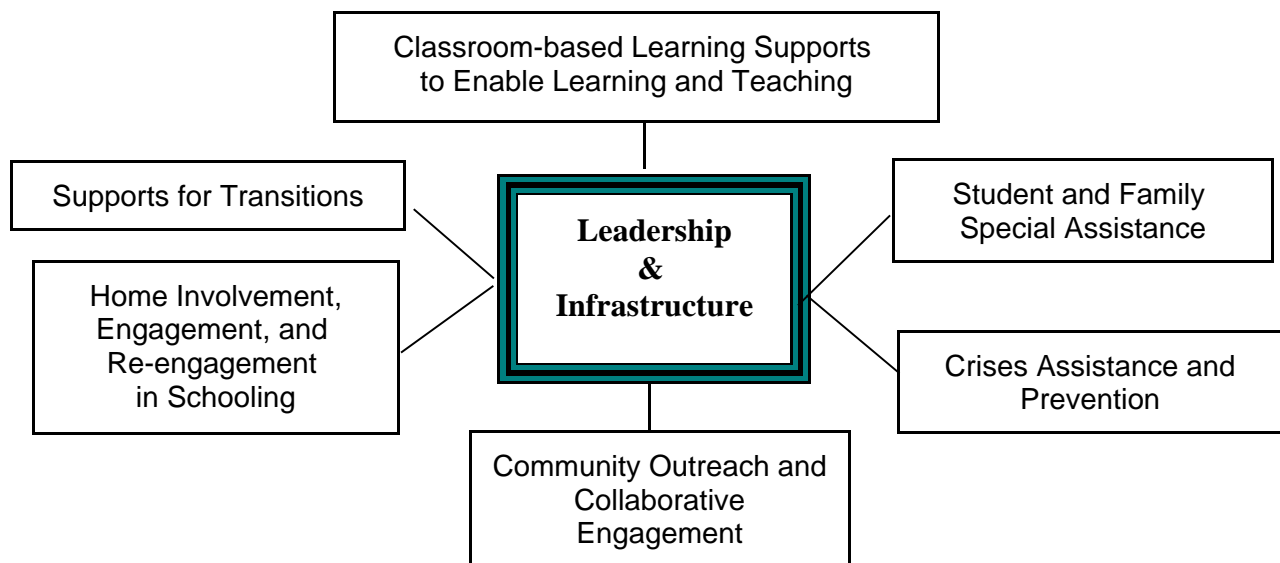
Categories of Basic Content Arenas for Student/Learning Supports Intervention

A system of student and learning supports requires more than conceiving a continuum of intervention. For example, “mapping” done with respect to the MTSS framework does not escape the trend just to generate laundry lists of programs and services at each level. Thus, in addition to the continuum, it is necessary to organize interventions cohesively into a circumscribed set of well-designed and delimited arenas that reflect the *content purpose* of the activity.

Our research and development efforts have categorized programs and services into six arenas of concerns that schools need to address each day. In organizing the activity, it becomes clearer what supports are needed in and out of the classroom so that teachers can enable the learning of students who are not doing well. The six arenas encompass:

- *Enhancing regular classroom strategies to enable learning* (e.g., improving instruction for students who have become disengaged from learning at school and for those with mild-moderate learning and behavior problems; includes a focus on prevention, early intervening, and use of strategies such as response to intervention)
- *Supporting transitions* (i.e., assisting students and families as they negotiate school and grade changes and many other transitions)
- *Increasing home and school connections and engagement*
- *Responding to, and where feasible, preventing crises*
- *Increasing community involvement and support* (outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers)
- *Facilitating student and family access to effective services and special assistance* as needed

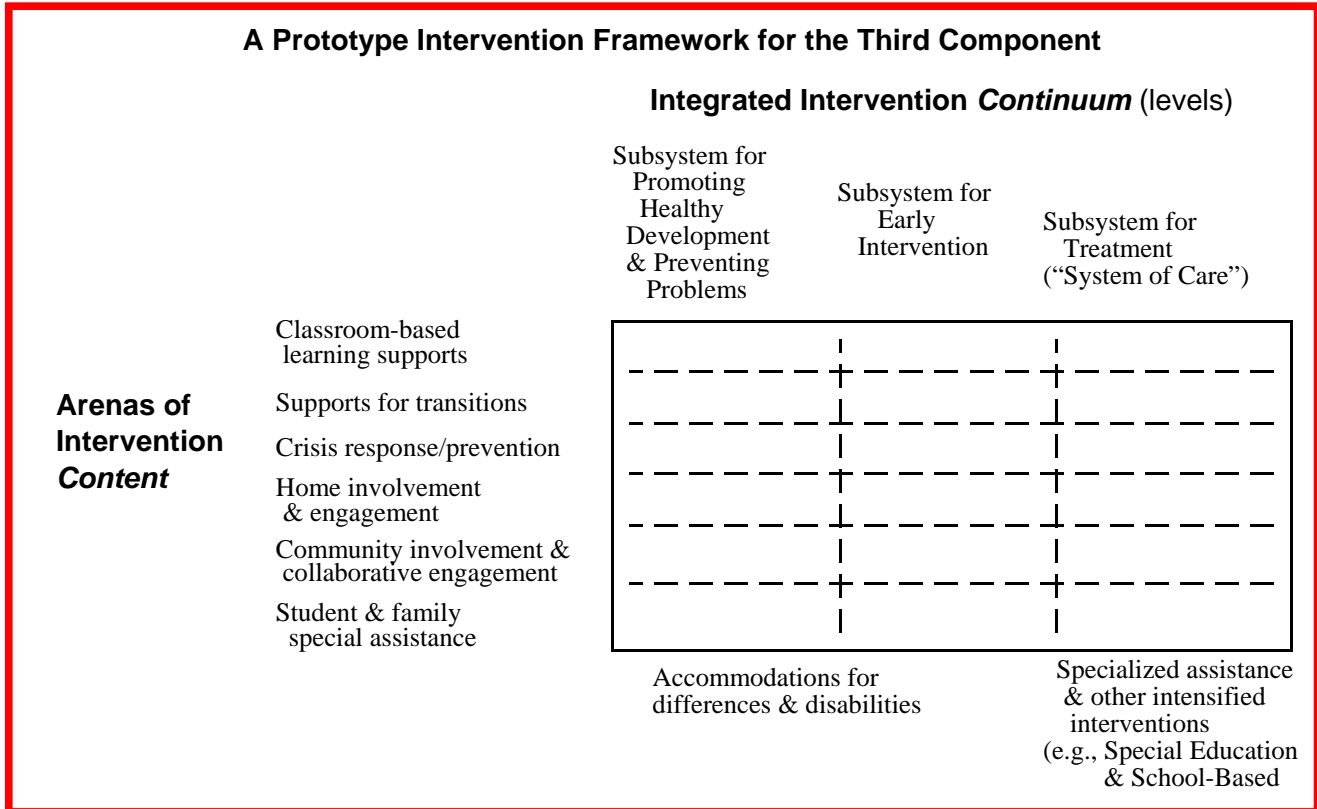
Some version of the six basic arenas has held-up over the last decade in a variety of venues across the country (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/nind7.htm>).



Note: All categorical programs can be integrated into these six content arenas. Examples of initiatives, programs, and services that can be unified into a comprehensive system of learning supports include positive behavioral supports, response to intervention, programs for safe and drug free schools, programs for social and emotional development and learning, full service community schools and family resource and school based health centers, CDC’s Coordinated School Health Program, bi-lingual, cultural, and other diversity programs, compensatory education programs, special education programs, mandates stemming from education legislation, and many more.

Continuum + Content

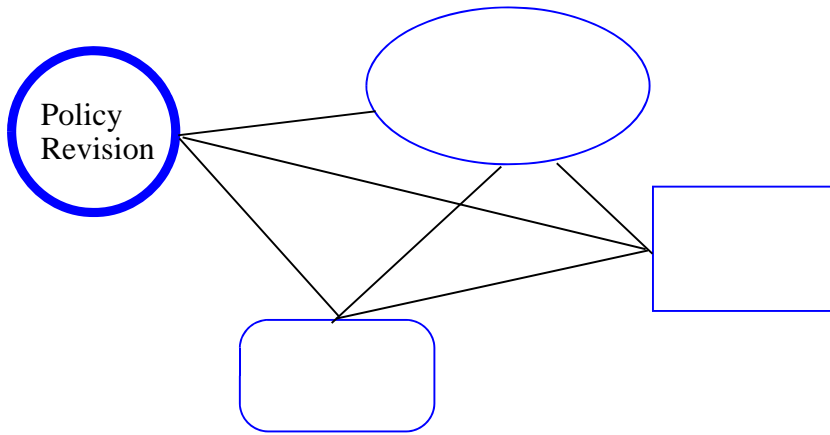
Combining the continuum and arenas of content activity moves MTSS thinking forward. It provides an intervention framework that can guide development of a total system designed to unify the resources a school devotes to student and learning supports, as well as braiding in community resources to fill critical gaps and strengthen the system (see Exhibit 5).



Note: The matrix illustrated above not only provides a guide for organizing and evaluating a system of student and learning supports, it is a tool for mapping existing interventions, clarifying which are evidence-based, identifying critical intervention gaps, and analyzing resource use with a view to redeploying resources to strengthen the system. The framework can guide embedding supports for compensatory and special education, English learners, psychosocial and mental health problems, use of specialized instructional support personnel, adoption of evidence-based interventions, integration of funding sources, and braiding in of community resources.

What the framework encompasses is essential to a school's ability to accomplish its instructional mission; it is not an added agenda to that mission. Moreover, the emphasis on classroom, school, home, and neighborhood helps create a school-wide culture of caring and nurturing. In turn, this helps students, families, staff, and the community at large feel a school is a welcoming, supportive place that accommodates diversity, prevents problems, and enhances youngsters' strengths and is committed to assuring equal opportunity for all students to succeed at school.

In sum, the intent is to unify and develop a comprehensive and equitable intervention system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. Establishing such a system requires coalescing ad hoc and piecemeal policies and practices. Doing so will help end the fragmentation of student and learning supports and related system disorganization and will provide a foundation for weaving together whatever a school has with whatever a community is doing to confront barriers to equity of opportunity. This implementation of learning supports as a primary school improvement component is essential to the focus on whole child, whole school, and whole community (including fostering safe schools and the emergence of a positive school climate).

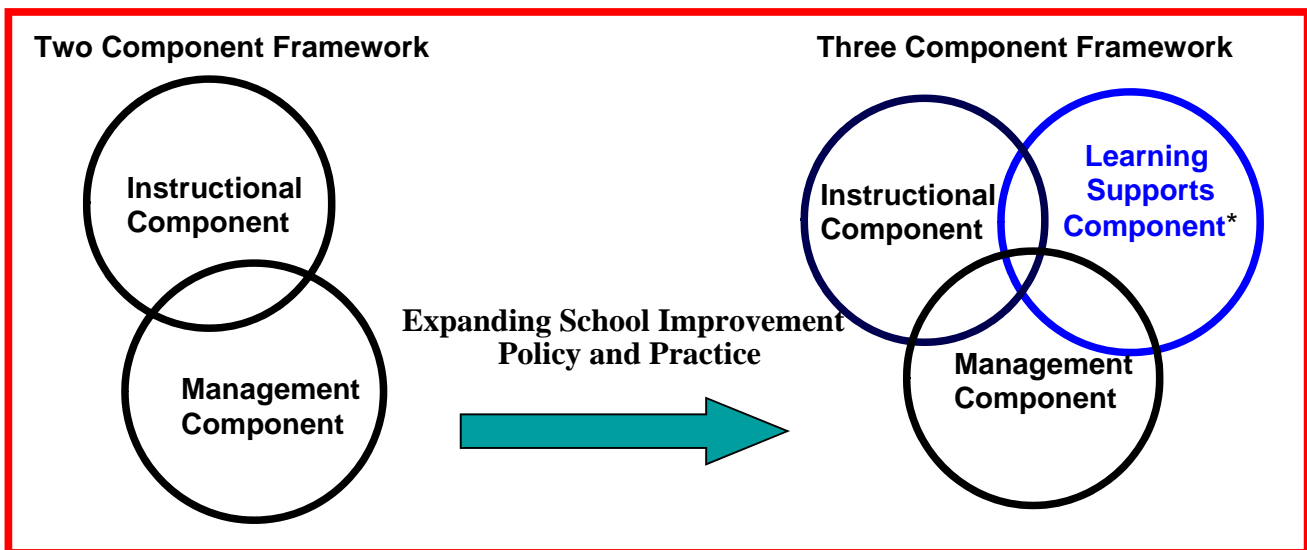


By continuing to marginalize student and learning supports, policy makers continue to marginalize all students who are not doing well at school

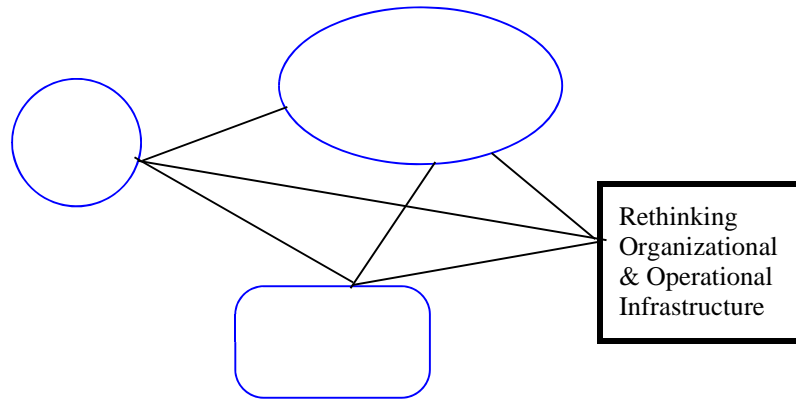
Let's take a quick look at the need for policy revision related to improving student and learning supports. Currently, school improvement policy and planning are guided primarily by a two-component framework.

Efforts to *transform* rather than just tinker with student and learning supports require an expansion of current school improvement policy. In most places, school improvement policy and practice is guided primarily by a two component framework (i.e., an instructional component and a management component). The result: all interventions for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students are given secondary consideration at best. As already noted, this marginalization is an underlying and fundamental cause of the widely observed fragmentation and disorganization of student and learning supports.

Ending the disorganization and effectively weaving together whatever a school has with whatever a community is doing to confront barriers to equity of opportunity calls for establishing a three component school improvement framework. As illustrated below, an expanded policy framework is intended to make addressing barriers to *enable* learning a *primary* commitment of school policy.



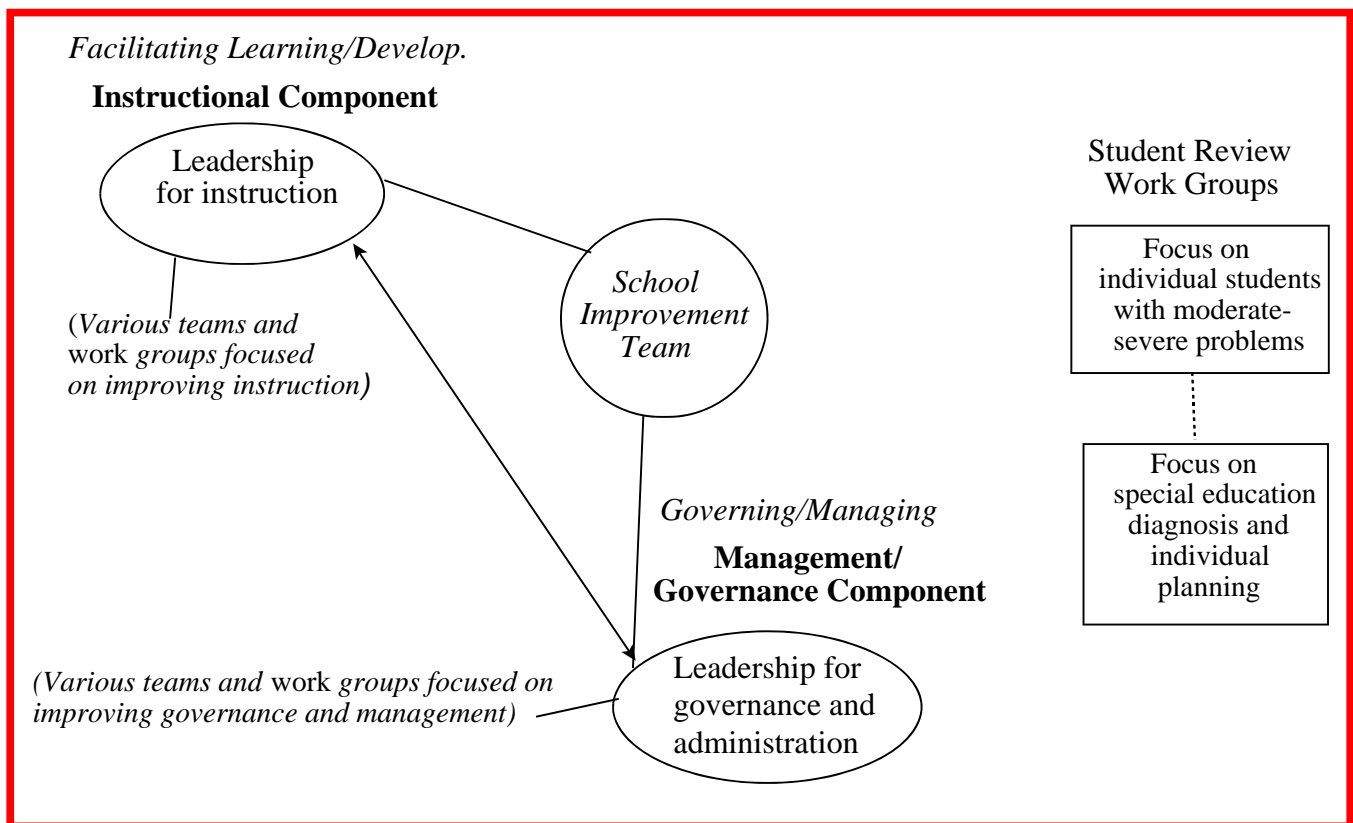
*States and districts are trending toward using the umbrella term *Learning Supports*. Learning supports are designed to directly address interfering factors *and* to do so in a way that (re-)engages students in classroom instruction. Attention to both these matters is essential because, in general, interventions that do not ensure a student's meaningful engagement in classroom learning are insufficient in sustaining student involvement, good behavior, and effective learning at school. In the classroom and school-wide, such supports encompass efforts to reduce the overemphasis on using extrinsic reinforcers and enhance an emphasis on *intrinsic motivation* to promote engagement and re-engagement.



Changes to enhance equity of opportunity made at the district central office mean little if they do not play out at the school level

A quick look at the need to rethink organizational and operational infrastructure:
 Leadership to Unify and Develop the System

Because student and learning supports are so-marginalized, it is not surprising that the current operational infrastructure at schools reflects this state of affairs. It tends to look like this:

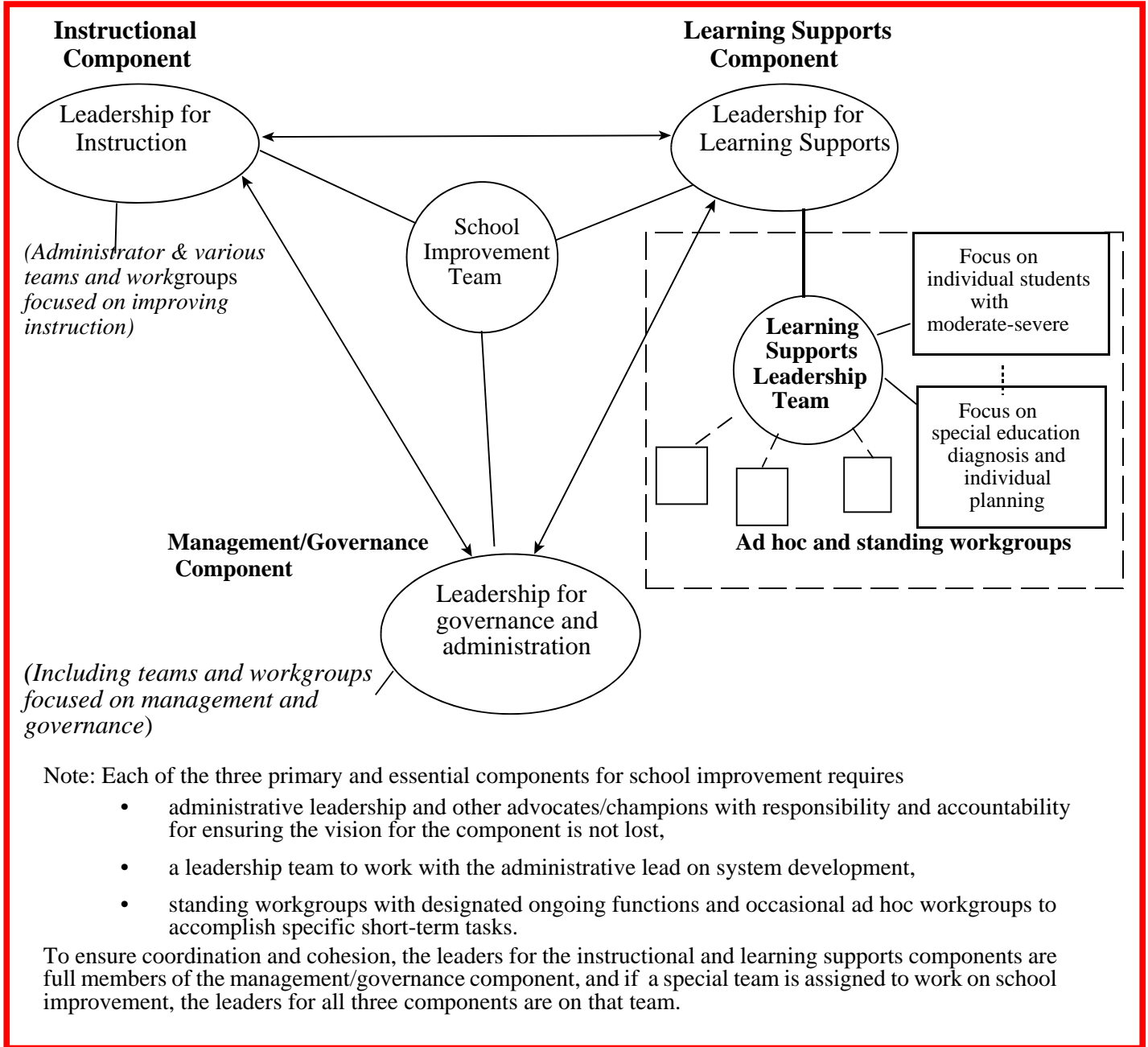


Note that there is no designated leadership for student and learning supports. Note also the situation related to the work groups focused on individual students experiencing learning, behavior, and emotional problems. These work groups mainly meet to review and make decisions about special assistance needs and referrals. In the process, they usually develop a perspective on the type of systemic improvements that could prevent problems and stem the tide of referrals. However, addressing these concerns is not one of their formal functions. And, in general, these work groups have little or no connection to discussions and decisions about school improvement needs.

RETHINKING THE SCHOOL'S OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

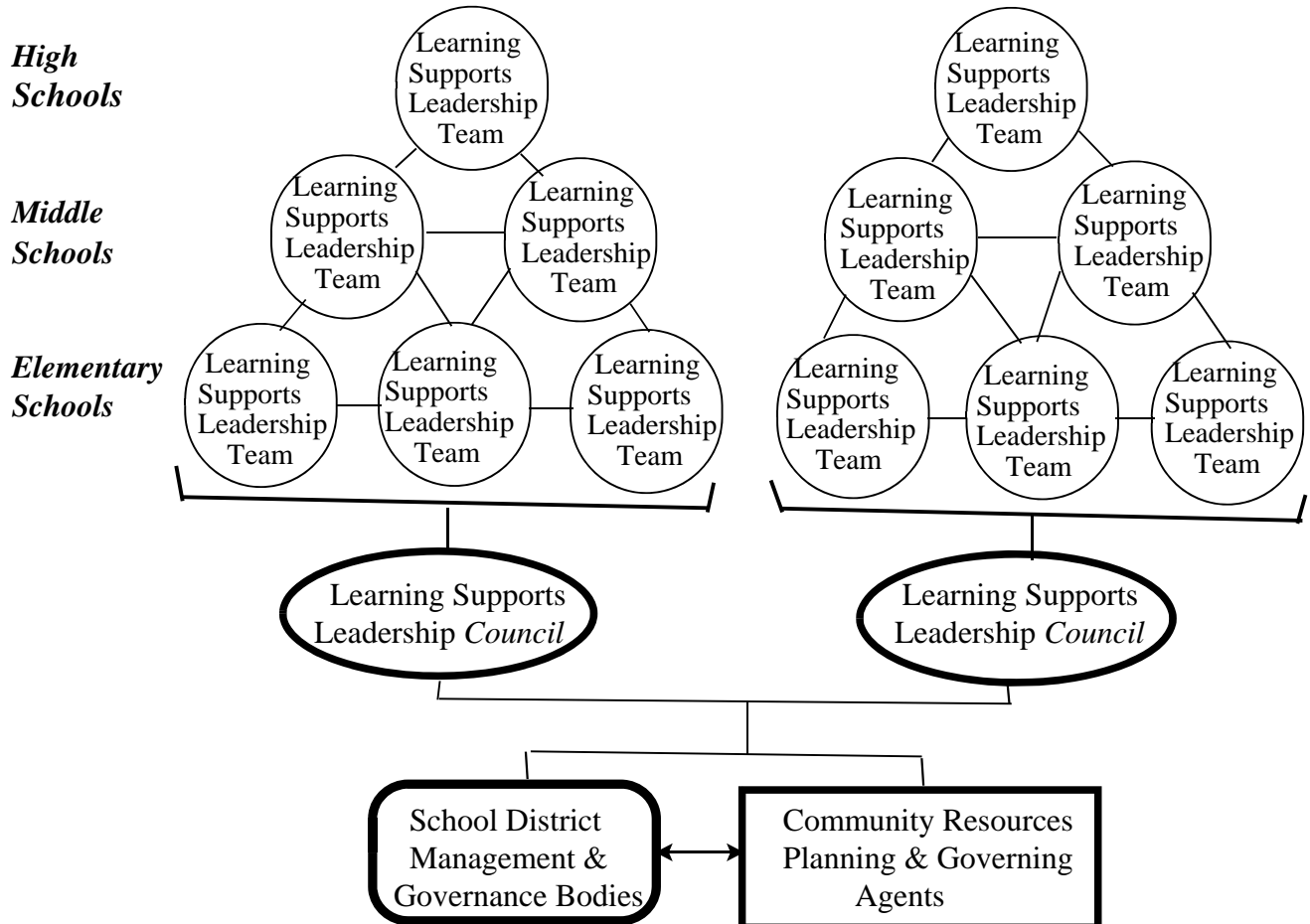
The exhibit below illustrates the basic features of an operational infrastructure prototype that fully integrates an emphasis on student/learning supports. The prototype was designed with a view to the type of interconnected leadership and workgroups necessary for developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

(This operational infrastructure should be paralleled at the district level.)



This reworking of the operational infrastructure is a necessity for ending the marginalization of student and learning supports. Working with a system development leadership team (e.g., a *Learning Supports Leadership Team*), a learning supports' administrative lead can facilitate continuous development of a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching. As conceived, each component's administrative lead is responsible and accountable not only for improving his or her component's performance but for fully weaving it into the other two.

Connecting Resources Across a Family of Schools, a District, and Community-Wide



For more on details on rethinking the *operational infrastructure*, see

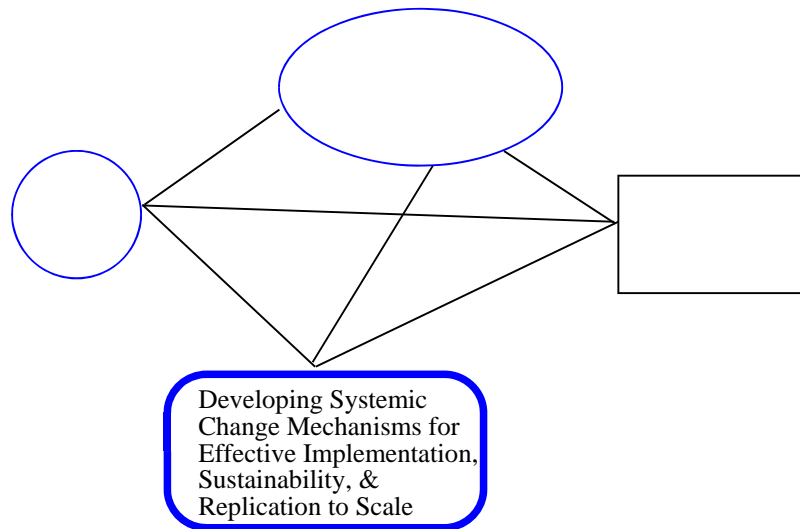
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/infrastructure/anotherinitiative-exec.pdf>

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentssupport/toolkit/aidk.pdf>

For examples of job descriptions for administrative leader for learning supports, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkitb4.htm>

For an aid in mapping and analyzing resources, see

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf>



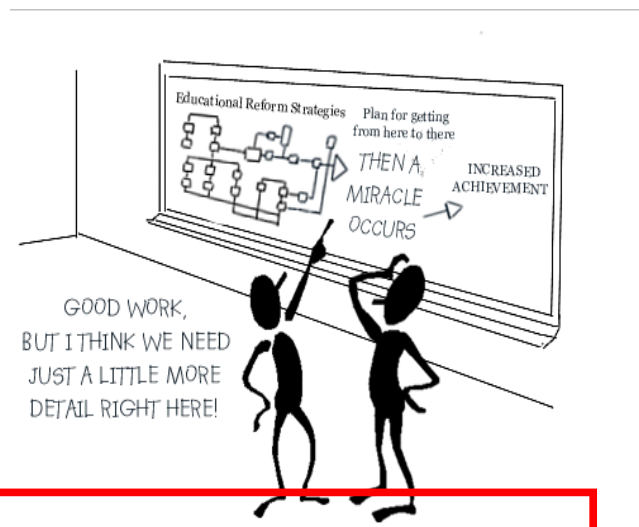
Systemic Change!

System change is about: **How do we get from here to there?**

And for districts, this involves doing so in ways that ensure

- >substance
- >scale-up
- >sustainability

All this is a discussion for another time.*



A cautionary note:

Good ideas and missionary zeal are sometimes enough to change the thinking of individuals; they are rarely, if ever, effective in changing complicated organizations (like the school) with traditions, dynamics, and goals of their own.

Seymour Sarason

*It is suggested that a start on appreciating the problem of addressing systemic change can be made by reading:

>Making It Happen – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/part3.pdf>

>Systemic Change for School Improvement – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/systemicchange.pdf>

Appendix B Links to Resources Distributed at the Summit

The following resources were handed out, referenced, or displayed at the Summit to flesh out the presentations.

Distributed:

- >Alabama Department of Education Design Document -- *a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* – <http://www.alsde.edu/ofc/ols/Documents/ALDOEDesignDocument.pdf>
- >Gainesville (GA) City Schools Case Study: *Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching, and Re-engaging Students* – <http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/face/pdf/my-books/gacasestudy2013.pdf> (an updated version done in 2015 was shared – Scholastic has not yet put it online)
- >*About Funding Stream Integration* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/fundinginteg.pdf>
- >*Tool for Mapping and Analyzing Resources* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf>
- >*Benchmark Checklist for Monitoring and Reviewing Progress in Developing a Comprehensive System to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentssupport/toolkit/benchmarktool.pdf>

On Display:

- >*Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System*. A special, preliminary edition of a new book by Adelman & Taylor. The publisher, Cognella is sending a complimentary digital copy to the many participants who indicated interest in receiving one.

Referenced Throughout the Day:

- >*System Change Toolkit for Transforming Student Supports into a Comprehensive System for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

This toolkit contains a range of resources designed to stimulate interchange and mobilize transformation. It includes prototypes and guides and much more to aid in developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports to replace the existing marginalized and fragmented activity for addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Online free resources are continuously revised and new ones are added – including professional development activities, powerpoints, and implementation resources.

Section A: Overview, Q & A, and Initiating the Work –provides brief big picture overviews (including exemplars, guides, powerpoints, webinars, handouts) for policy makers, administrators, and other stakeholders to adapt in moving forward; highlights essential elements, pioneering efforts, policy & funding stream integration, standards and related indicators

Section B: Designing and Planning a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System of Learning Supports – provides guides for creating readiness and reframing/reworking student and learning supports interventions and operational infrastructure; school-community collaborative infrastructure; tools for design teams; tools to aid mapping & analyses of intervention resources; tools for strategic planning; aids for capacity building; expanding the accountability framework for schools; benchmarks for monitoring systemic change

Section C: Phasing in a New System – provides guides for enhancing readiness, social marketing, ongoing capacity building; self-study surveys; professional development for teachers and administrators to enhance learning supports

Section D: Addressing the Problems of Systemic Change – provides some introductory resources for planning and implementing essential systemic changes; focuses on infrastructure and change agents for facilitating scale-up and sustaining transformative changes

Section E: On-line Clearinghouse Quick Find – A readily accessed dropdown menu of over 130 specific Quick Finds covering a range of topics related to addressing barriers to learning and re-engaging disconnected students. Each Quick Find provides direct links to resources.

Appendix C Resources Answering Questions & Requests the Summit

Here are some resources in response to questions and requests from participants related to transforming how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students:

About the problems of marginalization and fragmentation, see

- >the handouts from the Summit in Appendix A
- >Part 1 in *Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System*. by Adelman & Taylor. (For those who don't have the book, a prepublication version of Part 1 is online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/intropt1.pdf>)

About expanding the MTSS model, PBIS, and RtI, see

- >*ESSA State Consolidated Plans: Rethinking MTSS to Better Address Barriers to Learning* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essamtss.pdf>
- >*Moving Beyond the Three Tier Intervention Pyramid Toward a Comprehensive Framework for Student and Learning Supports* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/threetier.pdf>
- >*Behavioral Initiatives in Broad Perspective* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/behavioral/behini.pdf>
- >*RTI and Classroom & Schoolwide Learning Supports: A Guide for Teachers and Learning Supports Staff* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/rtiguide.pdf>

For more on these topics, see the following Quick Finds:

- >*Response to Intervention* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/responsetointervention.htm>
- >*Behavior Problems and Conduct Disorders* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p3022_01.htm

Note: The emphasis on MTSS, PBIS, and RtI at the Summit stressed the importance of understanding the current limitations and problems with these practices and to evolve and embed them into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports. This is essential in order to enhance their effectiveness. And if this is not done, one can expect the kind of backlash PBIS has experienced – see the article in *Education Week* entitled: “Tensions Accompany Growth of PBIS Discipline Model” – http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/08/28/2pbis_ep.h33.html

About personalization and intrinsic motivation, see

- >*Personalizing Learning and Addressing Barriers to Learning* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/personalizeI.pdf>
- >Series of articles in UCLA Center's e-journal – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/fall16.pdf>
 - >>*Grit – Another Buzzword? Student Motivation – a Fundamental Intervention Concern!*
 - >>*Personalization: Don't Let it Become Another Buzzword*
 - >>*Working with Disengaged Students*

About differences and diversity (e.g., race, class, gender, immigrants, disability, etc., etc.), see the many and varied resource links in the Quick Find labeled:

>Cultural Competence and Related Issues – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/culturecomp.htm>

About getting students involved in the process, see

>Youth Participation: Making it Real – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/youthpartic.pdf>

>What Youth Say about Participating – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/yaayouthpart.pdf>

About getting school boards involved, see

>Restructuring Boards of Education to Enhance Schools Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers to Student Learning – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentssupport/toolkit/aidh.pdf>

>Los Angeles Unified School District example – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/wheresithappening/losangeles.pdf>

>Grant Parish, LA example – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/grantpolicy.pdf>

>Enhancing a School Board's Focus on Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/schoolboardfocus.pdf>

>So You Want Higher Achievement Scores? It's Time to Rethink Learning Supports – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/schoolboard.pdf>

>Board Policy Prototype – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/policyproto2012.pdf>

About evaluation (formative and summative) and accountability indicators, see

>Expanding the Accountability Framework for Schools – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/account.pdf>

>Benchmark Checklist for Monitoring and Reviewing Progress in Developing a Comprehensive System to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentssupport/toolkit/benchmarktool.pdf>

>Standards & Quality Indicators for an Enabling or Learning Supports Component – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/qualityindicators.pdf>

About early childhood, see the many and varied resource links in the Quick Find labeled:

>Early childhood development – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/earlychildhood.htm>

About understanding initial causal factors and misdiagnoses, see

>Schools and the Challenge of LD and ADHD Misdiagnoses – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/ldmisdiagnoses.pdf>

About mental health in schools, see

>Mental Health in Schools: An Overview – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/aboutmh/mhinschools.html>

>Embedding Mental Health into a Learning Supports Component – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/embeddingmh.pdf>

About natural opportunities for social and emotional development, see

>Natural Opportunities to Promote Social-Emotional Learning and MH – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practicenotes/naturalopportunities.pdf>

About school-community collaboration, see

>“Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement” a chapter in *Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System*. (For those who don't have the book, a prepublication version of this chapter is online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/ch7comm.pdf>

>*School-Community Partnerships: A Guide* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/guides/schoolcomm.pdf>

About “Trailblazing and Pioneer Initiatives,” go to
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing.htm>

For more details on the work in Alabama, contact Linda Felton-Smith – lfelton-smith@alsde.edu

About coaching and support for transforming – The Center at UCLA offers free distance technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching (primarily by email and phone) to aid the efforts of those moving forward to develop a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports. Those making such systemic changes have found it particularly helpful when the Center works with them in preparing a design document and strategic plan for the work in ways that integrate the transformation into district and school strategic plans and implementation. Interested? CONTACT: Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Note: Various vendors are offering coaching. While these can be helpful (if they can be afforded), working directly with the Center, at least at the start, can ensure that the frameworks and essential system elements are understood and systemic changes are designed in ways that ensure substantive transformation, scalability, and sustainability.

Appendix D
List of Respondents to Summit Invitation

(*indicates those confirmed but unable to attend due to last minute circumstances)

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Excel by 5
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