



Introduction: *Tweaking is Not Enough – The Imperative for Transformation*

Despite the many efforts to improve schools, the attack on public education continues on several fronts from a variety of stakeholders. Concerns continue about the achievement gap, student dropouts, the plateauing of achievement test gains, and low performing schools. Teachers are regularly assailed, are dropping out at high rates, and recruitment is suffering.

The criticisms fuel the movement to privatize schooling.

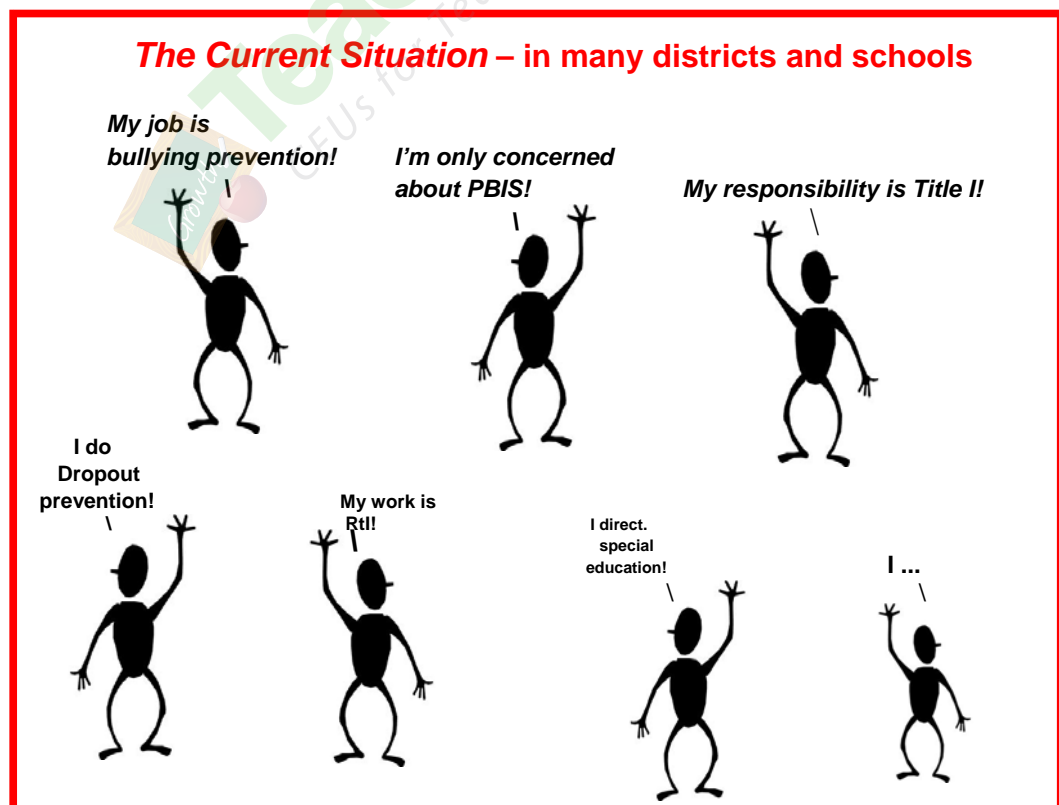
When the many societal problems that hamper school improvement are pointed out, the concerns are branded as excuses. Ironically, at the same time, legislative bodies regularly recognize and wrestle with matters such as bullying, school shootings, substance abuse, disconnected youth, and the many barriers arising from being raised in poverty, being a newly arrived immigrant, and being homeless.

Leaders for school improvement, of course, understand all this. Nevertheless, school improvement guides and planning tend to address barriers to learning and teaching in superficial ways. The trend is to keep tweaking current policies and practices rather than facing-up to the type of systemic transformation that is imperative.

The reality is that schools are confronted daily with multiple, interrelated problems that require multiple and interrelated solutions. These include a host of neighborhood, family, schooling, peer, and personal factors.

Interrelated solutions require various forms of collaboration. Thus, schools must transform how they connect with homes and communities so they can work together in pursuing shared goals related to the general well-being of the young and society.

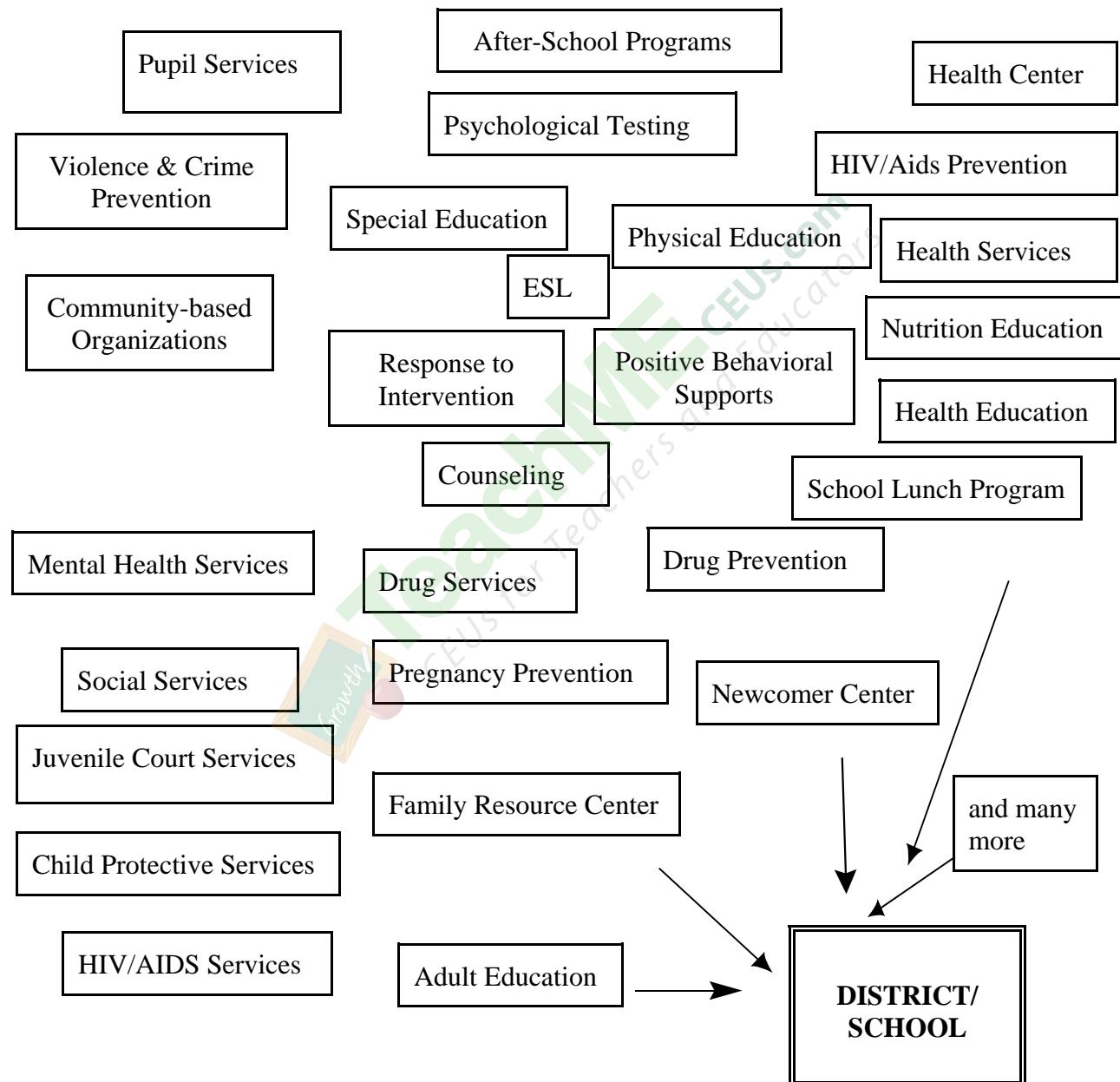
Current approaches to *student and learning supports* generally are not collaborative.



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.

Exhibit A

Student and Learning Supports: Much Activity, Much Fragmentation!*



*Learning and student supports are the resources, strategies, and practices that aim at enabling all students to have an equal opportunity for success at school and beyond by directly addressing external and internal barriers to learning and teaching.

Schools differ, of course, in what learning and student supports they have; some have few; some have many. Some have connected with community services (e.g., health and social services, after-school programs). Given the sparsity of community services, however, agencies endeavoring to bring their services to schools usually must limit activity to enhancing supports at a couple of schools in a neighborhood.

Moreover, there often is not a good connection between community services and the work of the many school and district-based student support staff whose roles include preventing, intervening early, and treating students with learning, behavior, emotional, and physical problems. Such school-employed personnel include psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses, dropout/graduation support staff, special educators, and others. When school and community efforts are poorly connected, community and school personnel may be working with the same students and families with little shared planning or ongoing communication. And there is almost no attention paid to systemic improvement.

Ironically, some policy makers have developed the false impression that community resources are ready and able to meet all the support needs of students and their families. In the struggle to balance tight school budgets, this impression already has contributed to serious cuts related to student supports (e.g., districts laying off student support personnel). Such cuts further reduce the amount of resources available for student and learning supports.

Why the Fragmentation?

Underlying the fragmentation is a fundamental policy problem, namely the long-standing *marginalization* of student and learning supports in school improvement policy and practice. Thus, most efforts to directly use student and learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students are not a primary focus in school improvement planning.

Because of the marginalization, the continuing trend is to establish student and learning supports through piecemeal policies and implement them in a fragmented and sometimes redundant manner. Then, when budgets tighten, many of these supports are among the first cut. All this contributes to a counterproductive job competition among student support staff and between these school personnel and those community professionals involved with bringing services to schools.

Given the marginalization, fragmentation, redundancy, and counterproductive competition related to student and learning supports, schools are not effectively playing their role in addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Systemic changes are imperative.

This book is about transforming student and learning supports to enhance equity of opportunity. It outlines a policy shift. It presents a unified, comprehensive, and equitable learning supports component to replace the existing fragmented and disorganized set of student and learning supports. It covers what is involved in designing and implementing such an approach. With respect to the costs of systemic change, the emphasis is mainly on redeploying existing resources and garnering economies of scale.

As noted in the preface, much of what is presented is common sense. However, that, doesn't mean making it happen is easy. Transforming schools is anything but easy; not transforming schools, however, is a recipe for maintaining the inequalities found in too many places.

Equity of opportunity is one of democracy's most elusive goals. Public education has an indispensable role to play in achieving this goal, but schools are hampered by fundamental gaps in school improvement policy and practice. The approach discussed in this book is meant to fill some of these gaps.

Leading the way to equity requires high levels of dedication and perseverance. This book is both an invitation and a call to action to all who want to enhance equity of opportunity for students to succeed at school and beyond.

Ultimately, only three things matter about educational reform. Does it have depth: does it improve important rather than superficial aspects of students' learning and development? Does it have length: can it be sustained over long periods of time instead of fizzling out after the first flush of innovation? Does it have breadth: can the reform be extended beyond a few schools, networks or showcase initiatives to transform education across entire systems or nations?

Andy Hargreaves & Dean Fink (2000)

Part I: Reframing for Transformation

Introduction: What Needs to be Done? Four Fundamental and Interrelated Transformation Concerns

Responding to learning, behavior, emotional, and physical problems in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner is counterproductive. School improvement must encompass policy and planning that enables every school to replace the outdated patchwork of programs and services that have emerged for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

The aim is to transform learning and student supports by developing a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic learning supports component that is fully integrated with the instructional and management/governance components at district and school levels.

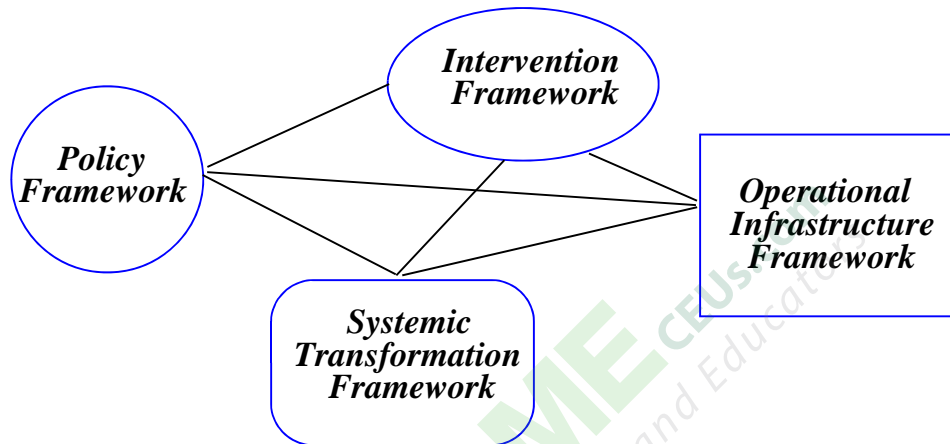
With a view to effective implementation, replication to scale, and sustainability, transforming learning and student supports calls for addressing a set of interconnected concerns. As illustrated in Exhibit B, these involve adopting/adapting prototypes that:

- Expand the *policy* framework for school improvement to fully integrate, as primary and essential, a student and learning supports component.
- Reframe student and learning support *interventions* to create a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports in classrooms and school-wide.
- Rework the *operational infrastructure* to ensure effective daily implementation and ongoing development of a unified and comprehensive system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching.
- Enhance approaches for *systemic change* in ways that ensure effective implementation, replication to scale, and sustainability.

We have developed prototype frameworks for each of these concerns. These frameworks are used by trailblazers across the country.

Exhibit B

Fundamental and Interrelated Transformation Concerns



Part I of this book underscores the imperative for transforming student and learning supports and outlines crucial changes in framing policy and intervention.

Part II offers details for improving intervention.

Part III explores ways to rework operational infrastructures and facilitate systemic change.

To paraphrase Goethe:

Not moving forward is a step backward.

Chapter 1. Viewing School Improvement through Additional Lenses

In the last analysis, we see only what we are ready to see. We eliminate and ignore everything that is not part of our prejudices.

Charcot (1857)

Not surprisingly, analyses of school improvement guides and plans indicate the primary focus is on what is mandated and measured. Specifically, such guides stress meeting the demand for standards-based and results-oriented school improvement mainly by elaborating on prevalent thinking about school practices, rather than considering fundamental systemic change. This reflects the assumptions that continuous progress in raising test scores and reducing the achievement gap can be accomplished by intensifying and narrowing the focus of school improvement to matters directly related to instruction and behavioral discipline. These failed assumptions ignore the necessity of fundamentally restructuring school and community resources in ways that enable learning.

WHAT'S MISSING IN MOST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS?

To understand the crucial facets that are missing in current school improvement policy and practice, education leaders need to revisit current plans using three critical lenses. These lenses focus on:

- *All students* – conceived in terms of differences in current motivation and abilities.
- *Barriers to learning and teaching* – emphasizing extrinsic as well as intrinsic factors.
- *Engaging and re-engaging students* – stressing the importance of maximizing intrinsic motivation and minimizing behavior control strategies.

First Lens: All students

Every teacher would like a classroom full of students who appear each day motivationally ready and able to learn what the teacher has planned to teach. What they find is a continuum of students who differ in motivation and abilities. At one end are those who are motivationally ready and able to work with the teacher on what has been planned. Around the middle of the continuum are students who come to school not very motivated and/or able to work with the teacher; these students may lack the prerequisite knowledge and skills for pursuing what is being taught, and/or have different learning rates and styles and possibly some minor vulnerabilities. At the other end of the continuum are students who are very deficient in their current capabilities, students with major disabilities and health problems, and too many who have become very avoidant and completely disengaged from classroom instruction.

At this point, it is important to stress that relatively few youngsters start out with internal problems that interfere with learning. Indeed, internal factors are not the primary instigators for the majority of learning, behavior, and emotional problems encountered at school. That is why it is essential to use the lens of barriers to learning and teaching in viewing students who are not doing well.

In our work, we have asked teachers from across the country, “Most days, how many of your students come to class motivationally ready and able to learn what you have planned to teach them?” The consistency of response is surprising and disturbing. In urban and rural schools serving economically disadvantaged families, teachers tell us that about 10 to 15% of their students fall into this group. In suburbia, teachers usually say 75% fit that profile.

Student surveys consistently indicate that alienation, bullying, harassment, and academic failure at school are widespread problems. Discussions with groups of students and support staff across the country suggest that many students who drop out are really “pushed out.” Ironically, many young teachers who “burn out” quickly also could be described as push outs.

Second Lens: Barriers to Learning and Teaching

The notion of barriers to learning encompasses both external and internal factors that interfere with learning and performance at school. Some children bring a wide range of problems stemming from restricted opportunities associated with poverty, difficult and diverse family conditions, high rates of mobility, lack of English language skills, violent neighborhoods, problems related to substance abuse, inadequate health care, and lack of enrichment opportunities (see Exhibit 1.1). Some also bring intrinsic conditions that make schooling difficult.

Exhibit 1.1

Examples of Conditions That Can Increase Barriers to Learning

Neighborhood	Family	School and Peers	Internal Student Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neurodevelopmental delay• Physical illness• Mental disorders/Disabilities• Inadequate nutrition and healthcare• Learning, behavior, and emotional problems that arise from negative environmental conditions exacerbate existing internal factors

As a result, at every grade level there are students who come to school each day not quite ready to perform and learn in the most effective manner. Students' problems are exacerbated as they internalize frustrations related to the barriers and the debilitating effects of poor academic or social performance. Addressing the problems begins with a basic appreciation of what causes them.

From this perspective, good teaching and other efforts to enhance positive development must be complemented with direct actions to remove or at least minimize the impact of barriers (see Exhibit 1.2). Without effective intervention, problems persist, inhibiting student development and learning, and fostering disengagement.

Third Lens: Engaging and re-engaging students in classroom learning

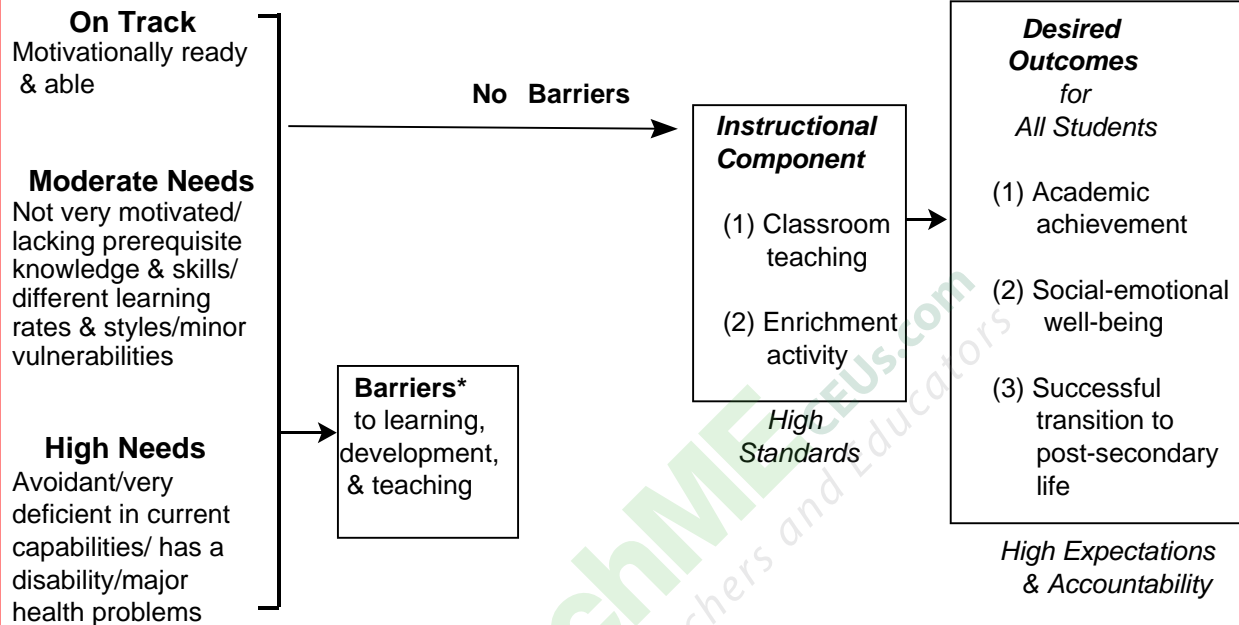
In general, teaching involves being able to apply strategies focused on content to be taught and knowledge and skills to be acquired – with some degree of attention given to the process of engaging students. Learning is a function of how good a fit there is in the transactions between the learner, the teacher, and other facets of the learning environment. Teaching works fine in schools where most students come each day ready and able to learn what is being taught. As already noted, in too many classrooms that is not the situation.

Student engagement involves not only engaging and maintaining engagement, but also re-engaging those who have disengaged. Given the fact that teachers have to provide instruction to the full continuum of learners, schools must provide the range of supports essential to enhancing student engagement and facilitating re-engagement.

Exhibit 1.2 Many Students Experience Barriers to Learning

Range of Learners

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



It is commonplace to find that students who have disengaged from the schoolwork at hand tend to misbehave. As teachers and other staff try to cope with those who are disruptive, the main concern usually is classroom management. At one time, a heavy dose of punishment was the dominant approach, but now such strategies are widely criticized. Currently, the emphasis is on more positive approaches designed to provide behavior support in and out of the classroom. For the most part, however, much of the focus on classroom management strategies stresses a form of social control aimed directly at stopping disruptive behavior.

An often-stated assumption is that stopping the behavior will make the student amenable to teaching. In a few cases, this may be so. However, the assumption ignores all the work that has led to understanding that a common response to social control is psychological reactance (e.g., the motivational need to restore one's sense of self-determination). To minimize psychological reactance, the foremost emphasis can't be on social control practices. Greater attention is required to maximizing intrinsic motivation for classroom learning and minimizing behavior control strategies.

What many of us have been taught about dealing with student misbehavior and learning problems runs counter to what we intuitively understand about human motivation. Teachers and parents, in particular, often learn to over-depend on reinforcement theory, despite the appreciation they may have of the importance of intrinsic motivation.

The move away from overreliance on punishment has enhanced advocacy for social skills training, asset development, character education, and positive behavior support initiatives. Any move away from punishment to positive approaches is a welcome one, but it is essential to include an emphasis on helping teachers learn how to enhance student engagement and facilitate re-engagement. (It is noteworthy that strategies for *re-engaging* students in learning rarely are a prominent part of pre- or in-service preparation and too seldom are the focus of interventions pursued by professionals whose role is to support teachers and students.)

Those who argue we must focus on basics are right; but too ignored in school improvement planning have been the basics related to student intrinsic motivation. Student engagement and re-engagement must be less about reacting to behavior problems and more about enhancing motivation to learn at school – with a strong emphasis on intrinsic motivation. As this is such a fundamental matter for school improvement, we highlight it as a basic facet of student and learning supports.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 1

Our research has used the three lenses highlighted above to zero-in on ways to redress key problems confronting schools. The lenses underscore the need to focus school improvement planning on the development of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports that enables students to get around barriers *and* re-engage in classroom instruction.

The emphasis on enabling student learning and performance fits well with the mission statement of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). That statement stresses:

It is not enough to say that all children can learn or that no child will be left behind; the work involves...achieving the vision of an American education system that enables all children to succeed in school, work, and life.

Ensuring that all children have an equal opportunity to succeed at school and beyond involves building on what is working well at schools, enhancing capacity for promoting promising practices, escaping old ideas that limit school improvement, and establishing new approaches that are effective, replicated, and sustained.

With specific respect to transforming student and learning supports, the need is to pull together such supports into a unified component, and then, over a period of several years, develop a comprehensive and equitable system by interweaving all that a school has with all that the community can bring to the table. We refer to the unified system as a learning supports component. Establishing such a component involves reframing school improvement policy. We turn to that topic now.

**School improvement
is a paradox.**

**That's right. Everyone is
going down the same road
in different directions.**



Chapter 2. Reframing Policy

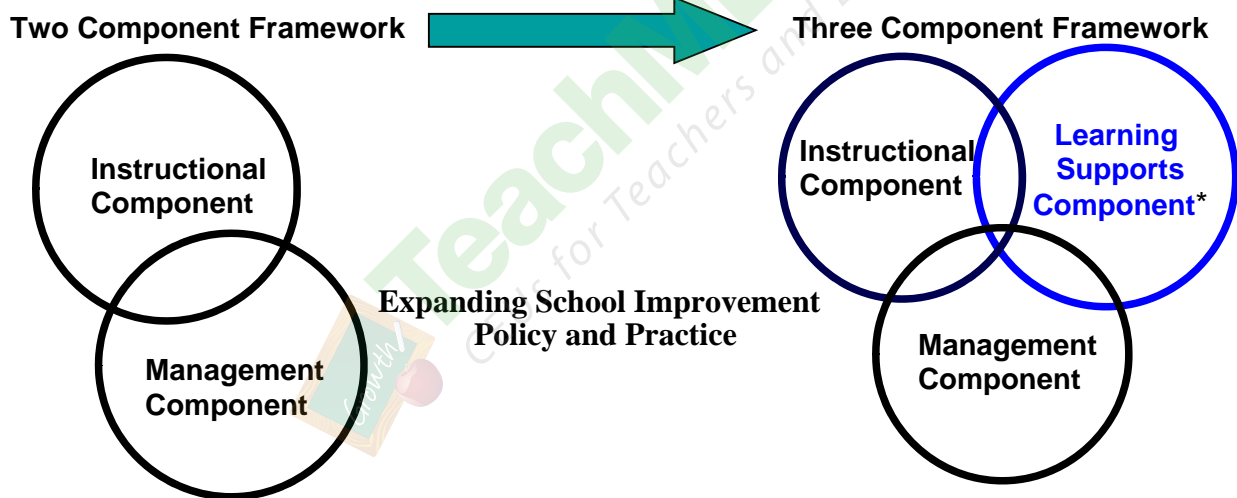
By continuing to marginalize student and learning supports, policy makers continue to marginalize all students who are not doing well at school.

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.

EXPANDING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT POLICY

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.

Exhibit 2.1
Expanded Policy Prototype



*States and districts are trending toward using the umbrella term *Learning Supports*. Learning supports are defined as the resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual supports to enable all students to have an equal opportunity for success at school by directly addressing barriers to learning and teaching. 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.

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.

RETHINKING ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADOPTING LEARNING SUPPORTS STANDARDS

Because school improvement policy across the country is "standards-based" and accountability driven, expanding the prevailing accountability framework and establishing standards for learning supports are key facets in driving effective implementation of a three component policy.

School Accountability

School accountability is a policy tool with extraordinary power to reshape schools – for good and for bad. As everyone involved in school improvement knows, currently the only accountability indicators that really count are achievement test scores. Achievement tests drive school accountability, and what such tests measure has become the be-all and end-all of what is attended to by many decision makers. This produces a growing disconnect between the realities of what it takes to improve academic performance and the direction in which many policy makers and school reformers are leading the public. The disconnect is especially evident in schools serving what often are referred to as “low wealth” families.

The move to a three component policy framework is intended to expand the framework for school accountability. Appendix A offers a prototype that focuses not only on achievement, but on personal and social development and on improvements that directly address barriers to learning and teaching.

Standards for a Learning Supports Component

Current discussions about standards for school improvement have become locked into debates over the initiative for Common Core State Standards. This limited focus is another indicator of the type of disconnect from reality resulting from the prevailing two component policy framework.

The move to a three component framework provides a focus on the need to complement curriculum and teaching standards with standards and related quality indicators for student/learning supports. Appendix B outlines a prototype of standards and indicators for a learning supports component.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 2

While not easy, moving to a three component policy framework is essential to student success at school and beyond. Establishing equity of opportunity for students in over 15,000 school districts and over 90,000 schools in the USA is an unlikely goal until school improvement policy expands to a fully integrated three-component policy framework.

An expanded policy framework will be a major driving force for transforming how schools address the many overlapping problems they must deal with each day. It also is crucial in advancing the agenda for whole child development and enhancing school climate.

Those currently leading the way in transforming student and learning supports are doing so because they understand the wide range of factors that interfere with students connecting with good instruction. They recognize that too many teachers are confronted with a large proportion of students who are not motivated and ready to learn what is on the teaching agenda for the day. They are committed to designing the type of unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports outlined in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3. Reframing Intervention for Student and Learning Support

Changing the individual while leaving the world alone is a dubious proposition.

Ulric Neisser (1976)

A learning supports component is established by coalescing existing student and learning supports into a cohesive unit and, over a period of several years, developing the component into a comprehensive intervention system that is fully integrated with instructional efforts.

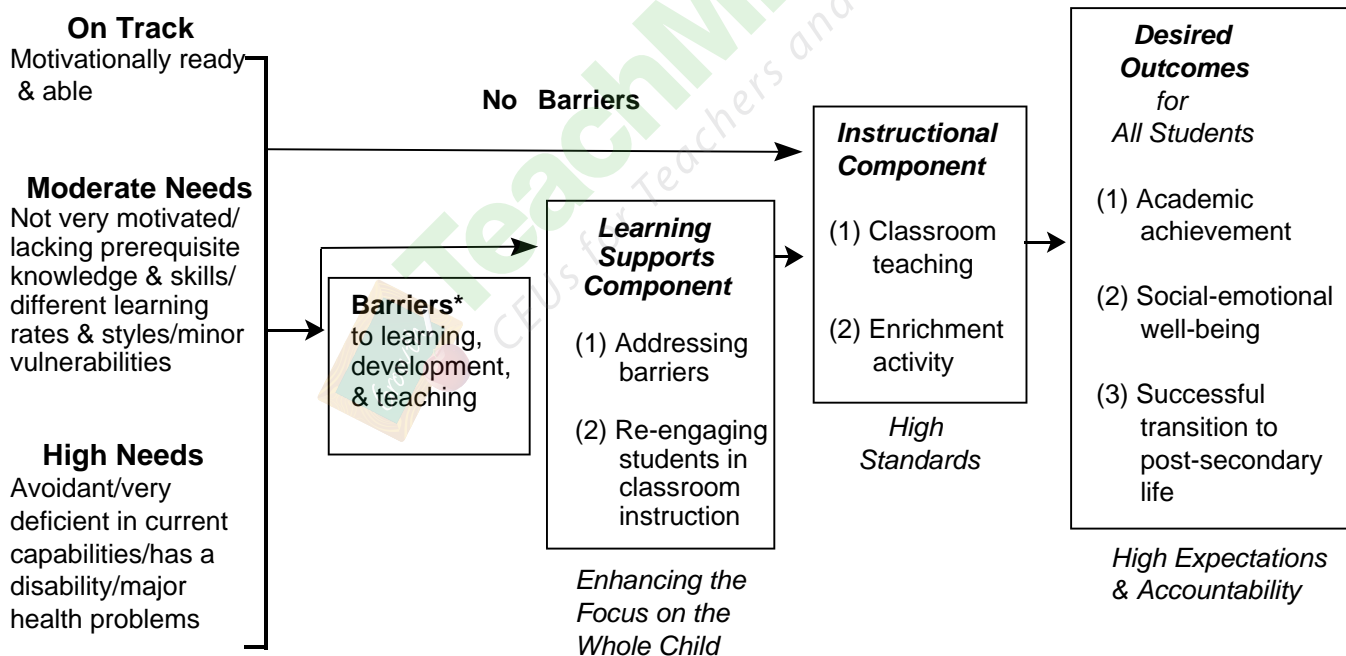
A unified and comprehensive system of learning supports is key to enabling *all* students to have an equal opportunity to learn at school and *all* teachers to teach effectively. Such a system is especially important where large numbers of students are not succeeding. As illustrated in Exhibit 3.1, a learning supports component encompasses classroom and school-wide approaches and is designed to enable students to get around the barriers *and* re-engage in classroom instruction.

Exhibit 3.1

A Learning Supports Component to Address Barriers and Re-engage Students in Classroom Instruction*

Range of Learners

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



*A learning supports component is operationalized as a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic approach for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. In keeping with public education and public health perspectives, interventions are designed to provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual supports to enable learning and engagement for *all* students and especially those experiencing behavior, learning, emotional, and physical problems. The interventions are meant to play out in the classroom and school-wide at every school and in every community. In promoting engagement and re-engagement, the interventions stress a reduced emphasis on using extrinsic reinforcers and an enhanced focus on intrinsic motivation as a process and outcome consideration.

INTERVENTION PROTOTYPE

While interventions are commonly framed in terms of tiers or levels, such a framework is an insufficient organizer. To escape the trend to generate laundry lists of programs and services at each level, it is necessary also to group them into a circumscribed set of arenas reflecting the *content purpose* of the activity. So, our intervention prototype has two facets:

- one organizes programs and services into a circumscribed set of *content arenas of activity*;
- the second conceptualizes levels of intervention as a full *continuum of integrated intervention subsystems* that interweave school-community-home resources.

Content Arenas of Activity

As Exhibit 3.2 illustrates, the facet of the prototype that focuses on content categorizes student/learning supports into six content arenas. These encompass efforts to

- *enhance strategies in regular classroom to enable learning* (e.g., working collaboratively with other teachers and student support staff to ensure instruction is personalized with an emphasis on enhancing intrinsic motivation for all students and especially those manifesting mild-moderate learning and behavior problems; re-engaging those who have become disengaged from learning at school; providing learning accommodations and supports as necessary; using response to intervention in applying special assistance; addressing external barriers with a focus on prevention and early intervening)
- *support transitions* (e.g., assisting students and families as they negotiate the many hurdles encountered during school and grade changes, daily transitions, program transitions, accessing supports, and so forth)
- *increase home and school connections and engagement* (e.g., addressing barriers to home involvement, helping those in the home enhance supports for their children, strengthening home and school communication, increasing home support of the school)
- *increase community involvement and collaborative engagement* (e.g., outreach to develop greater community connection and support from a wide range of entities, including enhanced use of volunteers and other community resources, establishing a school-community collaborative)
- *respond to, and where feasible, prevent school and personal crises* (e.g., preparing for emergencies, implementing plans when an event occurs, countering the impact of traumatic events, implementing prevention strategies; creating a caring and safe learning environment)
- *facilitate student and family access to special assistance* (including specialized services on- and off-campus) as needed

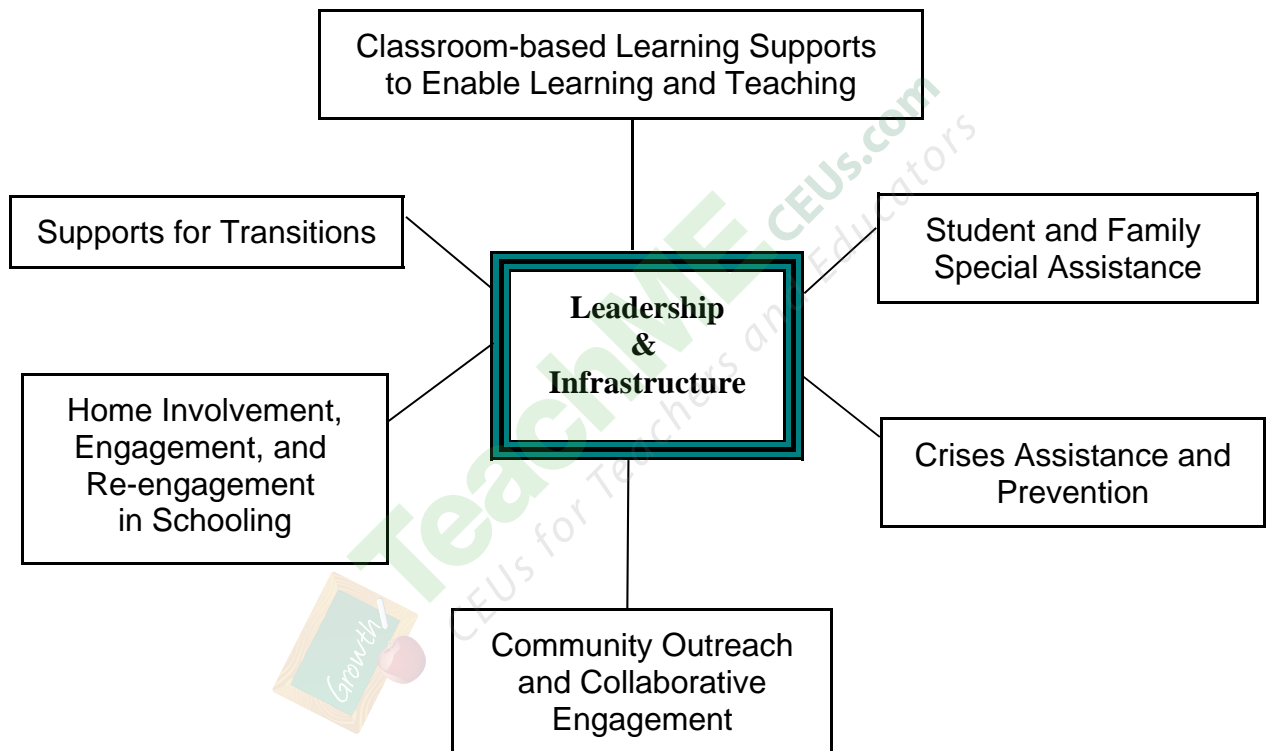
A brief discussion of and examples related to each of these arenas is provided in Chapters 4-9.

Exhibit 3.2

Prototype for Six Content Arenas

School improvement must include plans to develop a more effective system for directly dealing with factors that keep too many students from succeeding at school and beyond. The first concern is providing a range of supports in the classroom and as necessary outside the classroom so that teachers can enable the learning of students who are not doing well.

Our work over many years stresses that the supports needed cluster into the six content arenas illustrated below. (We think of them as the curriculum of learning supports.)



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, 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.

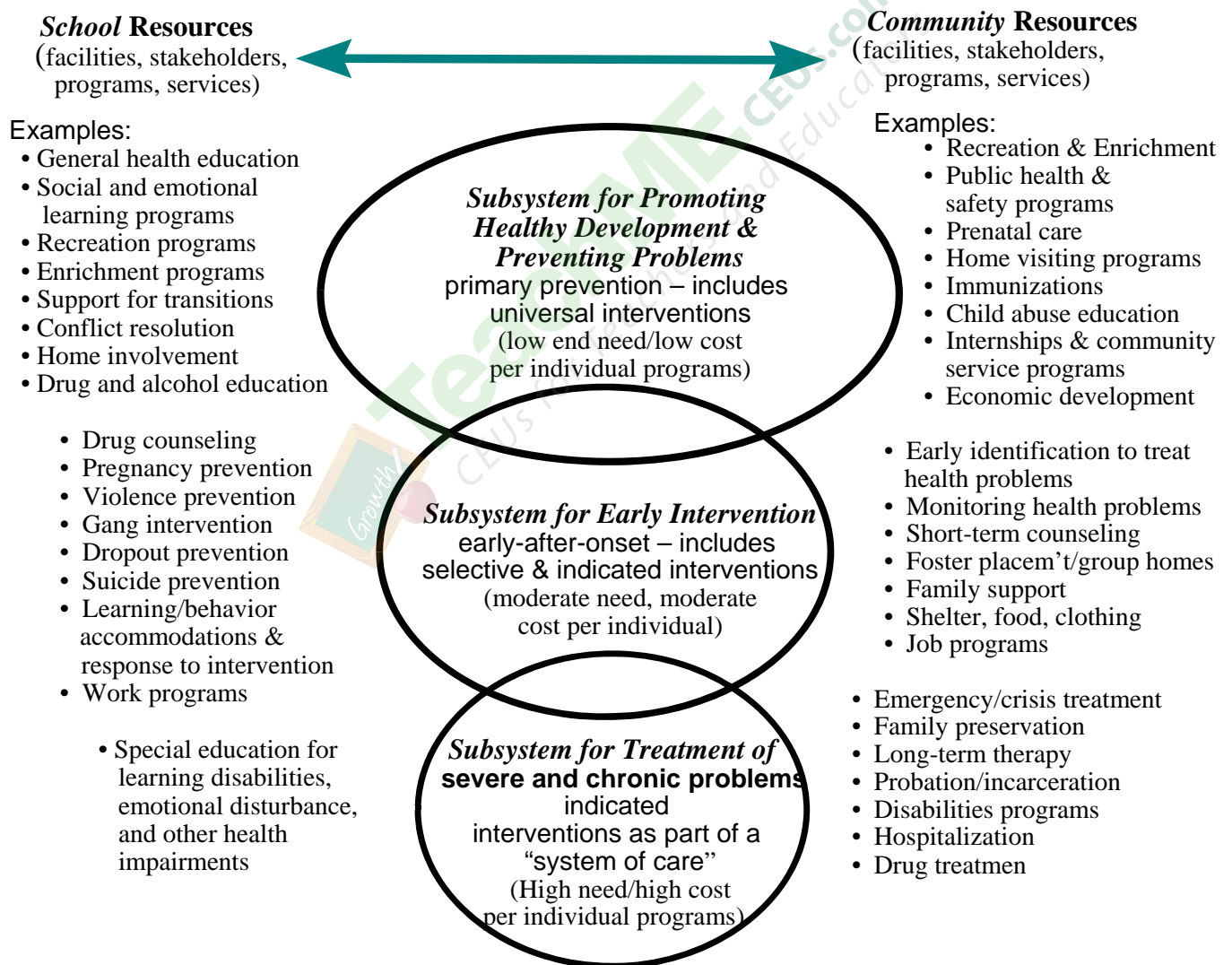
Continuum of Integrated Subsystems: Expanding the 3-tier Model

Beyond intervention content, a fundamental second facet of a unified and comprehensive system or learning supports is an integrated continuum of interventions that strives to

- promote healthy development and prevent problems
- intervene early to address problems as soon after onset as is feasible
- assist with chronic and severe problems.

As graphically portrayed in Exhibit 3.3, (a) each level represents a subsystem, (b) the three subsystems overlap, and (c) all three require integration into an overall system that encompasses school and community resources. Note that this framework expands thinking beyond the three tier pyramid that schools currently use.

Exhibit 3.3 Intervention *Continuum*: Interconnected Subsystems



As noted, the prevailing formulation of the intervention continuum in education mainly stresses a 3-tiered, level model, especially in the context of turning Response to Intervention (RtI) and positive behavioral supports (e.,g., PBIS) into school-wide practices.

The simplicity of the tiered presentation as widely adopted is appealing and helps underscore differences in levels of intervention. However, focusing simply on levels of intervention, while essential, is insufficient. Three basic concerns about such a formulation are that it mainly stresses levels of intensity, does not address the problem of systematically connecting interventions that fall into and across each level, and does not address the need to connect school and community interventions. As a result, it has done little to promote the type of intervention framework that policy and practice analyses indicate is needed to guide schools in developing a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports. In contrast, Exhibit 3.3 illustrates that intervention tiers/levels are better conceived as a set of integrated, overlapping subsystems that embrace both school and community resources.

As illustrated in Exhibit 3.4, the six *arenas* and the *continuum* constitute the prototype intervention framework for a comprehensive system of learning supports. Such a framework is meant to guide and unify school improvement planning related to developing a learning supports component. The matrix provides a framework for mapping what is in place and analyzing gaps.

Exhibit 3.4

Intervention Prototype Framework for a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports

		Integrated Intervention <i>Continuum</i> (levels)		
		Subsystem for Promoting Healthy Development & Preventing Problems	Subsystem for Early Intervention	Subsystem of Treatment (“System of Care”)
Arenas of Intervention Content	Classroom-based learning supports			
	Supports for transitions			
	Crisis response/prevention			
	Home involvement & engagement			
	Community involvement & collaborative engagement			
	Student & family special assistance			
		Accommodations for differences & disabilities	Specialized assistance & other intensified interventions (e.g., Special Education & School-Based Behavioral Health)	

Effectively designed and developed at a school, a learning supports component increases supports for all students. The emphasis is on

- unifying student and learning supports by grouping the many fragmented approaches experienced at school in ways that reduce responding to overlapping problems with separate and sometimes redundant interventions
- addressing barriers to learning and teaching through improving personalized instruction and increasing accommodations and special assistance when necessary
- enhancing the focus on motivational considerations with a special emphasis on intrinsic motivation as it relates to individual readiness and ongoing involvement and with the intent of fostering intrinsic motivation as a basic outcome
- re-engaging disconnected students
- adding specialized remediation, treatment, and rehabilitation as necessary, but only as necessary

In doing all this, a learning supports component enhances equity of opportunity, plays a major role in improving student and school performance, fosters positive school-community relationships, and promotes a positive school climate.

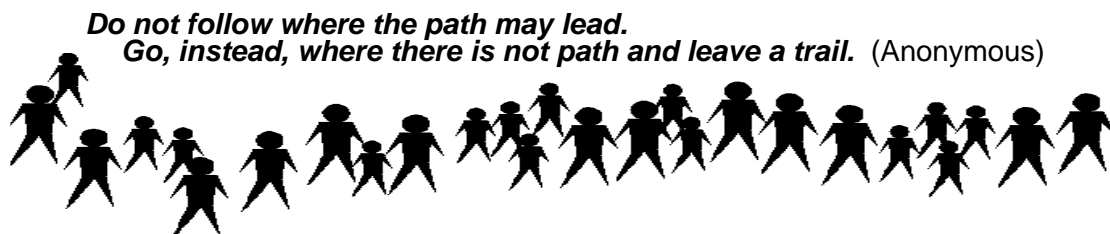
CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 3

As Dennie Wolf stressed over a decade ago as director of the Opportunity and Accountability Initiative at the Annenberg Institute for School Reform:

“Clearly, we know how to raise standards. However, we are less clear on how to support students in rising to meet those standards” Then, she asked: “Having invested heavily in ‘raising’ both the standards and the stakes, what investment are we willing to make to support students in ‘rising’ to meet those standards?”

Ultimately, the answer to that question will affect not only individuals with learning, behavior, emotional, and physical problems but the entire society.

It is time for school improvement to encompass policy and planning that enables every school to replace its outdated patchwork of programs and services used in addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Part II discusses how to organize the six content arenas. Part III explores ways to move forward.



A Sample of Center References Relevant to Part I

While the books cited below are not online, most of the cited chapters and journal articles can be accessed at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/materials/resources.htm>.

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Relevant Center Policy & Program Reports & Briefs can be found in --
II. School Improvement and Restructuring Related to Addressing Barriers to Learning & Teaching – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/materials/policyprogram.htm>

Brief overview documents about a *Unified & Comprehensive System for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching* can be found in the Center's transformation toolkit online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>

For example, see

What Is a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports?
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whatis.pdf>

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

We just missed the school bus.

Don't worry. I heard the principal say no child will be left behind!



Part II. Six Arenas for Classroom and School-wide Student & Learning Supports

Introduction: *Enhancing Equity of Opportunity for Success at School*

It was said of the legendary coach Vince Lombardi that he was always fair because he treated all his players the same -- like dogs!

Good schools strive to do their best for all students. This reflects our society's commitment to equity, fairness, and justice. But, if this commitment is to be meaningful, it cannot be approached simplistically. Some of the complexities have been discussed in Part I.

Currently, schools are focused on building better and better systems for *screening and referring* students for special assistance. Not surprisingly, the result is a "field of dreams" effect (i.e., *build it, and they will come*). In some schools, the number of referrals is so large that the system is so overwhelmed that only a small percentage of students are helped. Ironically, this is the case despite the range of programs and services that are frequently cited as operating in schools.

As stressed in Part I, schools committed to the success of all children must be redesigned so that teachers, student support staff, and others at the school can help students as early as is feasible after a problem appears. By developing a learning supports component, schools can minimize the impact of learning, behavior, emotional, and physical problems and appropriately stem the tide of referrals for out-of-class special assistance and special education.

Chapter 3 offered a prototype intervention framework for a learning supports component. Along with a continuum of intervention, the prototype highlighted a set of content arenas. These arenas were generated by research that clustered and categorized the large variety of school-based student and learning supports into six groups. The six arenas capture the essence of the multifaceted ways schools are trying to address barriers to learning, and they provide a foundation for developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.

As highlighted in Chapter 3, the six arenas encompass interventions for:

- Enhancing regular classroom strategies to enable learning
- Supporting transitions
- Increasing home connections to the school
- Increasing community involvement and collaborative engagement
- Responding to, and where feasible, preventing crises
- Facilitating student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed

Part II devotes a chapter to each of these.

Chapter 4. Classroom-based Learning Supports to Enable Learning and Teaching

Good instruction is necessary but not sufficient when students are experiencing external or internal challenges that inhibit learning.

Learning supports in classrooms are essential to address factors interfering with learning and enhance equity of opportunity for all students to succeed at school and beyond.

Available evidence makes it clear that what most school improvement guides and plans stress is not sufficient to address the many problems experienced at schools each day. The lenses described in Chapter 1 provide a perspective on what's missing.

For example, looking through the lens of how well a classroom *enables* equity of opportunity for *all* students to succeed leads to a recognition that instruction usually is not designed to account for a wide range of individual differences and circumstances. Moreover, too little accommodation and specific help is provided to students who manifest learning, behavior, emotional, and physical problems. And, in situations where students have become disconnected from classroom instruction, professional preparation generally has not equipped teachers to re-engage such youngsters.

To be more specific: in mapping and analyzing how classrooms address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students, we find the following:

- (1) Teaching is organized at most schools in ways that presume classroom teachers can do the job alone.
- (2) Insufficient attention is being paid to creating a stimulating and caring, as well as manageable learning environment.
- (3) Efforts to personalize instruction mainly are interpreted in terms of using technology and are not adequately differentiating instruction with respect to motivational differences.
- (4) Classrooms are not focusing enough on promoting intrinsic motivation, preventing problems, responding as soon as feasible after problems arise, and providing appropriate special assistance when students display specific problems.
- (5) Teachers' professional development has not effectively prepared them with respect to understanding intrinsic motivation, and this contributes to a tendency to overrely on rewards and punishment as strategies for teaching and controlling behavior.
- (6) Classrooms are not designed to be an effective first responder when special assistance for a student and family is needed.

All this hinders and undermines efforts to engage students in learning. Moreover, these conditions contribute to the type of psychological reactance that generates behavior and emotional problems and works against re-engaging disconnected students.

Enhancing learning supports in classrooms helps with these matters by increasing teacher effectiveness in accounting for a wider range of individual differences, fostering a caring context, and preventing and handling a wider range of problems when they arise (see Exhibit 4.1).

Exhibit 4.1

Key Facets of Enhancing Learning Supports in Classrooms

- **Reframing the approach to classroom instruction to enhance teacher capability to prevent and intervene as soon after problems arise and reduce need for out of class referrals** (e.g. personalizing instruction; enhancing necessary special assistance in the classroom; developing small group and independent learning options; reducing negative interactions and over-reliance on social control; expanding the range of curricular and instructional options and choices; systematic use of response to intervention and related prereferral interventions)
- **Opening the classroom door to invite in various forms of collaboration, support, and personalized professional development** (e.g., co-teaching and team teaching with resource teachers; working with student support staff in the classroom; using volunteers in targeted ways to enhance social and academic support; bringing in mentors; creating a learning community focused on intrinsic motivation concepts, their application to schooling, how to minimize use of rewards and punishment, and how to re-engage students who have become disengaged from classroom learning)
- **Enhancing the capability of student and learning supports staff and others to team with teachers in the classroom** (e.g., enhancing student support staff understanding of personalized instruction and how to work as colleagues in the classroom with teachers and others to enhance success for all students)
- **Providing a broad range of curricular and enrichment opportunities** (e.g., stimulating instructional content and processes, ensuring open access to and choice from a variety of enriching options)
- **Contributing to a positive climate in the classroom and school-wide** (e.g., enhancing feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to others at school; reducing threats to such feelings; ensuring staff have good professional and social supports; providing for conflict resolution)

FRAMEWORK AND DESIGN FOR ENHANCING CLASSROOM-BASED LEARNING SUPPORTS

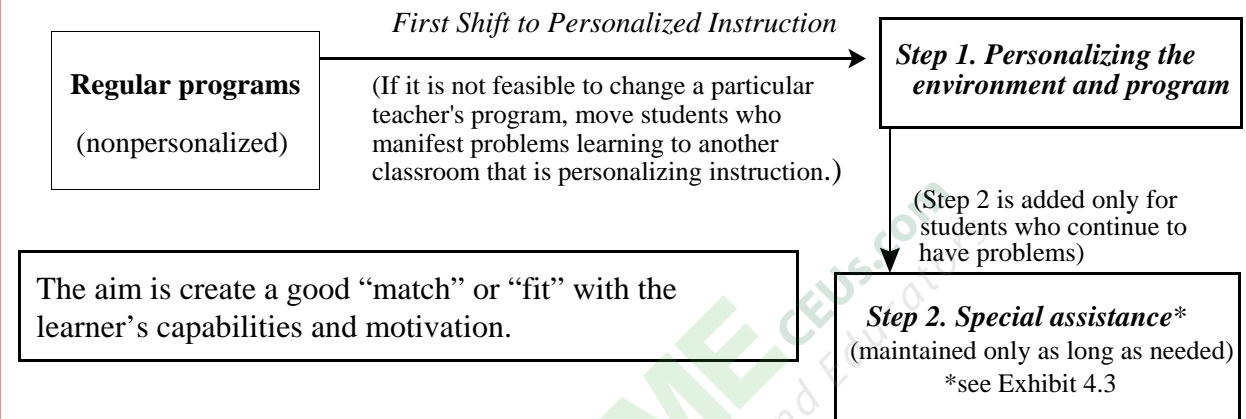
Everyone who works in schools knows that the way the classroom setting is arranged and instruction is organized can help or hinder learning and teaching. The ideal is to have an environment where students and teachers feel comfortable, positively stimulated, and well-supported in pursuing the learning objectives of the day.

Designing classrooms with this ideal involves enabling teachers to personalize and blend instruction for all students, provide a greater range of accommodations and enrichment options, and add special assistance in the context of implementing “Response to Intervention (RtI).” From a motivational perspective, the emphasis is on active learning (e.g., authentic, problem-based, and discovery learning; projects, learning centers, enrichment opportunities) and reducing negative interactions and overreliance on social control disciplinary practices. To facilitate all this, big classes are transformed into a set of smaller workgroups by using small group and independent learning options. (Note how these design features reflect Universal Design for Learning principles.) Properly implemented, the changes can increase the effectiveness of regular classroom instruction, prevent problems, support inclusionary policies, and reduce the need for specialized *services*.

Exhibit 4.2 illustrates a prototype framework for enhancing classroom learning supports. The approach is sequential and hierarchical. It reflects research indicating that “meeting students where they are” often is defined too narrowly. Differentiated instruction in most regular classrooms mainly focuses on individual differences in students’ developmental capabilities and pays little systemic attention to differences in motivation, especially intrinsic motivation. And, too little is done within classrooms to follow-up with special assistance when students manifest problems.

Exhibit 4.2

Prototype Framework for Enhancing Classroom Learning Supports



What's the First Step? *Personalized Instruction*

As essential as it is to attend to differences in capability, motivational differences often are the primary concern in personalizing learning, especially for students manifesting problems. We all know students who have learned much more than we anticipated because they were highly motivated; and we certainly know students who learn and perform poorly when they are not invested in the work.

So, our definition of personalization emphasizes that it is the process of accounting for individual differences in *both capability and motivation*. Furthermore, from a psychological perspective, we stress that it is a student's perception that determines whether the instructional “fit” or “match” is good or bad. Given this, personalizing instruction means ensuring conditions for learning are perceived by the learner as good ways to attain goals s/he wants to reach. Thus, a basic intervention concern is that of eliciting learners' perceptions of how well what is offered matches both their interests and abilities. This has fundamental implications for all efforts to assess students and manage behavior.

Personalized instruction is intended to enhance learning and to prevent many learning and behavior problems. And, it provides an essential foundation for ameliorating learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Indeed, just providing a student with a personalized program may be sufficient to reverse some problems. Other problems, of course, need something more. As highlighted in Exhibit 4.2, the prototype designates that “something more” as Step 2 *special assistance*. We will discuss this soon.

About Personalizing Instruction

After years of being bandied about, the term personalization (of learning/instruction/education) has come to the policy forefront in the U.S., the United Kingdom, Canada, and beyond. It is emphasized in the common core standards initiative, proposed model core teaching standards, the administration's 2010 National Education Technology Plan, the Race to the Top guidelines, and by a variety of reformers and philanthropies.

Despite some ongoing controversies, few argue against the goal of personalization which is to help schools function better in addressing the diverse needs and interests students bring each day. There is also agreement that new technologies can be helpful to a degree in accomplishing the goal. And, there is agreement that improved forms of formative assessments are an important element.

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education included the following definition in its national technology plan (Administration's National Education Technology Plan, 2010):

“Personalization refers to instruction that is paced to learning needs, tailored to learning preferences, and tailored to the specific interests of different learners. In an environment that is fully personalized, the learning objectives and content as well as the method and pace may all vary (so personalization encompasses differentiation and individualization).”

As part of a series of special reports on the topic, Education Week issued *Taking Stock of Personalized Learning* in 2014. That report highlighted recent definitional efforts and some ongoing issues.

Unfortunately, discussions of personalized learning often leave the impression that the process is mainly about incorporating technological innovations. For the most part, the discussions also fail to place personalized learning within the context of other conditions that must be improved in classrooms and school-wide to address factors interfering with student learning and performance. And, ironically, interventions used to facilitate instruction and control behavior of students who manifest learning and behavior problems often over-emphasize extrinsics, especially in efforts to reduce or eliminate misbehavior. Because over-use of extrinsics can undermine intrinsic motivation, such practices can be counterproductive to personalized learning.

In the 1960s, at UCLA we initiated a focus on a personalized approach to learning as fundamental to effective teaching and to preventing and correcting learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Since then, we have continued to develop and apply the approach.

From our perspective, the aim of personalizing learning is to enhance stable, positive, intrinsic attitudes that mobilize and maintain engagement in learning (in the classroom, throughout the school, and away from school). Developing intrinsic attitudes is basic to increasing the type of motivated practice (e.g., reading for pleasure) that is essential for mastering and assimilating what has just been learned. Personnel preparation programs have not focused enough on these matters.

So, what does it take to personalize a classroom?

First of all, the teacher must expect and value individual differences in students' motivation and development. The teacher must also offer options for learning and help students make decisions among the alternatives. The emphasis in such decision making must be on encouraging students to pursue what they perceive as a good match in terms of learning activities and structure. And as new information about what is and isn't a good match becomes available, there must be a willingness to revise decisions.

Given that a teacher is motivated to personalize a classroom program, both the students and the teacher have to learn how to make it a reality. This usually involves moving toward personalization through a series of transition steps (see *Personalizing Learning and Addressing Barriers to Learning* online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/personalizeI.pdf>). In general, this requires offering an appropriate variety of learning options as a starting point, facilitating student understanding of the content, processes, and outcomes related to the options, and establishing ways for some students to work independently and in small cooperative learning groupings while the teacher pursues one-to-one and small-group interactions.

What's the Second Step? *Special Assistance in the Classroom* (as needed)

When students require more than personalized instruction, it is essential to address the problem immediately. That is, with personalized instruction in place, the next step involves providing special assistance as needed. In most instances, such assistance is provided in the classroom.

As illustrated in Exhibit 4.3, Step 2 involves three levels of intervention. Note that this second step is introduced only if learners continue to have problems after instruction is personalized. Note also that special assistance is built on the foundation of personalized instruction.

To be a bit more specific:

Step 1 personalizing instruction. The intent is to ensure a student *perceives* instructional processes, content, and outcomes as a good match with his or her interests and capabilities.

A first emphasis is on *motivation*. Practices focus on (re)engaging the student in classroom instruction, with special attention paid to increasing intrinsic motivation and minimizing psychological reactance.

Matching *developmental capabilities* is a parallel concern in Step 1. Practices focus on accounting for *current* knowledge and skills.

Then, based on a student's responses to personalized instruction, it is determined if *special assistance* (step 2) also is needed.

Step 2 special assistance. Students for whom personalized instruction proves insufficient are provided supportive assistance. In keeping with the principle of using the least intervention needed (e.g., doing what is needed in ways that are least intrusive, restrictive, disruptive), step 2 stresses use of different *levels* of *special* intervention. With respect to sequence:

- students with minor problems maintain a direct focus on readily observable problems interfering with classroom learning and performance (Level A);
- students who continue to have problems often require a focus on necessary prerequisites (e.g., readiness attitudes, knowledge, and skills) they haven't acquired (Level B);
- when interventions at Levels A and B don't ameliorate the problem, the focus shifts to possible underlying factors.

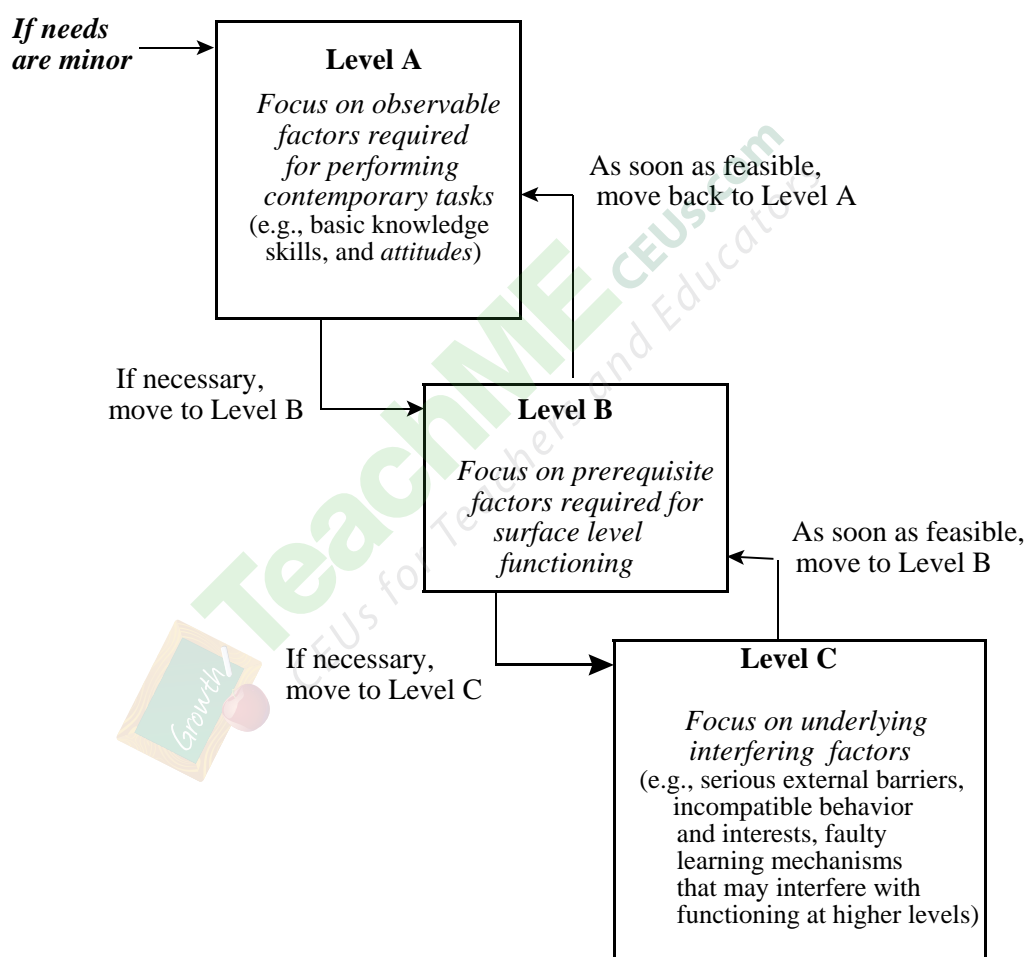
Students with severe and chronic problems require attention at all three levels.

(More on special assistance when *Student and Family Special Assistance* is discussed in Chapter 9.)

This sequence can help minimize false positive diagnoses (e.g., LD, ADHD) and identify those who should be referred for special education assessment.

Exhibit 4.3 Special Assistance Sequence and Hierarchy

Step 2 is introduced as necessary using best practices for special assistance (remediation, rehabilitation, treatment). These are applied differentially for minor and severe problems.



Primary concerns throughout are to (a) ensure motivational readiness, (b) enhance motivation during learning, and (c) increase intrinsic motivation as an outcome. Also important is minimizing conditions that decrease engagement in learning. Remember that the impact at any time depends on the student's perception of how well an intervention fits his/her motivation as well as capabilities.

With respect to both personalization and special assistance, understanding intrinsic motivation clarifies how essential it is to avoid processes that limit options and decision making and that make students feel controlled and coerced. Restricting the focus mainly to “remedying” problems cuts students off from experiences that enhance good feelings about learning at school. Overemphasis on controlling behavior produces psychological reactance. Overreliance on extrinsic motivation risks undermining efforts to enhance intrinsic motivation and can produce avoidance reactions in the classroom and to school. All this can reduce opportunities for positive learning and for development of positive attitudes. Over time, such practices result in too many students disengaging from classroom learning.

In contrast, practices that capitalize on intrinsic motivation enable and support learning. Such practices offer a broad range of content, outcomes, and procedural options, including a personalized structure to support and guide learning. With real options come real opportunities for involving learners in decision making. The focus on intrinsic motivation also stresses the importance of developing nonthreatening ways to provide ongoing information about learning and performance. And, of course, it calls for a significant focus on enrichment opportunities.

Where Does Response to Intervention Fit as a Learning Support?

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a prominently advocated strategy in efforts to address learning problems as soon as they arise. The process involves analyses of authentic responses made to instruction, as well to other interventions designed to address problems. The goal is to identify not only students’ needs but also their interests. Thus, the analyses must consider (a) motivational as well as developmental considerations and (b) whether the problem requires a deeper look. Does the problem stem from the student not having acquired readiness skills? Does it arise from “critical student dispositions” that have produced avoidance motivation to curricula content and instructional processes? What accommodations and interventions are needed to ameliorate the student’s problems? And, when problems persist, what other external and internal factors must be considered? All this is consistent with the prototype that first *personalizes* instruction and then assesses learning and behavior problems using a hierarchical set of interventions. And implementing these processes effectively is best accomplished through collaborative actions. For more, see *Response to Intervention*

A Few Words about Transforming Disciplinary Practices

In discussing her early frustrations with maintaining order in the classroom, Margaret Metzger notes that it was helpful to keep in mind her own experiences as a student.

“If I was going to stay in education, I knew I had to get past the discipline issues. . . . I wrote down what I liked and hated about my own teachers I remembered how much I wanted the teachers I adored to like or notice me; I remembered how criticism bruised my fragile ego; I remembered how I resented teacher power plays. Mostly, I remembered how much I hated the infantilizing nature of high school. . . . I reminded myself that I already know a lot – just from the student side of the desk. If I could keep remembering, I could convey genuine empathy and have honest interactions.”

Clearly, managing learning requires order in the classroom. Misbehavior disrupts; it may be hurtful; it may disinhibit others. When a student misbehaves, a natural reaction is to want that youngster to experience and other students to see the consequences of misbehaving. A hope is that public awareness of consequences will deter subsequent problems. As a result, schools spend considerable time and resources on *discipline* – sometimes embedding it all in the broader concept of *classroom management*. To minimize misbehavior schools stress the importance of student self-discipline and employ a variety of external disciplinary and social control practices. The latter include some practices that model behaviors which foster (rather than counter) development of negative values.

In schools, short of suspending the individual, punishment essentially takes the form of a decision to do something to students that they do not want done. In addition, a demand for future compliance usually is made, along with threats of harsher punishment if compliance is not forthcoming. And, the discipline may be administered in ways that suggest a student is an undesirable person. As students get older, suspension increasingly comes into play. Indeed, suspension remains one of the most common disciplinary responses for the transgressions of secondary students.

As often happens with reactive procedures, the benefits of using punishment to control behavior are offset by many negative consequences. These include increased negative attitudes toward school and school personnel which often lead to behavior problems, anti-social acts, and various mental health problems. Disciplinary procedures also are associated with dropping out of school. It is not surprising, then, that some concerned professionals refer to extreme disciplinary practices as "pushout" strategies.

With the growing awareness that widely used discipline practices are insufficient and often counterproductive, advocates for a more positive approach have called for a greater focus on prevention by adding programs for character education, social skills and emotional "intelligence" training, and positive behavior support initiatives. A more transformative perspective emphasizes developing a comprehensive approach encompassing:

- efforts to prevent misbehavior (e.g., improving programs to enhance student engagement and minimize conditions that foment misbehavior; enhancing home responsibility for childrens' behavior and learning; promoting a school climate that embraces a holistic and family-centered orientation; working with students to establish a set of logical consequences that are reasonable, fair, and nondenigrating)
- actions taken during misbehavior (e.g., reestablishing a calm and safe atmosphere and applying established logical consequences in keeping with the framework for personalization and special assistance)
- steps taken afterwards (e.g., making program changes if necessary; preventing further problems with those who misbehaved by following-up with special assistance).

Remember: The aim is not only to reduce misbehavior, but to use events as teachable moments to enhance personal responsibility (social and moral), integrity, self-regulation/self-discipline, a work ethic, appreciation of diversity, and positive feelings about self and others.

Chapter 9 focuses on addressing behavior problems when special assistance is needed for individual students and their families.

OPENING THE CLASSROOM DOOR TO ENHANCE COLLABORATION AND PERSONALIZED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO LEARNING SUPPORTS

As former teacher Claudia Graziano related in an Edutopia article:

New teachers, however naive and idealistic, often know before they enter the profession that the salaries are paltry, the class sizes large, and the supplies scant. What they don't know is how little support . . . they can expect once the door is closed and the textbooks are opened.

The point seems evident: *Even the best teachers can't do the job alone.* Teachers need a system of supports in the classroom and school-wide to help when students are not responding effectively to instruction. This means classrooms and schools need to have a more open-door policy.

Opening the classroom door can enhance student support, staff development, and outcomes. The crux of the matter is to ensure both in-class mentoring and collaboration with other teachers and student support staff, as well as with parents, professionals-in-training, volunteers, and so forth. Collaboration and teaming are key to facilitating personalized instruction and special assistance, creating a stimulating and manageable learning environment, and generally addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

ABOUT ENHANCING THE CAPABILITY OF STUDENT AND LEARNING SUPPORTS STAFF TO COLLABORATE IN THE CLASSROOM

Student support staff (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses) have specialized expertise. Their training prepares them to provide targeted direct assistance and support to students and their families and to offer consultation to teachers, school administrators, and other school staff.

However, effective collaboration with teachers involves much more than consultation and making recommendations about addressing student problems. It involves helping teachers (re)design their classrooms to address barriers to learning and teaching; this requires spending time in the classroom working collaboratively with teachers to model, guide, and team in implementing systemic changes.

With some additional training, student and learning support staff can bring into the classroom not only their special expertise, but ideas for how the classroom design can incorporate practices that will engage students who have not been doing well and accommodate those with special needs. This type of in-classroom collaboration can go far in enabling student learning and enhancing teacher competence for preventing and correcting problems.

The personnel preparation programs for student and learning supports staff generally do not prepare them for classroom teaching. So, if they are to effectively collaborate in the classroom, the nature and scope of their preparation programs needs to expand. For instance, they must learn what is involved in implementing personalized instruction and special assistance in the classroom and how to effectively team with teachers and other colleagues in developing a unified and comprehensive system of classroom and school-wide learning supports.

NEEDED: ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES AS A KEY FACET OF LEARNING SUPPORTS

Because so many people think of enrichment as a frill, it is not surprising when such activities are overlooked in discussing learning supports. Moreover, youngsters who manifest learning, behavior, and emotional problems are seen as needing all the time that is available in order to deal with their problems and “catch up” and thus often are deprived of available enrichment opportunities.

The reality is that enrichment activities increase the possibilities for creating a good motivational match and for facilitating learning, development, and remediation. Enrichment embellishes the classroom and school environment and increases the likelihood that students will discover new interests, information, and skills through exploration, inquiry, discovery, and recreation. The activities can play a role in preventing, minimizing, and overcoming school and individual problems. In some cases, enrichment experiences lead to lifelong interests or careers.

From a motivational perspective, many enrichment opportunities can be offered as personal choice activities that are open to all and are intended to enhance nonspecific motivation and developmental capabilities. Among enrichment offerings at schools are activities related to the arts, science, computers, athletics, student government, school newspapers and may include participation in clubs, exhibitions, performances, service learning programs, and competitions. Such activities often are more attractive and intriguing than those offered in the specified curriculum. In part, this is because they are not required, and individuals can seek out those that match their interests and abilities.

Because they are seen as extra-curricular, the impact of enrichment experiences is not separated out in assessing academic accountability. Nevertheless, it is a reasonable assumption that much will be learned, and equally as important, the learning will be pursued with a sense of value and joy and will enhance students' feelings of competence, self-determination, and affiliation with significant others.

Staffing a broad range of enrichment activities is another facet that calls for opening the school and classroom doors to colleagues and volunteers who have special knowledge and skills to add to the mix. In addition, students who have specific talents can play a special role.

Well-designed and structured enrichment activities are basic to encouraging proactive behavior and should be an integral part of daily classroom time. However, they should not be used as a behavior modification strategy (i.e., used as rewards and withdrawn as punishment). Rather, think of them as engagement strategies. They can help re-engage a student in classroom instruction. Offered before school, they can lure students to school early and thus reduce tardies. Offered at lunch, they can reduce the incidence of harassment and other negative interactions. After school, they provide alternatives to antisocial interactions in the community.

LEARNING SUPPORTS HELP CREATE AND MAINTAIN A POSITIVE CLIMATE

In focusing on climate, the intent to establish and maintain a positive context that facilitates classroom learning. In practice, school and classroom climates range from hostile or toxic to caring and supportive and can fluctuate daily and over the school year. The impact on students and staff can be beneficial or another barrier to learning and teaching.

Analyses of research suggest that school and classroom climate are significantly related to matters such as student engagement, behavior, self-efficacy, achievement, and social and emotional development, principal leadership style, stages of educational reform, teacher burnout, and overall quality of school life. For example, studies report strong associations between achievement levels and classrooms that are perceived as having greater cohesion and goal-direction and less disorganization and conflict. Research also suggests that the impact of classroom and school climate may be greater on students from low-income homes and groups that often are discriminated against.

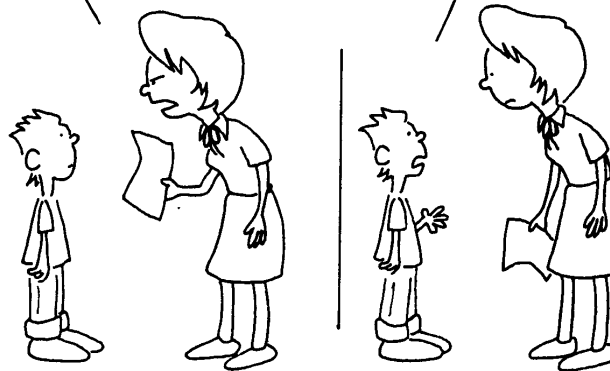
From a psychological perspective, classroom climate is perceived as an emergent quality. Each individual at a school has a personal view of the climate in a classroom and school-wide. That view reflects the degree to which the setting is seen as enhancing or threatening the individual's feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to significant others in the setting and is further influenced by what others in the setting communicate about the climate.

A Couple of Notes About School Climate

- Given the correlational nature of school climate research, cause and effect interpretations remain speculative. The broader body of organizational research does indicate the profound role accountability pressures play in shaping organizational climate. Thus, it is likely that the increasing demands for higher achievement test scores and control of student behavior contribute to a school climate that is reactive, over-controlling, and over-reliant on external reinforcement to motivate positive functioning. Regardless of the current status of research, understanding the nature of classroom and school climate is a basic element in improving schools, and learning supports are a basic component in enhancing creating and maintaining a positive climate.
- Classroom and school climate sometimes are referred to as the learning environment or the supportive learning environment, as well as by terms such as atmosphere, ambience, ecology, milieu, conditions for learning. It generally is acknowledged that the climate is a temporal, and somewhat fluid, perceived quality which emerges from the complex transaction of many factors and reflects the influence of the underlying, institutionalized values and belief systems, norms, ideologies, rituals, and traditions that constitute the school culture. And, of course, the climate and culture at a school are affected by the surrounding political, social, cultural, and economic contexts (e.g., home, neighborhood, city, state, country).

I CAN HARDLY READ YOUR HANDWRITING.
YOU MUST LEARN TO WRITE MORE CLEARLY.

AW, WHAT'S THE USE!
IF I WRITE ANY CLEARER, YOU'LL
COMPLAIN ABOUT MY SPELLING.



CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 4

Teachers need learning supports in their classrooms. This arena provides a fundamental example not only of how learning supports overlap regular instructional efforts, but how they add value to prevailing efforts to improve instruction and learning and ameliorate learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

Classroom-based learning supports can prevent problems, facilitate intervening as soon as problems are noted, enhance intrinsic motivation for learning, and re-engage disconnected students in classroom learning. This is accomplished by (a) reframing how the classroom personalizes instruction and provides more classroom-based special assistance to account for a wider range of individual differences, (b) opening the classroom door to enhance collaboration and personalized professional development related to learning supports, (c) enhancing the capabilities of student and learning supports staff to team with teachers in the classroom, (d) ensuring enrichment opportunities, and (e) facilitating emergence of a positive climate for learning.

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Chapter 5. Supports for Transitions

Transitions are critical times; addressing transitions present opportunities to prevent problems and enable learning.

Starting school, changing schools, moving to the next grade level, encountering hassles before and after school, during lunch – students (and their families) are confronted with a variety of transitions every day and throughout each year of schooling. Transition stressors can be barriers to school adjustment and thus learning and teaching; they also can exacerbate other factors that interfere with learning at school. Such stressors can lead students and their families, especially those who are particularly vulnerable, to behave in counterproductive ways and can have life-shaping consequences. Transitional problems can be viewed as stemming from factors related to the environment, person, or both.

Many schools pay too little attention to providing supports for transitions. When this is the case, opportunities are missed for promoting healthy development, addressing barriers to learning, and preventing learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

A comprehensive approach to providing transition supports requires interventions within classrooms and school-wide and among schools sending and receiving students (see Exhibit 5.1). The activity overlaps the other five intervention arenas of a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports. The immediate goals are to prevent and address transition problems. In addition, transition periods provide opportunities to promote healthy development, enhance safety, reduce alienation, increase positive attitudes and readiness skills for schooling, address systemic and personal barriers to learning and teaching, and (re)engage disconnected students and families.

Exhibit 5.1

Key Transition Concerns and Examples of Supports for Transitions

Starting school and arriving new – new students and their families, new staff, volunteers, visitors (Examples: comprehensive orientations, welcoming signs, materials, and initial receptions; social and emotional supports including peer buddy programs; accommodating special concerns of those from other countries and those arriving after periods of hospitalization)

Daily transitions -- before school, changing classes, breaks, lunch, afterschool (Examples: preventing problems by ensuring positive supervision and safety; providing attractive recreational, enrichment, and academic support activities; using problems that arise as teachable moments for enhancing social-emotional development)

Summer or intersession (Examples: catch-up, recreation, enrichment programs, service and workplace opportunities)

Matriculation – grade-to-grade – new classrooms, new teachers; elementary to middle school; middle to high school; in and out of special education programs; school-to-career/higher education transition (Examples: information; academic, vocational, and social-emotional counseling and related supports; pathway and articulation strategies; mentor programs; programs to support moving to post school living and work)

Note: All this calls for broad involvement of stakeholders (e.g., students, staff, home, police, faith groups, recreation, business, higher education) and related capacity building.

Reports of early outcomes note reductions in tardies, vandalism, and violence at school and in the neighborhood. Over time, transition programs reduce school avoidance and dropouts, as well as enhancing school adjustment and increasing the number who make successful transitions to higher education and post school living and work. And, initial studies of programs for transition in and out of special education suggest the interventions can enhance students' attitudes about school and self and can improve their academic performance. It also is likely that transition supports add to perceptions of a caring school climate; this can play a significant role in a family's decision about staying or changing schools.

FRAMING AND DESIGNING SUPPORTS FOR TRANSITIONS

Exhibit 5.2 provides a guide for school improvement planning related to developing a comprehensive approach for addressing transition concerns.

Exhibit 5.2
Prototype Framework for Addressing Transition Concerns*

	Subsystem for Enhancing Development and Preventing Problems	Subsystem for Immediately Addressing Problems	Subsystem for Addressing Continuing Problems
Starting school & arriving new			
Matriculation Concerns			
Daily Transitions			
Summer or intersessions			

*Transition planning focuses on addressing concerns (a) in classrooms, (b) school-wide, (c) by a network of schools (e.g., a high school and its feeder pattern), and (d) in collaboration with the community.

While the nature and scope of transitions vary, there are common features in planning and implementing transition supports. As with every intervention, considerations about time, space, materials, and competence arise at every step of the way. Multi-year strategic development requires gap analyses and priority setting. And, as with all student and learning supports, the work is strengthened when there is broad involvement of stakeholders in planning for transitions and being responsible for effective implementation (e.g., students, staff, home; representatives from the police, faith groups, recreation, businesses, higher education, etc.). Given the substantial overlap involved in providing supports for transitions, coalescing resources from school, family, friends, peers, and community can enhance school capacity to handle the variety of transition concerns confronting students and their families and enhance cost-effectiveness. Garnering the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders enlarges the pool of potential volunteers.

WHAT ARE PRIORITIES IN ENHANCING SUPPORTS FOR TRANSITIONS?

In establishing priorities for system development, the emphasis is on strengthening the most important interventions and filling the most critical gaps. What follows are examples commonly identified as priorities for improving supports for transitions. For more specific examples, see the self-study survey in Appendix C.

Focus on Students Starting School and Newcomers

School systems and individual schools are quite variable in the degree to which they are prepared to address transitional needs. And, of course, newcomers vary in terms of their capability and motivation with respect to transitioning into new settings. As a result, a newcomer may perceive a setting positively (e.g., friendly, inviting, helpful) or negatively (e.g., unwelcoming or even hostile, nonaccommodating). Schools can reduce learning, behavior, and emotional problems by prioritizing strategies for addressing newcomers' transitional needs and enhancing their positive perceptions.

Welcoming and Social Support for Everyone. Many schools are trying to enhance a positive school "climate." A good place to start is by enhancing welcoming and social supports for all newcomers. This includes using the first weeks after arrival as a time to monitor and follow-up with personalized supports (e.g., social-emotional, academic, job-related) for those having difficulty adjusting to the new situation.

Particular attention must be given to addressing the complex transitional needs of highly mobile students and recent immigrants. The greater the numbers and rate of student and staff mobility and of families arriving from other countries, the greater the priority for pursuing strategies to enhance welcoming and social support.

A positive welcome is desirable at each initial encounter between school staff and a new student and family, a new colleague, and all visitors. Each point of contact represents an opportunity and a challenge to positively assimilate newcomers into the school – welcoming and orienting them, linking them with appropriate social supports, assisting them to make successful transitions. It is risky business for a school not to have programs that fully orient new students, family, and staff, connect them with social supports (e.g., peer buddies, mentors), orchestrate their entrance into ongoing groups and activities, and so forth (see the Center's resource entitled: *What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families*

Immediately Addressing Adjustment Problems to the New Setting. Every school needs early warning and response procedures that

- quickly identifies any new student, family, or staff who is having adjustment problems
- provides supports that aid those with minor adjustment problems
- initiates special assistance when necessary to those who have major adjustment problems

Such supports attend to both motivation and capability concerns.

Daily Transitions

Many schools have significant problems with tardies, bullying, substance abuse, and other forms of out-of-classroom behavior that contribute to poor student performance and a negative school climate. To prevent such problems, a common priority is to focus on strategies to address before, during, and after school transitions. During such transitions, the aims are to ensure positive school-wide supervision and safety, increase the range of attractive recreational, enrichment, and academic support activities, and enhance social-emotional development.

With specific respect to social-emotional development, every school has goals that emphasize a desire to enhance students' personal and social functioning. Some schools pursue these goals through curriculum-based approaches to promote social-emotional learning and incorporate character education. Some have programs that pair students with mentors or engage students in helping peers or encourage participation in "service learning" activity, and so forth. Daily transitions provide natural opportunities to use various events as teachable moments and for following-up in personalized ways to enhance social-emotional development.

Enhancing Before, During, and After School Recreation, Academic Support, & Enrichment, Programs. Well-designed and structured recreation and enrichment activities are basic elements in preventing problems and encouraging proactive behavior. Offered before school, they lure students to the campus early and thus reduce tardies. Offered at lunch, they can reduce the incidence of harassment and other negative interactions. After school, they provide alternatives to antisocial interactions in the community, and paired with positive opportunities for enriched and personalized academic support, they offer renewed hope for those who have learning problems.

School-wide Supervision and Follow-up Focused on Social-Emotional Development. Unstructured times at school are "dangerous," especially for vulnerable students. Recess and lunch often result in office referrals for behavior problems and calls home expressing concern over inappropriate social and interpersonal behaviors. These are times when social groups (including gangs) gather together and provoke or intimidate others. When problems arise outside the classroom, those monitoring the situation have natural opportunities to use events as a teachable moment for personalized social-emotional learning. And, as feasible, they can arrange for follow-ups that deepen the learning.

Summer or Intersession Programs

Research findings stress that student's skills and knowledge often deteriorate when students are not in school for significant periods of time (summer, intersessions). This is a particular concern with students from low-income families and thus might be a high priority in schools enrolling students from such families.

Addressing the problem requires enhancing school and community opportunities for maintaining and increasing abilities and positive motivation and enabling struggling students to catch-up. This calls for approaches that are designed to provide students with well-rounded experiences that look and feel different from the usual school day. Teachers and community collaborators need to ensure activities are personalized, emphasize whole-child development, and involve not only academic learning, but also arts, recreation, sports, and a range of other enrichment opportunities, including service and workplace experiences. These are particularly valuable times for schools to collaborate with libraries, parks and recreation, local facilities where service learning can take place, and local businesses that can provide jobs and internships.

Matriculation Concerns

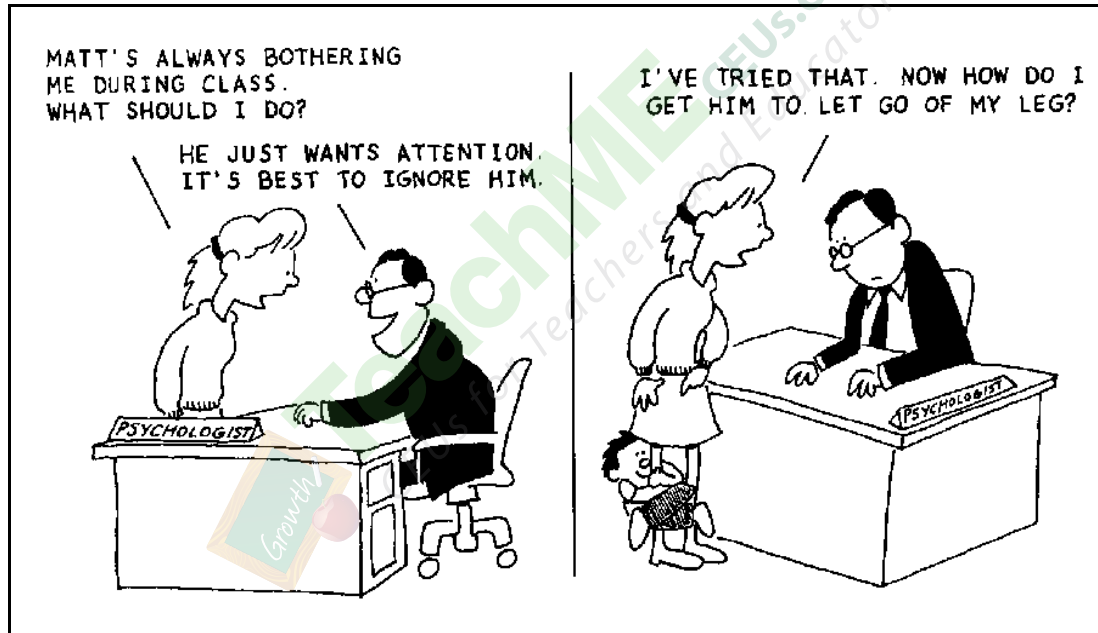
Articulation Programs. Students frequently have significant difficulty making the transition from grade-to-grade and going from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school. Indeed, many "dropouts" occur during transitions to high school. Priorities here include

- providing all students with opportunities to prepare themselves psychologically for such changes
- identifying and intervening on behalf of any student having difficulty during the actual period of transition

- offering follow-up opportunities, as feasible, to support those moving to post school living and work.

Comparable interventions are useful in helping family members address articulation concerns.

Counseling. Schools are unlikely to ever have the type of student-counselor ratio that is advocated. Therefore, an early priority often is the recruitment, training, and supervision of interested personnel and volunteers/mentors to fill certain gaps (e.g., to provide basic information relevant to students' academic and vocational futures). Such supports can free up counseling personnel to provide more social-emotional counseling and related supports to those in need.

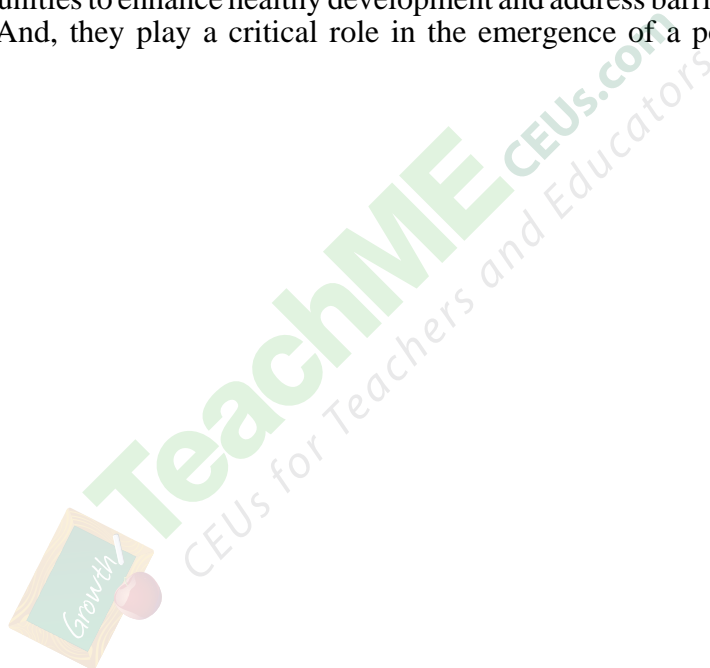


CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 5

In reviewing school improvement plans, school staff need to ask:

- *How are new students and families welcomed and positively assimilated into the school?*
- *What is done when a student is not adjusting well to a new school or a new class?*
- *How are behavior problems minimized before and after school? at lunch?*
- *Do articulation and related counseling programs provide more than orienting information and simple skills?*

Schools must plan, develop, and maintain a focus on ways to address the variety of transition concerns confronting students, their families, new staff, and others who come to the school. As effective transition supports are implemented, the concerns become opportunities to enhance healthy development and address barriers to learning and teaching. And, they play a critical role in the emergence of a positive school climate.



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Chapter 6. Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement in Schooling

Research findings accumulated over ... decades ... show that ... parental encouragement, activities, and interest at home and participation in schools and classrooms affect children's achievement, attitudes, and aspirations, even after student ability and family socioeconomic status are taken into account.

Joyce Epstein

The strongest predictors that a student is likely to drop out are family characteristics such as: socioeconomic status, family structure, family stress (e.g., death, divorce, family moves), and the mother's age. Students who come from low-income families, are the children of single, young, unemployed mothers, or who have experienced high degrees of family stress are more likely than other students to drop out of school. Of those characteristics, low socioeconomic status has been shown to bear the strongest relationship to students' tendency to drop out.

National Education Association

Research findings over the past 30 plus years consistently indicate the value of home support for schooling. Moreover, with respect to students who are not doing well at school, efforts to enhance home involvement are an basic element of the overall approach to addressing factors interfering with school learning and performance.

Despite the long-standing call by policy makers and researchers for schools to enhance parent involvement, the challenges in doing so have confounded many schools. Our analyses indicate that this will continue to be the case as long as the focus fails to account for the variety of individuals providing “parenting” and until “involvement” is designed as a mutually beneficial, equitable, and engaging process.

Instead of just focusing on *parent* involvement think about students being raised primarily by grandparents, aunts, older siblings, “nannies,” and in foster homes. Primary child caretakers differ. That is why we stress the term *home* involvement.

Other home involvement complications stem from factors such as caretaker economic status, work schedules, immigrant status, ethnic and racial considerations, single parent families, number of youngsters in the home, homes where English is not spoken, extended families, military families, families where parents are in prison, foster homes, and homeless families and youngsters. In addition, some caretakers have disabilities, and some are dysfunctional.

Home situations also differ in caretaker attitudes about school. Such attitudes often reflect personal past experiences as well as current encounters and how well their youngsters are doing at school. (Remember, some have more than one youngster who is not doing well.) Involving reluctant primary caretakers is difficult and often handled at school as a low priority.

In general, as with students, parents and other caretakers vary in their personal motivation and ability to participate at school. And as with many students who are not doing well at school, (re)establishing productive *working* relationships with some caretakers involves addressing individual psychosocial and educational barriers and doing so in a personalized way.

Reflecting on Those Who Aren't Involved

We find that most efforts to involve parents are aimed at those who want and are able to show up at school. It's important to have activities for such parents. It's also important to remember that, at many schools, these parents represent a small percent of families.

What about the rest? Especially those whose children are doing poorly at school.

Ironically, endeavors to involve families whose youngsters are doing poorly often result in parents becoming less involved. For example, a parent of such a youngster usually is called to school to explore the child's problems and often leaves with a sense of frustration, anger, and guilt. It is not surprising, then, that the parent subsequently avoids school contact as much as feasible.

A colleague describes the typical pattern of messages over time from the school to families of struggling students as follows:

Early messages: We are concerned about ... [missing assignments, poor attendance, lack of academic progress, behavior problems] ...

Over the years the school's messages become more urgent: Dear parents, we need a conference to talk about ... [behavior problems, academic problems, truancy]; please attend student study team meeting...

Finally, the school's messages become more formal: This is to inform you ... [your child will be retained, your child will be suspended]; you must attend an attendance review board meeting

Schools that really want to involve those at home minimize "finger wagging" and offer more than parent education classes.

We are reminded of the dictum that it can take as many as eight positive interactions to restore a relationship after a negative encounter.

The various complications that must be addressed in enhancing home involvement can be categorized as institutional, impersonal, and personal barriers (see Exhibit 6.1).

Exhibit 6.1**General Types and Forms of Barriers to Home Involvement****Forms of Barriers**

		Negative Attitudes	Lack of Mechanisms/Skills	Practical Deterrents
T y p e s o f B a r r i e r s	Institutional	<u>Examples</u>	<u>Examples</u>	<u>Examples</u>
		School administration is hostile toward increasing home involvement	Insufficient staff assigned to planning and implementing ways to enhance involvement; no more than a token effort to accommodate different languages	Low priority given to home involvement in allocating resources such as space, time, and money
		Home involvement suffers from benign neglect	Rapid influx of immigrant families overwhelms school's ability to communicate and provide relevant home involvement activities	Schools lack resources; majority in home have problems related to work schedules, childcare, transportation
	Personal	Specific teachers and parents feel home involvement is not worth the effort or feel threatened by such involvement	Specific teachers and parents lack relevant languages and interpersonal skills	Specific teachers and parents are too busy or lack resources

Increasing attention has been given to reducing institutional and impersonal barriers. However, as with so many endeavors to address barriers to learning and teaching, home involvement policies and practice are not well-developed.

From the perspective of transforming student and learning supports, interventions to engage and re-engage those in the home who seem uninterested or resistant raise all the issues and problems associated with intervening with reluctant individuals in general. For such parents and other home caretakers, extraordinary outreach strategies and a full continuum of supports probably are required to enable effective home involvement in schooling. The current imperative in this arena is to

- broaden the focus beyond thinking only in terms of parents
- enhance the range of ways in which schools address factors that interfere with (re)engaging primary caretakers (with particular attention to outreaching to those who have a child who is not doing well and those who are reluctant to engage)
- transform current policy and practice to fully integrate home involvement and engagement into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

FRAMING AND DESIGNING INTERVENTIONS FOR HOME INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

Over the years, the agenda for home involvement in schooling has reflected multiple aims and contrasting but not necessarily mutually exclusive rationales. For example, parents may be viewed as consumers, citizens, or both. At the root of the matter are debates about the role of schools as political and socialization agents, as a marketplace, and as a source of helping, especially for those with specific needs.

Underlying Rationales for Involving the Home

In general, underlying rationales shaping home involvement interventions can be contrasted as pursuing *political*, *socialization*, *economic*, and/or *helping agenda*. A *political* agenda focuses on the role the home plays in making decisions about schools and schooling and on the degree to which the agenda is personal and/or socially responsible. Examples of venues for political participation include advisory and shared governance committees, lobbying politicians, and supporting school bond measures.

A *socialization* agenda is seen in many of the messages sent home and in the widespread emphasis on school-based parent training. The intent is to influence parent-caretaker practices and attitudes in ways that facilitate what goes on at school.

An *economic* agenda is seen in views of the school as a marketplace choice and parents as consumers, in conflicts related to privatization of facets of public education, and in the ways the home is used as a supplementary resource to compensate for budget limitations.

A *helping* agenda is reflected in interventions designed to aid individuals in addressing barriers to learning and teaching. This can include facilitating family access to health and social services at the school and referral to community services.

From a special education perspective, Dunst and colleagues (1991) offer an example of conflicting agenda for home involvement. They differentiate family intervention policies and practices in terms of the degree to which they are (1) family-centered, (2) family-focused, (3) family-allied, or (4) professional-centered. Their view is that, in contrast to professional-centered approaches, a family-oriented agenda is much more committed to

- enhancing a sense of community (i.e., "promoting the coming together of people around shared values and common needs in ways that create mutually beneficial interdependencies")
- mobilizing resources and supports (i.e., "building support systems that enhance the flow of resources in ways that assist families with parenting responsibilities")
- sharing responsibility and collaboration (i.e., "sharing ideas and skills by parents and professionals in ways that build and strengthen collaborative arrangements")
- protecting family integrity (i.e., "respecting the family beliefs and values and protecting the family from intrusion upon its beliefs by outsiders")
- strengthening family functioning (i.e., "promoting the capabilities and competencies of families necessary to mobilize resources and perform parenting responsibilities in ways that have empowering consequences")
- ensuring proactive services (i.e., "adoption of consumer-driven human service-delivery models and practices that support and strengthen family functioning").

Early Frameworks

As stressed, the prevailing focus has been on *parents* (usually mothers). Thus, early frameworks were built around connecting with parents. For example, many years ago Joyce Epstein (1988) described five types of parent-school involvements. As categorized by Epstein, the focus is on:

(1) *basic obligations of parents to children and school* (e.g., providing food, clothing, shelter; assuring health and safety; providing child rearing and home training; providing school supplies and a place for doing school work; building positive home conditions for learning),

(2) *basic obligations of school to children and family* (e.g., using a variety of communication methods to inform parents about school schedules, events, policies and about children's grades, test scores, daily performance; treating children justly and effectively -- including accounting for differences),

(3) *parent involvement at school* (e.g., assisting teachers and students with lessons, class trips; assisting administrators, teachers, and staff in cafeteria, library, computer labs; assisting organized parent groups in fund-raising, community relations, political awareness, program development; attending student assemblies, sports events; attending workshops, discussion groups, training sessions),

(4) *parent involvement in student learning at home* (e.g., contributing to development of child's social and personal skills, basic academic skills, and advanced skills by aiding with schoolwork, providing enrichment opportunities, and monitoring progress and problems),

(5) *parent involvement in governance and advocacy* (e.g., participating in decision making groups; advocating for improved schooling).

Jackson and Cooper (1989) added a sixth and seventh category to Epstein's work. The sixth, *parent decision making*, stresses parents as consumers in the marketplace of available educational choices (e.g., making the best feasible arrangements to ensure their child's success). Their seventh category, *parent community networks*, covers involvements related to using "the unique culture of the local parent community to help all parties concerned." Included in this category are schools as places for parents to congregate and solve problems, activities that improve parents' skills, schooling that builds on parents' cultural traditions, and networking relevant to parents' agenda.

Reframing Parent Involvement

Building on the early work, as noted, we place greater emphasis on the full range of those influencing the student's life at home and on addressing barriers to engagement. In doing so, we present the agenda for involvement as a continuum of potential interventions that reflect the differences in primary caretakers needs and interests and the needs of the school (see Exhibit 6.2).

At one end of the continuum, the focus is on helping those in the home address their own basic needs so that they are able to meet basic obligations to their children. At the other end, the emphasis is on increasing home involvement in improving what goes on at schools and supporting public education. In between, there are interventions to enhance communication between school and home (especially with reference to matters related to the student), participation in making essential decisions about the student, support at home related to the student's *basic* learning and development, and involvement in solving problems and providing support at home and at school with respect to a student's *special* needs.

Exhibit 6.2

Framing a Continuum of Interventions for Home Involvement

Addressing the Needs of Primary Student Caretakers (e.g., parents, other relatives, foster parents) → *Involving those at Home in Addressing the Needs of the School*

Enhancing the learning and support needs of adults in the home

Helping those in the home improve how basic student obligations are met

Improving basic communications with the home

Engaging participation by those in the home to help with student learning and in problem solving and making decisions

Recruiting those at home to collaborate in strengthening school and community

While not strictly a hierarchy of needs, it is evident that when those in the home need significant help in meeting their personal basic needs and obligations, they probably will not be highly motivated to engage in addressing the school's needs.

Here are some examples related to each of these agenda items:

- (a) addressing the specific learning and support needs of adults in the home (e.g., support services to assist in addressing basic survival needs and obligations to the children; adult education classes to enhance literacy, job skills, English-as-a-second language, citizenship preparation; enrichment and recreational opportunities; mutual support groups)
- (b) helping those in the home improve how basic student obligations are met (e.g., enhancing caretaker literacy skills; providing guidance related to parenting and how to help with schoolwork; teaching family members how to support and enrich student learning)
- (c) improving forms of basic communication that promote the well-being of student, family, and school (e.g., facilitating home-school connections and sense of community through family networking and mutual support; facilitating child care and transportation to reduce barriers to coming to school; language translation; phone calls and/or e-mail from teacher and other staff with good news; frequent and balanced conferences – student-led when feasible; outreach to attract and facilitate participation of hard-to-reach families – including student dropouts)
- (d) enhancing home support for student learning and development and for problem solving and decision making essential to a student's well-being (e.g., preparing and engaging families for participation in supporting growth and in planning and problem-solving)
- (e) recruiting those at home to support, collaborate, and partner in strengthening school and community by meeting classroom, school, and community needs (e.g., volunteering to welcome and support new families; participating in school governance)

Whatever the agenda, all interventions must address differences in motivation and capability. In particular, outreach strategies must account for differences ranging from individuals who are motivationally ready and able to those whose attitudes and/or capabilities make them reluctant and even avoidant.

As with all student and learning supports, the work is strengthened when there is broad involvement of stakeholders in planning and being responsible for effective implementation. Garnering a wide range of stakeholder involvement provides a large pool from which to recruit resources for the work. In this respect, some schools establish a *parent or family center* to enhance the attractiveness of home involvement. In doing so, care must be taken to ensure no one group dominates use so that such venues remain inviting and open to all.

Reminder: The other five arenas of the learning supports component overlap home involvement and engagement in a variety of ways. For example: Supports for transitions emphasizes providing welcoming and ongoing social supports for newcomer families. Student and family special assistance is concerned with addressing individual family factors that interfere with family involvement. Community engagement strategies include a focus on ways for the community to increasingly support students and their families.

WHAT ARE PRIORITIES IN ENHANCING HOME INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT?

Multi-year strategic development requires gap analyses and priority setting. This chapter along with the self-study survey in Appendix C are intended as aids for this work. After conducting analyses, a workgroup can establish priorities for strengthening the most vital interventions and filling the most critical gaps. The first priorities are to enhance school improvement policy, planning, and action so that barriers to home involvement are reduced, and supports are enhanced in ways that increase involvement.

Enhancing Policy, Planning, and Action to Minimize Barriers to Involvement

Countering barriers to home involvement and engagement begins with ensuring a strong policy commitment to the work. Then, the focus turns to translating the policy into detailed strategic and action plans. This includes general and personalized staff development to ensure that all personnel (administrators, teachers, student and school support staff) understand the various barriers to home involvement and are well-prepared to assume their roles and responsibilities in addressing them. In personalizing staff development, special support is given to teachers who feel enhancing home involvement is too much of an added burden and those who feel threatened (e.g., because they think they can't make the necessary interpersonal connections due to racial, cultural, and/or language differences).

In general, the following are potential priorities in minimizing

- institutional barriers – modifying bureaucratic procedures to reduce negative and enhance positive home-school interactions; enhancing the attractiveness of involvement by opening schools for community use and offering a range of adult education and literacy opportunities on school sites
- impersonal barriers – countering practical problems related to work schedules, transportation, childcare and skill deficiencies related to cultural differences and levels of literacy; providing interactive communications and invitations; using social marketing to convey the mutual benefits of home involvement
- personal barriers – identifying and outreaching to specific school personnel or family members who may lack requisite motivation and skills or who find participation uncomfortable because it demands time and other resources or who have little interest or feel hostile about home involvement.

Improving Supports in Ways that Increase Involvement

Given the full continuum outlined in Exhibit 6.2, gap analyses usually identify priorities for ways to improve supports related to each need. Examples follow:

- To enhance the learning and support needs of adults in the home, schools have offered
 - >adult classes (e.g., focused on basic literacy and vocational skills, English as a Second Language, citizenship preparation)
 - >mutual support groups
 - >assistance in accessing outside help for personal needs
- To help those in the home improve how basic student obligations are met, schools have offered a range of education programs (e.g., focused on child-rearing/parenting, creating a supportive home environment for students, reducing factors that interfere with a student's school learning and performance, helping a student deal with challenges at home and school and in the neighborhood).
- In improving basic communications with the home, schools have included family members and foster care parents in designing and implementing the schools communication mechanisms (e.g., helping to improve front office interactions, newsletters, websites, email messages and other forms of messages to the home).
- To engage those in the home in participating in problem solving and making decisions essential to the student's well-being, schools have designed all interactions with those at home as natural opportunities for focusing on such matters.
- To recruit those at home to collaborate in strengthening school and community, schools have offered a variety of volunteer opportunities (see Exhibit 6.3).

Exhibit 6.3

Parent Participation at Pali High

PARENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Parent Outreach/Office Assistance

Attendance Office, Health Office, Library, College Center, Study Center, School Tours, Tutoring, Language Translation, Test Prep SAT/ACT Boot Camps

Fundraising

Educational Foundation, Booster Club - Fall Phon-A-Thon, Holiday Boutique, Casino Night, Silent Auction, Grant Writing, Grant Writing (Community Based)

Parent Organizations

Booster Club, Education Foundation, PTSA/PAC

On Campus

Fuerza Unida (Latino Student Union), Village Nation (Black Student Union), Music, Drama

School Governance

Board of Trustees Committees: Communications, Educational Programs, Finance & Budget, Operations & Facilities & Technology, Policy, Strategic Planning (Academic, Budget, Culture & Community, Facilities, Technology)

Hospitality

Baking/Cooking/Shopping, Graduation Reception, Senior Activities (Picnic, Breakfast, Awards), Student Events & Assemblies, Teacher & Staff Lunch/Dinners

Communication / Technology

Website Maintenance/Design, Email Communications: Writing or Editing Social Media Networking/Tech Support

Other Volunteer Opportunities

Campus Beautification/Recycling/Gardening, Health and Safety/Emergency Preparedness, Field Trip Chaperone/Transportation, Athletic Events, Educational Programs/Presentations

A Few Comments About Enhancing Understanding of Engagement and Re-engagement

A typical situation: Someone at home is called to school because their youngster is misbehaving or is not learning well. The resulting encounter is unpleasant for family members and school staff. The dynamics certainly don't encourage positive engagement of the home with the school; more often than not they are a source of a growing disconnection.

Understanding the problem of increasing home involvement as that of *engaging* and, as necessary, *re-engaging* individuals helps rethink such encounters and makes engagement and re-engagement central in designing interventions to enhance home involvement.

Engagement reflects a person's motivation. Engagement has three facets: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. From the perspective of intrinsic motivation theory and research, the emphasis in enhancing engagement is on (a) avoiding processes that mainly make people feel uncomfortable, controlled, and coerced and (b) moving away from practices that overrely on the use of reinforcers.

In general, research indicates that engagement is associated with positive outcomes and is higher when conditions are supportive, authentic, ensure opportunities for choice and provide sufficient structure. Conversely, disengagement is associated with threats to feelings of competence, self-determination, and/or relatedness to valued others. Maintaining engagement and re-engaging disconnected individuals requires minimizing conditions that negatively affect intrinsic motivation and maximizing conditions that have a positive motivational effect. Practices for preventing disengagement and strategies to re-engage families require minimizing conditions that negatively affect intrinsic motivation for connecting with the school and maximizing conditions that enhance such motivation.

Re-engaging those who have disconnected is a great challenge, especially when negative experiences in dealing with the school have resulted in a strong desire to avoid contact.

Reversing well-assimilated negative attitudes and behaviors is particularly difficult. As with disconnected students, personalized intervention strategies are required. Our work suggests outreaching to

- (a) *ask individuals to share their perceptions of the reasons for their disengagement* (This provides an invaluable basis for formulating a personalized plan to alter their negative perceptions and to prevent others from developing such perceptions.)
- (b) *reframe the reasons for and the processes related to home involvement to establish a good fit with the family's needs and interests* (The intent is to shift perceptions so that the process is viewed as supportive, not controlling, and the outcomes are perceived as personally valuable and obtainable.)
- (c) *renegotiate involvement* (The intent is to arrive at a mutual agreement with a delineated process for reevaluating and modifying the agreement as necessary.)
- (d) *reestablish and maintain an appropriate working relationship* (This requires the type of ongoing interactions that over a period of time enhance mutual understanding, provide mutual support, open-up communication, and engender mutual trust and respect.)

CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 6

Difficulties in connecting homes and schools are inevitable because schools increasingly are coping with marketplace principles, as well as pursuing their responsibilities to the society for economic, social, and political goals and for stakeholder collective and individual benefits. The situation is further complicated because those at home have different needs and are both consumers and citizens. As such, they include supporters, helpers, combatants, and underminers.

Policy may call for and mandate “parent” involvement, but that has been no guarantee of effective practice. The lack of home involvement is especially acute in middle and secondary schools, schools serving low income homes, and for families who feel blamed when their child is not doing well at school.

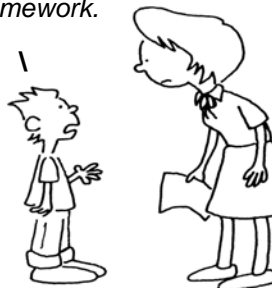
Enhancing home involvement requires greater attention to the full range of caretakers and embedding this intervention arena into a unified and comprehensive system for addressing barriers to productive participation. Interventions include school-wide and classroom-based efforts designed to strengthen the home situation, enhance family problem solving capabilities, increase support for student development, learning, and well-being, and strengthen schools and the community. With all this in mind, transformation of student and learning supports stresses establishing authentic collaborations, countering inherent inequities in power and resources, and empowering homes and communities, especially in impoverished neighborhoods. Toward these ends, the next chapter outlines ways to outreach to and enhance connections with a wide range of community resources.

At this point, those already enmeshed in initiatives to make schools better are probably a bit overwhelmed. If so, skip ahead to Part III for clarification about how current resources can be reorganized and redeployed and collaborations with the community can help fill critical gaps.

Your mom said that she never saw this report
I sent her about your work.
What do you know about that?



Gee, I guess the dog has been eating
more than my homework.



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Chapter 7. Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement

...while teaching is the most important in-school factor affecting student achievement, family and neighborhood characteristics matter more. The research consensus has been clear and unchanging for more than a decade: at most, teaching accounts for about 15 percent of student achievement outcomes, while socioeconomic factors account for about 60 percent.... Acknowledging connections between the economy, poverty, health and brain function is not an attempt to 'excuse' failing school bureaucracies and classroom teachers; rather, it is a necessary prerequisite for authentic school reform... inequality does matter. ... In the face of this reality, educators put up a valiant fight, and some succeed. The deck is stacked against them.

Goldstein (2011)

Historically, schools serving impoverished families trapped in America's 'ghettos' have been resistant to community participation. Enhanced participation is critically needed, however, if long-term urban school-reform projects and efforts to develop more empowering, community-supporting forms of pedagogy are to succeed.

Schutz (2006)

While schools represent a key commodity in communities, too many are viewed as “islands” with no bridges to and from the mainland. This works against addressing barriers to learning and teaching – especially in poor neighborhoods.

Schools are more effective and caring places when they are an integral and positive part of the community. For schools to be seen as such, they must take steps to engage and collaborate with many community stakeholders to address barriers to learning and teaching and strengthen the fabric of family and community life.

Moreover, schools and the community in which they reside are dealing with multiple, interrelated concerns, such as poverty, child development, literacy, violence, crime, safety, substance abuse, housing, and employment. A potent approach requires multifaceted and collaborative efforts.

The goal is to maximize mutual benefits, including better student progress, positive socialization of the young, higher staff morale, improved use of resources, an enhanced sense of community, community development, and more. In the long run, the aims are to strengthen students, schools, families, and neighborhoods.

Currently, school outreach to the community has a highly limited focus. Policy and related funding initiatives mostly support efforts to link community social services and physical and mental health services to schools. After school programs also involve community providers. In addition, some schools recruit volunteers and solicit other forms of resource contributions, as well as encouraging positive votes for school-related ballot measures. The downside of such well-meaning outreach is that it narrows thinking about transforming student and learning supports and about the role and functions of school-community collaboration.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE IN THE COMMUNITY?

Researchers have mapped a wide range of community entities whose missions overlap that of the local schools (see Exhibit 7.1). Districts/schools need to consider outreach to the full range of resources that exist, especially in neighborhoods where poverty reigns.

Exhibit 7.1

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

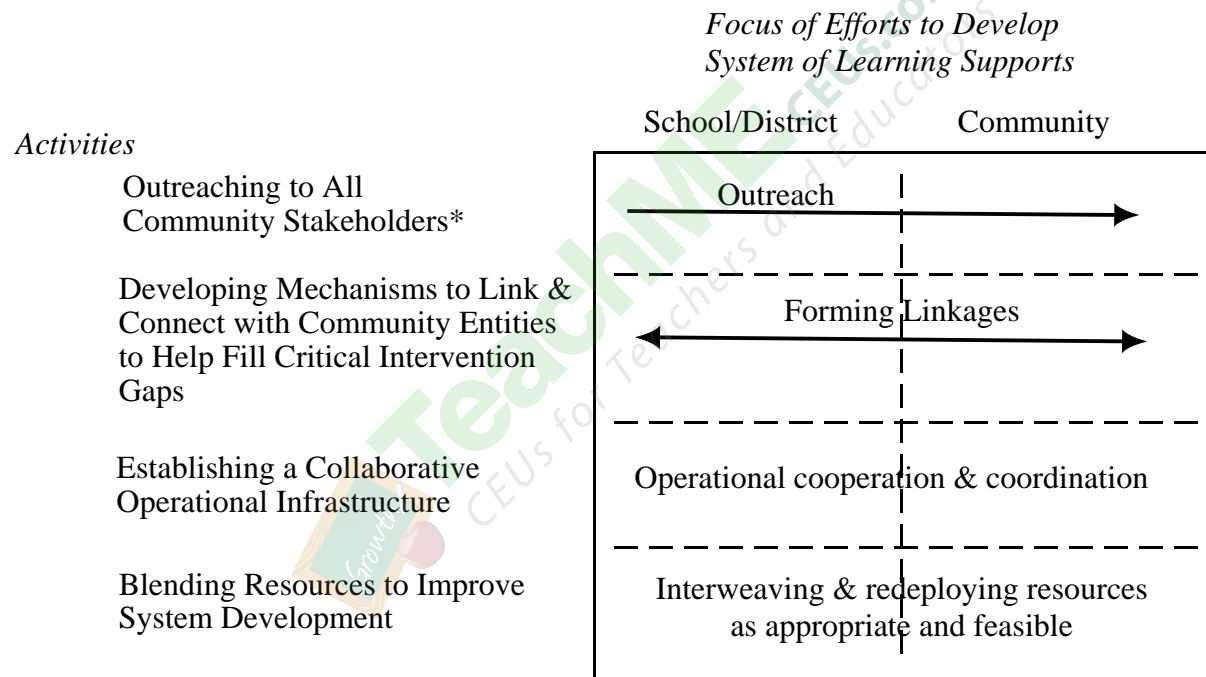
FRAMING AND DESIGNING INTERVENTIONS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT

School/district efforts to enhance community connections can encompass four types of activities: (1) outreaching to a broad range of community entities, (2) developing immediate links and connections with community resources that can help fill critical intervention gaps for addressing shared problems, (3) establishing an effective operational infrastructure for a school-community collaborative and (4) blending/weaving/redeploying school and community resources where feasible to help with system development (see Exhibit 7.2).

In practice, all four activities often are not pursued, especially when the focus is mainly on connecting a few community services to a school. However, all are vital in developing a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports.

Exhibit 7.2

Framework for Schools and Community Collaboration in Developing a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports



*Outreach is to all available community resources and decision makers (e.g., those associated with public and private agencies, colleges and universities, artists and cultural institutions, businesses and professional organizations, and service, volunteer, faith-based organizations).

Note: Because community resources in many neighborhoods are sparse, a school-by-school approach often leads to inequities (e.g., the first school to contact an agency might tie up all that a given agency can bring to a school). Therefore, district leadership needs to (a) help develop mechanisms that connect a “family” of schools (e.g., a high school feeder pattern, schools in the same neighborhood) and (b) play a role in outreaching and connecting community resources equitably to schools. A family of schools also provides a good nucleus for creating a school-community collaborative (see discussion later in this chapter and in Part III).

Below are examples of strategies related to pursuing the activities highlighted in Exhibit 7.2.

Outreach to the Community:

- a social marketing campaign to inform and invite participation of all community stakeholders with respect to
 - >district and school plans to work with the community to address barriers to student success and develop a cohesive and comprehensive system and
 - >the variety of opportunities for involvement at schools
- interventions to (re)engage students and families who don't interact with the school on a regular basis (e.g., the disengaged, truants, dropouts)
- outreach to specific stakeholder groups to recruit a steady increase in the number of volunteers available to the schools

Developing Mechanisms to Link and Connect with Community Entities:

- using school improvement planning to include a focus on analyzing and filling critical gaps in efforts to develop a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports
- establishing and training a multi-school workgroup to focus on recruiting and equitably integrating individuals and agencies who have resources that can help fill critical gaps

Establishing a Formal Collaborative and Building an Operational Infrastructure:

- identifying community stakeholders who are interested in establishing a school-community collaborative
- formulating aims, short-term goals, and immediate objectives
- organizing participants into an effective operational infrastructure and establishing formal working agreements (e.g., MOUs) about roles and responsibilities
- forming and training workgroups to accomplish immediate objectives
- monitoring and facilitating progress

Blending Resources to Improve System Development:

- mapping school and community resources used to address barriers to student success
- analyzing resource use to determine redundancies and inefficiencies
- identifying ways resources can be redeployed and interwoven to meet current priorities

WHAT ARE PRIORITIES IN ENHANCING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT?

Analyses related to school improvement can use the framework in Exhibit 7.2 and the self-study survey in Appendix C to identify next steps for enhancing school-community connections. Immediate priorities usually involve establishing policy and operational mechanisms for (a) a broad based social marketing outreach campaign aimed at connecting with a wide range of community entities and initiating work with those who indicate interest and (b) exploring the feasibility of building a school-community collaborative.

Social Marketing Outreach and Initiating Community Engagement

A social marketing campaign can begin simply with a press release, website and email announcements, and circulars distributed through local businesses and agencies. The initial focus is on informing the community about the positive work at the school and letting them know about the need and opportunities for community involvement.

Social marketing and outreach are ongoing processes. One facet involves prioritizing and strategically focusing on specific entities. Common priorities stress establishing ongoing working relationships with

- sources from which a multifaceted volunteer pool can be recruited (Review Exhibit 6.4 and see Exhibit 7.3 for the many ways volunteers can help at schools. Note: While home involvement can fill some volunteer roles and functions, adding the wider range of talents found throughout the community helps fill many gaps and broadens perspectives about community engagement.)
- community agencies that can fill critical gaps in supports for transitions (e.g., after school programs) and student and family special assistance (e.g., social services and physical and mental health)
- a wide range of community resources that can provide learning opportunities (It is a truism that learning is neither limited to what is formally taught nor to time spent in classrooms and at school; anyone in the community might be a contributing teacher and mentor who provides learning opportunities, such as service learning, internships, job-shadowing.)

Social marketing also can be directed at students and families who don't interact with the school on a regular basis, such as truants, dropouts, uninvolved families (See Chapter 9 for discussion of the type of special assistance and accommodations required to re-engage the disconnected.)

Multifaceted and authentic outreach to engage the community convey the message that schools are not islands. Opening up school sites as places where the community can engage in learning, recreation, enrichment, and connect with services they need can accelerate the impact of social marketing and outreach. Combining school and community resources heightens feasibility for opening up on-campus opportunities. Over time, the impact of these efforts can enhance school climate and lead to schools becoming the heart of the community.

Exhibit 7.3

The Many Roles for Volunteers in the Classroom and Throughout the School

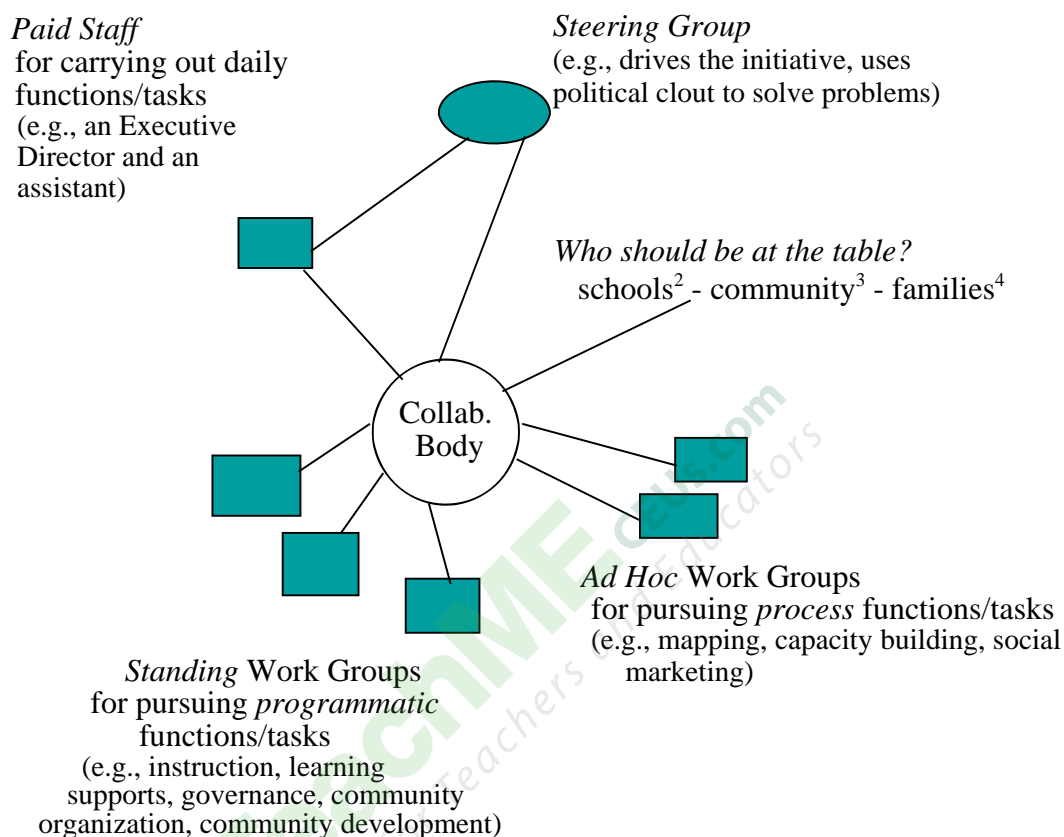
- I. Welcoming and Social Support
 - A. In the Front Office
 - 1. Greeting and welcoming
 - 2. Providing information to those who come to the front desk
 - 3. Escorting guests, new students/families to destinations on the campus
 - 4. Orienting newcomers
 - B. Staffing a Welcoming Club
 - 1. Connecting newly arrived parents with peer buddies
 - 2. Helping develop orientation and other information resources for newcomers
 - 3. Helping establish newcomer support groups
- II. Working with Designated Students in the Classroom
 - A. Helping to orient new students
 - B. Engaging disinterested, distracted, and distracting students
 - C. Providing personal guidance and support for specific students in class to help them stay focused and engaged
- III. Providing Additional Opportunities and Support in Class and on the Campus as a Whole – including helping develop and staff additional
 - A. Recreational activity
 - B. Enrichment activity
 - C. Tutoring
 - D. Mentoring
- IV. Helping Enhance the Positive Climate Throughout the School – including Assisting with "Chores"
 - A. Assisting with Supervision in Class and Throughout the Campus
 - B. Contributing to Campus "Beautification"
 - C. Helping to Get Materials Ready

Toward Developing a School-Community Collaborative

With a view to establishing an effective school-community collaborative, the early priority is to create a workgroup charged with developing an operational infrastructure for the collaborative. As the prototype illustrated in Exhibit 7.4 indicates, mechanisms are needed to provide oversight, leadership, capacity building, and ongoing support as the collaborative plans and implements strategic actions. Establishing such an infrastructure requires translating policy into authentic agreements about shared mission, vision, decision making, priorities, goals, roles, functions, resource allocation, redeployment, and enhancement, strategic implementation, evaluation, and accountability.

Exhibit 7.4

Prototype of a School-Community Collaborative Operational Infrastructure¹



¹Connecting the resources of schools, families, and a wide range of community entities through a formal collaborative facilitates developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning. Effectiveness, efficiencies, and economies of scale can be achieved by connecting a “family” (or complex) of schools (e.g., a high school and its feeder schools, schools in the same neighborhood). In a small community, the feeder pattern often is the school district.

²*Schools* = formal institutions responsible for formal education (e.g., pre-K, elementary, secondary, higher education entities). The intent is to interweave the resources of these institutions with community entities.

³*Community entities* = the many resources (public and private money, facilities, human and social capital) that can be brought to the table (e.g., health and social service agencies, businesses and unions, recreation, cultural, and youth development groups, libraries, juvenile justice and law enforcement, faith-based community institutions, service clubs, media). As the collaborative develops, additional steps must be taken to outreach to disenfranchised groups in the community.

⁴*Families* = representatives of all families in the community (not just representatives of organized family advocacy groups). The intent is to mobilize all the human and social capital represented by family members and other home caretakers of the young.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 7

Interest in connecting school and community resources is growing at an exponential rate. A temporary connection often is established in the wake of a crisis or to address a particular problem. In the long-run, however, school-community connections must be driven by a comprehensive vision about the shared role schools, communities, and families can play in strengthening youngsters, families, schools, and neighborhoods. Such a vision encompasses safe schools and neighborhoods, positive development and learning, personal, family, and economic well-being, and more.

While outreach to make informal linkages is relatively simple, establishing major long-term formal working relationships is not easy. Such connections require formal and institutionalized systemic changes to enable sharing of a wide spectrum of responsibilities and resources.

From the perspective of transforming student and learning supports, we caution against *limiting* school-community connections to co-locating a few service agencies on a few school sites. Such an approach tends to downplay what is needed to effectively address barriers to learning and teaching and undervalues the role of existing school resources and other human and social capital found in homes and communities. Remember that increasing access to a few more services is only one facet of developing a unified and comprehensive system for enhancing equity of opportunity.



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Chapter 8. Crises Assistance and Prevention

There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full.

Henry Kissinger

Crisis, emergency, disaster, catastrophe, tragedy, trauma – all are words heard frequently at schools today. Too many schools have had a major crisis; any school may have one soon.

Besides natural disasters such as earthquakes, fires, and pandemic diseases, students experience violence and death related to suicide, gang activity, snipers, hostage-taking, and rape. Some students and staff react with severe emotional responses – fear, grief, post traumatic stress syndrome. And, when a significant portion of a school's population is affected, major facets of a school's functioning are jeopardized. When too little effort is made to intervene, the aftermath can interfere with school and home performance, and long-term psychosocial and educational problems may ensue.

Crisis intervention is for responding to, minimizing the impact of, and preventing school and personal crises. After a crisis, the first concern is to ensure physical safety and medical first aid; this is followed immediately by attention to psychological considerations. Then, the emphasis is on the school's need to regain stability and a sense of normality so that students and staff can resume learning and teaching. This includes attending to follow-up care as needed.

Districts differ in the specificity with which they spell out procedures for schools to follow during and in the aftermath of a crisis. Based on district policy, schools plan for emergencies. It is rare, however, for districts to have addressed, in sufficient detail, policies and procedures for what to do in the days and weeks that follow a crisis event and what to do to prevent future occurrences when feasible.

Districts also differ in the amount of support they provide in helping schools establish and maintain crisis response mechanisms (e.g., crisis teams) and in training staff, as well as how much district level staffing is available for crisis intervention. Some, usually larger districts, may have regional support crisis teams that provide crisis management, medical and psychological/counseling support services, media relations, and debriefing. Others provide only an immediate response.

The proper handling of school crises is essential to minimizing negative impact on learning and physical and mental health. Comprehensive crisis intervention planning and implementation provides ways for school personnel, students, and families to return to normalcy as quickly as feasible, address residual (longer-term) psychosocial problems, and explore preventive measures for the future.

Examples of crisis intervention include activity designed to minimize the personal and institutional impact of crises and establish

- a safe and productive school environment (e.g., that deters violence and reduces injury)
- emergency/crisis responses at a site
- collaboration with local schools (e.g., high school feeder pattern) and the community at-large for crisis planning and response and to develop and implement strategies to enhance safety and reduce violence, bullying, child abuse, suicide
- follow-up care when needed
- a violence prevention and resiliency curriculum designed to teach students anger management, problem-solving skills, social skills, and conflict resolution.

FRAMING AND DESIGNING CRISES ASSISTANCE AND PREVENTION

Exhibit 8.1 presents a prototype framework to help plan crisis assistance and prevention. (Go to the resources referenced at the end of this chapter for specific intervention ideas related to each of these concerns.)

Exhibit 8.1

Prototype Framework for Crises Assistance and Prevention

		<i>Scope of Event</i>		
		Major School-wide crisis*	Small Group Crisis**	Individual Crisis***
<i>Phases for which to plan</i>	During the Emergency			
	Immediate Aftermath			
	Days/Weeks Following			
	Prevention in the Future			

*Major school-wide crisis (e.g., major earthquake, fire in building, gun violence on campus)

**Small group crisis (e.g., in events where most students are unaffected such as a classmate's death, the focus is on providing for *specific* classes, groups, and individuals who are upset)

***Individual crisis (e.g., student confides threat to hurt self or others such as suicide, assault)

Several points should be highlighted related to the prototype framework. Clearly, the scope of the event (major school-wide crises as contrasted to small group or individual crises) profoundly shapes the number of responders needed during the various phases of the crisis.

Also, problems requiring attention during the crisis are quite distinct from those arising in the immediate aftermath and in the days and weeks following the event (e.g., hysteria and fear as contrasted with grief reactions and post traumatic stress).

As with every intervention, multi-year strategic development requires gap analyses and priority setting and feasibility considerations. And, as with all student and learning supports, the work is strengthened when a broad range of stakeholders and resources are coalesced to help with planning and implementation (e.g., students, staff, home, police, medical, and other community resources).

WHAT ARE PRIORITIES IN ENHANCING CRISES ASSISTANCE AND PREVENTION?

The prototype framework in Exhibit 8.1 can guide gap analysis and setting priorities for intervention, personnel development, and ongoing support. For more specific examples to aid gap analysis, see the self-study survey in Appendix C.

The first priority is to *upgrade crisis intervention planning and response capability*. This can be done by a school's administration or by establishing a standing crisis response and prevention workgroup. In some districts, a school-based crisis intervention team is delineated as the key planning and implementation mechanism. Planning groups vary in size; they benefit from the participation of an administrator, student support staff (e.g., nurse, psychologist, counselor), and anyone with special expertise from the district and community.

Early tasks include

- reviewing strategic and action plans for crisis response and prevention
- preparing all at a school for responding to the different types of emergencies and making specific assignments and building capacity for crowd management, immediate medical and psychological first aid, rumor control, and handling media
- preparing all at a school to implement recovery efforts so students can resume learning and staff can resume their duties and designing and building capacity for immediate aftermath counseling and debriefing

As the above basics are accomplished, the workgroup can enhance plans and capacity for

- providing brief and longer-term follow-up care as necessary
- preventing what is readily preventable.

About Reviewing Strategic and Action Plans

Every school needs crisis assistance and prevention plans that establish specific responses and delineate capacity building for implementation. The focus in strategic and action planning is on such matters as:

- who will assume what roles and functions in responding to a crisis
- what types of events the school defines as a crisis warranting a school-based response
- what defines a particular event as a crisis
- how will different facets of crisis response be handled (who, what, where)
- how to assess and triage medical and psychological trauma
- how to identify students and staff in need of aftermath intervention
- what types of responses will be made with respect to students, staff, parents, district, community, media
- what special provisions will be implemented to address language and cultural considerations
- which school personnel will make the responses
- how district and community resources will be used
- which personnel will review the adequacy of each response and make appropriate revisions in crises response plans
- what in-service staff development and training are needed.
- how will everyone be informed about emergency and crisis procedures

Planning also addresses contingencies. What will be done if someone is not at school to carry out specified crisis response duties? What if a location is not accessible for carrying on a planned activity?

School crises, of course, often are community crises. Therefore, the school's plan should be coordinated with other local schools and with community crisis response personnel. The ideal is to seamlessly interweave plans and resources to enhance the benefits of the wider range of expertise and increase cost-effectiveness.

Once a general response plan is made planners can, over time, work out further details related to specific concerns and how to prevent what is preventable. In doing so, priority is given to high frequency and high impact concerns, such as wide-spread bullying.

About Ensuring Effective Immediate Crisis Response

Action planning focuses on establishing and preparing a *response team* to

- organize planning and training sessions for all at a school
- provide overall coordination during a crisis response
- liaison with district and school administrators and with community emergency response agencies (e.g., fire department, police, emergency medical teams).

The plan also designates which responders will take on roles and functions related to

- mobilizing the team when needed (e.g., telephone trees, email listservs)
- coordinating communications and controlling rumors
- first aid (medical, psychological)
- crowd management
- media
- evacuation and transportation
- individual and group supportive counseling
- aftermath interventions

and so forth.

Every role and function needs to be backed-up by 1-2 team members in case someone is absent or incapacitated. Team contact information must be posted in visible places (e.g., next to phones and computers in office locations).

There's never time to plan things right.



True, but there's always time to do things wrong!



Note: While training for delivering medical first aid is fairly commonplace, relatively little attention is paid to preparing responders to administer psychological first aid. To correct this oversight, Exhibit 8.2 provides an overview from a guide prepared by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and the National Center for PTSD.

Exhibit 8.2

About Psychological First Aid in Schools

Psychological First Aid for Schools is an evidence-informed approach for assisting children, adolescents, adults, and families in the aftermath of a school crisis, disaster, or terrorism event.

The guide is divided into the following sections:

Introduction and Overview

Preparing to Deliver Psychological First Aid

The Core Actions

- Contact and Engagement
- Safety and Comfort
- Stabilization
- Information Gathering: Current Needs and Concerns
- Practical Assistance
- Connection with Social Supports
- Information on Coping
- Linkage with Collaborative Services

Appendices

As stated in the manual:

“The basic objectives of a Psychological First Aid provider in schools are:

- To establish a positive connection with students and staff members in a non-intrusive, compassionate manner
- To enhance immediate and ongoing safety and provide physical and emotional comfort
- To calm and orient emotionally overwhelmed or distraught students and staff
- To help students and staff members identify their immediate needs and concerns
- To offer practical assistance and information to help students and staff members address their immediate needs and concerns
- To connect students and staff members as soon as possible to social support networks, including family members, friends, coaches, and other school or community groups
- To empower students, staff, and families to take an active role in their recovery, by acknowledging their coping efforts and strengths, and supporting adaptive coping
- To make clear your availability and (when appropriate) link the student and staff to other relevant school or community resources such as school counseling services, peer support programs, afterschool activities, tutoring, primary care physicians, local recovery systems, mental health services, employee assistance programs, public-sector services, and other relief organizations

(cont.)

Core actions are:

1. Contact and Engagement
Goal: To initiate contacts or to respond to contacts by students and staff in a non-intrusive, compassionate, and helpful manner
2. Safety and Comfort
Goal: To enhance immediate and ongoing safety, and provide physical and emotional comfort
3. Stabilization (if needed)
Goal: To calm and orient emotionally overwhelmed or disoriented students and staff
4. Information Gathering: (Current Needs and Concerns)
Goal: To identify immediate needs and concerns, gather additional information, and tailor Psychological First Aid for Schools interventions to meet these needs
5. Practical Assistance
Goal: To offer practical help to students and staff in addressing immediate needs and concerns
6. Connection with Social Supports
Goal: To help establish brief or ongoing contacts with primary support persons or other sources of support, including family, friends, teachers, and other school and/or community resources
7. Information on Coping
Goal: To provide information about stress reactions and coping to reduce distress and promote adaptive functioning
8. Linkage with Collaborative Services
Goal: To link students and staff with available services needed at the time or in the future

These core actions of Psychological First Aid for Schools constitute the basic objectives of providing early assistance within hours, days, or weeks following an event.”

The manual stresses the importance of being flexible and devoting the amount of time spent on each core action based on the person’s specific needs and concerns.

*Brymer M., Taylor M., Escudero P., Jacobs A., Kronenberg M., Macy R., Mock L., Payne L., Pynoos R., & Vogel J. *Psychological first aid for schools: Field operations guide, 2nd Edition*. (2012). Los Angeles: National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

About Designing Recovery Efforts

The aftermath of any crisis may affect a significant segment of a school's stakeholders. Of particular concern is the need for rumor control, dealing with contagion effects, and providing support for anyone experiencing medical problems and strong psychological reactions. Recovery planning and action focuses on specific steps to be taken in the ensuing days/weeks. The emphasis is on:

- (1) Preparing and circulating accurate information to minimize destructive/disruptive rumors. An example is providing teachers with accurate information about the event and asking them to judiciously cover the matter with their students. The point is not only to provide accurate information about the event, but to clarify that the feelings students are having are natural and to remind students of available resources. Provision should be made to back up teachers (e.g., those who feel their situation requires someone with specific skills). The same type of information is relevant for staff and families.
- (2) Preparing and circulating a handout to all school personnel regarding what they should watch for in the aftermath and what they can do if anyone appears especially upset.
- (3) Implementing classroom discussions and activities that enable students to express and discuss feelings about crises.
- (4) Implementing counseling and other special supports for classes, groups, and individuals.

Special expertise may be required in handling problems that arise in the days and weeks following an event. If there is not anyone with the needed expertise at the school, referrals are indicated.

As soon as feasible, planners meet for a debriefing session to evaluate how procedures worked, what revisions are needed, and to clarify preventive implications.

About Brief and Longer-term Follow-up

For some at a school, extended counseling and other special supports are needed. See Chapter 9 for the processes involved in providing student and family special assistance. Processes similar to those presented can be established for affected staff.

Preventing What is Readily Preventable

Prevention is a fundamental element of well-designed crises planning. Prevention strategies play a significant role in creating an environment in which a positive school climate can emerge.

A major focus of prevention is on strategies for deterring violence and reducing injury (e.g., violence prevention and resiliency curriculum; initiatives for conflict resolution and restorative justice). Another facet is concern for enhancing resiliency in the form of enhanced motivation and capacity for coping with stress. At all times, the emphasis is on minimizing circumstances that undermine personal well-being (e.g., threats to feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness to significant others).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 8

In the context of transforming student and learning supports, developing the highlighted range of school-based crisis intervention requires more than a typical emergency/crisis response team. Where such a team is in place, it needs to be expanded into a broad-based workgroup charged with planning, development, implementation, ongoing evaluation, and quality improvement related to crisis assistance and prevention. This type of standing workgroup can ensure integration with the other five learning supports arenas and with the district, neighboring schools, and the surrounding community.

The workgroup will need members who have or will develop the specific expertise related to crises assistance and prevention. Some members of such a workgroup are dictated by their formal role in a school and will bring expertise (e.g., a school administrator, nurse, psychologist, social worker, counselor); in addition, there almost always are other staff who have special expertise and will be interested in participating (e.g., those with first aid and counseling training, those concerned with school climate and safety).

Optimally, the district should provide not only policy and procedural guidelines, but also district support staff to help workgroups formulate specific plans, organize and train designated responders, and coordinate with relevant district and community resources. And if any schools cannot generate a standing crisis assistance and prevention workgroup, the district and neighboring schools can pool resources to meet the need.



Chapter 9. Student and Family Special Assistance

Only a small proportion of students requiring special assistance are candidates for special education

Before providing special assistance to a student, the logical first step is to address general factors that may be causing problems. In schools, this first step involves developing the five arenas of learning supports discussed in previous chapters. This can be sufficient for addressing conditions that are affecting a large proportion of students, and this reduces the need for further special attention. A few students, however, will continue to manifest learning, behavior, and emotional problems, and they and their families require extra assistance, perhaps including specialized interventions. Depending on problem severity and pervasiveness, such assistance involves pursuing the sequence and hierarchy of interventions highlighted in Exhibit 9.1 (reproduced from Chapter 4).

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT LEARNING AND TEACHING

Most school staff and parents have little difficulty identifying youngsters who manifest problems at school. Given that as much as feasible has been done to provide a range of general learning supports, such students require special assistance. Keep in mind, however, that only a small proportion of these students are candidates for special education diagnosis and programming. Indeed, properly designed and implemented special assistance is intended to reduce unnecessary referrals for special education.

Rethinking special assistance is fundamental in revamping school systems to address the needs of *all* learners and reduce learning problems, misbehavior, suspensions, expulsions, grade retention, and dropouts. As with the other elements of a learning supports system, the aim is to enable learning by improving the match between school interventions and a learner's motivation and capabilities.

Special assistance often is just an extension of general strategies; sometimes, however, more specialized interventions are needed. In either case, a school's process objective is to provide extra support as soon as a need is recognized and in ways that are least disruptive to the student's whole development. Done effectively, special assistance reduces misdiagnoses and unwarranted special education referrals. To these ends, the endeavor reflects aspects of what in the past has been referred to as prereferral intervention and uses Response to Intervention (RtI) as an authentic and multifaceted assessment process. These strategies improve screening and planning and facilitate appropriate decisions about referral for school-based, school-linked, and community-based specialized services. Exhibit 9.2 summarizes, with examples, the array of special assistance.

How is Special Assistance Provided Strategically?

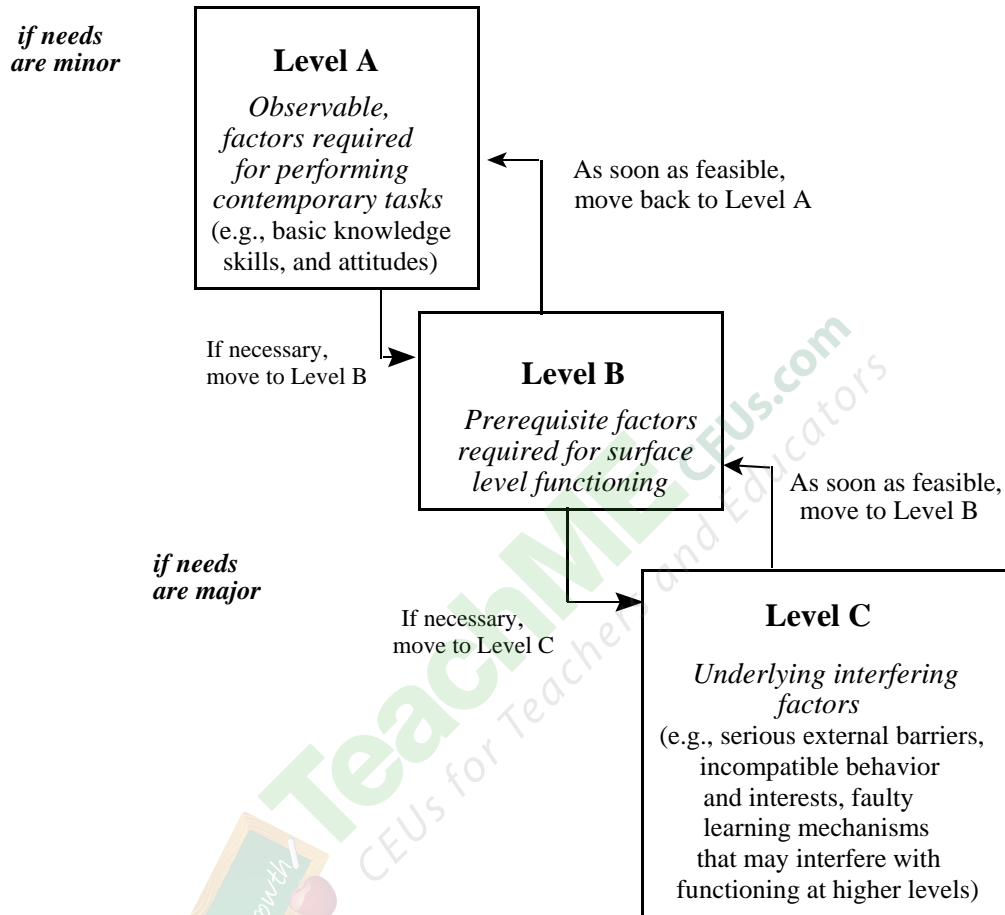
Once it is clear that special assistance is required, the focus turns to determining what type of assistance to provide and how to provide it. In making such determinations, all who work with the youngster must take the time to develop (a) an understanding of why the student is having problems, (b) an analysis of the nature and scope of the problems (current weaknesses and limitations, including missing prerequisites and interfering behaviors and attitudes), and (c) an appreciation of his or her strengths (in terms of both motivation and capabilities).

Learning, behavior, and emotional difficulties are commonly associated with motivational problems. Thus, enhancing motivation is always a primary concern. To this end, intensive efforts are immediately required to ensure a student is mobilized to learn and perform. Such efforts include use of a wider range of learning and performance options, individual guidance and support, and appropriate accommodations. Particular attention is paid to minimizing threats to feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to significant others and emphasizing ways to enhance such feelings.

Exhibit 9.1

Sequence and Hierarchy of Special Assistance

Step 2. *Best special practices* (special assistance, such as remediation, rehabilitation, treatment) are used differentially for minor and severe problems



Note: The concept of using the least intervention necessary to accomplish results applies to decisions about intervening at Levels A, B, or C. The point is to ensure the right amount of assistance is provided so that first and foremost students' needs are addressed. At the same time, the idea is to keep interventions from becoming too life-intrusive and to ensure the costs and benefits are appropriately balanced.

Responses to special assistance are a primary assessment strategy. When motivational considerations are given short shrift, assessments and diagnoses are confounded, and special assistance may just as readily exacerbate as correct a student's problems. When a student's motivation to learn and problem-solve is enhanced, a more valid assessment of special assistance needs and personal strengths is likely. Moreover, among the disengaged, re-engagement enables identification of students misdiagnosed as having internal dysfunctions (e.g., a learning disability, an attention deficit hyperactivity disorder).

Addressing motivational concerns can be sufficient for assisting a large proportion of students and reducing the need for further special attention. A few, however, may continue to manifest learning and behavior problems and require further special assistance, perhaps including specialized practices.

Exhibit 9.2
Array of Special Assistance

Concern	In the Classroom	Outside the Classroom
To provide student and learning supports as soon as a problem is recognized and to do so in the least disruptive way.	Where feasible, special assistance is implemented in the classroom. This is best accomplished by opening the door to invite in resource and student support staff and volunteers.	Outside assistance at school is provided as needed and available. Referrals elsewhere are made when necessary.
LEVELS		
<p>Observable Factors Required for Effective Learning at School</p> <p>At this level, the focus remains on <i>directly</i> enabling acquisition of the basic knowledge, skills, and interests related to age-appropriate life and learning tasks (e.g., reading, inter- & intra-personal problem solving). It builds on personalized instruction, encompasses what often is called “prereferral” intervention, and uses accommodations and responses to special assistance.</p>	<p>A basic strategy at this level includes <i>reteaching</i> – but not with the same approach that has failed. Alternative strategies and modification of activities are used to improve the match with the learner’s current levels of motivation and capability. To find the right match, a range of accommodations and technical moves are used to enhance motivation, sensory intake and processing, decision making, and output. Other strategies include problem solving conferences with parents and the student, expanding options and opportunities for decision making, and enhancing protective buffers and resilience.</p>	<p>Examples of interventions at this level include out-of-class tutoring, supportive and stress reduction counseling, parent training related to helping a student learn & perform, health and social services as needed for minor problems, enhancing protective buffers and resilience.</p>
<p>Missing Prerequisites (i.e., the readiness gap)</p> <p>Special assistance at this level focuses on identifying and <i>directly</i> enabling acquisition of developmental and motivational prerequisites (knowledge, skills, attitudes) in order to fill the readiness gap.</p>	<p>The more that a youngster has missed key learning opportunities, the more likely s/he has gaps in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed in the current grade. If the readiness gap is not filled, it grows. Where a readiness gap exists, teaching staff must be able to take the time to address the gap by identifying missing prerequisites and ensuring the student acquire them. Processes are the same as those used in facilitating learning related to current life tasks.</p>	<p>Examples at this level also include tutoring, supportive and stress reduction counseling, parent training, health and social services as needed for mild to moderate problems, and enhancing protective buffers and resilience. Students also may need special counseling to restore feelings of competence, self-determination, and relatedness to significant others.</p>
<p>Underlying Problems and Interfering Factors</p> <p>Special assistance at this level identifies severe and chronic problems (e.g., poor motivation, social and emotional dysfunctioning, faulty learning mechanisms). Then, the focus is on helping students overcome underlying deficiencies by correcting the problems (if feasible) or enabling learning and performance by providing accommodations and teaching strategies for coping and compensating.</p>	<p>Special assistance in the classroom at this level involves assessment of underlying problems and/or serious interfering factors and use of remedial, rehabilitative, and tertiary prevention strategies that are used in conjunction with ongoing personalized instruction.</p>	<p>At this level, the need is for intensive interventions designed to address barriers related to a host of external and internal risk factors and interventions for promoting healthy development (including a focus on resiliency and protective factors).</p> <p>In extreme cases, full time outside interventions may be required for a limited period of time.</p>

Taken as a whole, outcome research on special assistance indicates fewer behavior, emotional, and learning problems, enhanced positive social-emotional functioning, lower rates of unnecessary referral to special education, less visits to hospital emergency rooms, and fewer hospitalizations. Reports also indicate increased attendance, better grades, improved achievement and promotion to the next grade, reduced suspensions and expulsions, fewer dropouts, and increased graduation rates.

About the Sequence and Hierarchy

Proceeding in a sequential and hierarchical way emphasizes using the simplest, most direct, and noninvasive approaches whenever problems appear minor. Levels, sequence, and specific practices are determined initially and on an ongoing basis by assessing a student's responses to special assistance. This is supplemented, as necessary, with more in-depth assessment to determine external and internal factors that are interfering with a student's learning and positive functioning.

While the focus may be on any of the three levels, the sequence and level differ depending on whether students have minor and occasional problems or have severe and pervasive problems. For learners with minor or occasional problems, the initial focus is on directly facilitating learning and performance related to immediate tasks and interests and on expanding the range of interests. The procedures involve (1) continued adaptation of methods to match and enhance levels of motivation and development and (2) reteaching specific skills and knowledge when students have difficulty.

If problems continue, the focus shifts to assessing and developing missing prerequisites (Level B) needed to function at the higher level. The emphasis is on essential "readiness" skills and/or attitudes. Individuals who have not learned to order and sequence events, follow directions, interact positively with peers, and so forth need to develop such skills to succeed at school. Similarly, if students don't see much point in learning the three Rs or other school subjects, motivational readiness must be engendered. As with all intervention, procedures are adapted to improve the match, and reteaching is used when the learner has difficulty. If missing prerequisites are successfully developed, the focus returns to observable factors (Level A).

If help with missing prerequisites (Level B) is not effective, the focus shifts to underlying interfering factors (Level C). Only at this level is the emphasis on factors that may interfere with functioning (i.e., incompatible behaviors and interests and/or dysfunctional learning mechanisms). At this level, intervention stresses intensive and often specialized assistance designed to help individuals overcome underlying problems (e.g., clinical remediation, psychotherapy and behavior change strategies, medical and social services). This level includes

- direct actions to address major external/internal barriers to learning and behaving
- helping students strengthen themselves in areas of weakness or vulnerability
- helping students learn ways to compensate, as necessary, when confronted with barriers or areas of weakness
- using a range of ongoing accommodations, specialized techniques, technology

Because the range of empirically-proven practices is so limited, direct action at this level mainly encompasses a continuous process of trial and appraisal to find the best ways to help. This may involve working with family members, peers, and other school staff – counseling them away from actions that interfere with a student's progress and guiding them to helpful strategies. In pursuing underlying interfering factors, the intent is to move back up the hierarchy as soon as feasible.

Specific objectives at any level are formulated with the student (and key family members) to identify processes and outcomes the student values and perceives as attainable. Interventions are modified based on ongoing dialogues with the student that are informed by analyses of task performance. In the classroom, special assistance is an extension of general efforts to facilitate learning. It is the struggle to find an appropriate match for learners having problems that mainly differentiates special classroom assistance from regular teaching.

Student Motivation Is a Major Consideration at All Times

- Motivation is an antecedent concern affecting intervention. Poor motivational readiness often is (a) a cause of inadequate and problem functioning, (b) a factor maintaining such problems, or (c) both. Thus, strategies are required that reduce avoidance motivation and enhance motivational readiness so that the student is mobilized to participate.
- Motivation is an ongoing process concern. Processes must elicit, enhance, and maintain motivation so that the student stays mobilized (e.g., strategies to counter boredom).
- Enhancing intrinsic motivation is a basic outcome concern. A student may be motivated to work on a problem during an intervention session but not elsewhere. Responding to this concern requires strategies to enhance stable, positive attitudes that mobilize the student to act outside the intervention context and after the intervention is terminated.

Similar motivational considerations arise in providing special assistance to a student's family. And, staff motivation warrants attention as well.

Now that you're in third grade,
how do you like school?

CLOSED!



FRAMING AND DESIGNING INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENT AND FAMILY SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Exhibit 9.3 offers a prototype framework to help schools plan the many learning support activities related to special assistance. As the Exhibit highlights, special assistance in and out of classrooms encompasses processes for providing all stakeholders with information clarifying available assistance and how to access help, facilitating requests for assistance, identifying and assessing problems, triaging in making referrals, planning and providing direct services, monitoring and managing care, managing resources, and interfacing with community outreach to fill gaps. The work also includes ongoing formative evaluations designed to improve quality, effectiveness, and efficiency.

With specific respect to severe and chronic problems and students mandated for special education programs, special assistance includes connecting what the school offers with whatever is available in the community and facilitating access. In implementing the activity, the emphasis is on enhancing a “system of care” and ensuring the special assistance is integrated with the other facets of the comprehensive system of learning supports.

Exhibit 9.3

Framework for Student and Family Special Assistance

Activities	Venue	
	In the Classroom*	Out of the Classroom**
Using responses to intervention (RtI) to initially identify and triage those who need such assistance		
Conducting additional assessment to the degree necessary – including diagnosis and planning of an Individual education program (IEP) when appropriate		
Providing consultation, triage, and referrals		
Conducting ongoing management of care		
Enhancing special assistance availability and quality		

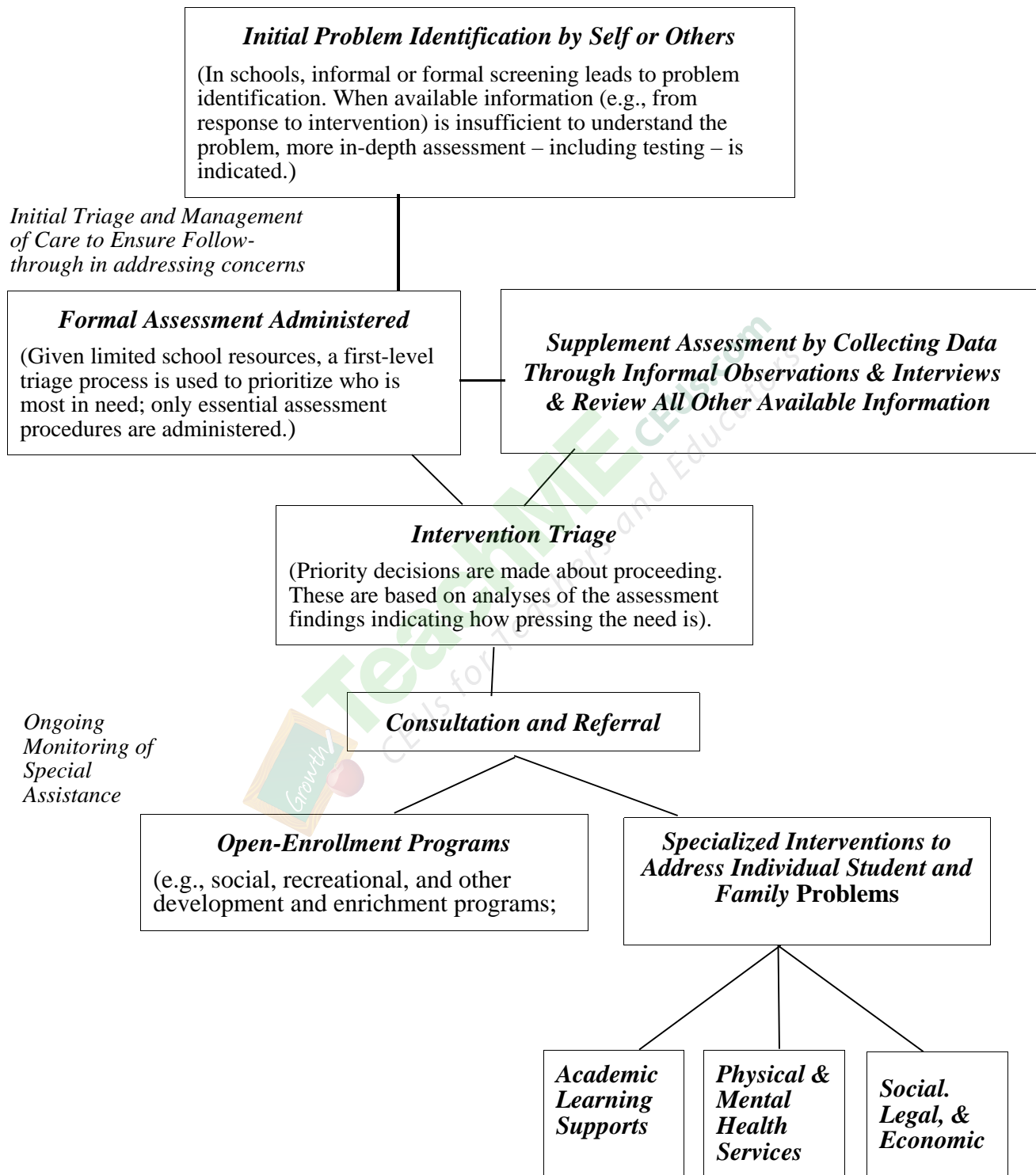
*Provided by the school's teaching and/or student support staff

**Out of class special assistance may be provided at the school, at a district facility, and/or at a community facility. In some schools, professionals from the community have connected with schools to co-locate their agency services.

Efforts related to problem identification, triage, referral to and management of special assistance require developing and connecting each process systematically. Exhibit 9.4 highlights the connections.

Exhibit 9.4

Processes for Problem Identification, Triage, Referral, & Management of Interventions



Note: Proper application of special assistance involves ongoing assessment, information sharing, and care monitoring and management. These processes can be facilitated by a computerized information management system (with effective privacy safeguards).

WHAT ARE PRIORITIES IN ENHANCING STUDENT AND FAMILY SPECIAL ASSISTANCE?

This chapter along with the self-study survey in Appendix C provide aids for a workgroup charged with conducting a gap analyses and setting priorities related to strengthening special assistance. From our perspective, the overriding priorities are to establish strategies for doing less outside and more inside the classroom.

Doing Less Student and Family Special Assistance Outside the Classroom

Currently, most requests for special assistance outside the classroom ask student support staff (e.g., psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses) to address specific problems related to individual students and/or their families. Usually, the request is stimulated because a student is manifesting significant learning, behavior, and emotional problems. In some instances, the request is intended to generate an evaluation leading to special education. Indeed, over the years, such requests have led to an exponential escalation in the number of students designated as having a learning disability (LD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

As noted, transformation of student and learning supports aims at preventing and ameliorating many school-related learning, behavior, and emotional problems. The transformation stresses bringing student support staff into classrooms for part of each day so they can play a greater role in limiting the need for out-of-class services. One aim is to reduce the number of students with commonplace problems who are misdiagnosed and assigned to the special education population.

This is not to say that added assistance outside class is unnecessary. The point is to reduce overuse and misuse of specialized services, while maximizing appropriate attention to both external and internal barriers to learning and performance. Examples of appropriate use are cited in Exhibit 9.2.

Doing More Student and Family Special Assistance in the Classroom

Common priorities in enhancing special assistance in classrooms are expanding options, broadening accommodations, taking a comprehensive approach to response to intervention, and enhancing remedial strategies. A few words about each follow.

About Adding Learning Options. Every teacher knows the value of variety. Varied options are especially important in engaging and finding ways to re-engage students with low motivation for or negative attitudes about classroom learning and performance. Before some students will decide to participate in a proactive way, they have to perceive the learning environment as positively different – and quite a bit so – from the one they dislike.

A valued set of options and the opportunity for involvement in decision making helps foster student perceptions of having real choices and being self-determining and can help counter perceptions of coercion and control. Shifting such perceptions can reduce reactive misbehavior and enhance engagement in classroom learning.

Broadening Accommodations. Besides adding options, it is imperative to accommodate a wider range of behavior than usually is tolerated. For instance, classroom environments can be altered to better account for youngsters who are very active and/or distractable. This includes initial easing of certain behavioral expectations and standards for some of these students (e.g., widening limits on acceptable behavior for a time to minimize rule infringement).

Accommodative strategies are intended to enable a student to participate successfully. Such strategies improve the fit between what is expected and what a student values and believes is attainable with appropriate effort (see Exhibit 9.5).

Exhibit 9.5

Examples of Accommodation Recommendations

If students seem easily distracted, the following might be used:

- identify any specific environmental factors that distract students and make appropriate environmental changes
- have students work with a group that is highly task-focused
- let students work in a study carrel or in a space that is “private” and uncluttered
- designate a volunteer to help whenever students becomes distracted and/or start to misbehave, and if necessary, to help them make transitions
- allow for frequent "breaks"
- interact with students in ways that will minimize confusion and distractions (e.g., keep conversations relatively short; talk quietly and slowly; use concrete terms; express warmth and nurturance)

If students need more support and guidance, the following might be used:

- develop and provide sets of specific prompts, multisensory cues, steps, etc. using oral, written, and perhaps pictorial and color-coded guides as organizational aids related to specific learning activities, materials, and daily schedules
- ensure someone checks with students frequently throughout an activity to provide additional support and guidance in concrete ways (e.g., model, demonstrate, coach)
- support student efforts related to self-monitoring and self-evaluation and provide nurturing feedback keyed to student progress and next steps

If students have difficulty finishing tasks as scheduled, try the following:

- modify the length and time demands of assignments and tests
- modify the nature of the process and products (e.g., allow use of technological tools and allow for oral, audio-visual, arts and crafts, graphic, and computer generated products)

As noted, accommodations help establish a good match for learning. For students with significant learning, behavior, and emotional problems, interveners use many special accommodations. In fact, federal law (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) encourages schools to pursue a range of such accommodations when students' symptoms significantly interfere with school learning but are not severe enough to qualify them for special education. See the following page for examples of the types of accommodations offered.

(cont.)

Exhibit 9.5 (cont.)

504 Accommodation Checklist

Various organizations concerned with special populations circulate lists of 504 accommodations. The following is one that was downloaded from website of a group concerned with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (see <http://www.come-over.to/FAS/IDEA504.htm>).

Physical Arrangement of Room

- seating student near the teacher
- seating student near a positive role model
- standing near student when giving directions/presenting lessons
- avoiding distracting stimuli (air conditioner, high traffic area)
- increasing distance between desks

Lesson Presentation

- pairing students to check work
- writing key points on the board
- providing peer tutoring
- providing visual aids, large print, films
- providing peer notetaker
- making sure directions are understood
- including a variety of activities during each lesson
- repeating directions to student after they are given to the class: then have him/her repeat and explain directions to teacher
- providing written outline
- allowing student to tape record lessons
- having child review key points orally
- teaching through multi-sensory modes, visual, auditory, kinesthetics, olfactory
- using computer-assisted instruction
- accompany oral directions with written directions for child to refer to blackboard or paper
- provide model to help students, post the model, refer to it often
- provide cross age peer tutoring
- to assist the student in finding the main idea underlying, highlighting, cue cards, etc.
- breaking longer presentations into shorter segments

Assignments/worksheets

- giving extra time to complete tasks
- simplifying complex directions
- handing worksheets out one at a time
- reducing the reading level of the assignments
- requiring fewer correct responses to achieve grade (quality vs. quantity)
- allowing student to tape record assignments/homework
- providing a structured routine in written form
- providing study skills training/learning strategies
- giving frequent short quizzes and avoiding long tests
- shortening assignments; breaking work into smaller segments
- allowing typewritten or computer printed assignments prepared by the student or dictated by the student and recorded by someone else if needed.
- using self-monitoring devices
- reducing homework assignments
- not grading handwriting
- student not be allowed to use cursive or manuscript writing
- reversals and transpositions of letters and numbers should not be marked wrong, reversals or transpositions should be pointed out for corrections
- do not require lengthy outside reading assignments
- teacher monitor students self-paced assignments (daily, weekly, bi-weekly)

- arrangements for homework assignments to reach home with clear, concise directions
- recognize and give credit for student's oral participation in class

Test Taking

- allowing open book exams
- giving exam orally
- giving take home tests
- using more objective items (fewer essay responses)
- allowing student to give test answers on tape recorder
- giving frequent short quizzes, not long exams
- allowing extra time for exam
- reading test item to student
- avoid placing student under pressure of time or competition

Organization

- providing peer assistance with organizational skills
- assigning volunteer homework buddy
- allowing student to have an extra set of books at home
- sending daily/weekly progress reports home
- developing a reward system for in-schoolwork and homework completion
- providing student with a homework assignment notebook

Behaviors

- use of timers to facilitate task completion
- structure transitional and unstructured times (recess, hallways, lunchroom, locker room, library, assembly, field trips, etc.)
- praising specific behaviors
- using self-monitoring strategies
- giving extra privileges and rewards
- keeping classroom rules simple and clear
- making "prudent use" of negative consequences
- allowing for short breaks between assignments
- cueing student to stay on task (nonverbal signal)
- marking student's correct answers, not his mistakes
- implementing a classroom behavior management system
- allowing student time out of seat to run errands, etc.
- ignoring inappropriate behaviors not drastically outside classroom limits
- allowing legitimate movement
- contracting with the student
- increasing the immediacy of rewards
- implementing time-out procedures

Besides individual accommodations, schools can make changes in how classrooms and instruction are organized. Looping is an example. This strategy involves the teacher moving with students from one grade to the next for one or more years. This accommodation can reduce student apprehension about a new school year and enables schools to provide more time for slower students. And, it ensures more time for relationship building and bonding between teachers and students and teachers and parents and among students. Other examples of procedural changes that can help accommodate a wider range of learner differences in motivation and development include blocking, blending, and flipping instruction and various uses of technology. Both academic and social benefits are reported for such practices.

About Response to Intervention (RtI). As a special assistance approach, RtI becomes a strategy for improving understanding of a student's problem and what to do about it (see Exhibit 9.6).

Exhibit 9.6

Example of Steps in a Special Assistance Approach to Response to Intervention

- Use individual conferences to find out more about the causes of a student's problems and what interventions to try.
- Keep the initial focus on building a positive working relationship with the youngster and family.
- Move on to ask about assets (e.g. positive attributes, outside interests, hobbies, what the student likes at school and in class).
- Ask about what the youngster doesn't like at school.
- Explore the reasons for "dislikes" (e.g., Are assignments seen as too hard? as uninteresting? Is the student embarrassed because others will think s/he doesn't have the ability to do assignments? Is the youngster picked on? rejected? alienated?)
- Clarify other likely causal factors.
- Explore what the youngster and those in the home think can be done to make things better (including extra support from a volunteer, a peer, friend, etc.).
- Discuss some new strategies the youngster and those in the home would be *willing* to try to make the situation better.
- Introduce some new learning and enrichment options with an emphasis on those that fit the student's specific interests and a deemphasis on areas that are not of interest. Analyze the response.
- If peers dislike the student, find ways for the youngster to have special, positive status in class and/or in others arenas around the school/community. (This not only can help counter a negative image among peers, but can reduce behavior problems and alleviate negative feelings about self and others.) Analyze the impact on learning and behavior.
- Enhance use of aides, volunteers, peer tutors/coaches, mentors, those in the home, etc. not only to help support student efforts to learn and perform, but to enhance the student's social support networks. Analyze the impact on learning and behavior.
- After trying all the above, add some tutoring specifically designed to enhance student engagement in learning and to facilitate learning of specific academic and social skills that are interfering with effective classroom performance and learning.

Over time, staff using RtI acquire an appreciation of what is likely to work with the student and what will not. Only after extensive efforts are pursued and proven unsuccessful in the classroom is it time to seek out-of-classroom support services. And, as such services are added, steps are required to ensure they are coordinated with what is going on in the classroom, school-wide, and at home.

About “Remediation.” Remediation generally is used when students have difficulty learning or retaining what they have learned. Techniques and materials designated as remedial often appear quite different from those used in regular teaching. However, many remedial practices are simply adaptations of regular procedures and draw on general intervention principles and models. This is even the case with some packaged programs and materials especially developed for problem populations.

So what makes remedial instruction different?

The answer involves the following factors:

- *Sequence of application.* Remedial practices are pursued after the best available nonremedial practices prove inadequate.
- *Level of intervention focus.* Specialized psychoeducational procedures to facilitate learning may be applied at any of three levels noted in Exhibit 9.1.
- *Staff competence and time.* Probably the most important feature differentiating remedial from regular practices is the need for a competent professional who has time to provide one-to-one intervention. While special training does not necessarily guarantee such competence, remediation usually is done by staff who have special training. Establishing an appropriate match for learners with problems is difficult and involves a great deal of trial and appraisal. Additional time is essential in developing an understanding of the learner (strengths, weaknesses, limitations, likes, dislikes).
- *Content and outcomes.* Remedial efforts often add other content and outcome objectives to address missing prerequisites, faulty learning mechanisms, or interfering behaviors and attitudes.
- *Instructional and other intervention processes.* Remediation usually stresses an extreme application of instructional principles. Such applications may include reductions in levels of abstraction, intensification of the way stimuli are presented and acted upon, and increases in the amount and consistency of direction and support – including added reliance on other resources in the classroom (e.g., paid aides, resource personnel, volunteers, peer tutors). Use of special settings outside regular classrooms is a last resort.
- *Resource costs.* Because of the factors described above, remediation is more costly than regular teaching (allocations of time, personnel, materials, space, and so forth).
- *Psychological Impact.* The features of remediation are highly visible to students, teachers, and others. Chances are such features are seen as "different" and stigmatizing. Thus, the psychological impact of remediation can have a negative component. The sensitive nature of remediation is another reason it should be implemented only when necessary and in ways that strive to produce positive perceptions all around.

In sum, what makes remedial strategies different is their rationale, the extreme degree and consistency with which they must be applied, and their application on levels of functioning other than current life tasks. What may make a remedial procedure work is that it puts aside practices a student has experienced as ineffective and replaces them with strategies that enhance motivation and match current capabilities.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FOR ADDRESSING CHRONIC BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

As noted in Chapter 4, a comprehensive approach to addressing misbehavior encompasses:

- efforts to prevent and anticipate misbehavior
- actions taken during misbehavior
- steps taken afterwards

However, because of the frequency with which students may be misbehaving, a school's focus usually is on reacting to deviant and devious behavior and ensuring a safe environment. In doing so, teachers and other school staff increasingly have adopted *discipline* and *classroom management* strategies that model behaviors which foster (rather than counter) development of negative values.

With growing awareness of the lack of effectiveness and the negative effects associated with widely used discipline practices, many schools are moving beyond applications of direct punishment. The trend is toward using positive approaches and “logical” and “fair” consequences in dealing with behavior problems.

From both a prevention and correction perspective, advocates for more positive approaches have called for various forms of special student training programs (e.g., *character education*, *emotional "intelligence" training*, positive behavior support initiatives, social skills training, mindfulness training). Besides reducing misbehavior, some of these approaches aim at enhancing personal responsibility (social and moral), integrity, self-regulation/self-discipline, a work ethic, appreciation of diversity, and positive feelings about self and others. Embedded throughout are calls for more home involvement, with emphasis on enhanced parent responsibility for their children's behavior and learning.

Are Special Training Programs the Answer?

Poor social-emotional development clearly is a widely identified concern (a correlate) and contributing factor in a wide range of educational, psychosocial, and mental health problems. Training programs to improve social-emotional learning and interpersonal problem solving are described as having promise both for prevention and correction. Reviewers of research are cautiously optimistic. Conclusions stress that individual studies show effectiveness, but the range of skills acquired remain limited; and so does the generalizability and maintenance of outcomes. This is the case for training of specific skills (e.g., what to say and do in a specific situation), general strategies (e.g., how to generate a wider range of interpersonal problem-solving options), as well as efforts to develop cognitive-affective orientations (e.g., empathy training). What training programs tend to pay insufficient attention to is the role engagement in instruction plays in determining behavior at school.

Addressing Chronic Misbehavior and Engagement as a Special Assistance Priority

Specific discipline practices, training programs, and positive behavior initiatives usually stop short of ensuring the ongoing motivational engagement of students in classroom instruction. Engaging/re-engaging students productively in instruction is key not only to reducing misbehavior but to maintaining positive behavior. And the process requires understanding and addressing the causes of misbehavior, especially underlying motivation. Failure to attend effectively to underlying motivation leads to approaching passive and often hostile students with practices that can instigate and exacerbate problems.

Consider students who spend most of the day trying to avoid all or part of the instructional program. An intrinsic motivational interpretation of the avoidance behavior of many of these youngsters is that it reflects their perception that school is not a place they experience a sense of competence, self-determination, and/or relatedness to significant others. Indeed, too often, the experience results in feelings of incompetence, loss of autonomy, and adverse relationships. Over time, the negative perceptions develop into strong motivational dispositions and related patterns of misbehavior.

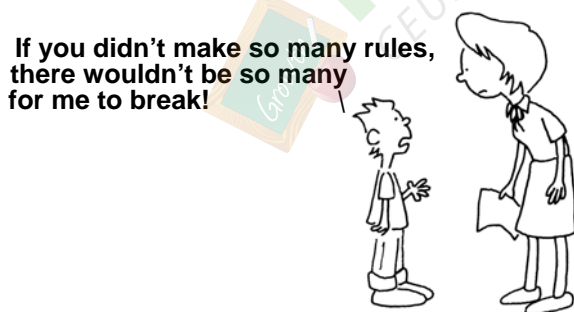
Analyses point to many school conditions that can have a negative impact on a student's motivation. Examples of such conditions include: excessive rules, criticism, and confrontation; processes that the student perceives as unchallenging, uninteresting, over-demanding, or overwhelming; structure that seriously limits options or that is over-controlling and coercive. Misbehavior at school often is reactive to such conditions. That is, individuals can be *expected* to react. This is particularly true for students with learning, behavior, and emotional problems.

So, a great deal of school misbehavior is motivated by students' efforts to cope, defend, avoid, and protest in reaction to aversive experiences (e.g., to protect themselves against situations in which they feel coerced to participate and/or cannot cope effectively). The actions may be direct or indirect and include defiance, physical and psychological withdrawal, and diversionary tactics.

Of course, misbehavior can also reflect *approach motivation*. Noncooperative, disruptive, and aggressive behavior patterns that are *proactive* can feel rewarding and satisfying to a youngster because the behavior itself is exciting or because the behavior leads to desired outcomes (e.g., peer recognition, feelings of competence or autonomy). Intentional negative behavior stemming from approach motivation can be viewed as *pursuit of deviance*.

In addressing students manifesting chronic misbehavior, intrinsic motivational theory suggests different approaches for reactive and proactive actions. In both instances, however, interventions to reduce reactive and proactive behavior problems generally begin with major changes in the school environment that minimize reactivity.

Special assistance for those misbehaving reactively require steps designed to reduce reactance and enhance positive motivation for participating in an intervention. For youngsters highly motivated to pursue deviance (e.g., those who proactively engage in criminal acts), even more is needed. Intervention might focus on helping these youngsters identify and follow through on a range of valued, socially appropriate alternatives to deviant activity. Such alternatives must be capable of producing greater feelings of self-determination, competence, and relatedness than usually result from the youngsters' deviant actions. To these ends, motivational analyses of the problem can point to corrective steps for implementation by teachers, student support staff, other professionals, parents, or students themselves.



A Cautionary Note about Special Assistance

Too many schools tend to redefine and constrict the curriculum for individuals identified as needing special assistance. For example, remedial programs often focus primarily on students' deficits. Always working on one's problems and trying to catch up can be grueling. It takes tremendous motivation to spend day in and day out mostly working on one's problems. Moreover, restricting opportunities can delay development in areas not included and risks making the whole school experience rather deadening.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 9

Transforming how schools provide special assistance to students and families is critical for improving student and learning supports and thus is an essential facet of enhancing equity of opportunity. From the school's perspective, the aim is to provide special assistance in ways that increase the likelihood that a student will be more successful at school, while also reducing the need for teachers to seek special programs and services.

Without a systematic approach to special assistance, referral processes become flooded, and the capability of providing effective help for many students with learning, behavior, and emotional problems is undermined. By developing a systematic approach to special assistance, schools can play a greater role in social and emotional development and embrace a holistic and family-centered orientation.

And in a real sense, special assistance as a facet of a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports is fundamental to enhancing classroom and school climate and developing a community school.



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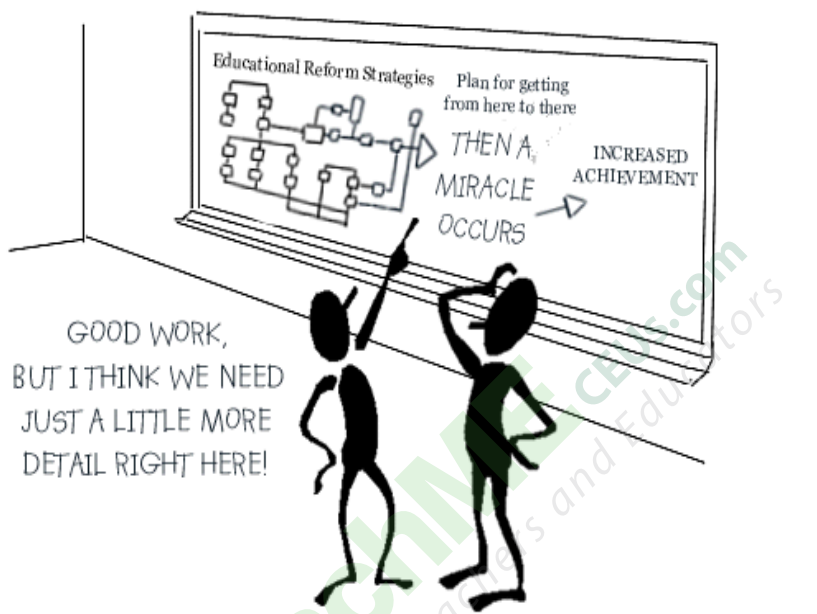
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Part III. Making it Happen

***Calls for transforming public education are easy;
making it happen isn't.***

Introduction: *Escaping Old Ideas and Moving Forward*



Some time ago, John Maynard Keynes cogently stressed: *The real difficulty in changing the course of any enterprise lies not in developing new ideas but in escaping old ones.* So in espousing the transformation of student and learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system, we are well aware that success requires leaving various established ideas behind. Six to escape are:

- the idea that student and learning supports are not essential
- the ideas that addressing barriers for the large number of students in need can be accomplished by relying **primarily** on direct services for individuals and an emphasis on wrap-around services
- the idea that improving student and learning supports **mainly** involves enhancing coordination of current interventions and co-locating community resources on a school campus
- the idea that adopting *a simple continuum* of interventions *is a sufficient framework* for transforming the nature and scope of school-based student/learning supports
- the idea that effective school improvement can be accomplished without ending the continuing marginalization in school improvement policy of efforts to develop a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports
- the idea that transformation of student and learning supports can be achieved without considerable attention to the challenges of promoting and facilitating systemic changes.

By now, we hope we have clarified what needs to replace the first five old ideas. In Part III, we turn to the challenges associated with organizational and systemic change.

As Seymour Sarason cautioned:

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.

Escaping old ideas is a beginning. However, accomplishing more than cosmetic changes requires understanding systemic change and how to deal with the inevitable problems that arise. In particular, *transforming* what goes on each day in schools in substantive and sustainable ways involves focusing on both the *direct implementation* of a set of new ideas and strategically *facilitating* the phasing in of systemic changes.

In Part III, we frame systemic and organizational change processes for transforming student and learning supports so that they better address barriers to learning and teaching. We highlight

- major transformation considerations
- ways to rethink operational mechanisms for daily implementation
- processes and lessons learned in facilitating systemic transformation

Finally, given that adaptations to fit local conditions are necessary, we stress that care must be taken so that adaptations don't undermine fundamental transformation. With this in mind, we conclude with a coda stressing five essential elements that should be the focus of any place that indicates it is developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.



Chapter 10

Major Phases and Key Facets of Transforming Student & Learning Supports

So how do we get there from here?

Michael Fullan stresses that effective systemic change requires leadership that “motivates people to take on the complexities and anxieties of difficult change.” We would add that such leadership also must develop a refined understanding of how to *facilitate* and *sustain* difficult systemic change. That is, successful systemic transformation of established institutions requires organized and effective facilitation, especially when change is to take place at multiple sites and at several levels.

ABOUT FACILITATING TRANSFORMATION: LOGICAL, BUT NOT, LINEAR

Accomplishing substantive and sustainable transformation requires planning both direct implementation and facilitation of systemic changes, but this infrequently happens. Most of the attention goes to strategic and action plans for *direct implementation*. The logic model for this is illustrated in the top half of Exhibit 10.1. What tends to get ignored is the necessity of *facilitating implementation*. Yet, as can be seen in the bottom half of Exhibit 10.1, the same logic applies.

In both instances, the logic models are helpful for strategic planning. At the same time, logical plans rarely play out in a linear manner in transforming schools, and plans vary in how well they anticipate common problems associated with making systemic changes.

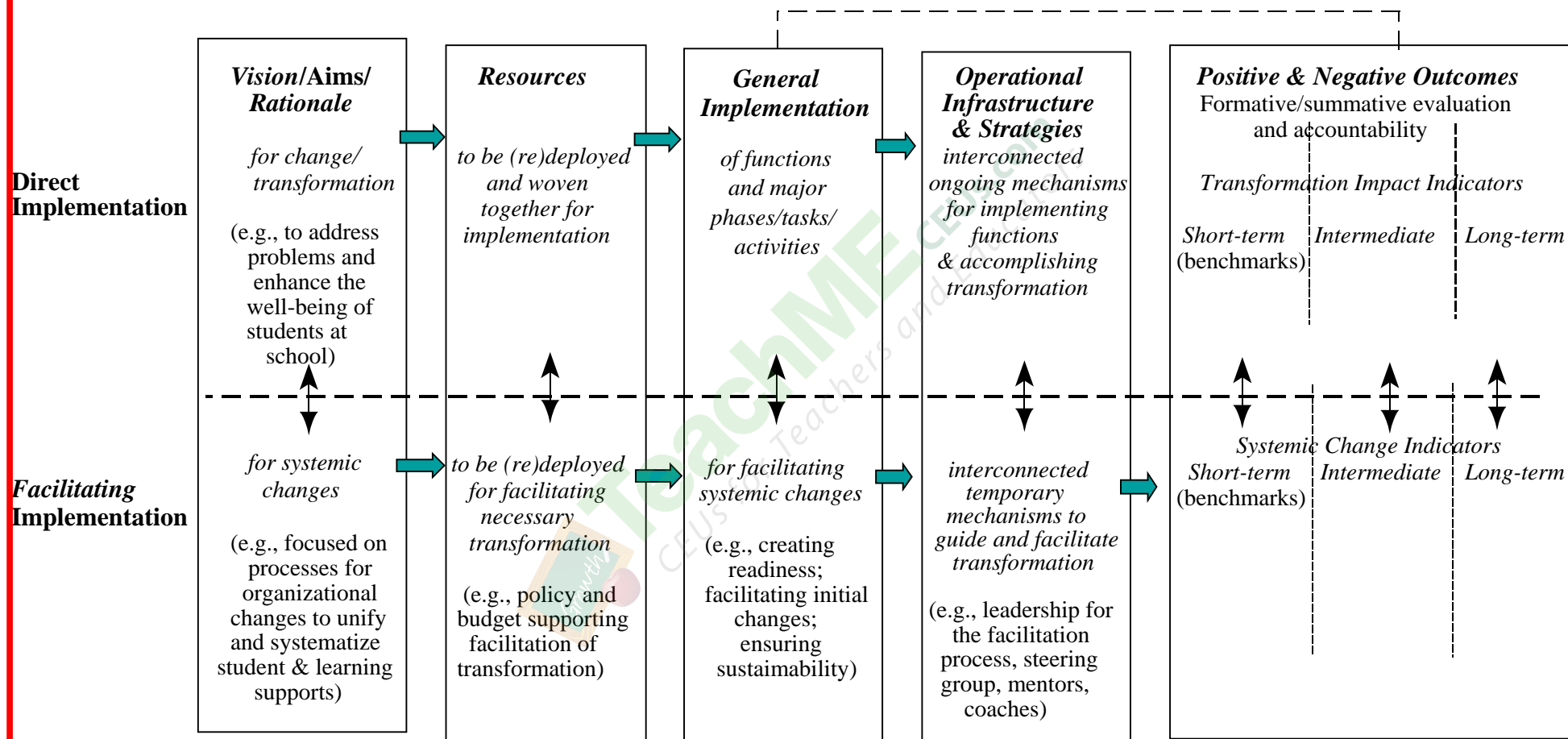
Among the most flagrant problems are failure to give sufficient strategic attention and time to

- underwriting and establishing an effective systemic change operational infrastructure
- creating readiness among a critical mass of key stakeholders in a setting where changes are to be introduced
- developing a design document to communicate and guide the work
- developing a multi-year strategic plan
- ensuring policy is instituted that makes the changes a high priority
- reworking an organization’s daily operational infrastructure to support development and sustainability of the changes

Chapter 12 discusses each of these problems in some detail.

Exhibit 10.1

Linking Logical Frameworks for Planning Direct Implementation and its Facilitation



WHAT ARE MAJOR PHASES AND KEY FACETS OF SYSTEMIC CHANGE?

In addition to the logic model, we frame major phases and key facets (see Exhibit 10.2). These guide strategic planning for implementing, sustaining, and going-to-scale.

Phases

Our formulation of four overlapping phases of systemic change is as follows:

- *creating readiness, commitment, and engagement* – increasing a climate/culture for change through enhancing the motivation and capability of a critical mass of stakeholders and generating memoranda of agreements, policy decisions, a design document, and strategic and action plans
- *initial implementation* – introducing and phasing in changes using a well-designed facilitative operational infrastructure to provide guidance and support
- *institutionalization* – ensuring that policy guidelines and a daily operational infrastructure for maintaining and enhancing productive changes are fully integrated into long-term strategic plans, guidance documents, and capacity building
- *ongoing renewal and evolution* – providing for continuous quality improvement and ongoing support in ways that enable stakeholders to become a community of learners who creatively pursue renewal

Each phase encompasses a range of tasks and steps related to facilitating implementation at every organizational level.

Key Facets

As indicated in Exhibit 10.2, transformation includes continuous social marketing based on articulation of a clear and shared vision for desired changes. It necessitates a major policy commitment and formal partnership agreements. Effectively carrying out essential functions (e.g., governance and priority setting, steering, operations, resource mapping and coordination) requires qualified leadership and an appropriately designed operational infrastructure for daily implementation and for facilitating systemic transformation. Chapters 11 and 12, respectively, address these matters and offer some lessons learned.

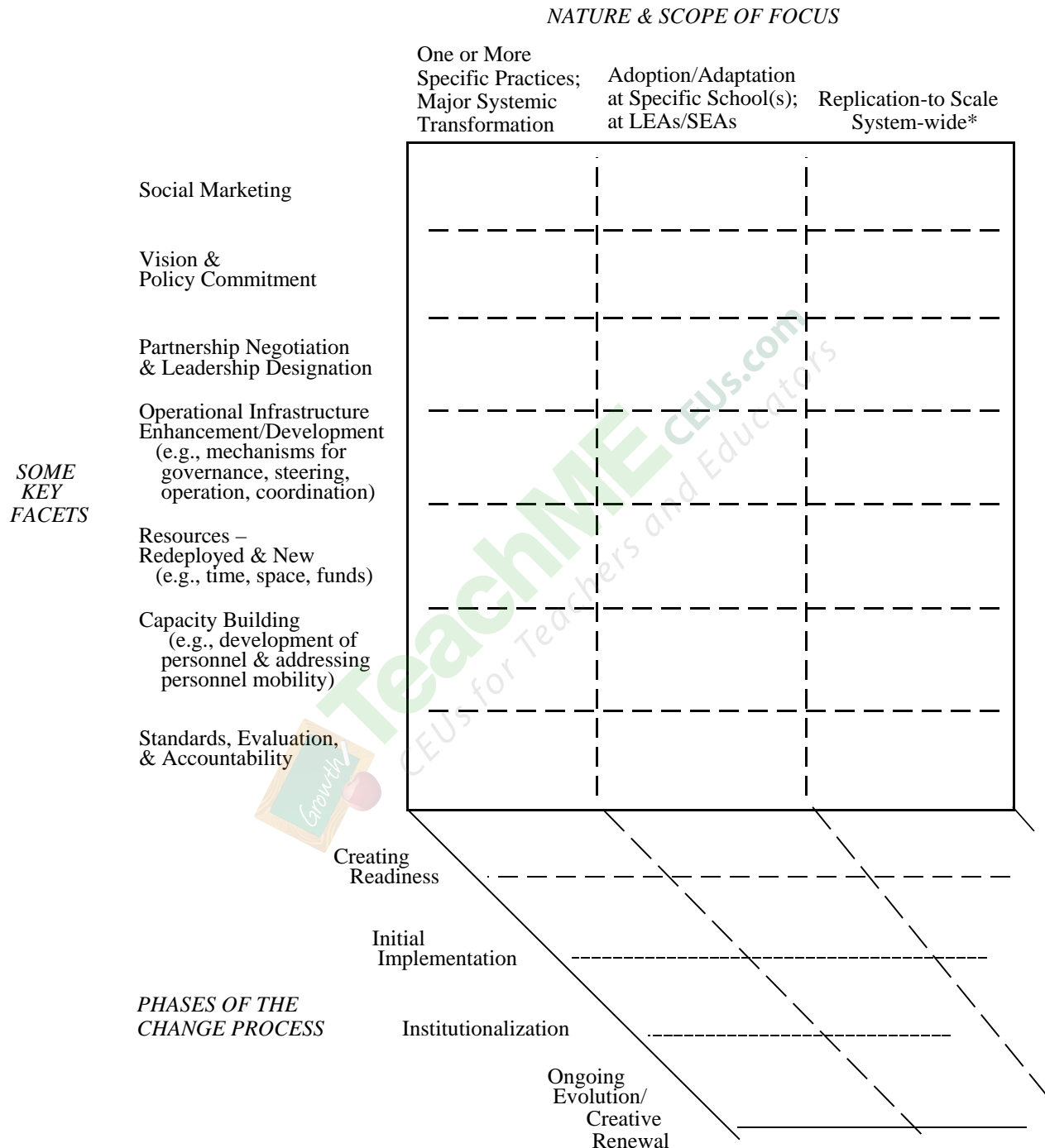
Effectiveness also requires redeploying and generating some new resources. Capacity building includes major attention to personnel development, including strategies for addressing the reality that personnel leave and newcomers appear with regularity. Finally, processes for quality improvement (e.g., formative evaluation), impact evaluation, and accountability call for establishing standards and related indicators.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The frameworks in this chapter are meant to deepen appreciation for what is involved in planning transformative changes. The complexity of transformation may make some readers uncomfortable. The temptation is to simplify. Doing so, is a mistake. When it comes to school improvement, simplification generally leads to dressing up old ideas in new language and losing the promise of substantive and sustainable change.

Exhibit 10.2

Considerations Related to Direct Implementation and Facilitating Systemic Changes



*Transforming student and learning supports in a district involves replicating major system changes on a large-scale.

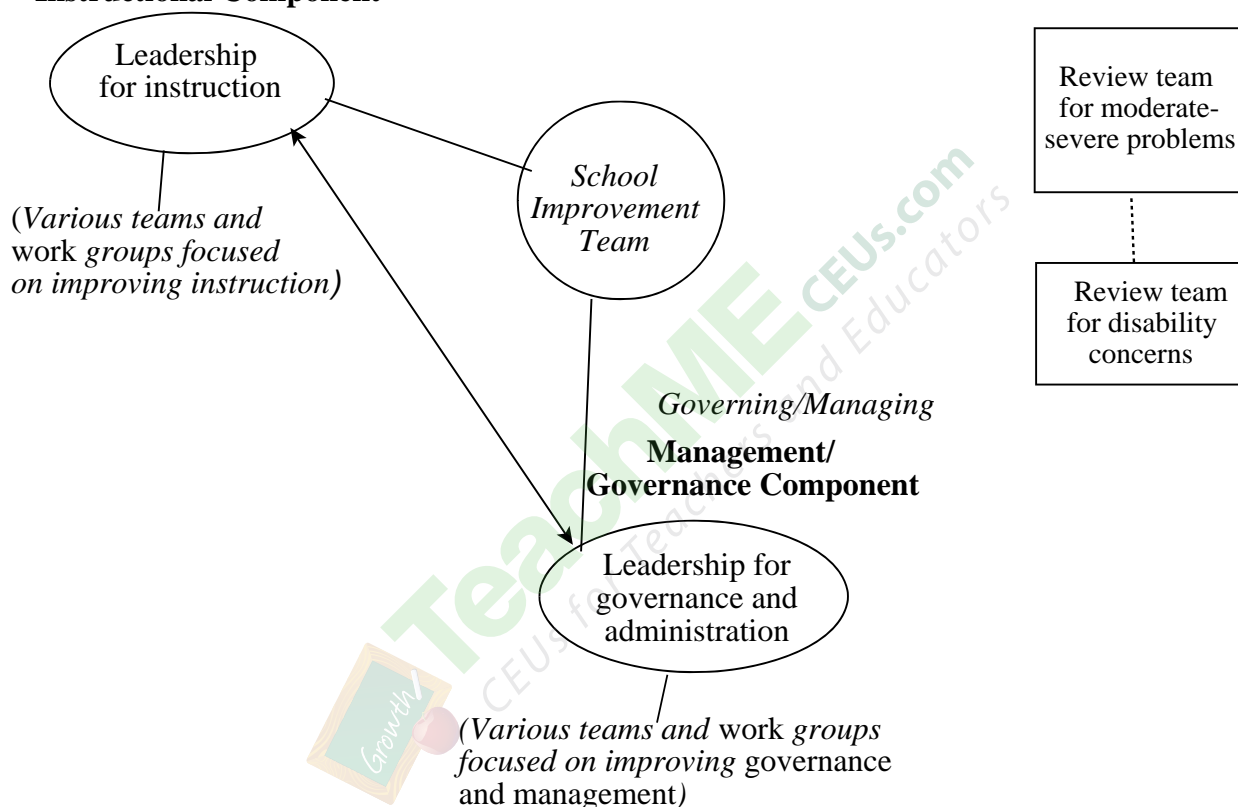
Chapter 11. A Reworked Operational Infrastructure for Daily Implementation

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

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:

Facilitating Learning/Develop.

Instructional Component



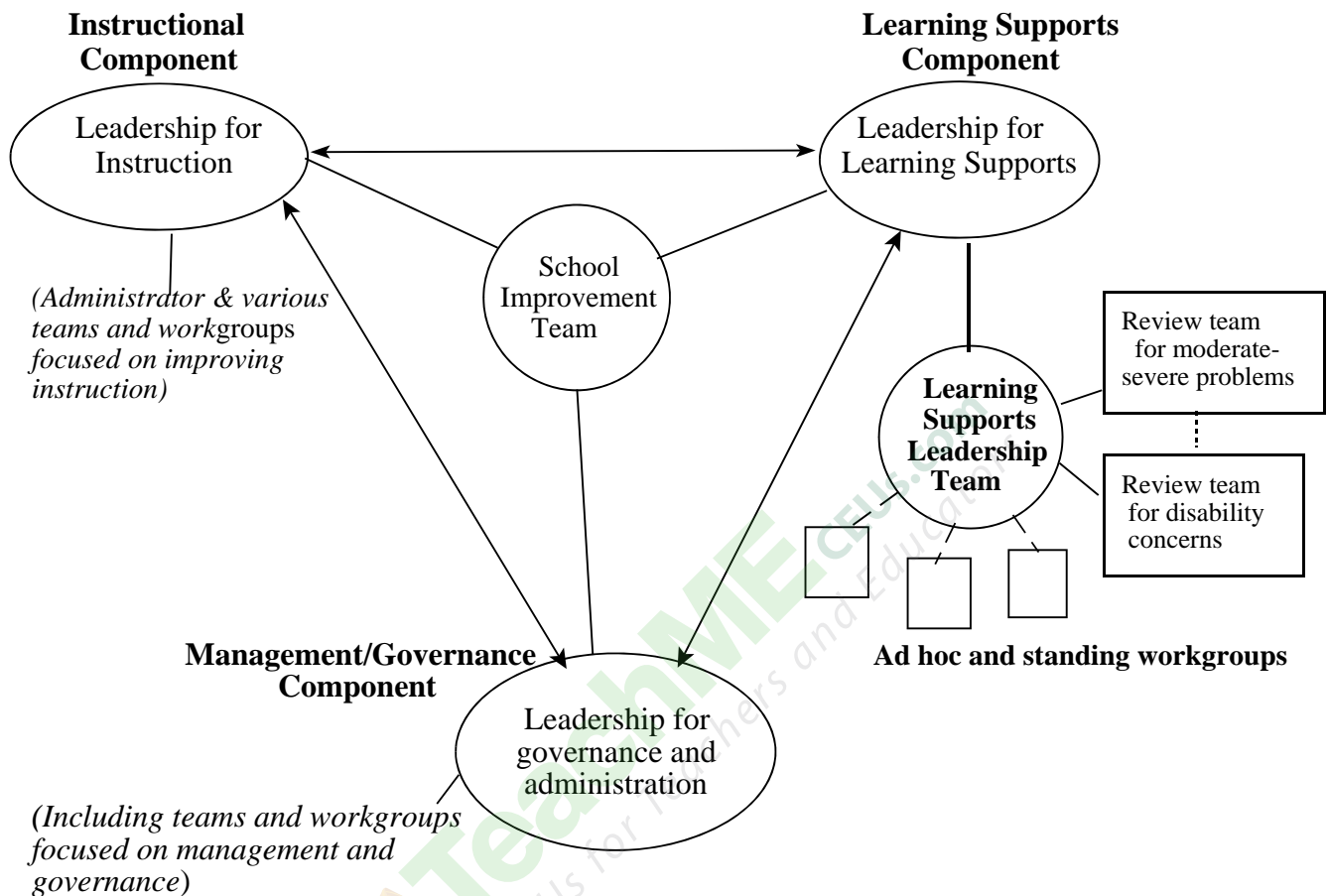
Note that there is no designated leadership for student and learning supports. Note also the situation related to the teams focused on individual students experiencing learning, behavior, and emotional problems. These teams mainly meet to review and make decisions about special assistance needs and referrals. 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 teams have little or no connection to discussions and decisions about school improvement needs.

RETHINKING THE SCHOOL'S OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Exhibit 11.1 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.

Exhibit 11.1
Prototype for an Integrated Operational Infrastructure at the School Level

(This operational infrastructure should be paralleled at the district level -- see Appendix D.)



Note: Each of the three primary and essential components for school improvement requires

1. administrative leadership and other advocates/champions with responsibility and accountability for ensuring the vision for the component is not lost,
2. a leadership team to work with the administrative lead on system development,
3. standing workgroups with designated ongoing functions and occasional ad hoc workgroups to accomplish specific short-term tasks.

To ensure coordination and integration, the leaders for the instructional and learning supports components are fully integrated members of the management/governance component, and if a special team is assigned to work on school improvement, the leaders for all three components are on that team.

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 integrating it with the other two.

At the school level, the administrative lead and the leadership team meet weekly to guide and monitor daily implementation and ongoing component development. The initial focus is on mapping and analyzing all resources and related budget allocations for student and learning supports. As highlighted earlier in this book, such resources include student support personnel (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses; compensatory and special education staff); specialized services; special initiatives; grants; programs for afterschool, wellness, dropout prevention, attendance, drug abuse prevention, violence prevention, pregnancy prevention; parent/family/health centers; volunteer assistance; community resources linked to schools, and more. Allocated funds come from the general budget, compensatory and special education, and special projects (including those supported by extramural sources).

Using the framework for a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports (review Exhibit 3.4), resource analyses identify critical gaps, redundancies, and which funds can be redeployed to develop the system. Then, priorities are set for moving forward in a cohesive and integrated way.

At the district level, the need is for administrative leadership and capacity building support that helps maximize component development at each school (see Appendix D). Note: it is crucial to establish the district's leadership for this work at a high enough level to ensure the administrator is always an active participant at key planning and decision-making tables (e.g., a cabinet level administrative leader, such as an associate superintendent).

How Can Small Schools Staff a Reworked Operational Infrastructure?

All schools are confronted with (1) improving instruction, (2) providing learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching, and (3) enhancing management and governance. The challenge in any school is to pursue all three functions in a cohesive, equitable, and effective manner. The added challenge in a small school is how to do it with so few personnel.

In small schools, the key is to modestly convert existing personnel roles and functions to establish the type of operational infrastructure illustrated in Exhibit 11.1. Usually, the principal and whoever else is part of a school leadership team will lead the way in improving instruction and management/governance. As constituted, however, such a team may not be prepared to advance development of the Learning Supports Component. Thus, someone already on the leadership team must assume this role and be provided training to carry it out effectively.

Alternatively, someone in the school who is involved with student supports (e.g. a pupil services professional, a Title I Coordinator, a special education resource specialist) can be invited to join the leadership team, assigned responsibility and accountability for ensuring the vision for the component is not lost, and provided Component leadership training. The leader, however chosen, will benefit from eliciting the help of other advocates/champions at the school and from the community.

HOW DOES A CASE-FOCUSED TEAM DIFFER FROM A SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP TEAM?

Every school that wants to improve student and learning supports needs a mechanism to enhance how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. As noted, most schools have teams that focus on individual student and related family problems (e.g., a student assistance team, an IEP team). These teams pursue functions such as referral, triage, and care

monitoring or management. They are not, however, empowered or positioned to focus on systemic improvements that could prevent problems and stem the tide of referrals. Exhibit 11.2 contrasts their case-by-case focus, with the functions required for system development leadership.

Exhibit 11.2 **Contrasting Team Functions**

A Case-oriented Team

Focuses on specific individuals and discrete services to address barriers to learning

Sometimes called:

Child Study Team
Student Study Team
Student Success Team
Student Assistance Team
Teacher Assistance Team
IEP Team

EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS:

- >triage
- >referral
- >case monitoring/management
- >case progress review
- >case reassessment

A System Development Leadership Team

Focuses on all students and the resources, programs, and systems to address barriers to learning & promote healthy development

Possibly called:

Learning Supports Leadership Team
Learning Supports Resource Team
Resource Coordinating Team
Resource Coordinating Council
School Support Team

EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS:

- >aggregating data across students and from teachers to analyze school needs
- >mapping resources at school & in the community
- >analyzing resources & formulating priorities for system development (in keeping with the most pressing needs at the school)
- >recommending how resources should be deployed and redeployed
- >coordinating and integrating school resources & connecting with community resources
- >planning and facilitating ways to strengthen and develop new programs and subsystems
- >developing strategies for enhancing resources
- >establishing workgroups as needed
- >social "marketing"

Two metaphors help differentiate the two types of teams and the importance of both sets of functions. A case-orientation fits what is usually referred to as the starfish metaphor.

The day after a great storm had washed up all sorts of sea life far up onto the beach, a youngster set out to throw back as many of the still-living starfish as he could. After watching him toss one after the other into the ocean, an old man approached him and said:

It's no use your doing that, there are too many, You're not going to make any difference.

The boy looked at him in surprise, then bent over, picked up another starfish, threw it in, and then replied: *It made a difference to that one!*

This metaphor, of course, reflects all the important clinical efforts undertaken by staff alone and when they meet together to work on specific cases.

The development leadership focus is captured by what can be called the bridge metaphor.

In a small town, one weekend a group of school staff went fishing together down at the river. Not long after they got there, a child came floating down the rapids calling for help. One of the group on the shore quickly dived in and pulled the child out. Minutes later another, then another, and then many more children were coming down the river. Soon every one in the group was diving in and dragging children to the shore, resuscitating them, and then jumping back.

But, there were too many. All of a sudden, in the midst of all this frenzy, one of the group stopped jumping in and was seen walking away. Her colleagues were amazed and irate. How could she leave when there were so many children to save? About an hour later, to everyone's relief, the flow of children stopped, and the group could finally catch their breath.

At that moment, their colleague came back. They turned on her and angrily shouted:

How could you walk off when we needed everyone here to save the children?

She replied:

It occurred to me that someone ought to go upstream and find out why so many kids were falling into the river. What I found is that the old wooden bridge had several planks missing, and when some children tried to jump over the gap, they couldn't make it and fell through into the river. So I got a team together, and we fixed the bridge.

Fixing and building better bridges is a good way to think about prevention, and it helps underscore the importance of taking time to improve and enhance resources, programs, and systems.

Who's on a Learning Supports Leadership Team?

Where feasible, a Learning Supports Leadership Team is formed as an inclusive group of informed, willing, and able stakeholders. This might include the following:

- administrative lead for the component
- school psychologist
- counselor
- school nurse
- school social worker
- behavioral specialist
- special education teacher
- representatives of community agencies involved regularly with the school
- student representation (when appropriate and feasible)
- others who have a particular interest and ability to help with the functions

Schools with few student and learning support staff will begin with only a few people.

Because schools have case-oriented teams that team may be able to expand its focus to cover the functions of a system development leadership team. This can work if the team is trained and facilitated to split its time and agenda effectively.

Once a Learning Supports Leadership Team is operational at a school, the organizational focus can turn to connecting it with other local schools, the district, and the community.

WHY CONNECT LEARNING SUPPORTS ACROSS A COMPLEX OR “FAMILY” OF SCHOOLS?

Schools in the same neighborhood experience and often share similar problems. Feeder schools commonly enroll students from the same family, and their children may all be experiencing problems. Some schools share student and learning support personnel. We think of those with such natural affiliations as a potential family of schools.

As illustrated in Exhibit 11.3, the connecting mechanism is a multi-site body, or what in the prototype is designated as a Learning Supports Leadership *Council*. It brings together one-two representatives from each participating school's Learning Supports Leadership Team. The objectives are to

- enhance communication among schools
- coordinate and integrate programs serving multiple schools
- identify and meet common needs with respect to guidelines and staff development
- create linkages and collaboration among schools and with community agencies (Multi-school councils are especially attractive to community agencies lacking the time or personnel to link with individual schools.)
- ensure cohesive and equitable deployment of student and learning support resources
- weave together human and financial resources from public and private sectors and encourage the pooling of resources to minimize redundancy, reduce costs, and achieve economies of scale

A multi-site council is particularly useful for integrating the efforts of high schools and their feeder middle and elementary schools. Think about supports for transitions. Think about shared crises. And think about working with families who have youngsters attending more than one level of schooling in the same cluster. (When such a family has several children in need of special attention, it is neither cost-effective nor good intervention for each school to contact a family separately.)

Natural starting points for councils include sharing each other's needs assessment, resource mapping, analyses, and recommendations about priorities for system improvement. Specific attention is paid to how each school can work together on common problems such as truancy, bullying, and community violence.

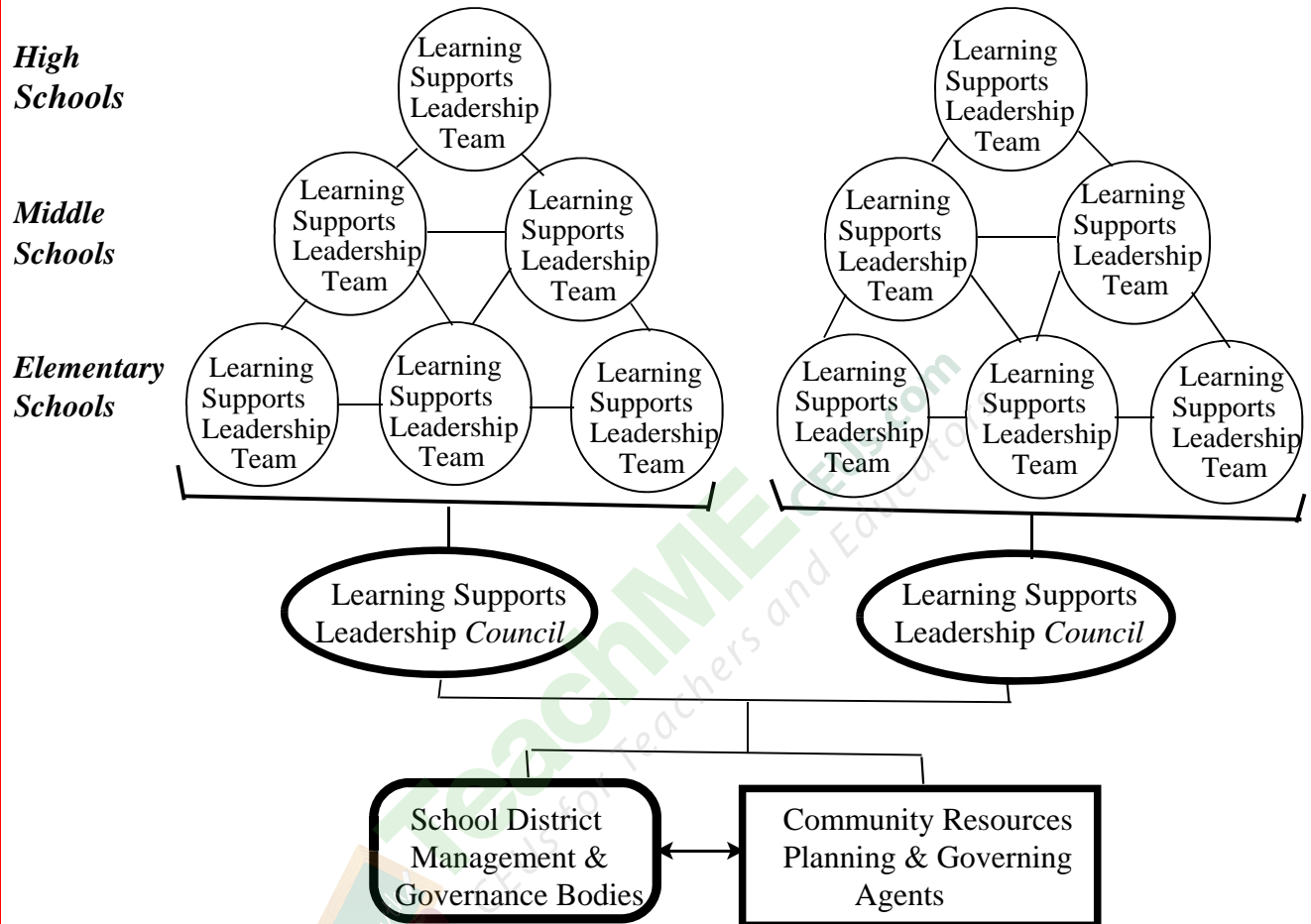
CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 11

Transformation of student and learning supports clearly requires reworking the existing operational infrastructure at school and district levels. A learning supports component must have an administrative leader. The leader needs the support of a system development leadership team and workgroups. Together they ensure the component is (1) fully developed and integrated as a primary and essential facet of school improvement, (2) working with a family of schools, and (3) outreaching to the community to fill critical system gaps.

As we have stressed, transformation of student and learning supports also requires a temporary set of operational mechanisms to *facilitate* the systemic changes. We turn these concerns now.

Exhibit 11.3

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



Chapter 12. Processes and Lessons Learned in Facilitating Systemic Transformation

Substantive change begins with a design, a well-developed multi-year strategic plan, and resources to facilitate making it a sustainable reality

As discussed in Chapter 10, flagrant deficiencies associated with making systemic changes include failure to give sufficient strategic attention and time to

- underwriting and establishing an effective systemic change operational infrastructure
- creating readiness among a critical mass of key stakeholders in a setting where changes are to be introduced
- developing a design document to communicate and guide the work
- developing a multi-year strategic plan
- ensuring policy is instituted that makes the changes a high priority
- reworking an organization's daily operational infrastructure to support development and sustainability of the changes.

In what follows, we explore facets of each of these matters and share some lessons learned. The intent is to offer insights from research and practice as aids to those formulating strategic plans for facilitating implementation.

OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ACCOMPLISHING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

In addition to the daily operational infrastructure, effective transformation requires a *facilitative* operational infrastructure. Exhibit 12.1 offers an example that can be customized (e.g., at district, school, state, regional education agency levels). This is a temporary infrastructure – put in place until the transformation is accomplished.

Dedicated, well-prepared and coordinated leadership is key to the success of systemic changes in a complex organization. Everyone must be aware of who is leading the way. And leaders must be sitting at key decision making tables when budgetary and other fundamental decisions are discussed. This is critical because the facilitative infrastructure requires appropriate resource allocation (e.g., staffing, budget, systemic change training, guidance materials, technical assistance).

With respect to staffing, it is essential to avoid just adding the work as another assignment to those who already are overly committed. Job descriptions must be modified to reflect new responsibilities and accountabilities. Professional development related to carrying out the essential functions as part of a team also requires special attention.

Teamwork is essential!

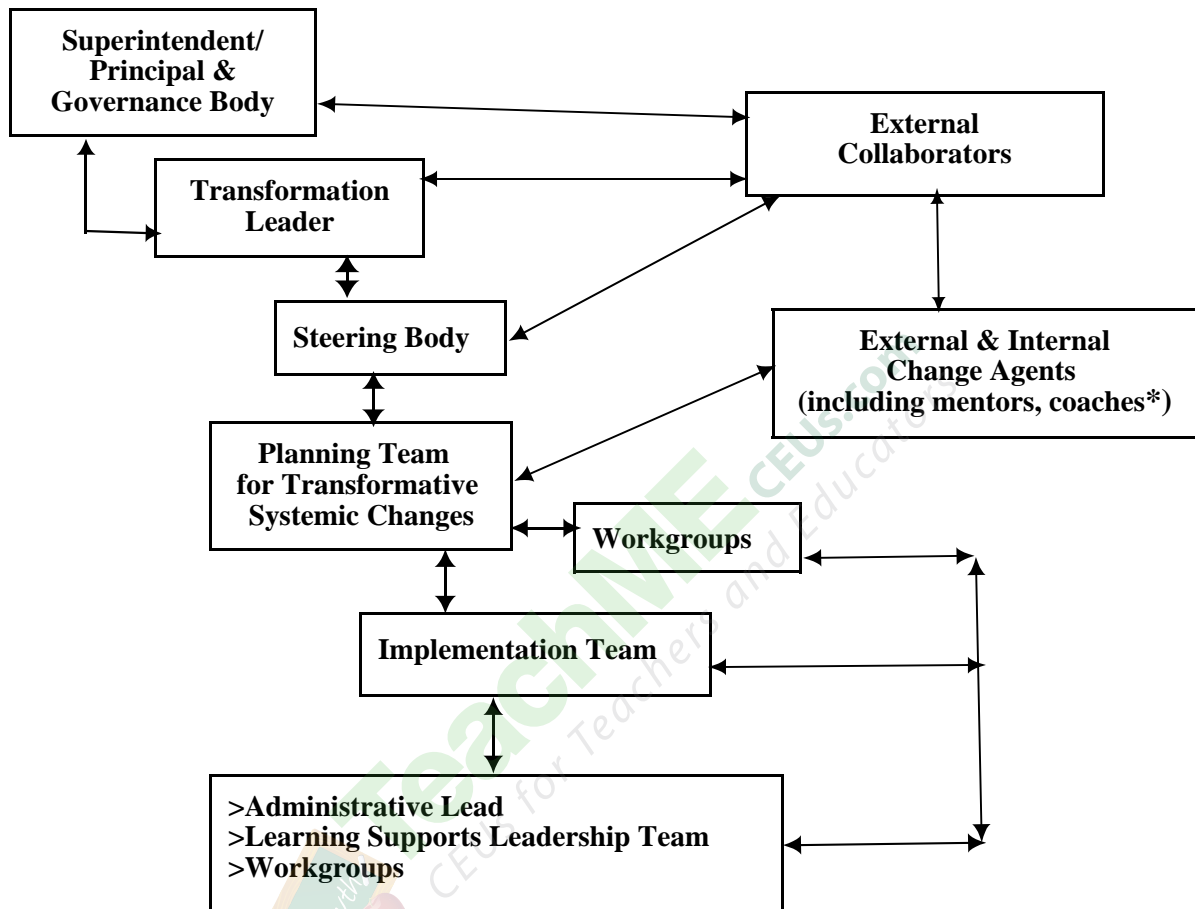


Sure it is; it lets you blame someone else.



Exhibit 12.1

Prototype for a Temporary Operational Infrastructure to Facilitate Transformation



*Mentors/coaches are used to guide establishment of the systemic change infrastructure, with a focus on

- preparing a broad enough range of key leaders and staff (e.g., leaders directly involved with student and learning supports and others, such as leaders for instruction, school improvement, data/evaluation; a given staff member may be part of several workgroups/teams)
- ensuring general understanding of each mechanism's functions and interrelationship (see Appendix E for examples)
- providing capacity building that ensures members understand the essence of what needs to be accomplished and are committed to making it happen
- assisting in development of clear action plans.

Some Lessons Learned

Operational infrastructure for change. We find that the need for a transformation leader and implementation team is readily comprehended; however, the importance of establishing temporary mechanisms to facilitate systemic changes is less appreciated. In observing efforts to transform schools, we rarely find an infrastructure for *facilitating* implementation. More characteristically, ad hoc mechanisms (e.g., a coach, an implementation team) have been set in motion with personnel who often have too little training for the job and without adequate processes for formative evaluation. And, it is common to find individuals and teams operating without clear understanding of functions and major tasks. The importance of reworking daily operational infrastructures and building an effective set of mechanisms to facilitate systemic changes cannot be overstated.

Champions/advocates. A well-chosen steering group can champion, guide, and remove barriers to moving the work forward. To do all this, the group needs a core of high level decision makers. In addition, we find it invaluable to cultivate an additional cadre of influential advocates who are highly motivated not just to help get things underway, but to ensure sustainability.

Administrative leadership. There is a tendency to just tack responsibility for the work onto already overworked administrators. When this happens, we find that leaders start strong but given the many challenges of their jobs and the complexities of systemic transformation, they become distracted and/or overwhelmed. Leadership for fundamental and major transformation is a job unto itself.

Outreach to resistant parties. It is common to find staff who are resistant to change. Some view the work as a distraction from and/or a competition with their current job descriptions. Others are afraid of losing their turf. To counter this, we make continuous efforts to reach out and include such folks in workgroups so that they become invested in the changes.

Revisiting agreements. As understanding of what is involved deepens, we have learned to review and revise initial agreements and procedures as necessary.

Protecting those making change. Because they are called upon to do many things that may be unpopular with some stakeholders, it is essential to put appropriate protections in place for those on the front line of change.

Continuous monitoring is required to watch for and strategically address all this

How many change agents does it take to change a light bulb?

**Only one,
but the bulb has to want to change!**



CREATING READINESS, COMMITMENT, AND ENGAGEMENT

New initiatives often spend too little time creating readiness for change. Stakeholders must perceive proposed changes in ways that make them feel they are valued contributors to a collective identity, destiny, and vision. From the perspective of intrinsic motivation theory, change must be facilitated in ways that enhance participants' feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness with and commitment to each other.

Specific planning for creating readiness, commitment, and engagement is critical. With this in mind, we have extracted the following from the literature as highly relevant conditions to focus on in planning ways to enhance readiness for system change:

- a high level of policy commitment that is translated into appropriate resources, including space, budget, time, dedicated, respected, and accountable leadership and champions, and social marketing;
- open and effective communication about goals and procedures, including processes for countering uninformed gossip;
- incentives for change, such as intrinsically valued outcomes, expectations for success, recognition, and rewards and protections for when problems arise;
- procedural options from which those expected to implement change can select the ones they see as most workable;
- systemic change mechanisms that are perceived as likely to improve organizational health, enhance a sense of community, and empower stakeholders;*
- change agents who are perceived as pragmatic – maintaining ideals while embracing practical solutions;
- formal and flexible plans for accomplishing change in stages and with realistic timelines;
- development of formal agreements (with provision for revisions);
- procedures for engaging stakeholders who enter the system after the efforts are underway.

*Empowerment is a multi-faceted concept. Theoreticians distinguish “power over” from “power to” and “power from.” *Power over* involves explicit or implicit dominance over others and events; *power to* is seen as increased opportunities to act; *power from* implies ability to resist the power of others.

Some Lessons Learned

In our experience, the complexity of communication means it is almost always the case that initial introductory presentations are only partially understood. This interferes with creating *informed* readiness. Planning for creating readiness, commitment, and engagement must account for a variety of strategies to deepen understanding and counter misinterpretations of intended changes. It is essential to do this early to minimize the problems that will arise from uninformed “grape vine” gossip. Of particular importance is ensuring understanding and commitment to the essential elements that must be implemented and sustained if substantive, rather than cosmetic, change is to emerge (see Coda). Furthermore, given the inevitability of staff changes, a plan for bringing newcomers up to speed is vital.

DESIGN DOCUMENT

Development of a design document is key to communicating and guiding the work at state and local levels. See the state department examples developed in Alabama, Louisiana, and Iowa (online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing.htm>). For an example of work at the district level, see the overview document from Gainesville (GA) City School District (online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/wheresithappening/gainesvillebroch.pdf>), as well as the related case study (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/casestudy.pdf>).

A design document articulates:

- ***the imperative*** for the proposed transformative changes (see Part I)
- ***policy changes*** that ensure the intended transformation is not marginalized (e.g., that policy explicitly supports, at a high priority level, the development and sustainability of the impending changes – see Chapter 2)
- an ***intervention framework*** (e.g., that illustrates the nature and scope of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports – see Chapter 3)
- a framework for an ***organizational and operational infrastructure*** (e.g., that illustrates how existing mechanisms need to be reworked to support, develop, and sustain the transformation – see Chapter 11)
- how the systemic changes will be facilitated (see Exhibit 12-1)

As can be seen in the online examples of designs, it is common for organizations to adopt/adapt prototypes to account for situational opportunities, strengths, and limitations.

Some Lessons Learned

Mentors/coaches and working relationships. Mentors and coaches have played instrumental roles in planning and guiding design document preparation. Such professional can be invaluable resources.

At the same time, we have found that not all mentors and coaches understand the complexity of their role. (See Appendix F for examples of major tasks for coaches/mentors; special references to coaching are provided at the end of this chapter.)

For instance, mentors/coaches often state: *It's all about relationship building.* However, many fail to understand the difference between just building a few good personal relationships and the importance of helping develop an extensive and long-lasting network of productive *working relationships*.

Fundamental and sustained system changes require effective *working* relationships among a critical mass of stakeholders. Such relationships emerge from establishing a set of steering, planning, and implementation mechanisms and weaving them into an effective operational infrastructure for systemic change. From this perspective, mentors and coaches and the relationships they establish are only one element in such an infrastructure.

It is worth remembering that some key stakeholders will not be interested in developing *personal* relationships with a coach or others involved in the transformation; this doesn't mean that such individuals won't play an effective role in working for change.

MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Once the design is documented, the next step is to develop a multi-year strategic plan. A multi-year plan is essential because implementing and scaling-up a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports requires *phased-in* change over several years. Such a plan and related yearly action planning are key to effective implementation, sustainability, and replication to scale of any major transformation.

In brief, strategic planning is a systematic process that translates a desired future into (a) a broad set of goals or objectives and (b) a sequence of strategic activity to accomplish the major phases and tasks involved in achieving the transformation design. The plan spells out an answer to: *How do we get there from here?*

In general, sites need to develop a multi-year strategic plan that

- (1) provides an *overview* of how the intended transformation will be pursued,
- (2) conveys a *detailed plan for initial direct implementation and its facilitation* (with an emphasis on strategies that anticipate sustainability, renewal, summative evaluation and accountability),
- (3) delineates strategic approaches to each key facet of facilitating implementation, such as establishing a temporary operational change infrastructure, capacity building, and formative evaluation.

The multi-year plan stresses objectives, steps, and tasks for each phase of systemic change and general strategies for accomplishing them. The plan accounts for implementing the design in a given setting and facilitating replication and scale-up.

In formulating plans, keep in mind that schools and classrooms are the central focus. The simple truth is that: *If planned changes do not end up playing out effectively at schools and in classrooms, they mean little.*

Some Lessons Learned

Good strategic and action planning accounts for situational opportunities, strengths, and limitations. Such plans also address matters meant to block change – often raised by those who are reluctant or resistant to making the transformation.*

Regular reviews of plans and monitoring how they are carried out also is essential. And as noted, initial agreements and procedures often must be revised as the work proceeds and understanding deepens.

*Most fundamentally, we hear it argued that there is no money for the work. Effective responses to such challenges are essential to ensuring that the work is not undermined. Our response with respect to the financial argument is that, for many LEAs and schools, it is estimated that about 25% of the budget is expended on addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Strategic planning focuses on redeploying such resources to develop a more cost-effective system.

ENSURING POLICY FACILITATES TRANSFORMATION

Accountability and standards for guiding practice are two fundamental policy drivers. Therefore, ending the policy marginalization of a learning supports component requires (1) an expanded accountability framework that includes leading indicators of direct outcomes (review Appendix A) and (2) standards for a learning supports component (review Appendix B).

Finally, with scale-up and sustainability in mind, policy makers must ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for establishing and building the capacity of the temporary operational infrastructure for accomplishing systemic change.

Some Lessons Learned

Demonstrations, pilots, and projects. Transformation of student and learning supports requires policy for effective replication and sustainability that addresses the scale of need. A frequent problem is decisions to only implement demonstrations and pilots (e.g., at one or two sites) rather than establishing a policy for phasing in changes at all schools over several years. Demonstrations in a district rarely are scaled-up.

A related problem is escaping “project mentality” (sometimes referred to as “projectitis”). We find a common tendency is for those involved in the transformation process to think about their work only as a temporary project (e.g., “It will end when this superintendent/principal leaves.” “It will end when the special funding runs out.”). This mind set often leads to a general view that the work doesn’t warrant serious engagement. The history of schools is strewn with valuable innovations that were not sustained.

Of course, frequent leadership changes (e.g., superintendents, principals, other key stakeholders) do tend to reverse changes that are underway. Countering this requires institutionalizing transformation policies and procedures as early as feasible. It also calls for planning strategies to effectively engage new decision makers and shapers.

REWORKING DAILY OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

To ensure continuing development, sustainability, and creative renewal of a learning supports component, the functions of a temporary infrastructure for facilitating systemic changes eventually are subsumed by the daily operational infrastructure. As discussed in the preceding chapter, a reworking of the daily operational infrastructure is done at school and district levels, with school needs supported by the district (review Exhibit 11.1 and Appendix D). In addition, remember that enhancing outcomes, generating efficiencies, and achieving economies of scale requires establishing mechanisms to connect a family or complex (e.g., feeder pattern) of schools and building collaborations with community resources (review Exhibit 11.3).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR PART III

Transforming education requires processes that facilitate substantive and sustainable systemic change. Such processes include articulating the design for innovative new directions and a multi-year strategic plan for phasing in the changes.

Supporting the work requires a temporary district/school operational infrastructure for facilitating implementation of the strategic plan. It also involves a reworking of the ongoing daily operational infrastructures at school and district levels and for connecting schools with each other and the community.

In underwriting transformation, the emphasis is first on weaving together what education agencies already allocate (e.g., pupil services, special and compensatory education and other categorical programs). Over time, increasing efforts are made to link school resources with those from home and community (e.g., formally connecting school programs with assets at home, neighborhood enrichment, recreation, and service agencies, businesses, service clubs, faith-based organizations).

Finally, well-designed and carried out leadership coaching and mentoring at every level is invaluable in making transformation a reality.

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Coda. Five Essential Elements of a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports

*What the best and wisest parent wants for his [or her] own child,
that must the community want for all of its children.
Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely;
acted upon, it destroys our democracy.*

John Dewey (in *The School and Society*, 1907)

Given the many barriers to learning and teaching, the time is overdue for schools to move from a fragmented and marginalized set of student and learning supports to a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system. *But as easy as this is to say, it is more than hard to do!*

Transforming student and learning supports is a complex, multi-year process that requires a high degree of commitment and relentlessness of effort. Facilitating transformation is not straightforward, sequential, or linear. Rather, the work proceeds and changes emerge in overlapping and spiraling ways; time frames for building capacity to accomplish the changes often are unrealistic; prototypes must be adapted to localities; change agents must be opportunistic. Success can be ephemeral. The effort can be frustrating and tiring, and those leading the way sometimes become professionally vulnerable.

Clearly, transforming schools is a job for brave and hardy souls.

At the core of all efforts to facilitate transformation is the constant concern that changes will be superficial. While adaptations are inevitable, care must be taken not to minimize or eliminate elements that are essential to the fundamental transformation of how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. A constant problem we encounter in this respect is the tendency for some places to adopt the terminology and not the substance of the intended transformation.

So, we end by underscoring five elements that are essential in developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.

(1) Policy: Moving to a three component policy for schools

To enable all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school and beyond, schools need to *directly* address barriers to learning and teaching. This requires elevating policy that establishes student and learning supports as a third primary and essential component for school improvement. As indicated in Exhibit 2.1, the third component might be called a learning supports component or a component to address barriers to learning and teaching or something comparable.

Moreover, the policy must be translated into a design document and strategic plan that ensures learning supports are unified and then developed into a comprehensive system of supportive interventions in classrooms and school-wide. Key here is fully integrating the design and strategic plans for the third component into existing school improvement plans.

Obviously, it is desirable that the three component policy be adopted at state and district levels; however, any school can espouse such a policy and begin moving forward.

(2) A transformative intervention framework that encompasses a continuum and content

This element refers to the prototype presented in Exhibit 3.4. As discussed in Chapter 3, a unified and comprehensive intervention framework combines both (a) an integrated and systemic continuum of school and community intervention (delineated as subsystem levels)* and (b) a multifaceted and cohesive focus on content organized into six content arenas.

*The continuum is designed to (a) promote positive development and prevent problems, (b) intervene as early after the onset of problems as is feasible, and (c) provide special assistance for severe and chronic problems. This continuum must not be presented as identical to the tiers or pyramid currently emphasized in relation to Response to Intervention (RtI) and behavioral initiatives.

(3) A daily operational infrastructure dedicated to the third component

To ensure effective daily functioning and continuous development and improvement in keeping with the design and strategic plan, there must be

- an administrative leader (e.g., associate superintendent, assistant principal)
- a system development learning supports leadership team
- workgroups to carry out specific tasks.

(Review prototype presented in Exhibit 11.1.)

The job description for the leader of the Learning Supports Component must be revised to reflect the new responsibilities and accountabilities. The role must ensure this leader is at administrative planning and decision making tables so that the Component's development is a regular part of the agenda.

Working with the administrative leader, a learning supports leadership team clarifies how resources currently are used, analyzes gaps, identifies priorities, recommends resource redeployment, and establishes and guides workgroups for developing each facet of the component over a period of several years.

(4) Continuous capacity building for direct implementation and facilitating transformation

General capacity building plans and their implementation must include a specific focus on enhancing development of the Learning Supports Component. This includes in-depth professional development for learning supports staff and related professional development for teachers, administrators, other staff and volunteers, and community stakeholders.

(5) Monitoring for improvement and accountability

Essential to the ongoing development of a learning supports component are (a) continuous monitoring of all factors that facilitate and hinder progress and (b) ensuring appropriate actions are taken. (See Appendix G for a set of benchmarks to use in monitoring and improving transformation.)

As significant progress is made in developing the system, the monitoring expands to evaluate the impact on student outcomes that directly reflect the contribution of learning supports, such as increased attendance, reduced misbehavior, fewer inappropriate referrals, as well as improved learning.

THE CHALLENGE NOW IS TO MOVE FORWARD

As Congress considers reauthorizing the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) and states adopt new curriculum standards, it is time and it is essential to include a unifying, comprehensive, and equitable focus on addressing barriers to learning and re-engaging disconnected students.

At state and regional levels, it is time and it is imperative for education agencies to reorganize student and learning supports into a cohesive unit and provide guidance and capacity building support for districts to build a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated system of learning supports.

At district and school levels, it is time and it is imperative to go beyond thinking mainly in terms of providing traditional services, linking with and collocating agency resources, and enhancing coordination. These all have a place, but they do not address how to unify and rethink ways to better meet the needs of the many, rather than just providing traditional services to a relatively few students.

It is time and it is imperative to fundamentally transform student and learning supports. Fortunately, work done in recent years provides places to observe, prototypes to adopt/adapt, and guidance for states, districts and schools.

As noted in the preface, this book is the keystone for the *2015 National Initiative to Transform Student and Learning Supports*. To further help districts and schools make the transformation, the Center is working on developing additional online, free resources – including professional development activities, powerpoints, implementation resources, and a revised System Change Toolkit. We also will continue providing technical assistance and coaching.*

*Currently, the Center at UCLA works with states and districts across the country to mentor and coach strategic efforts to plan, implement, and sustain the essence of the prototype frameworks presented in this book. This mentoring and coaching includes the opportunity for regular exchanges and technical assistance over the years. The Center also continuously updates online resource aids to support ongoing work. No fees are attached to the using the Center since most of its coaching and technical assistance can be done via email and phone conferencing and all its resources are available for free access online.

Appendix A

Expanding the Accountability Framework for Schools

Accountability is a policy tool that has extraordinary power to reshape schools

Current accountability pressures marginalize almost every effort not seen as directly and quickly producing higher achievement scores

School accountability is a policy tool with extraordinary power to reshape schools – for good and for bad. Systems are driven by accountability measures. This is particularly so under “reform” conditions.

As everyone involved in school reform knows, the only measures that currently really count are achievement test scores. These tests drive school accountability, and what such tests measure has become the be-all and end-all of what is attended to by many decision makers. This produces a growing disconnect between the realities of what it takes to improve academic performance and the direction in which many policy makers and school reformers are leading the public.

The disconnect is especially evident in schools serving what are often referred to as “low wealth” families. Such families and those who work in schools serving them have a clear appreciation of many barriers to learning and teaching that must be addressed so students can benefit from the teacher’s efforts to teach. These stakeholders stress that, in many schools, major academic improvements are unlikely until the impact of such barriers is reduced effectively.

At the same time, it is evident to anyone who looks that there is no direct accountability for how schools address factors interfering with student success at school. To the contrary, efforts essential for addressing barriers to development and learning often are devalued, further marginalized, and cut when achievement test scores do not reflect an immediate impact.

Thus, rather than building the type of system that can produce improved academic performance, prevailing accountability measures are pressuring schools to pursue a direct route to improving instruction. The implicit underlying assumption is that students are motivationally ready and able each day to benefit from the teacher’s instruction. The reality, of course, is that in too many schools the *majority* of youngsters do not fit this picture. Students confronted with a host of interfering factors usually are not in a position to benefit even from significant instructional improvements. The result is low test scores and an achievement gap.

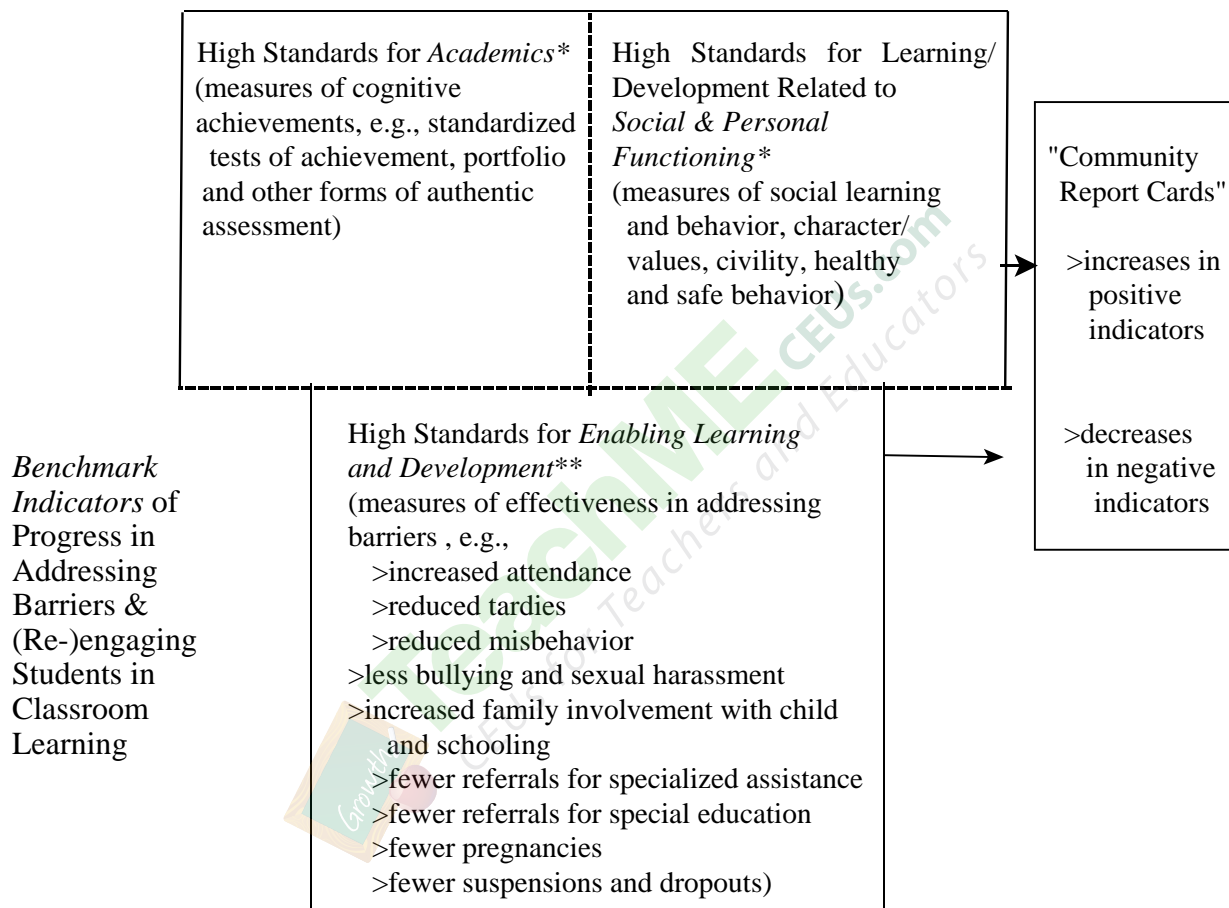
Logically, well designed, systematic efforts should be directed at addressing interfering factors. However, current accountability pressures override the logic and marginalize almost every effort not seen as directly and quickly leading to higher achievement scores. Ironically, this works against what must be done and against gathering evidence on how the impact of addressing barriers to learning directly.

All this leads to an appreciation of the need for an expanded framework for school accountability – a framework that includes direct measures of achievement and much more. We view this as a move toward what has been called *intelligent accountability*. The following Exhibit highlights such an expanded framework.

Exhibit

Expanding the Framework for School Accountability

*Indicators
of Positive
Learning and
Development*



*Results of interventions for directly facilitating development and learning.

**Results of interventions for addressing barriers to learning and development.

As illustrated, there is no intent to deflect from the laser-like focus on meeting high academic standards. Debate will continue about how best to measure academic outcomes, but clearly schools must demonstrate they effectively teach academics.

At the same time, policy must acknowledge that schools also are expected to pursue high standards in promoting positive social and personal functioning, including enhancing civility, teaching safe and healthy behavior, and some form of “character education.” Every school we visit has specific goals related to this facet of student development and learning. Yet, it is evident that there is no systematic evaluation or reporting of the work. As would be expected, then, schools direct few resources and too little attention to these unmeasured concerns. Yet, society wants schools to attend to these matters, and most professionals understand that personal and social functioning are integrally tied to academic performance. From this perspective, it seems self-defeating not to hold schools accountable for improving students’ social and personal functioning.

For schools where a large proportion of students are not doing well, it is also self-defeating not to attend to benchmark indicators of progress in addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Schools cannot teach children who are not in class. Therefore, increasing attendance always is an expectation (and an important budget consideration). Other basic indicators of school improvement and precursors of enhanced academic performance are reducing tardiness and problem behaviors, lessening suspension and dropout rates, and abating the large number of inappropriate referrals for special education. Given this, the progress of school staff related to such matters should be measured and treated as a significant aspect of school accountability.

It is self-defeating not to attend to benchmark indicators of progress related to addressing barriers to learning and teaching

School outcomes, of course, are influenced by the well-being of the families and the neighborhoods in which they operate. Therefore, performance of any school should be judged within the context of the current status of indicators of community well-being, such as economic, social, and health measures. If those indicators are not improving or are declining, it is patently unfair to ignore these contextual conditions in judging school performance.

In sum, it is unlikely that the majority of students in economically depressed areas will perform up to high standards if schools and communities do not pursue a holistic, systemic, and collaborative approach that focuses not just on students, but on strengthening their families, schools, and surrounding neighborhood.

Appendix B

Standards for a Learning Supports Component

School improvement discussions across the country are standards-based and accountability driven. Disconnects are inevitable when curriculum and teaching standards are developed separately. And this is a problem that needs correction.

Beyond this problem, however, is the failure of the current standards movement to deal with the reality that curriculum and teaching standards fall far short of providing a focus on how schools can enhance equity of opportunity for *all*. Such standards continue to give short shrift to factors that *interfere* with successful teaching and pay too little attention to the many students manifesting *moderate-to-severe learning, behavior, and emotional problems*. Establishing standards for student/learning supports is essential to rectifying these short-comings.

None of this argues against the necessity of improving standards for curriculum and instruction. The intent here is to highlight that the current standards movement does little to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. The policy need is for a third component that does so directly and systematically. Standards generated for such a component can then help drive and guide component development and personnel preparation.

Adopting standards for learning supports in no way diminishes the importance of curriculum and teaching standards. Every teacher must have the ability and resources to bring a sound curriculum to life and apply strategies that make learning meaningful and effective, and to these ends, appropriate curriculum and teaching standards are foundational. But, such standards are insufficient for enhancing equity of opportunity to succeed at school and beyond.

Standards for learning supports are long overdue. A start has been made with the standards various student support professional associations have formulated for their individual constituencies. Now it is time to establish a *unified* set of standards for student/learning supports.

The following Exhibit outlines such a set of standards. These standards reflect prototype frameworks for a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports and were developed as part of the national initiative for *New Directions for Student and Learning Supports* (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ndannouncement.htm>). The Exhibit is adapted from our Center's resource entitled: *Standards & Quality Indicators for an Enabling or Learning Supports Component* online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/qualityindicators.pdf>.

A cursory reading of the standards underscores how much is not being discussed in the current movement to improve education standards.

Standards for a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports

Area: *Framing and Delineating Intervention Functions*

Standard 1. Establishment of an overall unifying intervention framework for a comprehensive, systemic, and equitable component for addressing barriers to learning and teaching, including re-engaging disconnected students.

A *Learning Supports Component* is a systemic approach that is fully and equitably integrated into the school's strategic improvement plan as a primary and essential component overlapping the instructional and management components. The supports are operationalized into a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive intervention framework.¹ One facet of this framework is a continuum of integrated, overlapping subsystems that embrace both school and community resources (e.g., subsystems to promote positive development, prevent problems, respond early after problem onset, and treat severe-chronic problems). Note that this intervention continuum is not well operationalized simply as tiers or levels of school intervention. Rather, the standard is that each level is developed as a subsystem that weaves together school and community resources, and each subsystem covers a delineated set of "content" arenas.

A conceptualization that organizes a delineated set of content arenas for addressing barriers to learning and teaching is the other facet of the framework.¹ To illustrate standards for content arenas, the following uses the six arenas designated in the intervention framework prototype being used by pioneering states and districts.

Standard 1 addendum: Specific standards for the content arenas of a learning supports component

- While the number and labels for designated content arenas may differ, as Standard 1 indicates: Schools need a conceptualization that organizes a delineated set of content arenas for addressing barriers to learning and teaching. (As one of the quality performance indicators for Standard 1 indicates, rather than a fragmented, "laundry-list" of programs, services, and activities, the learning supports need to be organized into a concise content or "curriculum" framework that categorizes and captures the essence of the multifaceted ways schools need to address barriers to learning.)
- >**Standard 1a. Continuous enhancement of regular classroom strategies to enable learning** (e.g., improving instruction for students with mild-moderate learning and behavior problems and re-engaging those who have become disengaged from learning at school)
 - >**Standard 1b. Continuous enhancement of a programs and systems for a full range of transition supports** (e.g., assisting students and families as they negotiate school and grade changes, daily transitions, etc.)
 - >**Standard 1c. Continuous enhancement of programs and systems to increase and strengthen home and school connections**
 - >**Standard 1d. Continuous enhancement of programs and systems for responding to, and where feasible, preventing school and personal crises** (including creating a caring and safe learning environment)
 - >**Standard 1e. Continuous enhancement of programs and systems to increase and strengthen community involvement and support** (e.g., outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers)
 - >**Standard 1f. Continuous enhancement of programs and systems to facilitate student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed.**

(cont.)

Area: Reworking Operational Infrastructure

Standard 2. Establishment of an *integrated operational infrastructure* framework for a comprehensive, systemic, and equitable component for addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

Developing and institutionalizing a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports requires mechanisms that are integrated with each other and are fully integrated into school improvement efforts. The need at all levels is to rework infrastructure to support efforts to address barriers to learning in a cohesive manner and to integrate the work with efforts to promote healthy development and with instruction and with the management/governance mechanisms. This requires dedicated administrative leadership (with leaders involved in system governance, planning and implementation), a learning supports leadership team and work groups (focused on functions such as mapping, analysis, and priority setting for intervention development and resource allocation; integration, communication and information management; capacity building; quality improvement and accountability).

Area: Enhancing Resource Use

Standard 3. Appropriate resource use and allocation for developing, maintaining, and evolving the component.

Appropriate use of resources is based on up-to-date gap and outcome analyses and established priorities for improving the component. Resource allocation involves (re)deployment of available funds to achieve priorities. Cost-efficiencies are achieved through collaborations that, in common purpose, integrate systems and weave together learning support resources within the school, among families of schools, from centralized district assets, and from various community entities.

Area: Continuous Capacity Building

Standard 4. Capacity building for developing, maintaining, and evolving the component.

Capacity building involves enhancing ongoing system and stakeholder development and performance. The work requires allocation of resources to provide effective and efficient mechanisms and personnel to carry out a myriad of capacity building functions.

Area: Continuous Evaluation and Appropriate Accountability

Standard 5. Formative and summative evaluation and accountability are fully integrated into all planning and implementation.

Formative evaluation provides essential data related to progress in improving processes and achieving benchmarks and outcomes. In the initial phase of component development, formative evaluation focuses heavily on feedback and benchmarks related to specific developmental tasks, functioning of processes, and immediate outcomes. Formative evaluation is an ongoing process with an increasing focus on intermediate and then long-range outcomes. Summative data on intermediate outcomes are gathered as soon as the component is operating as an integrated system. Summative data on long-range outcomes are gathered after the component has operated as an integrated system for two years. Accountability indicators should fit the phase of component development. This means the primary focus is on developmental benchmarks in the early phases. When the accountability focus is on student impact, the primary emphasis is on the direct enabling outcomes for students that each arena of the component is designed to accomplish. As these accountability indicators show solid impact, they can be correlated with academic progress to estimate their contribution to academic achievement.

Appendix C

Self Study Surveys

Self-study surveys are useful aids in mapping and analyzing student and learning supports and making decisions about priorities for improving the system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

The first survey is designed to provide a quick 2 step general overview of student and learning supports activity, processes, and mechanisms.

This is followed by surveys of

- Classroom-based Learning Supports to Enable Learning and Teaching
- Supports for Transitions
- Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement in Schooling
- Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement
- Crises Assistance and Prevention
- Student and Family Special Assistance

About the Self-Study Process to Enhance the Learning Supports Component

This type of self-study is best done by a workgroup. However, such a self-study is *NOT* about having another meeting, getting through a task, or an accountability measure! The process is about moving on to better outcomes for students.

A group of school staff (teachers, support staff, administrators) can use the items to discuss how the school currently addresses any or all of the learning supports arenas. Workgroup members initially might work separately in responding to survey items, but the real payoff comes from group discussions.

The items on a survey help clarify

- what is currently being done and whether it is being done well and
- what else is desired.

This provides a basis for discussing analyses and decision making. (See the following page.)

The discussion and subsequent analyses also provide a form of quality review.

About Analyzing Gaps; Reviewing Resources; Planning Action

Discussions using the self-study surveys usually involve some analyses.

As you proceed, think about and discuss the following:

- (1) Which learning supports address barriers that your district/school has identified as the most significant factors interfering with students learning and teachers teaching?
- (2) Which of the significant factors are not being addressed at all or not well-enough? (These are critical gaps to fill.)
- (3) Given that all the critical gaps probably can't be filled immediately, discuss priorities.
- (4) Discuss whether any current activities are not effective and probably should be discontinued so that the resources can be redeployed to fill high priority gaps.
- (5) Identify who in the community might be worth outreaching to with a view to establishing a collaboration to help fill high priority gaps.
- (6) Are there other sources of funds available at this time to fill the gaps?
- (7) Decide what steps to take in acting upon the analysis.

Self-study Survey

General Overview of Student & Learning Supports Activity, Processes, and Mechanisms at a School

This two-step survey provides a starting point for clarifying

- *what student and learning supports staff are at the school and what they do*
- *how student and learning supports resources are used*
- *how student and learning supports are organized and coordinated*
- *what procedures are in place for enhancing the impact of student & learning supports*

- (1) The first form provides a template for quickly clarifying people and positions providing student and learning supports at a school, along with some of what they do. Once this form is completed it can be circulated as basic information for all school stakeholders and can be useful in the social marketing of learning supports. The people listed also are a logical group to bring together in establishing a system development leadership team for learning supports at the school.
- (2) Following this form is a self-study survey designed to review and help improve processes and mechanisms relevant to the Learning Supports Component.

Step 1. Quick Information about Learning Supports Staff at the School

In a sense, every school stakeholder is a resource for learning supports. Below are a few individuals who play designated roles.

Administrative Leader for Learning Supports

School Psychologist _____
times at the school _____

- Provides assessment and testing of students for special services. Counseling for students and parents. Support services for teachers. Prevention, crisis, conflict resolution, program modification for special learning and/or behavioral needs.

School Nurse _____
times at the school _____

- Provides immunizations, follow-up, communicable disease control, vision and hearing screening and follow-up, health assessments and referrals, health counseling and information for students and families.

Pupil Services & Attendance Counselor

times at the school _____

- Provides a liaison between school and home to maximize school attendance, transition counseling for returnees, enhancing attendance improvement activities.

Social Worker _____
times at the school _____

- Assists in identifying at-risk students and provides follow-up counseling for students and parents. Refers families for additional services if needed.

Counselors _____ times at the school _____

- General and special counseling/guidance services. Consultation with parents and school staff.

Dropout Prevention Program Coordination

times at the school _____

- Coordinates activity designed to promote dropout prevention.

Title I and Bilingual Coordinators

- Coordinates categorical programs, provides services to identified Title I students, implements Bilingual Master Plan (supervising the curriculum, testing, and so forth)

Resource and Special Education Teachers

- times at the school _____
- Provides information on program modifications for students in regular classrooms as well as providing services for special education.

Other important resources:

School-based Crisis Team (list by name/title)

_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____

School Improvement Program Planners

_____	/	_____
_____	/	_____

Community Resources

- Providing school-linked or school-based interventions and resources

Who	What they do	When
_____	/	/
_____	/	/
_____	/	/
_____	/	/
_____	/	/

Step 2. General Overview of Student & Learning Supports Activity, Processes, and Mechanisms at a School

Items 1-11 ask about what processes and mechanisms are in place.

Use the following ratings in responding to these items.

DK = don't know

1 = not yet

2 = planned

3 = just recently initiated

4 = has been functional for a while

5 = well institutionalized (well established with a commitment to sustainability)

1. Is someone at the school designated as the administrative leader for activity designed to address barriers to learning (e.g., student supports, learning supports, health and social services)? DK 1 2 3 4 5
2. Is someone at the school designated as the leader for facilitating implementation of the transformation of student & learning supports? DK 1 2 3 4 5
3. Is there a time and place when personnel involved in activity designed to address barriers to learning meet together? DK 1 2 3 4 5
4. Is there a system development team (as contrasted to a case-oriented team) (e.g., a Learning Supports Leadership Team)? DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - (a) Does the team analyze data trends at the school with respect to
 - >attendance DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >drop outs DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >misbehavior DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >referrals for special assistance DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >achievement DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - (b) Does the team map learning supports programs and services to determine whether
 - >identified priorities are being addressed adequately DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >program quality is up to standards DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >gaps have been identified and priorities for the future are set DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - (c) Which of the following learning supports arenas are reviewed regularly?
 - >Classroom-based Learning Supports DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >Supports for Transitions DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >Home Involvement, Engagement, & Re-engagement in Schooling DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >Crisis Assistance and Prevention DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >Student and Family Special Assistance DK 1 2 3 4 5

Step 2. (cont.)

5. Are there *written descriptions* of the student and learning supports programs and services available to give to
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| >staff | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| >families | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| >students | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| >community stakeholders | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
6. Are there case-oriented processes in place for
- | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) concerned parties to use in making referrals? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) triage (to decide how to respond when a referral is made)? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) care monitoring and management? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
7. Are there *written descriptions* available to give to staff and others about
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| >how to make referrals | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| >the triage process | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| >the process for case monitoring and management | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| >the process for student review | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
8. Is there
- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) a student review team? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) an IEP team? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) a crisis response team? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (d) a learning supports system development team? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
9. Are there systems in place to support staff wellness?
- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|----|---|---|---|---|---|
10. Are there processes by which staff and families learn
- | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) What is available in the way of student and learning supports at school? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) What is available in the way of student and learning supports (e.g., programs/services) in the community? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) How to access the student and learning supports they need? | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
11. Is someone at a school designated as a representative to meet with the other local schools (e.g., in the feeder pattern) to enhance connectivity and use of student and learning supports (e.g., sharing among the schools and equity in linking with community resources)?
- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| | DK | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|----|---|---|---|---|---|

Step 2. (cont.)

Items 12-16 ask about effectiveness of existing processes.

Use the following ratings in responding to these items.

- DK = don't know
- 1 = hardly ever effective
- 2 = effective about 25 % of the time
- 3 = effective about half the time
- 4 = effective about 75% of the time
- 5 = almost always effective

12. How effective are the processes used for

- (a) planning, implementing, and evaluating improvements in the development of student and learning supports? DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (b) enhancing use of student and learning supports resources (e.g., through budget decisions, staff development; developing or bringing new programs/services to the site; making formal linkages with programs/services in the community)? DK 1 2 3 4 5

13. How effective are the processes used for ensuring that

- (a) resources are properly allocated and coordinated? DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (b) community resources linked with the school are effectively coordinated/integrated with related school activities? DK 1 2 3 4 5

14. How effective are the processes used for ensuring that resources available to the whole feeder pattern of schools are properly allocated and shared/coordinated? DK 1 2 3 4 5

15. How effective is the

- (a) referral system? DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (b) triage system? DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (c) case monitoring and management system? DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (d) student review team? DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (e) IEP team? DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (f) crisis response team? DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (g) learning supports system development team DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (h) development of Classroom-based Learning Supports DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (i) development of Supports for Transitions DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (j) development of Home Involvement and Engagement DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (k) development of Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (l) development of Crisis Assistance and Prevention DK 1 2 3 4 5
- (m) development of Student and Family Special Assistance DK 1 2 3 4 5

16. With respect to community resources:

- (a) List those that bring programs/services to the school site.
- (b) List those not at the school site but which have made a special commitment to respond to the school's referrals and needs.

Classroom-based Learning Supports

This arena provides a fundamental example not only of how learning supports overlap regular instructional efforts, but how they add value to prevailing efforts to improve instruction. Classroom-based learning supports enhance strategies in regular classrooms to enable learning. Such supports can (a) prevent problems, (b) facilitate intervening as soon as problems are noted, (c) enhance intrinsic motivation for learning, and (d) re-engage students who have become disengaged from classroom learning. These ends are accomplished by accounting for a wider range of individual differences, preventing and handling a wider range of problems when they arise, and fostering a caring context for learning.

Of course, teachers can't be expected to do all this alone. Enhancing classroom learning supports involves opening the classroom door to invite in a range of colleagues* and volunteers to collaboratively work on addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

A first focus is on ensuring instruction is personalized. This includes an emphasis on enhancing intrinsic motivation for all students and especially those manifesting mild-moderate learning and behavior problems; re-engaging those who have become disengaged from learning at school; providing learning accommodations when necessary; using response to intervention; addressing external barriers with a focus on prevention and early intervening. Then, as necessary, adding special assistance in the classroom. Referrals for special assistance outside the classroom are made only after in-classroom learning supports are proven insufficient.

Work in this arena requires personalizing in-service professional development of teachers, student and learning support staff, and all others helping in the classroom. The focus is on increasing the effectiveness of regular classroom instruction and reducing the need for specialized services. Special attention is needed to increase the array of strategies for teaching students to compensate for differences, vulnerabilities, and disabilities and for enhancing accommodations and special assistance in the classroom as necessary. Additional knowledge and skills also are needed for developing a classroom infrastructure that transforms a big class into a set of smaller ones.

*As appropriate, support *in the classroom* is provided by student and learning support staff. This involves restructuring and redesigning the roles, functions, and staff development of these professionals so they are able to work closely with teachers and students in the classroom.

Classroom-based Learning Supports

Use the following ratings in responding to items 1-5.

DK = don't know; 1 = not yet; 2 = planned; 3 = just recently initiated; 4 = has been functional for a while; 5 = well institutionalized (well established with a commitment to maintenance)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Is there a stated policy for enhancing Classroom-based Learning Supports? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Is there a designated leader or leaders for enhancing Classroom-based Learning Supports? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Do personnel involved in enhancing Classroom-based Learning Supports meet regularly as a workgroup to evaluate current status and plan next steps? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Is there a written plan for capacity building related to enhancing Classroom-based Learning Supports? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Are there written descriptions available to give all stakeholders regarding current Classroom-based Learning Supports? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |

Use the following ratings in responding to the next items.

DK = don't know

1 = hardly ever effective

2 = effective about 25 % of the time

3 = effective about half the time

4 = effective about 75% of the time

5 = almost always effective

With respect to enhancing Classroom-based Learning Supports, how effective are each of the following:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| >current policy | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >designated leadership | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >workgroup monitoring and planning of next steps | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >capacity building efforts | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |

Classroom-based Learning Supports (cont.)

Indicate all items that apply.

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
I. Reframing the approach to classroom instruction to enhance teacher capability to prevent and intervene as soon after problems arise and reduce need for out of class referrals				
A. Is instruction personalized (i.e., designed to match each student's motivation and capabilities)?	—	—	—	—
B. Is in-classroom special assistance available when needed?	—	—	—	—
C. Are there small group and independent learning options?	—	—	—	—
D. Are behavior problems handled in ways that minimize negative impact on student attitudes toward classroom learning (e.g., reduced reliance on social control strategies?)	—	—	—	—
E. Is there a range of curricula/instructional options & choices?	—	—	—	—
F. Is there systematic use of response to intervention and related "prereferral" interventions?	—	—	—	—
G. Are materials and activities upgraded to ensure				
1. basic supplies are available in the classroom?	—	—	—	—
2. an increased range of high-motivation activities (with some specifically keyed to the interests of students in need of special attention)?	—	—	—	—
3. appropriate use of advanced technology?	—	—	—	—
4. other? (specify) _____	—	—	—	—
H. Is there a focus on fostering social and emotional development (e.g., using natural opportunities as teachable moments)?	—	—	—	—
I. Which of the following can teachers request as special interventions?				
1. a "time out" situation?	—	—	—	—
2. designated remediation specialists?	—	—	—	—
3. family problem solving conferences?	—	—	—	—
4. exchange of a student to improve student-teacher match and for a fresh start?	—	—	—	—
5. referral for special out-of classroom assistance?	—	—	—	—
6. other (specify) _____	—	—	—	—
J. What is done to assist a teacher who needs help in teaching limited English speaking students?				
1. Is the student reassigned?	—	—	—	—
2. Does the teacher receive professional development for working with these students?	—	—	—	—
3. Are computer programs used to address ESL needs?	—	—	—	—
4. Does a bilingual coordinator offer consultation?	—	—	—	—
5. Is a bilingual aide assigned to the class?	—	—	—	—
6. Are volunteers brought in to help (e.g., parents, peers)?	—	—	—	—
7. Other? (specify) _____	—	—	—	—

II. Opening the Classroom Door to Enhance Collaboration, Support, and Personalized Professional Development

Classroom-based Learning Supports (cont.)		Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
Opening the Classroom Door to Enhance Collaboration, Support, and Personalized Professional Development					
A. Are others invited into the classroom to collaborate in enhancing Classroom-based Learning Supports?					
>other teachers to team/co-teach?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>student support staff?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>resource teacher?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>specialists?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>volunteers?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>aides (e.g., paraeducators; other paid assistants)?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>older students?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>parents or other family members?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
B. Personnel Preparation Related to Classroom-based Learning Supports					
1. Does in-service focus on enhancing the capacity for pursuing learning supports in regular classrooms of the following staff					
>regular teachers?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>student support staff?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>resource teacher?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>specialists?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Does the training for nonprofessionals (e.g., volunteers, aides, and other assistants) include a focus on learning supports?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Is team teaching or co-teaching used for teachers to learn about Classroom-based Learning Supports?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Are there mentors/coaches who work with teachers and other staff in the classroom to personalize personnel preparation?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Are demonstrations provided?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Are workshops and readings offered regularly?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Is there a focus on learning how to integrate intrinsic motivation into teaching and classroom management?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Is there a focus on strategies for re-engaging students who have disengaged from classroom learning?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Is there a focus on learning to use technology to enhance Classroom-based Learning Supports?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Is consultation available from persons with special expertise such as					
>student support staff (e.g., psychologist, counselor, social worker, nurse)?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>resource specialists and/or special education teachers?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>bilingual and/or other coordinators?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
>other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Are subgroups of staff clustered to facilitate personalized development to enhance Classroom-based Learning Supports?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. Is there a learning community at the school that focuses on Classroom-based Learning Supports?					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. Other (specify) _____					
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

III. Enhancing the capability of student and learning supports staff and others to team with teachers in the classroom

A. Is there a focus on increasing student support staff (and others') understanding of processes, strategies, and techniques involved in personalizing instruction?

B. Are support staff (and others) taught how to work as colleagues in the classroom with teachers and others?

A. Are the current curricula and instructional processes varied enough to support personalizing instruction?

B. Is social and emotional learning a specific curriculum item?

C. Is health education a regular part of the curriculum?

D. Is computer literacy taught?

E. What enrichment and adjunct programs are used regularly?

>library activities?

>music/art?

>student performances?

>Are there several field trips a year?

>Are there student council & other leadership opportunities?

>Are there school environment projects such as

-mural painting?

-horticulture/gardening?

-school clean-up and beautification?

-other? (specify).

>Are there special school-wide events such as

-sports?

-clubs and similar organized activities?

-student newspaper?

-sales events?

-poster contests?

-essay contests?

-book fair?

-health fair?

-pep rallies/contests?

-attendance competitions?

-attendance awards/assemblies?

>other? (specify) _____

>Are guest contributors used (e.g., outside speakers/performers)?

>Other (specify)?_____

F. What types of technology are available to the classroom?

>computers in the classroom? (Internet? Skype? etc.)

>computer lab?

>computer assisted instruction?

>video recording capability?

>instructional TV?

>multimedia lab?

>other? (specify)_____

Classroom-based Learning Supports (cont.)

V. Contributing to a positive climate in the classroom and school-wide

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. Are teachers fully included in ensuring the school is developing a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching?	—	—	—	—
B. Are classroom and school-wide approaches effective for				
>creating and maintaining a caring and supportive climate?	—	—	—	—
>supporting high standards for positive behavior?	—	—	—	—
C. With respect to professional and personal support,				
1. Is there effective communication to and among staff?	—	—	—	—
2. Are teachers and other staff involved in governance?	—	—	—	—
3. Is there formal conflict mediation/resolution?	—	—	—	—
4. Is there effective social support?	—	—	—	—
D. Are there efforts to enhance broad stakeholder involvement and engagement in				
>classrooms?	—	—	—	—
>school-wide events?	—	—	—	—
>decision-making?	—	—	—	—
E. Are the stakeholders who participate at the school well-oriented and provided with enough training so that they can				
function in the classroom and school-wide in ways that are	—	—	—	—
>knowledgeable and collegial?	—	—	—	—
>helpful for creating and maintaining a caring and supportive climate?	—	—	—	—

Indicate below other things you want the school to do to assist teachers' efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching and to re-engaging disconnected students.

Are there other ways the school currently is assisting teachers' efforts to address barriers to students' learning and teaching and to re-engaging disconnected students? (List below)

Note: Other matters relevant to *Classroom-based Learning Supports* are included in the other self-study surveys.

Supports for Transitions

Students and their families are regularly confronted with a variety of transitions – changing schools, changing grades, encountering a range of other daily hassles and major life demands. Many of these can interfere with productive school involvement.

A comprehensive approach to providing transition supports requires interventions within classrooms and school-wide and among schools sending and receiving students. The immediate goals are to enhance success during transitions and prevent transition problems. In addition, transition periods provide opportunities to promote healthy development, reduce alienation and increase positive attitudes toward school and learning, address systemic and personal barriers to learning and teaching, and re-engage disconnected students and families.

The focus is on concerns related to

Starting school and newly arriving – students and their families, new staff, volunteers, visitors (e.g., comprehensive orientations, welcoming signs, materials, and initial receptions; social and emotional supports including peer buddy programs; accommodating special concerns of those from other countries and those arriving after periods of hospitalization)

Daily transitions -- before school, changing classes, breaks, lunch, afterschool (e.g., preventing problems by ensuring positive supervision and safety; providing attractive recreational, enrichment, and academic support activities; using problems that arise as teachable moments related to enhancing social-emotional development)

Summer or intersession (e.g., catch-up, recreation, enrichment programs, service and workplace opportunities)

Matriculation – grade-to-grade – new classrooms, new teachers; elementary to middle school; middle to high school; in and out of special education programs; school-to-career/higher education transition (e.g., information; academic, vocational, and social-emotional counseling and related supports; pathway and articulation strategies; mentor programs; programs to support moving to post school living and work)

The activity overlaps the other five intervention arenas of a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports in contributing to the degree to which youngsters benefit from schooling.

Intended outcomes include reducing alienation, enhancing readiness, motivation, and involvement in school and learning activities, and enhancing safety. Early outcomes that have been reported include reductions in tardies, vandalism, and violence at school and in the neighborhood. Over time, articulation programs reduce school avoidance and dropouts, as well as enhancing school adjustment and increasing the number who make successful transitions to higher education and post school living and work. And, initial studies of programs for transition in and out of special education suggest the interventions can enhance students' attitudes about school and self and can improve their academic performance. It also is likely that transition supports add to perceptions of a caring school climate; this can play a significant role in a family's decision about staying or changing schools.

Supports for Transitions

Use the following ratings in responding to items 1-5.

DK = don't know; 1 = not yet; 2 = planned; 3 = just recently initiated; 4 = has been functional for a while; 5 = well institutionalized (well established with a commitment to maintenance)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Is there a stated policy for enhancing Supports for Transitions? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Is there a designated leader or leaders for enhancing Supports for Transitions? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Do personnel involved in enhancing Supports for Transitions meet regularly as a workgroup to evaluate current status and plan next steps? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Is there a written plan for capacity building related to enhancing Supports for Transitions? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Are there written descriptions available to give all stakeholders regarding current Supports for Transitions? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |

Use the following ratings in responding to the next items.

DK = don't know

1 = hardly ever effective

2 = effective about 25 % of the time

3 = effective about half the time

4 = effective about 75% of the time

5 = almost always effective

With respect to enhancing Supports for Transitions, how effective are each of the following:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| >current policy | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >designated leadership | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >workgroup monitoring and planning of next steps | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >capacity building efforts | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |

Indicate all items that apply.

Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
-----	-----------------------------------------	----	---------------------------------------------

A. Supportive Welcoming

- [illegible]

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Which of the following are available

- [illegible]

Supports for Transitions (cont.)

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
6. academic support in the form of				
>tutors	_____	_____	_____	_____
>homework club	_____	_____	_____	_____
>study hall	_____	_____	_____	_____
>homework phone line	_____	_____	_____	_____
>email and web assistance	_____	_____	_____	_____
>homework center	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. supervision and support for moving from one campus location to another	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. other (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

III. Summer and Intersessions

Which of the following programs are offered during
vacations and/or intersessions?

1. academic support	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. recreation	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. formal enrichment opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. youth groups	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. sports	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. student and family special assistance	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. service opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. workplace opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. other (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

IV. Matriculations

A. Grade-to-grade and Program-to-program Articulation

Which of the following transition programs are in use?

1. Are orientations to the new situation provided?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Is transition counseling provided?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Are students taken on "warm-up" visits?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Are "survival" skills taught?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Is the new setting primed to accommodate the individual's needs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Is there an early warning and support system for students having problems adjusting?	_____	_____	_____	_____

B. Transitions to Higher Education/Career

Which of the following are used to facilitate transition
to higher education and post school living?

1. vocational counseling	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. college counseling	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. a mentoring program	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. college prep courses and related activity	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. job training	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. job opportunities on campus	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. a work-study program	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. life skills counseling	_____	_____	_____	_____

C. Other? (specify) _____

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

Supports for Transitions (cont.)

V. Capacity Building to Enhance Support for Transitions

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. Are resources budgeted to enhance supports for transitions?	___	___	___	___
B. Are steps taken to enhance broad stakeholder involvement in transition activity?	___	___	___	___
C. Is there ongoing personnel preparation related to supports for transitions for				
1. teachers?	___	___	___	___
2. student and learning supports staff?	___	___	___	___
3. administrators?	___	___	___	___
4. office staff?	___	___	___	___
D. Is there an ongoing focus on preparing peer buddies?	___	___	___	___
E. Which of the following topics are covered in educating staff and other key stakeholders?				
1. ensuring successful transitions				
>before school	___	___	___	___
>after school	___	___	___	___
>during school	___	___	___	___
>for those having problems adjusting	___	___	___	___
2. developing systematic social supports for students, families, and staff	___	___	___	___
3. creating a psychological sense of community	___	___	___	___
F. Other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___

Indicate below other things you want the school to do in providing support for transitions.

Indicate below other ways the school provides supports for transitions.

Note: Other matters relevant to *Supports for Transitions* are included in the other self-study surveys.

Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement in Schooling

This arena expands concern for parent involvement to encompass anyone in the home who is influencing the student's life. In some cases, grandparents, aunts, older siblings, "nannies," and foster homes have assumed parental and caretaking roles. Thus, schools and communities must go beyond focusing on parents in their efforts to enhance involvement and engagement of the most significant people in as student's home situation.

Included in this arena are school-wide and classroom-based efforts designed to

- (a) address the specific learning and support needs of adults in the home (e.g., support services to assist in addressing basic survival needs and obligations to the children; adult education classes to enhance literacy, job skills, English-as-a-second language, citizenship preparation; enrichment and recreational opportunities; mutual support groups)
- (b) help those in the home improve how basic student obligations are met (e.g., enhancing caretaker literacy skills; providing guidance related to parenting and how to help with schoolwork; teaching family members how to support and enrich student learning)
- (c) improve forms of basic communication that promote the well-being of student, family, and school (e.g., facilitating home-school connections and sense of community through family networking and mutual support; facilitating child care and transportation to reduce barriers to coming to school; language translation; phone calls and/or e-mail from teacher and other staff with good news; frequent and balanced conferences – student-led when feasible; outreach to attract and facilitate participation of hard-to-reach families – including student dropouts)
- (d) enhancing home support for student learning and development and for problem solving and decision making essential to a student's well-being (e.g., preparing and engaging families for participation in supporting growth and planning and problem-solving)
- (e) recruit those at home to support, collaborate, and partner in strengthening school and community by meeting classroom, school, and community needs (e.g., volunteering to welcome and support new families; participating in school governance)

The context for some of this activity may be a *parent or family center* if one has been established at the site. Outcomes include indices of caretakers' learning, student progress, and community enhancement specifically related to home involvement.

Home Involvement ... in Schooling

Use the following ratings in responding to items 1-5.

DK = don't know; 1 = not yet; 2 = planned; 3 = just recently initiated; 4 = has been functional for a while; 5 = well institutionalized (well established with a commitment to maintenance)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Is there a stated policy for enhancing Home Involvement and Engagement? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Is there a designated leader or leaders for enhancing Home Involvement and Engagement? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Do personnel involved in enhancing Home Involvement and Engagement meet regularly as a workgroup to evaluate current status and plan next steps? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Is there a written plan for capacity building related to enhancing Home Involvement and Engagement? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Are there written descriptions available to give all stakeholders regarding current Home Involvement and Engagement? | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |

Use the following ratings in responding to the next items.

DK = don't know

1 = hardly ever effective

2 = effective about 25 % of the time

3 = effective about half the time

4 = effective about 75% of the time

5 = almost always effective

With respect to enhancing Home Involvement and Engagement, how effective are each of the following:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| >current policy | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >designated leadership | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >workgroup monitoring and planning of next steps | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >capacity building efforts | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |

Indicate all items that apply.

I. Addressing Family Basic Needs

- [illegible]

[illegible][illegible]

Home Involvement ... in Schooling (cont.)

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
B. Is there a system to inform the home on a regular basis (e.g., regular letters, newsletters, email, computerized phone messages, website)				
1. about general school matters?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. about opportunities for home involvement?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. To enhance home involvement in the student's program and progress, are interactive communications used, such as				
1. sending notes home regularly?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. a computerized phone line?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. email?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. frequent balanced in-person conferences with the family?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. student-led conferences?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. messages with good news about the student	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
D. Which of the following are used to enhance the home-school connection and sense of community?				
1. Does the school offer orientations & open houses?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Does the school have special receptions for new families?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Does the school regularly showcase students to the community through				
>student performances?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>award ceremonies?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Does the school offer the community				
>cultural and sports events?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>topical workshops and discussion groups?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>health fairs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>family preservation fairs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>work fairs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>newsletters?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>community bulletin boards?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>community festivals and celebrations?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Does the school facilitate family networking and mutual support?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. How does the school address barriers to participation?				
>facilitate child care?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>facilitate transportation?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>provide language translations?	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Is there outreach to hard to involve families?				
>making home visits?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>offering support networks?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>focusing on student dropouts?	_____	_____	_____	_____
>other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Other? (specify) _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Home Involvement ... in Schooling (cont.)

IVa. Enhancing Home Support for Student Learning and Development

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. Are families instructed on how to provide opportunities for students to apply what they are learning?	___	___	___	___
B. Are families instructed on how to use enrichment opportunities to enhance youngsters' social and personal and academic skills and higher order functioning?	___	___	___	___
C. Are there family field trips?	___	___	___	___
D. Are families provided space and facilitation for meeting together as a community of learners?	___	___	___	___
E. Are family literacy programs available?	___	___	___	___
F. Are family homework programs offered?	___	___	___	___
G. Other? (specify) _____	___	___	___	___

IVb. Involving Homes in Making Decisions Essential to the Student?

A. Families are invited to participate through personal				
1. letters	___	___	___	___
2. phone calls	___	___	___	___
3. email	___	___	___	___
4. other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
B. Families are informed about schooling choices through				
1. letters	___	___	___	___
2. phone calls	___	___	___	___
3. email	___	___	___	___
4. conferences	___	___	___	___
5. other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
C. Families are taught skills to participate effectively in decision making.	___	___	___	___
D. Does the school hold frequent in-person conferences with the family and student focused on problem-solving and decision making?	___	___	___	___
E. With respect to mobilizing problem solving at home related to student needs				
1. Is instruction provided to enhance family problem solving skills(including increased awareness of resources for assistance)?	___	___	___	___
2. Is good problem solving modeled at conferences with the family?	___	___	___	___
F. Other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___

Home Involvement ... in Schooling (cont.)

V. Recruiting Families to Collaborate in Strengthening School and Community

For which of the following are those in the home recruited and trained to help meet school/community needs?

1. Improving schooling for students by assisting

>administrators?

>teachers?

>other staff?

>others in the community?

>with lessons or tutoring?

>on class trips?

>in the cafeteria?

>in the library?

>in computer labs?

>with homework helplines?

>the front office to welcome visitors and new enrollees and their families?

>with phoning/emails home regarding absences?

>outreach to the home?

>other? (specify) _____

2. Improving school operations by assisting with

>school and community up-keep and beautification

>improving school-community relations

>fund raising

>PTA

>enhancing public support by increasing political awareness about the contributions and needs of the school

>school governance

>advocacy for school needs

>advisory councils

>program planning

>other? (specify) _____

3. Establishing home-community networks to benefit the community

4. Other? (specify) _____

Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
-----	--------------------------------	----	------------------------------------

VI. Capacity Building to Enhance Home Involvement

A. Are resources budgeted to enhance to enhance home involvement and engagement in schools?

B. Are steps taken to enhance broad stakeholder involvement in home involvement and engagement?

C. Is there ongoing personnel preparation related to home involvement and engagement for

1. teachers?

2. student and learning supports staff?

3. administrators?

4. office staff?

5. other (specify) _____

Home Involvement ... in Schooling (cont.)

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
D. Which of the following topics are covered in educating staff and other key stakeholders?				
1. enhancing home involvement and engagement?	___	___	___	___
2. overcoming barriers to home involvement (including re-engagement of disconnected families)?	___	___	___	___
5. facilitating family participation in meetings to problem-solve and make decisions about the student?	___	___	___	___
4. developing group-led mutual support groups?	___	___	___	___
5. developing families as a community of learners?	___	___	___	___
6. designing an inclusionary "Parent Center"?	___	___	___	___
7. adopting curriculum for parent education?	___	___	___	___
8. teaching parents to mentor & lead at the school?	___	___	___	___
9. Other? (specify) _____	___	___	___	___

Indicate below other things you want the school to do in enhancing home involvement and engagement.

Indicate below other ways the school enhances home involvement and engagement.

Note: Other matters relevant to *Home Involvement, Engagement, and Re-engagement* are included in the other self-study surveys.

Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement

Schools are more effective and caring places when they are an integral and positive part of the community. For schools to be seen as such, they must take steps to engage and collaborate with many community stakeholders to address barriers to learning and teaching and strengthen the fabric of family and community life.

The goal is to maximize mutual benefits, including better student progress, positive socialization of the young, higher staff morale, improved use of resources, an enhanced sense of community, community development, and more. In the long run, the aims are to strengthen students, schools, families, and neighborhood.

A school/district approach to enhancing community connections is conceived as involving four types of activities:

- (a) outreaching to a broad range of community entities (e.g., developing a social marketing campaign, pursuing interventions to engage/re-engage students and families who don't interact with the school on a regular basis; targeting facets of outreach to increase the number of volunteers available to the schools)
- (b) developing immediate links and connections with community resources that can help fill critical intervention gaps for addressing shared problems (e.g., expanding school improvement planning to include analysis of critical gaps in school efforts to develop a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports; establishing and training a multi-school workgroup to focus on recruiting and equitably integrating individuals and agencies who can add resources to fill critical gaps)
- (c) establishing an effective operational infrastructure for a school-community collaborative (e.g., identifying community stakeholders interested in establishing a school-community collaborative; organizing participants into an effective operational infrastructure and establishing formal working agreements about roles and responsibilities; forming and training workgroups to accomplish immediate objectives, monitoring and facilitating progress)
- (d) blending/weaving/redeploying school and community resources together where feasible and appropriate to help with system development (e.g., mapping school and community resources used to address barriers to student success; analyzing resource use to determine redundancies and inefficiencies; identifying ways resources can be redeployed and interwoven to meet current priorities)

Because community resources in many neighborhoods are sparse, a school-by-school approach often leads to inequities (e.g., the first school to contact an agency might tie up all that a given agency can bring to a school). Therefore, district leadership needs to (a) help develop mechanisms that connect a "family" of schools (e.g., a high school feeder pattern, schools in the same neighborhood) and (b) play a role in outreaching and connecting community resources equitably to schools. A family of schools also provides a good nucleus for creating a school-community collaborative .

Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement

Use the following ratings in responding to items 1-5.

DK = don't know; 1 = not yet; 2 = planned; 3 = just recently initiated; 4 = has been functional for a while; 5 = well institutionalized (well established with a commitment to maintenance)

1. Is there a stated policy for enhancing school-community connections
 - >at the district level? DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >at the school level? DK 1 2 3 4 5
2. Is there a designated leader for enhancing school-community connections
 - >at the district level? DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >at the school level? DK 1 2 3 4 5
3. Do personnel involved in enhancing school-community connections meet regularly as a workgroup to evaluate current status and plan next steps
 - >at the district level? DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >at the school level? DK 1 2 3 4 5
4. Is there a written plan for capacity building related to enhancing the school-community connections
 - >at the district level? DK 1 2 3 4 5
 - >at the school level? DK 1 2 3 4 5
5. Are there written descriptions available to give all stakeholders regarding current school-community connections? DK 1 2 3 4 5

Use the following ratings in responding to the next items.

DK = don't know

1 = hardly ever effective

2 = effective about 25 % of the time

3 = effective about half the time

4 = effective about 75% of the time

5 = almost always effective

In general, how effective are local efforts to enhance school-community connections?

DK 1 2 3 4 5

With respect to enhancing school-community connections, how effective are each of the following:

>current policy

DK 1 2 3 4 5

>designated leadership

DK 1 2 3 4 5

>workgroup monitoring and planning of next steps

DK 1 2 3 4 5

>capacity building efforts

DK 1 2 3 4 5

Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement (cont.)

Indicate all items that apply.

Ia. Outreach to a Broad Range of Community Entities

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. From which of the following community sources are resources recruited?				
1. public community agencies, organizations, facilities, and providers	___	___	___	___
2. private community agencies, organizations, facilities, and providers	___	___	___	___
3. business sector	___	___	___	___
4. professional organizations and groups	___	___	___	___
5. volunteer service programs, organizations, & clubs	___	___	___	___
6. universities and colleges	___	___	___	___
7. other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
B. What types of school-community connections currently are in place?				
1. mentoring for students and families	___	___	___	___
2. volunteers with no special expertise	___	___	___	___
3. community members with special expertise who help as requested, such as				
>artists	___	___	___	___
>musicians	___	___	___	___
>librarians	___	___	___	___
>health and safety programs	___	___	___	___
>other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
4. formal agency and program linkages that result in community health and social services providers coming to schools, such as				
>after school programs	___	___	___	___
>service providers collocating at schools	___	___	___	___
>other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
5. formal arrangements that involve community representatives in				
>school governance	___	___	___	___
>advocacy for the school	___	___	___	___
>advisory functions	___	___	___	___
>program planning	___	___	___	___
>fund raising	___	___	___	___
>sponsoring activity (e.g., adopt-a-school)	___	___	___	___
>creating awards and incentives	___	___	___	___
>providing job-shadowing opportunities	___	___	___	___
>creating jobs	___	___	___	___
>other (specify) _____	___	___	___	___
6. formal arrangements that connect school and community for enhancing child and youth development	___	___	___	___

Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement (cont.)

C. With specific respect to volunteers

1. What types of volunteers are used at the site?

>nonprofessionals

-parents

-college students

-senior citizens

-business people

-peer and cross age tutors

-peer and cross age counselors

-paraprofessionals

>professionals-in-training (specify)_____

>professionals (pro bono) (specify)_____

>other (specify) _____

- ## 2. Who do volunteers assist?

```
>administrators
```

```
>teachers
```

>student and learning supports staff

>office staff

>other staff

>others (specify) _____

3. In which of the following ways do volunteers participate?

>providing general classroom assistance

>assisting with targeted students

>assisting after school

- >providing special tutoring

- > helping students with attention problems

- >helping with bilingual students

- >helping address other diversity matters

>helping in the cafeteria

>helping in the library

>helping in computer lab

>helping on class trips

>helping with homework helplines

>working in the front office

>helping welcome visitors

- >helping welcome new enrollees & their families

>phoning or emailing home about absences

- >outreaching to the home

- >acting as mentors or advocates for students, families, staff

- >assisting with school up-keep and beautification

- > helping enhance public support by increasing political awareness about the contributions and needs of the school

>other (specify) _____

[illegible]

Ib. Outreach to Students/Families Who Don't Come to School Regularly – including truants/dropouts

- A. Home visits to assess and plan ways to overcome barriers to
 - 1. student attendance
 - 2. family involvement in schooling

B. Support networks connecting hard to involve

1. students with peers and mentors
2. families with peers and mentors

C. Special incentives for

1. students
2. families

D. Other (specify) _____

II. Developing Mechanisms to Link and Connect with Community Entities

A. Are the following in place:

1. designated leadership for enhancing school-community connections?
2. workgroup for developing how connections contribute to school and community?
3. specific representatives from the school and community designated to meet with each other?

B. Are there processes specifically designed to

1. recruit community stakeholders?
2. orient & welcome community stakeholders recruited for school involvement and support?
3. enhance the volunteer pool?
4. screen volunteers?
5. train volunteers?
6. maintain volunteers?

C. Which of the following are used to encourage ongoing community-school connections?

1. Orientations and open houses for
 - >newly arriving students
 - >newly arriving families
 - >new staff

- 2. School sponsored
 - >student performances for the community
 - >cultural and sports events for the community
 - >community festivals and celebrations
 - >topical workshops and discussion groups
 - >health fairs
 - >family preservation fairs
 - >work fairs

3. Offer use of campus facilities

[illegible]

Engagement of schooling	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
is component		
/ special assistance	_____	_____
tions	_____	_____
d prevention	_____	_____
t & engagement	_____	_____
ement & collab. engagement	_____	_____
earning supports	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
ment		
nity programs and services	_____	_____
	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
r schooling		

D. In helping improve schools, do the school-community connections enhance

Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
-----	-----------------------------------------	----	---------------------------------------------

1. the instructional component of schooling
 - >kindergarten readiness
 - >tutoring
 - >mentoring
 - >school reform initiatives
 - >homework hotlines
 - >media/technology
 - >service learning
 - >career mentoring
 - >career academies
 - >adult education, ESL, literacy, citizenship classes
 - >others _____
2. the governance/management of schooling
 - >PTA/PTSA
 - >shared leadership
 - >advisory bodies
 - >others _____
3. the learning supports component
 - >student and family special assistance
 - >supports for transitions
 - >crisis response and prevention
 - >home involvement & engagement
 - >community involvement & collab. engagement
 - >classroom-based learning supports
 - >others _____
4. stakeholder development
 - >school staff
 - >staff from community programs and services
 - >family members
 - >others _____
5. financial support for schooling
 - >adopt-a-school
 - >grant programs and funded projects
 - >donations/fund raising
 - >other _____

[illegible]

Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement (cont.)

E. In helping improve the neighborhood, do the school-community connections enhance

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
1. youth development programs				
>home visitation programs				
>parent education				
>infant and toddler programs				
>child care/children's centers/preschool programs				
>community service programs				
>public health and safety programs				
>leadership development programs				
>others _____				
2. youth/family recreation and enrichment opportunities				
>art/music/cultural programs				
>parks' programs				
>youth clubs				
>scouts				
>youth sports leagues				
>community centers				
>library programs				
>faith community's activities				
>camping programs				
>others _____				
3. physical health services				
>school-based/linked clinics for primary care				
>immunization clinics				
>communicable disease control programs				
>EPSDT programs				
>pro bono/volunteer programs				
>AIDS/HIV programs				
>asthma programs				
>pregnant and parenting minors programs				
>dental services				
>vision and hearing services				
>referral facilitation				
>emergency care				
>others _____				
4. mental health services				
>school-based/linked clinics w/ mental health component				
>EPSDT mental health focus				
>pro bono/volunteer programs				
>referral facilitation				
>counseling				
>crisis hotlines				
>others _____				
5. programs to address psychosocial problems				
>conflict mediation/resolution				
>substance abuse				
>community/school safe havens				
>safe passages				
>youth violence prevention				
>gang alternatives				
>pregnancy prevention and counseling				
>case management of programs for high risk youth				
>child abuse and domestic violence programs				

Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement (cont.)

E. Connecting to improve *neighborhood* (cont.)

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
6. basic living needs services				
>food	_____	_____	_____	_____
>clothing	_____	_____	_____	_____
>housing	_____	_____	_____	_____
>child care	_____	_____	_____	_____
>transportation assistance	_____	_____	_____	_____
>others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. work/career/higher education programs				
>college prep programs	_____	_____	_____	_____
>job mentoring	_____	_____	_____	_____
>job shadowing	_____	_____	_____	_____
>job programs and employment opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____
>others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. social services				
>school-based/linked family resource centers	_____	_____	_____	_____
>integrated services initiatives	_____	_____	_____	_____
>budgeting/financial management counseling	_____	_____	_____	_____
>family preservation and support	_____	_____	_____	_____
>foster care school transition programs	_____	_____	_____	_____
>case management	_____	_____	_____	_____
>immigration and cultural transition assistance	_____	_____	_____	_____
>language translation	_____	_____	_____	_____
>others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. crime and juvenile justice programs				
>camp returnee programs	_____	_____	_____	_____
>children's court liaison	_____	_____	_____	_____
>truancy mediation	_____	_____	_____	_____
>juvenile diversion programs with school	_____	_____	_____	_____
>probation services at school	_____	_____	_____	_____
>police protection programs	_____	_____	_____	_____
>others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. legal assistance				
>legal aide programs	_____	_____	_____	_____
>others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. support for developing neighborhood organizations				
>neighborhood protective associations	_____	_____	_____	_____
>emergency response planning and implementation	_____	_____	_____	_____
>neighborhood coalitions and advocacy groups	_____	_____	_____	_____
>volunteer services	_____	_____	_____	_____
>welcoming clubs	_____	_____	_____	_____
>social support networks	_____	_____	_____	_____
>others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. economic development and housing programs				
>empowerment zones	_____	_____	_____	_____
>urban village programs	_____	_____	_____	_____
>accessing affordable housing	_____	_____	_____	_____
>others _____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement (cont.)

III. Establishing an effective operational infrastructure for a school-community collaborative

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. Are the following in place:				
4. designated leadership for establishing a school-community collaborative?	—	—	—	—
5. formal working agreements about mutual roles and responsibilities?	—	—	—	—
6. workgroup for developing the collaborative infrastructure?	—	—	—	—
7. specific representatives from the school and community designated to be part of the collaborative?	—	—	—	—
8. a steering group?	—	—	—	—
9. standing and ad hoc workgroups to pursue ongoing functions?	—	—	—	—
10. executive director for the collaborative?	—	—	—	—
11. collaborative staff?	—	—	—	—
12. regular meetings for the collaborative as a whole?	—	—	—	—
B. Are there processes for				
1. identifying community stakeholders interested in establishing a school-community collaborative?	—	—	—	—
2. forming and training workgroups to accomplish immediate objectives?	—	—	—	—
3. monitoring and facilitating progress?	—	—	—	—
C. In its focus on school improvement, does the collaborative				
1. the instructional component of schooling	—	—	—	—
2. the governance and management of schooling	—	—	—	—
3. financial support for schooling	—	—	—	—
4. stakeholder development	—	—	—	—
5. school-based programs and services to address barriers to learning	—	—	—	—
D. In its focus on improving the neighborhood, does the collaborative stress				
1. youth development programs	—	—	—	—
2. youth and family recreation & enrichment opportunities	—	—	—	—
3. physical health services	—	—	—	—
4. mental health services	—	—	—	—
5. programs to address psychosocial problems	—	—	—	—
6. basic living needs services	—	—	—	—
7. college prep programs	—	—	—	—
8. work/career programs	—	—	—	—
9. social services	—	—	—	—
10. crime and juvenile justice programs	—	—	—	—
11. legal assistance	—	—	—	—
12. support for development of neighborhood organizations	—	—	—	—
13. economic development programs	—	—	—	—

Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement (cont.)

IV. Blending/weaving/redeploying school and community resources together

Has a workgroup from the school-community collaborative

>mapped school and community resources that are used to address barriers to student success?

>analyzed critical gaps and recommended priorities for filling these gaps?

>analyzed resource use to determine redundancies and inefficiencies?

>identified ways school and community resources can be redeployed and interwoven to meet current priorities?

Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
-----	--------------------------------	----	------------------------------------

V. Capacity Building to Enhance Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement

A. Are resources budgeted to enhance to enhance community outreach and collaborative engagement?

B. Are steps taken to enhance broad stakeholder involvement in community outreach and collaborative engagement?

C. Is there ongoing personnel preparation related to community outreach and collaborative engagement for

1. teachers?
2. student and learning supports staff?
3. administrators?
4. office staff?
5. other (specify) _____

D. Which of the following topics are covered in educating staff and other key stakeholders?

1. understanding the local community (e.g., culture, needs, resources)

2. how to recruit, train, and retain community resources and volunteers

>in general

>for special roles

3. how to outreach to hard-to-involve students and families

4. understanding how to create a psychological sense of community

5. developing systematic social supports for students, families, and staff

6. how to develop a school-community collaborative

7. Other (specify) _____

E. Are there ongoing processes for training, support, and quality improvement of participants in the school-community collaborative?

Community Outreach & Collaborative Engagement (cont.)

Indicate below other things you want the school to do in enhancing community outreach and collaborative engagement.

Indicate below other ways the school is enhancing community outreach and collaborative engagement.

Note: Other matters relevant to *Community Outreach and Collaborative Engagement* are included in the other self-study surveys.



Crises Assistance and Prevention

Schools must respond to, minimize the impact of, and prevent school and personal crises. This requires school-wide and classroom-based approaches for

- A. immediate emergency response** – at a site and with other local schools and the surrounding community
- (b) immediate aftermath assistance**
- (c) follow-up** – in the days and weeks after an event,
- (d) prevention in the future** – taking steps at school and in the community to prevent those future events that are preventable and reduce the impact when crises occur (e.g., enhancing school safety, violence reduction, suicide prevention, child abuse prevention, processes to mediate and resolve conflict, a emphasis on improving human relations, promoting a caring school culture, enhancing coping, resilience, problem solving, refining institutional response to crises).

Key overlapping mechanisms in this arena are a planning and development workgroup and a crisis response team. All those involved in this work need preparation related to emergency response procedures, physical and psychological first-aid, aftermath interventions, and so forth.

After a crisis, the first concern is to ensure physical safety and medical first aid; this is followed immediately by attention to psychological considerations. Then, the emphasis is on the school's need to regain stability and a sense of normality so that students and staff can resume learning and teaching. Included here is attention to follow-up care as needed.

Clearly, the scope of the event (major school-wide crises as contrasted to small group or individual crises) profoundly shapes how many responders are needed during the various phases of the crisis. Also, difficulties that must be dealt with during the crisis itself raise many problems that are quite distinct from those arising in the immediate aftermath and in the days and weeks following the event (e.g., hysteria and fear as contrasted with grief reactions and post traumatic stress).

The proper handling of school crises is essential to minimizing negative impact on learning and mental health. Comprehensive crisis intervention planning and implementation provides ways for school personnel, students, and families to return to normalcy as quickly as feasible, address residual (longer-term) psychosocial problems, and explore preventive measures for the future.

Crises Assistance and Prevention

Use the following ratings in responding to the item 1-5.

DK = don't know; 1 = not yet; 2 = planned; 3 = just recently initiated; 4 = has been functional for a while; 5 = well institutionalized (well established with a commitment to maintenance)

1. Is there a stated policy for enhancing Crises Assistance and Prevention? DK 1 2 3 4 5
2. Is there a designated leader or leaders for enhancing Crises Assistance and Prevention? DK 1 2 3 4 5
3. Do personnel involved in enhancing Crises Assistance and Prevention meet regularly as a workgroup to evaluate current status and plan next steps? DK 1 2 3 4 5
4. Is there a written plan for capacity building related to enhancing Crises Assistance and Prevention? DK 1 2 3 4 5
5. Are there written descriptions available to give all stakeholders regarding current Crises Assistance and Prevention? DK 1 2 3 4 5

Use the following ratings in responding to the next items.

DK = don't know

1 = hardly ever effective

2 = effective about 25 % of the time

3 = effective about half the time

4 = effective about 75% of the time

5 = almost always effective

With respect to enhancing Crises Assistance and Prevention, how effective are each of the following:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| >current policy | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >designated leadership | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >workgroup monitoring and planning of next steps | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >capacity building efforts | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |

Crisis Assistance and Prevention

Indicate all items that apply.

I. Ensuring Immediate Assistance in Emergencies/Crises

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. Is there a plan that details a coordinated response				
1. for all at the school site?				
2. with other schools in the complex?				
3. with community agencies?				
B. Are emergency/crisis plans updated appropriately with regard to				
1. crisis management guidelines (e.g., flow charts, check list)?				
2. plans for communicating with homes/community?				
3. media relations guidelines?				
C. Are stakeholders regularly provided with information about emergency response plans?				
D. Are there sufficient emergency response practices and quality improvements?				
E. Are responders properly prepared to				
1. handle the overall situation?				
2. provide medical first aid?				
3. provide psychological first aid?				
F. Other? (specify) _____				

II. Immediate Aftermath

A. Is there a plan for				
1. stabilizing the situation?				
2. providing information to all concerned parties?				
3. responding to the media?				
B. Are there processes for implementing the aftermath plan?				
C. Are there plans and processes for providing aftermath assistance to all who need it?				
D. Are there plans and processes for providing aftermath assistance to the emergency responders?				
E. Other? (specify) _____				

III. Providing Follow-up Assistance as Necessary

A. Are there plans and processes for providing <i>short-term</i> follow-up assistance?				
B. Are there plans and processes for providing <i>longer-term</i> follow-up assistance?				
C. Other? (specify) _____				

Crisis Assistance and Prevention (cont.)

IV. Prevention

	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
Yes			

- A. Is there an ongoing emphasis on enhancing a caring and safe learning environment
 - 1. school-wide?
 - 2. in classrooms?
 - 3. in the neighborhood?
- B. Are there plans and processes for
 - 1. refining the institutional response to crises?
 - 2. enhancing coping, resilience, problem solving?
 - 3. improving human relations?
 - 4. mediating/resolving conflicts?
 - 5. bullying and harassment abatement?
 - 6. school and community violence reduction?
 - 7. suicide prevention?
 - 8. child abuse prevention?
 - 9. sexual abuse prevention?
 - 10. substance abuse prevention?
 - 11. other (specify) _____

V. Capacity Building to Enhance Crisis Assistance and Prevention

- A. Are resources budgeted to enhance to enhance Crisis Assistance and Prevention?
- B. Are steps taken to enhance broad stakeholder involvement in Crisis Assistance and Prevention?
- C. Which of the following are involved in Crisis Assistance and Prevention planning:
 - 1. learning supports staff?
 - 2. teachers?
 - 3. other school staff?
 - 4. students?
 - 5. families?
 - 6. other schools in the vicinity?
 - 7. other concerned parties in the community?
- D. Is the Crisis Response team appropriately trained?
- E. Are there plans and processes to enhance the capacity of the following stakeholders to pursue prevention strategies:
 - 1. learning supports staff?
 - 2. teachers?
 - 3. other school staff?
 - 4. students?
 - 5. families?
 - 6. other schools in the feeder pattern?
 - 7. other concerned parties in the community?

Crisis Assistance and Prevention (cont.)

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
F. Is there ongoing personnel preparation related to Crisis Assistance and Prevention for				
1. teachers?	—	—	—	—
2. student and learning supports staff?	—	—	—	—
3. administrators?	—	—	—	—
4. office staff?	—	—	—	—
5. other (specify) _____	—	—	—	—
G. Are staff, students, and families well-informed about response and recovery plans and processes?	—	—	—	—
H. Which of the following topics are covered in educating staff and other key stakeholders?				
1. anticipating emergencies	—	—	—	—
2. how to respond when an emergency arises	—	—	—	—
3. how to access assistance after an emergency (including watching for post traumatic psychological reactions)	—	—	—	—
4. indicators of abuse & potential suicide & what to do	—	—	—	—
5. how to respond to concerns related to death, dying, and grief	—	—	—	—
6. how to mediate conflicts and minimize violent reactions	—	—	—	—
7. medical first aid	—	—	—	—
8. psychological first aid	—	—	—	—
9. other (specify) _____	—	—	—	—

Indicate below other things you want the school to do in responding to and preventing crises

Indicate below other ways the school responds to and prevents crises.

Note: Other matters relevant to *Crises Assistance and Prevention* are included in the other self-study surveys.

Student and Family Special Assistance

Before providing special assistance to a student, the logical first step is to address general environmental factors that may be causing problems. In schools, this first step involves developing the other five arenas of the learning supports component. This can be sufficient for addressing conditions affecting a large proportion of students, and this reduces the need for further special attention. A few students, however, will continue to manifest learning, behavior, and emotional problems, and they and their families require extra assistance, perhaps including referral for specialized services and even a special education program.

Student and family special assistance includes a focus on such matters as

- Using responses to intervention (RtI) to initially identify and triage those who need such assistance
- Conducting additional assessment to the degree necessary – including diagnosis and planning of an Individual education program (IEP) when appropriate
- Providing consultation, triage, and referrals
- Conducting ongoing management of care
- Enhancing special assistance availability and quality

With specific respect to severe and chronic problems and students mandated for special education programs, special assistance includes connecting what the school offers with whatever is available in the community and facilitating access. In implementing the activity, the emphasis is on enhancing a “system of care” and ensuring the special assistance is integrated with the other facets of the comprehensive system of learning supports.

Student and Family Special Assistance

Use the following ratings in responding to the item 1-5.

DK = don't know; 1 = not yet; 2 = planned; 3 = just recently initiated; 4 = has been functional for a while; 5 = well institutionalized (well established with a commitment to maintenance)

1. Is there a stated policy for enhancing Student and Family Special Assistance? DK 1 2 3 4 5
2. Is there a designated leader or leaders for enhancing Student and Family Special Assistance? DK 1 2 3 4 5
3. Do personnel involved in enhancing Student and Family Special Assistance meet regularly as a workgroup to evaluate current status and plan next steps? DK 1 2 3 4 5
4. Is there a written plan for capacity building related to enhancing Student and Family Special Assistance? DK 1 2 3 4 5
5. Are there written descriptions available to give all stakeholders regarding current Student and Family Special Assistance? DK 1 2 3 4 5

Use the following ratings in responding to the next items.

- DK = don't know
1 = hardly ever effective
2 = effective about 25 % of the time
3 = effective about half the time
4 = effective about 75% of the time
5 = almost always effective

With respect to enhancing Student and Family Special Assistance, how effective are each of the following:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| >current policy | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >designated leadership | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >workgroup monitoring and planning of next steps | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |
| >capacity building efforts | DK 1 2 3 4 5 |

Indicate all items that apply.

Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?

-

[illegible]

Student & Family Special Assistance (cont.)

IIIb. Which of the following are provided by the district/school for possible referral:

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. Medical interventions?				
>immunizations				
>first aid and emergency care				
>crisis follow-up medical care				
>health and safety education and counseling				
>health and safety prevention programs				
>screening for vision problems				
>screening for hearing problems				
>screening for health problems (specify)				
>screening for dental problems (specify)				
>treatment of some acute problems (specify)				
>medication monitoring				
>medication administration				
>home outreach				
>other (specify) _____				
B. Psychological interventions?				
>psychological first aid				
>crisis follow-up counseling				
>crisis hotlines				
>conflict mediation				
>alcohol and other drug abuse programs				
>pregnancy prevention program				
>programs for pregnant and parenting students				
>gang prevention program				
>gang intervention program				
>dropout prevention program				
>physical & sexual abuse prevention & response				
>individual counseling				
>group counseling				
>family counseling				
>mental health education				
>home outreach				
>other (specify) _____				
C. Basic survival needs interventions?				
>Emergency food				
>emergency clothing				
>emergency housing				
>transportation support				
>welfare services				
>language translation				
>legal aid				
>protection from physical abuse				
>protection from sexual abuse				
>child care				
>employment assistance				
>other (specify) _____				

Student & Family Special Assistance (cont.)

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
D. Specialized school interventions?				
>early education program				
>special day classes (specify) _____				
>speech and language therapy				
>adaptive P. E.				
>occupational and physical therapy				
>special assessment				
>Resource Specialist Program				
>Title I				
>ESL				
>School Readiness Language Develop. Program				
>alternative school				
>student assistance team				
>IEP team				
>other (specify) _____				
E. Attendance interventions?				
>absence follow-up				
>attendance monitoring				
>first day calls				
F. Discipline interventions?				
>time out				
>counseling				
>exclusion				
G. Adult education programs?				
>ESL				
>citizenship classes				
>basic literacy skill				
>parenting				
>helping children do better at school				
>other (specify) _____				
H. Other? (specify) _____				
IV. How is special assistance managed and monitored?				
A. Is student information data management used?				
B. Is a process used to trail progress of students and their families?				
C. Is a process used to facilitate communication for				
1. care management?				
2. resource and process management?				
E. Are there follow-ups to determine				
1. referral follow-through?				
2. consumer satisfaction with referrals?				
3. the need for more help?				
F. Other? (specify) _____				

Student & Family Special Assistance (cont.)

V. How is the availability and quality of student and family special assistance enhanced?

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
A. To enhance stakeholders' awareness,				
A. Are there <i>written descriptions</i> of available learning supports programs?	—	—	—	—
2. Are there <i>written descriptions</i> about				
>how to make referrals?	—	—	—	—
>the triage process?	—	—	—	—
>the process for case monitoring/management?	—	—	—	—
>the process for student review?	—	—	—	—
3. Are there communication processes that inform stakeholders about available learning supports programs and how to navigate the systems?	—	—	—	—
4. Other? (specify) _____	—	—	—	—
B. To enhance resource use and system development,				
1. Is there a system development-oriented mechanism (e.g., a Learning Supports Leadership Team) that focuses on				
>Coordinating and integrating resources	—	—	—	—
>Braiding resources	—	—	—	—
>Pursuing economies of scale	—	—	—	—
>Filling gaps	—	—	—	—
>Linking with community providers (e.g., to fill gaps)	—	—	—	—
>quality improvement	—	—	—	—
C. Is there a special facility to house student and family special assistance interventions (e.g., health center, family or parent Center, counseling center)?	—	—	—	—
3. Other? (specify) _____	—	—	—	—
D. To build capacity for growth and sustainability,				
1. Are resources budgeted to enhance to enhance student and family special assistance?	—	—	—	—
2. Are steps taken to enhance broad stakeholder involvement in student and family special assistance?	—	—	—	—
3. Is there ongoing personnel preparation related to student and family special assistance for				
>teachers?	—	—	—	—
>student and learning supports staff?	—	—	—	—
>administrators?	—	—	—	—
>office staff?	—	—	—	—
>other (specify) _____	—	—	—	—
4. Which of the following topics are covered in educating staff and other key stakeholders?				
>broadening understanding of causes of learning, behavior, and emotional problems	—	—	—	—
>broadening understanding of ways to ameliorate (prevent, correct) learning, behavior, and emotional problems	—	—	—	—

(Cont.)

Student & Family Special Assistance (cont.)

	Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
>developing systematic academic supports for students in need	—	—	—	—
>what classroom teachers and the home can do to minimize the need for special interventions and prevent unnecessary referrals	—	—	—	—
>enhancing resource quality, availability, scope	—	—	—	—
>enhancing the referral system and ensuring effective follow through	—	—	—	—
>enhancing the case management system in ways that increase service efficacy	—	—	—	—
>other (specify) _____	—	—	—	—

Indicate below other things you want the school to do in providing student and family special assistance.

Indicate below other ways the school enhancing student and family special assistance.

Note: Other matters relevant to *Student and Family Special Assistance* are included in the other self-study surveys.

Appendix D

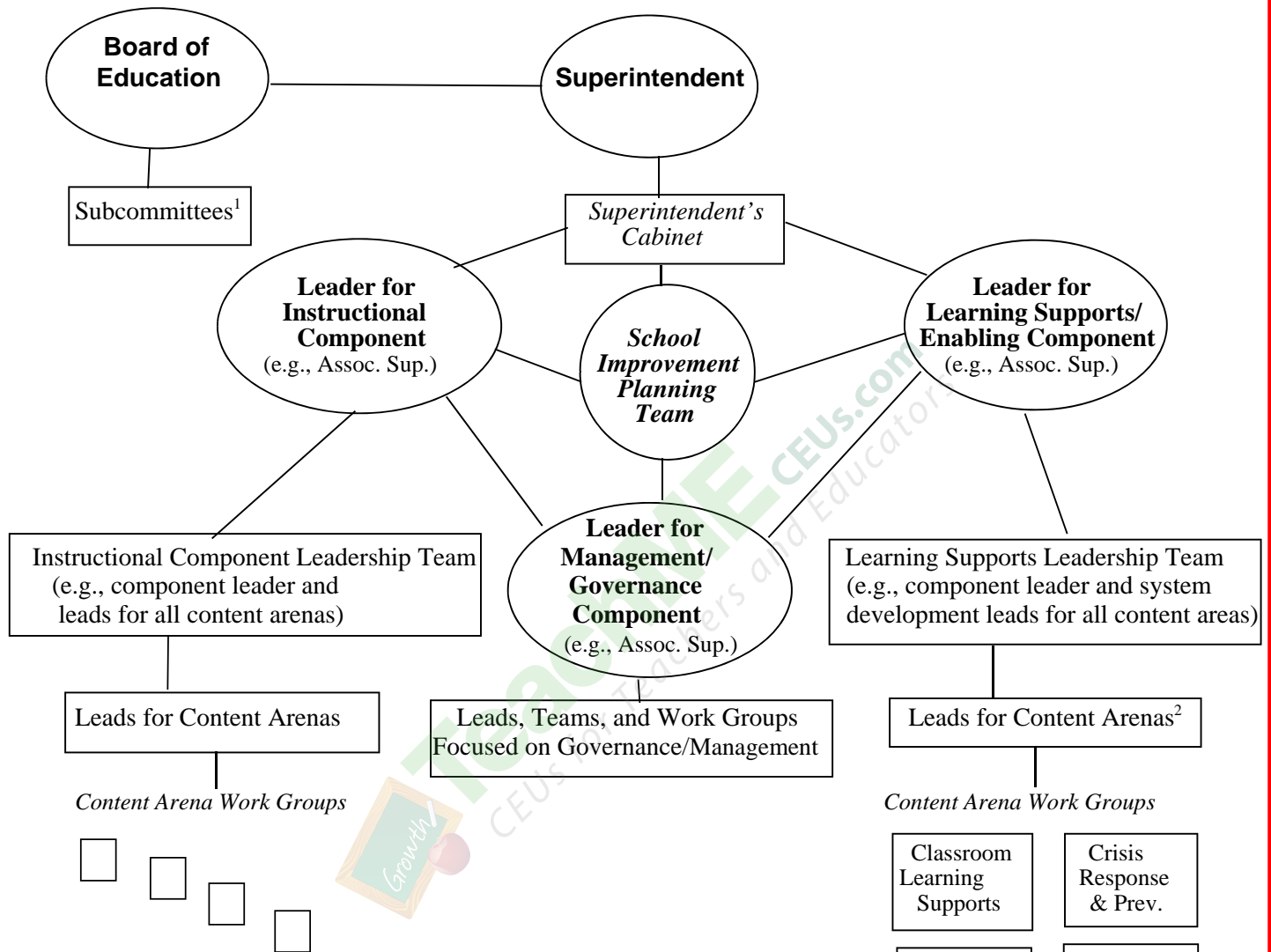
District Level Operational Infrastructure

As illustrated in the Exhibit on the following page, the operational infrastructure at the district parallels the reworked one at the school level. This facilitates development of a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching at the district and does so in ways that connect well with the work at schools.

Once a learning supports' administrator is appointed, that leader can establish a leadership team for learning supports consisting of system development workgroup leaders for the six major content arenas. The intent is to ensure personnel are dedicated to and have accountability for advancing a specific arena and for transforming existing activity into a unified, integrated, and systemic approach to all student and learning supports. To facilitate this, capacity building must include cross-content and cross-disciplinary training so that all personnel are encouraged to broaden their perspective and contribute effectively to the transformation.

Along with their counterparts who are working to improve instruction and management/governance, the learning supports leadership is included at district planning and decision making tables and fully integrated into school improvement efforts. Organizing in this way moves student and learning supports away from the marginalization, fragmentation, unnecessary redundancy, and counterproductive competition that has resulted from organizing around traditional programs and specific disciplines.

District Level Operational Infrastructure



Notes:

1. If there isn't one, a board subcommittee for learning supports should be created to ensure policy and supports for developing a comprehensive system of learning supports at every school (see Center documents *Restructuring Boards of Education to Enhance Schools' Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers to Student Learning* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/boardrep.pdf> and *Example of a Formal Proposal for Moving in New Directions for Student Support*)

2. All resources related to addressing barriers to learning and teaching (e.g., student support personnel, compensatory and special education staff and interventions, special initiatives, grants, and programs) are integrated into a refined set of major content arenas such as those indicated here. Leads are assigned for each arena and work groups are established.

Appendix E

Facilitative Mechanism's Functions and Interrelationship

Once the design document is produced, the need is to establish and prepare a set of temporary systemic change mechanisms. These are illustrated and discussed in Chapter 12. Below are some key functions of each mechanism. Note these are working examples meant to clarify what each does and how it interacts with the others.

Superintendent and Governing Body

Functions

- appoints the transformation leader
- ensures policy is in place to facilitate unifying and developing a comprehensive system of learning supports and implementing the necessary systemic changes
- uses a variety of platforms and venues to indicate championship of the new system and to inform and engage key stakeholders
- reviews regular reports on progress and addresses barriers that interfere with moving forward
- institutionalizes the changes into policy, the organizational and operational infrastructures, strategic plans, budgets, and standards and accountability indicators
- uses external collaborators to obtain consultation, professional development, and technical assistance as necessary
- celebrates progress

Transformation Leader – In our work, this logically is the administrative leader for student and learning supports.

Functions

- provides leadership and oversight in maintaining the vision and supporting progress
- works with superintendent and governing body to facilitate the above functions
- establishes and works with all systemic change mechanisms
- ensures provisions are made for the capacity building of each mechanism to ensure each can carry out its functions effectively
- provides opportunities for interchange & additional in-depth presentations to build a critical mass of consensus for and engagement in systemic changes
- works with external collaborators to obtain consultation, professional development, and technical assistance as necessary
- monitors and evaluates progress and addresses barriers that interfere with moving forward
- provides regular reports on the work to superintendent and governing body
- celebrates progress

Steering Body – consists of "champions" who agree to steer the process. (Some members of the group may also be internal coaches and mentors.) The members must have an in-depth understanding of what is involved in unifying and developing a comprehensive system of learning supports and be highly motivated not just to help get things underway but to ensure sustainability.

Functions

- provides a broad-based and potent leadership and oversight mechanism for maintaining the vision and overseeing and supporting progress
- provides support for the Transformation Leader
- champions the new system and ensures that key stakeholders are informed and engaged
- arranges for and analyzes the mapping of resources and infrastructure and delineates implications for systemic change
- reviews and approves the action plan the Planning Team develops
- monitors and evaluates progress and addresses barriers that interfere with moving forward
- works with external collaborators to obtain consultation, professional development, and technical assistance as necessary
- recommends policy changes to facilitate unifying and developing a comprehensive system of learning supports and implementing the necessary systemic changes
- uses a variety of platforms and venues to indicate championship of the new system

- recommends ways to institutionalize and sustain the systemic changes (e.g., changes in organizational and operational infrastructure, strategic plans, and budgets; capacity building)
- celebrates progress

Composition. The Steering Group should not be too large. It needs a few high level, well-connected "champions" and the key change agents (e.g., the administrative leader and other system change staff) who have responsibility for implementation.

Process. Initially, the group meets formally once a week, with informal contacts among members as necessary. The external collaborators can help provide capacity building input for the group (and for the other systemic change mechanisms as they are established). Progress monitoring and process problem solving requires regular input from key change agents. Periodically, to work against the perception that it is a closed, elite group, it can host "focus groups" to elicit input and feedback, provide information, and problem solve.

Planning Team for Transformative Systemic Changes – This team develops action plans accounting for both direct implementation and systemic change considerations. The focus of initial action planning is on start-up and phase-in. These involve specific steps and can be broken down into specific tasks for action planning and monitoring of progress. The members must begin with an in-depth understanding of what is involved in unifying and developing a comprehensive system of learning supports and be highly motivated not just to help get things underway but to ensure sustainability.

Functions

- prepares draft action plan for start-up and phase-in
- establishes work groups as necessary to help with plan development
- submits plan for revision and eventual approval
- once approved, prepares a draft plan for sustainability
- submits sustainability plan revision and eventual approval
- ensures the Implementation Team develops the capacity to carry out the plan effectively
- develops a benchmark tool to monitor progress
- works with external collaborators to obtain consultation, professional development, and technical assistance as necessary
- adapts and reworks plans as needed

Composition. The Planning Team should not be too large. It needs members who are experienced in formulating action plans and who understand the limitations and gaps in the current system. Logical members are representatives from the Steering Group, the Design Team, and others leading school improvement and providing learning/student supports. Where special expertise is needed, work groups can be used.

Process. This should be a time-defined task requiring about 4 weekly meetings, with drafts prepared and shared between meetings. The focus in meetings is on clarifying feedback and guidance for improving sections of the plan that are under development. External collaborators can help provide capacity building input for the group. To ensure input from those who have been identified as key stakeholders, the team can share the working products of their efforts and encourage feedback. Such an interactive process helps to build consensus and create readiness for action.

Implementation Team – This team facilitates both direct implementation and systemic change as laid out in the action plan.

Functions. Focus is on implementing specific start-up and phase-in action plan with a view to sustainability. Examples of tasks include

- establishing operational infrastructure for unifying and developing a comprehensive system of learning supports (e.g., Administrative Lead, Learning Supports Leadership Team, Workgroups)
- ensuring infrastructure establishes processes for communication, visibility of the work, information management, problems solving, etc.

- working to increase stakeholder readiness for, commitment to, and engagement in planned changes
- ensuring capacity building for implementation
- ensuring progress is monitored and that plans are revised as needed
- working with external collaborators to obtain consultation, professional development, and technical assistance as necessary
- celebrating progress

Composition. At each level (state department, region, district, school), an Implementation Team consists of 2-3 personnel who are specifically designated and trained to facilitate the planned systemic changes at that level.

Process. At each level, an Implementation Team works with the leader who is responsible for the systemic changes. At department and regional levels, the transformation leader and the Steering Team can constitute an implementation team. At the district level, the team first facilitates central office changes and then establishes a pattern and schedule for working with each participating school and families of schools.

External collaborators/change agents focus on training leaders and can help provide capacity building input for all involved in implementation.

Examples of Benefits from Drawing on External Expertise

External Change Agents (including mentors, coaches). Such change agents add major value in deepening understanding and facilitating implementation of a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports and do so in ways that enhance sustainability.

Functions. Facilitating the development and operation of all mechanisms and professional development of leaders (e.g., training of trainers). Focus includes mentoring and coaching to help leaders plan and implement

- capacity building with an emphasis on creating readiness and commitment both in terms of motivation and skills, team building, providing technical assistance, and organizing basic interdisciplinary and "cross-training"
- priority setting
- supports for carrying out specific tasks
- communication, liaison, interface among mechanisms
- formative evaluation, progress monitoring, rapid problem solving, and accountability
- ongoing supports for sustainability
- revisions in planning as needed
- celebrating progress

External Collaborators (e.g. UCLA)

Functions

- providing prototypes and expertise for both direct implementation and systemic change considerations
- providing professional development and ongoing technical assistance
- customizing and creating additional implementation and outreach tools as needed
- championing and sharing the work nationally and providing regional and state level platforms
- including the work as part of new directions for student and learning supports dissemination and diffusion efforts
- connecting leadership with other state and district leaders who are implementing the work in order to help problem solve and share best practice
- supporting overview documentation and progress/outcomes/impact
- celebrating progress

Appendix F

Major Tasks of Mentors and Coaches

In transforming student and learning supports, the essential role of coaches and mentors is to prepare leaders to

- Deepen understanding of and enhance committed readiness for what is involved in
 - >unifying & developing a comprehensive learning supports system
 - >making systemic changes
- Establish and build the capacity of the administrative leader for the learning supports component and of a Learning Supports Leadership Team
- Engage a critical mass of key stakeholder groups (building interest and consensus for the work and garnering feedback and support)
- Guide development of a design document and strategic system change plan
- Establish and build the capacity of a set of system change mechanisms
- Build the capacity of work group(s) to
 - >map prevailing status of student and learning supports within the district (e.g., current activity, gaps, redundancies, priority needs, etc.) using the intervention framework in the design document
 - >analyze the resource map and priority needs and recommend
 - >>how to unify the work into a system
 - >>yearly priorities for developing the system into a comprehensive approach
 - >analyze and recommend changes that fit with the design for a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports with respect to
 - >>current policies (bulletins, guidelines, etc.)
 - >>current operational infrastructure
 - >>current programs and initiatives
 - >>possible ways to redeploy resources
 - >>adapt benchmarks & mechanisms to monitor progress at district/school levels
- Provide a set of recommendations for change that will be submitted to the agency head (e.g., changes in policy and operational infrastructure)
- Fully integrate the system as a primary and essential component of school improvement
- Enhance component visibility, communication, sharing, and problem solving (e.g., within the district and beyond)
- Establish a system for continuous quality improvement and evaluation of impact and integrate it into regular planning, evaluation, and accountability
- Connect resources to enhance effectiveness and achieve economies of scale (e.g., weave resources at SEA/LEA levels; connect a "Family" of schools/a feeder pattern)
- Enhance outreach to establish formal collaborative linkages with community resources
- Update and deepen resource mapping and analyses
- Plan and implement continuous capacity building and technical assistance
- Celebrate progress

Appendix G

Benchmarks for Monitoring and Improving Transformation

The checklist on the following pages is designed to aid those involved in the process of transforming student and learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic Learning Supports Component.

This tool was developed as a formative evaluation instrument for use by steering groups, transformation leaders, and other stakeholders. It can aid in focusing problem solving discussions and planning next steps.

The items should be modified to fit local strategic and action plans



	Date started	Date Completed if applies	Current Status
I. ORIENTATION AND CREATING READINESS			
DISTRICT LEVEL – District name:			
A. Establishment of a district <i>Steering Group</i> (“champions”) to facilitate development of the Component Steering Group members identified Names: Position:			
B. Leadership and systemic change training for steering group members			
C. Orienting district stakeholders – initial contacts made with key stakeholders to introduce basic ideas			
(1) “Social marketing” strategies used to introduce basic ideas and relevant research base to key stakeholders >administrators >staff >parent representatives >business and community stakeholders >_____			
(2) Opportunities for interchange provided & additional in-depth presentations made to build a critical mass of consensus for systemic changes			
(3) Ongoing evaluation of interest indicates a critical mass of stakeholders are ready to pursue a policy commitment and/or continuing work to enhance commitment for moving forward			
(4) Ratification and sponsorship elicited from a critical mass of stakeholders			
D. Establishing Policy Commitment & Framework – (follow-up meetings with district leaders to clarify dimensions of the work and how to proceed)			
(1) Negotiation of policy commitment and conditions for engagement (e.g., high level policy established and assurance of leadership commitment – learning supports component adopted as one of the primary and essential components of school improvement – on a par with instructional & management components)			
(2) Policy translated into an inspiring vision, a framework, and a strategic plan that phases in changes using a realistic time line			
(3) Policy translated into appropriate resource allocations (leadership, staff, space, budget, time)			

	Date started	Date Completed if applies	Current Status
(4) Incentives for change established (e.g., intrinsically valued outcomes, expectations for success, recognitions, rewards)			
(5) Procedural options established that reflect stakeholder strengths and from which those expected to implement change can select strategies they see as workable			
(6) Infrastructure and processes established for facilitating systemic change			
(7) Establishment of transformation leadership			
(8) Transformation leaders identified – indicate name(s): _____ _____			
(9) Initial capacity-building – essential skills developed among stakeholders to begin implementation			
(10) Benchmarks used to provide feedback on progress and to make necessary improvements in the process for creating readiness			
E. Development of phase-in plan for District			
SCHOOL LEVEL – School name:			
A. Establishment of Steering Group (“champions) for school to facilitate development of Component Steering Group members identified Names: _____ Position: _____			
B. Leadership and systemic change training for Steering Group members			
C. Orienting school stakeholders – initial contacts made with key stakeholders to introduce basic ideas			
(1) “Social marketing” strategies used to introduce basic ideas and relevant research base to key stakeholders >administrators >staff >parent representatives >business and community stakeholders _____			
(2) Opportunities for interchange provided & additional in-depth presentations made to build a critical mass of consensus for systemic changes			

	Date started	Date Completed if applies	Current Status
(3) Evaluation of interest to determine that a critical mass of stakeholders want to move forward			
(4) Ratification and sponsorship elicited from a critical mass of stakeholders			
D. Establishing Policy Commitment & Framework – (follow-up meetings with school leaders to clarify the dimensions of the work and how to proceed)			
(1) Negotiation of a policy commitment and conditions for engagement (e.g., high level policy established and assurance of leadership commitment – learning supports component adopted as one of the primary and essential components of school improvement – on a par with the instructional and management components)			
(2) Policy translated into an inspiring vision, frameworks, and a strategic plan to phase-in changes using a realistic time line			
(3) Policy translated into appropriate resource allocations (leadership, staff, space, budget, time)			
(4) Incentives for change established (e.g., intrinsically valued outcomes, expectations for success, recognitions, rewards)			
(5) Procedural options established that reflect stakeholder strengths and from which those expected to implement change can select strategies they see as workable			
(6) Infrastructure and processes established for facilitating systemic change			
(7) Establishment of transformation leadership			
(8) Transformation leaders identified – indicate name(s): _____			
(9) Initial capacity-building – essential skills developed among stakeholders to begin implementation			
(10) Benchmarks used to provide feedback on progress and to make necessary improvements in the process for creating motivational readiness and capability to move forward			
E. Development of phase-in plan for school			

	Date started	Date Completed if applies	Current Status
II. START-UP AND PHASE-IN			
A. Evaluation indicating that Steering Group at the school is ready to facilitate development of the Component Update Members Name: Position:			
B. Identification of a site leader (equivalent to the leader for the Instructional Component) Name: Position:			
C. Identification of other advocates for the Component Names: Position:			
D. Current Transformation leader(s) indicate name(s): _____			
E. Leadership and systemic change training for all taking a lead in developing the component			
F. Survey of staff to assess transformation readiness			
G. ESTABLISHMENT OF LEARNING SUPPORTS LEADERSHIP TEAM			
(1) Identification of potential team members			
(2) Recruitment of team members. Name: Position:			
(3) Initial team meeting.			
(4) Training for team.			

	Date started	Date Completed if applies	Current Status
H. INITIAL MAPPING AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING RESOURCES			
(1) Initial mapping			
(2) Initial analyses (e.g., of needs, gaps, efficacy, coordination, integration with school improvement planning)			
(3) Initial plans and steps to improve learning supports System (e.g., priorities, development work groups)			
(4) Initial “maps” and plans distributed			
I. INITIAL ENHANCEMENT OF SYSTEMS AND ACTIVITY RELATED TO ENABLING			
(1) Analysis, improvement, documentation, and circulation of info and recommendations on how to use current “systems” – clarification of steps, development of flow charts, written descriptions, training of personnel, etc. (e.g., for work related to >Promoting Healthy Development and Preventing Problems >Response to Intervention (RtI) >Handling Behavior Problems >Referral for Emergency Help-Major Services >Triage >Care Management >Crisis Response (e.g., Crisis Team) >_____			
(2) Training for existing teams. >Student and Family Assistance Team (e.g., Student Study or Guidance Team) >IEP Team members >Crisis Team >Other (specify)			
J. REFINING INFRASTRUCTURE & PURSUING DEEPER MAPPING AND ANALYSES			
(1) Student and Learning supports organized into a delineated set of intervention arenas (e.g., 6 content arenas)			
(2) Standing work groups developed for each arena			

	Date started	Date Completed if applies	Current Status
(3) Training of Arena work groups Delineate by arena:			
(4) Initial mapping and analyses of resources related to each arena accomplished			
(5) Each arena work group formulates priorities for improvement. Delineate by area:			
(6) Priorities for enhancing learning supports delineated, evaluated, and ranked by Learning Supports Leadership Team and plans formulated for pursuing top priorities.			
(7) School infrastructure refined so that learning supports component is fully integrated with the instructional and management components			
(8) If relevant, plans formulated to establish a Family and/or Parent Center			
K. COMPONENT VISIBILITY, COMMUNICATION, & PROBLEM SOLVING			
(1) Ad hoc work groups developed to enhance component visibility, communication, sharing, & problem solving			
(2) All existing programs, services, and resources listed, circulated (e.g., to all staff, parents), and for high visibility featured in memos, bulletins, on websites, in a brochure describing the component, in newsletters, and on information boards)			
(3) Other steps taken to enhance visibility. (specify)			
(4) Effective <i>communication mechanisms</i> in operation			
(5) Effective <i>problem solving mechanisms</i> in operation			
(6) Effective <i>social marketing mechanisms</i> in operation			

	Date Started	Date Completed	Current Status
L. OUTREACH TO FILL GAPS & PURSUE ECONOMIES OF SCALE			
(1) Formal collaborative linkages established with other resources in the district (specify)			
(2) Formal collaborative linkages (e.g., a Learning Supports Leadership <i>Council</i>) established with other schools in locale (e.g., a feeder pattern) (specify)			
(3) Formal collaborative linkages (e.g., a school-community collaborative) established with a wide range of community resources (e.g., programs and agencies) (specify)			
M. SYSTEM FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (Formative Evaluation)			
Decisions about indicators to be used.			
Members recruited for Quality Improvement Team. Name: Position:			
Training of Quality Improvement Team			
Initial Quality Improvement recommendations. Made. Acted upon.			

Site Name	Date Started	Date Completed	Current Status
<p align="center">III. INSTITUTIONALIZATION (maintenance & evolution)</p> <p align="center">& IV. PLANS FOR ONGOING RENEWAL</p>			
A. Indications of planning for maintenance			
(1) policy commitments			
(2) regular budget allocations			
(3) ongoing administrative leadership			
(4) a key facet of school improvement plans			
(5) summative evaluation and use of leading Indicators for ongoing accountability			
B. Strategies in use for maintaining momentum/progress. (sustainability) (List most prominent examples)			
C. Strategies in use and future plans for generating renewal (List most prominent examples)			

An overarching benchmark involves the monitoring of the implementation of evaluation plans.



"This course was developed from the public domain document: Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable."