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UCSB STUDY FINDS FREQUENT SCHOOL CHANGES HURT BOTH STUDENTS AND THEIR SCHOOLS

The debate on improving California's educational system needs to include the issue of students who transfer schools, say University of California, Santa Barbara researchers in a just-completed study that backs this claim with hard facts.

"Student mobility---the practice of elementary and secondary students changing schools for reasons other than school promotion---is more widespread in California than any other state and often damaging to students and schools," says Russell W. Rumberger, professor of education and co-author of the study. "Student mobility affects one out of every three students and one out of every five schools, reducing both student and school performance. The reform proposals designed to improve the educational performance of the state's students and schools just passed by the California legislators does not address this factor."

"Schools are not simply victims of mobility, but are also the cause of a great deal of student movement," added Katherine A. Larson, a researcher in UCSB's Graduate School of Education and co-author of the study. "Our data found that for a variety of reasons schools create 50 percent of the school changes that secondary students make. This finding adds to the importance of our data because it means that perhaps we can help schools change those practices that increase student mobility."

The study examined the extent of mobility among California students and schools and how it varied among types of schools and students, the educational consequences of changing schools for students and schools, the causes of student mobility, and possible solutions to reduce the harmful effects of frequent moves.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.