



*A Center Policy Brief**

For Consideration in Reauthorizing the *No Child Left Behind Act* . . .

Promoting a Systematic Focus on Learning Supports to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching

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About this Report

As passed in 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) tends to marginalize the essential role of student/learning supports in enabling all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

Anticipating Congressional hearings related to reauthorizing NCLB, this policy analysis report focuses on how learning supports can be enhanced in the reauthorized law. The analysis builds on several previous reports clarifying critical gaps in school improvement policy and planning and how to fill them (see references in this document). The proposed additions also reflect ongoing work stemming from the *National Initiative: New Directions for Student Support* (see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/ndannouncement.htm>)

The intent is to enhance effectiveness in addressing the factors that interfere with a great many students succeeding at school.

The emphasis is on fully integrating the development of a comprehensive *system of learning supports* as an essential component in school improvement efforts.

Failure to develop such a system is seen as contributing to the perpetuation of achievement gaps and dropout rates and as playing a major role in the plateauing of achievement gains.

This first draft of the proposed additions is being circulated for widespread feedback. We will incorporate appropriate changes based on input and then send the final report to the House and Senate Education Committee members and circulate it widely.

Feel free to share this draft with anyone who might be interested in providing feedback.

For Consideration in Reauthorizing the *No Child Left Behind Act* . . .

Promoting a Systematic Focus on Learning Supports to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching

The upcoming reauthorization provides an opportunity to correct a significant deficiency in the *No Child Left Behind Act*. Specifically, additions are needed to Title I to enable all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. These additions call for the promotion of a systematic focus on learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching. (In the current act, such barriers are referred to as “major factors that have significantly affected the academic achievement of students.”)

The proposed additions emphasize promoting the development of a comprehensive and systemic learning supports component in all schools. This is to be accomplished through *reframing and redeploying* existing personnel and programmatic resources and through enhanced connections with community resources. (Thus, additional appropriations are not an issue.)

The immediate objective is to provide nonregulatory guidance to schools for strategically addressing barriers to learning and teaching and for ending the tendency to generate learning supports in an ad hoc, piecemeal and fragmented manner. The longer-term aim is to create a comprehensive and cohesive system of learning supports in all schools based on defined standards and with specific accountability indicators.

Why the Proposed Additions are Essential

Effective instruction is, of course, fundamental to a school’s mission. None of us want to send our children to a school where teachers do not have high standards, expectations, and competence.

At the same time, the reality is that many factors can interfere with learning and teaching. Teachers in low performing schools point to how few students appear motivationally ready and able to learn what the daily lesson plan prescribes. Teachers in the upper grades report that a significant percentage of their students have become actively disengaged and alienated from classroom learning. And, “acting out” behavior, especially bullying and disrespect for others, is rampant. (So is passivity, but “hypoactivity” attracts less attention.) One result of all this is seen in the increasing number of students misdiagnosed as having learning disabilities (LD) and attention deficit-hyperactivity disorders (ADHD). Another result is the number of dropouts (students and teachers) – often referred to as “pushouts.”

Teachers need and want considerable help in addressing barriers to student and school success

Teachers need and want considerable help in addressing barriers to student and school success. Unfortunately, the sparse help they currently receive is grossly inadequate.

Part of the problem is that most guidelines for school improvement give meager attention to matters other than the instructional component of schooling. Such guides *do* recognize that “acting out” students are disruptive of teaching and may harm others. And, thus, some planning focuses on improving classroom management and enhancing school safety. Sometimes this includes classroom instructional initiatives intended to enhance students’ respect for school staff, parents, and each other (e.g., “character education”).

But, the overall approach to school improvement conveys the impression that better academic instruction is sufficient for increasing a school's test score averages, closing the achievement gap, and reducing the number of students leaving school before graduation. Anything not directly instruction-centered runs a distant second in planning.

The reality in too many classrooms, however, is that improved instruction is not sufficient. In daily practice, schools continue to be plagued by student disengagement, behavior problems, and dropouts. Thus, to the degree feasible, schools make efforts to provide some "supports." But, the marginalized policy status of student and learning supports leads to reactive, ad hoc, piecemeal, and fragmented practices that often reach only a small percentage of students in need. This reality is seen in the growing concerns about student disengagement, disrespect, misconduct, and the latest cycle of distress over dropouts.

A fair interpretation of the phrase "No Child Left Behind" is that all students will have an equal opportunity to succeed at school

A fair interpretation of the phrase "No Child Left Behind" is that all students will have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. However, unless school improvement efforts ensure there is a potent *system* of learning supports to enable that success, many will continue to be left behind. With this in mind, analyses of the *No Child Left Behind Act* and the related Non-regulatory Guidance document from the U.S. Department of Education entitled, *Designing Schoolwide Programs* (March 2006) indicates a clear need for the reauthorization to enhance the way it addresses learning supports.

The following points are a preamble to the proposed Title I additions:

(a) Pioneering initiatives across the country have adopted the concept of *Learning Supports* as a unifying concept to encompass the many resources, strategies, and practices used to address barriers to learning and teaching. A learning support system not only provides a unifying concept, it provides a context for linking with other organizations and agencies as needed and can be a focal point for braiding school and community resources into a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive component at every school.

(b) While learning supports can benefit all students, they are especially essential in schools where significant numbers of students are not doing well, are absent frequently, and too many are dropping out. Other indicators of need are seen in growing rates of bullying and other forms of violence at school, sporadic parental involvement, continuing concern about substance abuse, etc.

Enhancing opportunities for school success calls for a comprehensive learning supports *system*

(c) To improve learning supports as a key element in school improvement, there needs to be a greater emphasis in every school on the development of a comprehensive learning supports *system*.

(d) A comprehensive learning supports system is designed to address barriers to learning and teaching in ways that enhance the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual support and ongoing development needed to enable effective classroom learning. Particular attention is given to strategies that result in enhanced engagement in classroom instruction.

(e) Such a system consists of a multifaceted and integrated array of interventions (programs and services) that, as a cohesive *Learning Supports Component*, can meet the needs of traditional and nontraditional learners. It includes school-based and school-linked resources designed to enable teachers to teach and pupils to learn. It encompasses a *continuum of interventions* that promote learning and development, prevent and respond early after the onset of problems, and provide correctional, and remedial programs and services. And, it organizes learning supports into a discrete set of *content arenas*.

(f) In the aggregate, a comprehensive learning support system creates a supportive, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that promotes the success and well-being not only of students but of their families and school staff. Overall, such a system contributes significantly to a school's goals of helping students become good parents, good neighbors, good workers, and good citizens of the world.

(g) The Learning Supports Component is meant to be fully integrated with the instruction component in the classroom and schoolwide.

(h) To develop into a comprehensive learning supports system, schools must outreach in a strategic manner to build connections with other schools, particularly those that constitute a feeder pattern. This can reduce inappropriate redundancies and enhance economies of scale.

(i) To develop into a comprehensive learning supports system, schools also must outreach in a strategic manner to build connections with community resources. Such connections include braiding resources where school and community have overlapping functions, filling gaps in school resources, and enhancing access to services needed that are beyond the purview of the school. This trend builds on the growing consensus among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners that stronger collaborative efforts by schools, families, and communities are essential to student success.

Leaving no child behind means addressing the problems of the many who aren't benefitting from instructional improvements because of a host of barriers interfering with their learning

(j) To be effective, a school's Learning Supports Component must take what works, improve on other practices, and create new avenues to address barriers to learning and teaching.

The bottom line is: If schools are to ensure that students succeed, school improvement designs must reflect the full implications of the word *all*. Clearly, *all* includes more than students who are motivationally ready and able to profit from demands and expectations for "high standards." Leaving no child behind means addressing the problems of the many who aren't benefitting from instructional improvements because of a host of *external* and *internal* barriers interfering with their development and learning. This is certainly the case for students in Title I schools, and therefore, Title I must fully reflect this reality.

References Related to Proposed Additions

Policy and Program Analyses

- >*School Improvement Planning: What's Missing?* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsmissing.htm>
- >*Addressing What's Missing in School Improvement Planning: Expanding Standards and Accountability to Encompass an Enabling or Learning Supports Component* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/enabling/standards.pdf>
- >*Designing Schoolwide Programs in Title I Schools: Using the Non-Regulatory Guidance in Ways that Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/briefs/DOEGuidance.pdf>
- >*Another Initiative? Where Does it Fit? A Unifying Framework and an Integrated Infrastructure for Schools to Address Barriers to Learning & Promote Healthy Development* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/infrastructure/anotherinitiative-exec.pdf>
- >*Systemic Change for School Improvement: Designing, Implementing, and Sustaining Prototypes and Going to Scale*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/systemicreport.pdf>

Two Recently Published Books on Learning Supports

- >*The School Leader's Guide to Student Learning Supports: New Directions for Addressing Barriers to Learning* (<http://www.corwinpress.com/book.aspx?pid=11343>)
- >*The Implementation Guide to Student Learning Supports: New Directions for Addressing Barriers to Learning* (<http://www.corwinpress.com/book.aspx?pid=11371>)

Example of One State's Approach

- >*Developing Our Youth: Fulfilling a Promise, Investing in Iowa's Future - Enhancing Iowa's Systems of Supports for Learning and Development* –
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/iowasystemofsupport.pdf>

Proposed Additions to the No Child Left Behind Act

It is proposed that the following additions be made to Title I.

Note: For the most part, only sections affected are included below; the proposed added text is underlined.

SEC. 1001. Statement of Purpose

New (6) enabling all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school through promoting development of a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system of learning supports at schools;

~~(7)~~ (8) providing greater decisionmaking authority and flexibility to schools, teachers, and learning supports staff in exchange for greater responsibility for student performance;

~~(9)~~ (10) promoting schoolwide reform and ensuring the access of children to effective, scientifically based instructional strategies, and challenging academic content, and learning supports;

~~(10)~~ (11) significantly elevating the quality of instruction and learning supports by providing staff in participating schools with substantial opportunities for professional development;

~~(11)~~ (12) coordinating and integrating programs and services under all parts of this title with each other, with other educational services, and, to the extent feasible, with other agencies providing services to serving youth, children, and families;

Part A – Improving Basic Programs Operated By Local Educational Agencies

Subpart 1 – Basic Program Requirements

SEC. 1111 STATE PLANS

(b) ACADEMIC STANDARDS, ACADEMIC ASSESSMENTS, LEARNING SUPPORTS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

(9) FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT – Each State plan shall include an assurance that the State educational agency will

(A) promote development of a standards-based comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive system of learning supports at schools through

(i) developing a nonregulatory guidance document for the establishment of a school Learning Supports Component;

(ii) providing ongoing technical assistance, leadership training, and other capacity building supports;

(iii) developing aids for districts and schools to rethink the roles of pupil services personnel and other student support staff;

(iv) developing aids for reframing infrastructure *mechanisms* at school and district levels and with public and private community resources to appropriately pursue development of a comprehensive learning support system. Such aids will clarify effective mechanisms for

(I) assisting individuals and families with family decision-making and timely, coordinated, and monitored referrals to school and community services when indicated;

(II) an administrative leader, student support staff, and other stakeholders to work collaboratively at each school with a focus on resources in order to minimize duplication and fragmentation of learning supports and strengthen the Learning Supports Component;

(III) responding to, minimizing the psychosocial impact of, and, if feasible, preventing crises;

(IV) capacity building and regular support for all stakeholders involved in addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development;

(V) ensuring evaluation and accountability for a school's Learning Supports Component;

(VI) minimizing duplication and fragmentation of learning supports when working with other schools and agencies.

(v) ensuring that Learning Supports are integrated within the organization of the State education agency in a manner that reflects the organization at school and district levels;

(vi) including an assessment of learning supports systems in all school review guidance documents and accountability reports. Such an assessment should focus on specific and directly relevant indicators of the impact of a school's Learning Supports Component, such as

(I) increases in student attendance;

(II) increases in academic performance;

(III) increase in family involvement with student and school;

(IV) reductions in tardies;

(V) reductions in misbehavior;

(VI) reductions in bullying and sexual harrassment;

(VII) fewer inappropriate referrals for specialized assistance and special education;

(VIII) fewer student pregnancies;

(IX) fewer suspensions and dropouts.

(B) coordinate and collaborate, to the extent feasible and necessary as determined by the State education agency, with agencies ~~providing services to~~ serving children, youth, and families within the State that are identified under section 1116 and that request assistance with addressing major factors that have significantly affected the academic achievement of students in the local education agency or schools served by such agency.

SEC. 1112. LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PLANS.

- (a) PLAN PROVISIONS -
(1) IN GENERAL -

(E) a description of how the local educational agency will coordinate and integrate programs and services provided under this part with educational services and learning supports at the local educational agency or individual school level, such as –

(i) Even Start, Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, and other preschool programs, including plans for the transition of participants in such programs to local elementary school programs; ~~and~~

(ii) services for children with limited English proficiency, children with disabilities, migratory children, neglected or delinquent youth, Indian children served under part A of title VII, homeless children, and immigrant children in order to increase program effectiveness, eliminate duplication, and reduce fragmentation of the instructional program;

(iii) a cohesive Learning Supports Component the scope of which covers a school-community continuum of interconnected intervention systems for

(I) promoting healthy development and preventing problems;

(II) intervening early to address problems as soon after onset as is feasible;

(III) assisting those with chronic and severe problems.

(iv) a cohesive Learning Supports Component the content of which at each system level encompasses

(I) enhancing the capacity of teachers to address learning, behavior, and emotional problems within the context of the classroom, engage and re-engage pupils in classroom learning, and foster social, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development. This would include an emphasis on inservice education. Examples of interventions include:

(aa) addressing a greater range of pupil problems within the classroom through an increased emphasis on strategies for positive social and emotional development, problem prevention, and accommodation of differences in the motivation and capabilities of pupils;

(bb) classroom management that emphasizes re-engagement of pupils in classroom learning and minimizes over-reliance on social control strategies;

(cc) collaboration with pupil support staff and the home in providing additional assistance to foster enhanced responsibility, problem solving, resilience, and effective engagement in classroom learning;

(dd) use of broadly conceived “Response to Intervention” strategies and “prereferral interventions to minimize unnecessary referrals for special services and special education;

(II) enhancing the capacity of schools to handle transition concerns confronting pupils and their families. The emphasis is on ensuring that systematic interventions are established to provide supports for the many transitions students, their families, and school staff encounter. Examples include:

(aa) welcoming and social support programs for newcomers;

(bb) before, during, and afterschool programs to enrich learning and provide safe recreation;

(cc) articulation programs to support grade transitions;

(dd) addressing transition concerns related to vulnerable populations, including, but not limited to, those in homeless education, migrant education, and special education programs;

(ee) vocational and college counseling and school-to-career programs;

(ff) support in moving to postschool living and work;

(gg) outreach programs to re-engage truants and dropouts in learning;

(III) responding to, minimizing the psychosocial impact of, and preventing crisis. The emphasis is on ensuring that systematic interventions are established for emergency, crisis, and follow-up responses and for preventing crises at a school and throughout a complex of schools. Examples include:

(aa) establishment of a crisis team to ensure immediate response when emergencies arise, and to provide aftermath assistance as necessary and appropriate so that pupils are not unduly delayed in re-engaging in learning;

(bb) schoolwide and school-linked prevention programs to enhance safety at school and to reduce violence, bullying, harassment, abuse, and other threats to safety in order to ensure a supportive and productive learning environment;

(cc) classroom curriculum approaches focused on preventing crisis events, including, but not limited to, violence, suicide, and physical or sexual abuse;

(IV) enhancing home involvement. The emphasis is on ensuring there are systematic interventions and contexts at school that are designed to lead to greater involvement that supports student progress with respect to addressing learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Examples include:

(aa) interventions that address specific needs of the caretakers of a pupil, including, but not limited to, providing ways for them to enhance literacy and job skills and meet their basic obligations to the children in their care;

(bb) interventions for outreaching and re-engaging homes that have disengaged from school involvement;

(cc) improved systems for communication and connection between home and school;

(dd) improved systems for home involvement in decisions and problem solving affecting the student;

(ee) enhanced strategies for engaging the home in supporting the basic learning and development of their children to prevent or at least minimize learning, behavior, and emotional problems;

(V) outreaching to the community in order to build linkages. The emphasize is on ensuring that there are systematic interventions to provide outreach to and engage strategically with public and private community resources to support learning at school of students with learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Examples include:

(aa) training, screening, and maintaining volunteers and mentors to assist school staff in enhancing pupil motivation and capability for school learning;

(bb) job shadowing and service learning programs to enhance the expectations of pupils for postgraduation opportunities;

(cc) enhancing limited school resources through linkages with community resources, including, but not limited to, libraries, recreational facilities, and postsecondary education institutions;

(dd) Enhancing community and school connections to heighten a sense of community;

(VI) providing special assistance for pupils and families as necessary. The emphasis is on ensuring that there are systems and programs established to provide or connect with direct services when necessary to address barriers to the learning of pupils at school. Examples include:

(aa) special assistance for teachers in addressing the problems of specific individuals;

(bb) processing requests and referrals for special assistance, including, but not limited to, counseling or special education;

(cc) ensuring effective case and resource management when pupils are receiving direct services;

(dd) connecting with community service providers to fill gaps in school services and enhance access for referrals.

(M) a description of the actions the local educational agency will take to implement public school choice and enhance learning supports and supplemental services, consistent with the requirements of section 1116;

SEC. 1116. ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT AND LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.

(b) SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT-

(3) SCHOOL PLAN-

(A) REVISED PLAN-

(iii) provide an assurance that the school will spend not less than 10 percent of the funds made available to the school under section 1113 for each fiscal year that the school is in school improvement status, for the purpose of providing to the school's teachers, learning support staff, and principal high-quality professional development that —

(ix) enhance learning supports and incorporate, as appropriate, activities before school, after school, during the summer, and during any extension of the school year; and

(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE-

(B) SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE- Such technical assistance —

(i) shall include assistance in analyzing data from the assessments required under section 1111(b)(3), and other examples of student work, to identify and address problems in instruction, and problems if any, in implementing learning supports and the parental involvement requirements described in section 1118, the professional development requirements described in section 1119, and the responsibilities of the school and local educational agency under the school plan, and to identify and address solutions to such problems;

(ii) shall include assistance in identifying and implementing professional development, instructional strategies, ~~and~~ methods of instruction, and learning supports that are based on scientifically based research and that have proven effective in addressing the specific instructional issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement;

(5) FAILURE TO MAKE ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS AFTER IDENTIFICATION-

(B) shall enhance learning supports and make supplemental educational services available consistent with subsection (e)(1); and

(C) ROLE OF LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY-

(iii) continue to enhance learning supports and make supplemental educational services available, in accordance with subsection (e), to children who remain in the school; and

(iv) identify the school for corrective action and take at least one of the following corrective actions:

(II) Institute and fully implement a new curriculum and enhance learning

supports, including providing appropriate professional development for all relevant staff, that is based on scientifically based research and offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for low-achieving students and enabling the school to make adequate yearly progress.

(8) RESTRUCTURING-

(A) FAILURE TO MAKE ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS—

(ii) continue to enhance learning supports and make supplemental educational services available, in accordance with subsection (e), to children who remain in the school; and

(10) FUNDS FOR TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES-

(A) IN GENERAL—

(ii) an amount equal to 5 percent of its allocation under subpart 2 to enhance learning supports and provide supplemental educational services under subsection (e); and

(iii) an amount equal to the remaining 10 percent of its allocation under subpart 2 for transportation under paragraph (9), enhancing learning supports, and supplemental educational services under subsection (e), or ~~both~~ all three, as the agency determines.

(c) STATE REVIEW AND LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY IMPROVEMENT—

(7) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY REVISIONS-

(A) PLAN—

(i) incorporate scientifically based research strategies that strengthen the core academic and learning supports programs in schools served by the local educational agency;

(iii) address the professional development needs of the instructional and learning supports staff serving the agency by committing to spend not less than 10 percent of the funds received by the local educational agency under subpart 2 for each fiscal year in which the agency is identified for improvement for professional development (including funds reserved for professional development under subsection (b)(3)(A)(iii)), but excluding funds reserved for professional development under section 1119;

(iv) include specific measurable achievement goals and targets and learning

supports goals and targets for each of the groups of students identified in the disaggregated data pursuant to section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), consistent with adequate yearly progress as defined under section 1111(b)(2);

(v) address the fundamental teaching and learning and learning supports needs in the schools of that agency, and the specific academic problems of low—achieving students, including a determination of why the local educational agency's prior plan failed to bring about increased student academic achievement;

(vi) enhance learning supports and incorporate, as appropriate, activities before school, after school, during the summer, and during an extension of the school year;

(viii) include strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school as cited in Section 1112, (a) (1) (IV).

(9) STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY—

(B) METHODS AND STRATEGIES—Technical assistance provided under this section by the State educational agency or an entity authorized by such agency shall be supported by effective methods and instructional strategies based on scientifically based research. Such technical assistance shall address problems, if any, in implementing the learning supports component described in Section 1112, the parental involvement activities described in section 1118 and the professional development activities described in section 1119.

(10) CORRECTIVE ACTION—

(A) DEFINITION— As used in this paragraph, the term 'corrective action' means action, consistent with State law, that—

(i) substantially and directly responds to the consistent academic failure that caused the State to take such action and to any underlying staffing, curricular, learning supports, or other problems in the agency; and

(C) CERTAIN CORRECTIVE ACTIONS REQUIRED— In the case of a local educational agency identified for corrective action, the State educational agency shall take at least one of the following corrective actions:

(ii) Instituting and fully implementing a new curriculum and enhancing learning supports ~~that is~~ based on State and local academic content and achievement standards, including providing appropriate professional development based on scientifically based research for all relevant staff, that offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for low-achieving students.

(e) LEARNING SUPPORTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES-

New

(1) LEARNING SUPPORTS – In the case of any school described in paragraph (5), (7), or (8) of subsection (b), the local educational agency serving such school shall, subject to this subsection, arrange for the enhancement of its Learning Supports Component.

(±2) SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES—

(f) SCHOOLS AND LEAS PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED FOR IMPROVEMENT OR CORRECTIVE ACTION—

(2) LEAS—

(C) SPECIAL RULE— For the schools and other local educational agencies described under paragraphs (1) and (2), as required, the State shall ensure that public school choice in accordance with subparagraphs (b)(1)(E) and (F) and enhanced learning supports and supplemental education services in accordance with subsection (e) are provided not later than the first day of the 2002-2003 school year.

SEC. 1117. SCHOOL SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION.

(a) SYSTEM FOR SUPPORT-

(4) STATEWIDE SYSTEM-

(A) In order to achieve the purpose described in paragraph (1), the statewide system shall include, at a minimum, the following approaches:

(iii) Designating and using distinguished teachers, learning supports staff, and principals who are chosen from schools served under this part that have been especially successful in improving academic achievement and a supportive, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment.

(5) SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAMS-

(A) COMPOSITION- Each school support team established under this section shall be composed of persons knowledgeable about scientifically based research and practice on teaching and learning, learning supports, and about successful schoolwide projects, school reform, and improving educational opportunities for low-achieving students, including —

(B) FUNCTIONS- Each school support team assigned to a school under this section shall –

(i) review and analyze all facets of the school's operation, including the design and operation of the instructional program and learning supports component, and assist the school in developing recommendations for improving student performance in that school;

(iii) evaluate, at least semiannually, the effectiveness of school personnel assigned to the school, including identifying outstanding teachers, learning supports staff, and principals, and make findings and recommendations to the

school, the local educational agency, and, where appropriate, the State educational agency; and

SEC. 1118. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.

(e) BUILDING CAPACITY FOR INVOLVEMENT- To ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, each school and local educational agency assisted under this part —

(1) shall provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or local educational agency, as appropriate, to

(A) enhance their readiness and ability to enable the school performance of their children as cited in Section 1112, (a) (1) (IV); and

(B) in understanding such topics as the State's academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards, State and local academic assessments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children;

(6) may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, learning supports staff, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training;

Concluding Comments

It is time for school improvement decision makers to face the fact that *multifaceted problems usually require comprehensive, integrated solutions applied concurrently and over time*. The need is for enhanced supports and integrated systems that enable learning by addressing barriers to learning and teaching. To these ends, this report proposes specific additions to the *No Child Left Behind Act*.

A growing body of resources and pioneering initiatives provide a solid base and ample precedents upon which to expand NCLB's focus on learning supports. And, the work fully incorporates the conclusions of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development which stress:

School systems are not responsible for meeting every need of their students.

But ...

When the need directly affects learning, the school must meet the challenge.