

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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August 28, 2020 Education News Update

In honor of Labor Day, there will be no education news update. The summary will be published next on September 11.

TEACHING & LEARNING

Black history getting new emphasis

After a summer of demonstrations against racism, states, school boards, school systems and teachers across the country are grappling with how to ramp up Black history lessons. Black history instruction tends to focus on three areas — enslavement, the Civil War and the civil rights movement — and often is shoehorned into Black History Month in February, the shortest month of the year. Now some states, schools and teachers are moving to infuse the Black experience into the broader social studies curriculum. Many Black history classes start with enslavement, but that dehumanizes Blacks as victims, educators say. So some schools go back further to the beginnings of civilization and the rich history of African culture.

Marsha Mercer. "Black history instruction gets new emphasis in many states." *Route Fifty*. August 20, 2020

<https://www.routefifty.com/management/2020/08/black-history-instruction-gets-new-emphasis-many-states/167841/>

School nurses prepare for dealing with coronavirus

In the battle against the coronavirus, school nurses could become the new front-line medics, standing between the children and their possible spread of the disease. Many nurses admit they worry about keeping everyone in their school safe. They worry about having enough masks and gloves for themselves. They worry about situations that haven't been scripted in plans. And they worry what will happen if people in their school start getting sick. Since children like to play close together and share, and many teens believe they are impervious to illness, nurses see the first days of school as a challenge. Nationally, some schools already have restarted, with mixed results.

Craig Schneider. "Could school nurses become the new front-line medics?" *Newsday*. August 22, 2020

https://www.newsday.com/long-island/education/school-nurses-preparing-for-reopenings-1.48368277?user=5c8795827e553f56154105c0&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Morning-Update

Livestreaming classes can lead to privacy issues

When in-person classes are livestreamed to distance learners, every heated class debate, teacher mistake, and student outburst is on display and might be recorded.

Sarah Schwartz. "As Teachers Livestream Classes, Privacy Issues Arise." *Education Week*. August 20, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/08/20/as-teachers-livestream-classes-privacy-issues-arise.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59657716&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

New child care groups fill gap as schools go remote

As school districts move to remote instruction for the fall, day-care providers, dance studios, and after-school programs step in to fill school-day child-care gaps.

Christina A. Samuels. "New Players Fill Child-Care Gap as Schools Go Remote." *Education Week*. August 20, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/08/20/new-players-fill-child-care-gap-as-schools.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59657716&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Teachers felt less successful teaching online this spring

The spring semester, in which schools closed and teachers pivoted to remote instruction on a dime, was challenging for everyone involved. But [a new survey shows that](#) teachers' sense of success dramatically declined—a troubling sign, since many schools have started the new school year remotely, too. But teachers who had supportive school leadership were the least likely to experience a dip in their sense of success.

Madeline Will. "Teachers Felt Less Successful During the Spring School Closures, Survey Finds." *Education Week*. August 26, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2020/08/teachers_felt_less_successful_during_the_spring_school_closures_study_finds.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59661058&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Pandemic-caused learning loss hits younger students differently

New research suggests schools will need to target interventions differently to help students in different grades and subjects recover from pandemic disruption. All students likely will experience learning loss, according to an analysis from Illuminate Education, more so in math and in reading. Yet, learning loss differed by grade level: K-1 students saw greater losses in reading growth; g.5 students' ability to read aloud suffered most..

Sarah D. Sparks. "COVID-Related Learning Loss Will Hit Younger Students Differently." *Education Week*. August 26, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2020/08/covid-related_learning_loss_varies_by_grade.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59661058&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Tips for offering special education online

It is possible for students with special needs to succeed in an online learning environment, according to a special-education teacher at California Virtual Academies. She shares three keys to success, including constant communication and working with the student's individualized education program team.

Lindsay Scacco. "Special education and online learning: What you need to know." *Smart Brief/Education*. August 25, 2020
https://www.smartbrief.com/original/2020/08/special-education-and-online-learning-what-you-need-know?utm_source=brief

Online learning more effective this semester

Last spring when schools switched to distance learning no one was prepared not much teaching or learning occurred. Families are reporting that the learning process seems to be more effective during the first few weeks of online learning so far this semester. As schools reopen, many districts, including the largest, are starting with either some or all remote learning – the path for which they are least prepared. Although many districts still struggle to help students who have no access to technology, many have at least taken basic steps to avoid past failures. Measures include more live instruction over the internet; consistent scheduling across grades and classes; a common communication tool for teachers, students, and parents; and a return to attendance-taking and grading.

Francine Kiefer. "Remote reboot: How are students faring this time around?" *Christian Science Monitor*. August 27, 2020
https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Education/2020/0825/Remote-reboot-How-are-students-faring-this-time-around?i=363657&fmc_sub=13815550&l=1223_HTML&u=13423710&mid=10979696&ib=2&cmpid=ema.EqualEd.20200827&src=newsletter

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Federal administration declares teachers are essential workers

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has classified teachers as essential workers during the coronavirus pandemic as the Trump administration presses schools nationwide to bring students back to class.

Gabriella Borter & Brendan O'Brien. "Trump administration classifies teachers essential workers during pandemic." *Reuters*. August 20, 2020
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa-idUSKBN25G1ZK>

Because they are 'essential' some teachers told not to quarantine when exposed to COVID-19

In a move backed by the White House, some districts are telling teachers to come to class after they've been exposed to the virus, which experts say could propagate an outbreak.

Madeline Will. "Deemed 'Essential Workers,' Some Teachers Told to Skip Quarantine After COVID-19 Exposure." *Education Week*. August 21, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/08/21/deemed-essential-workers-some-teachers-told-to.html?cmp=soceml-twfdblitz-ewnow>

Less than 1/3 of Americans think school will be safe

Nearly two-thirds of Americans do not believe it is safe for K-12 students to return to school, according to a new nationwide survey. Only 31% of people responding to the survey think returning to school is very safe or somewhat safe. The survey indicates that women, people with lower incomes, non-whites, and Democrats are less likely to consider sending their children back to school this fall.

Megan Schumann, Rutgers University. "Survey: Only 31% of Americans think return to school is safe." *Futurity*. August 20, 2020
<https://www.futurity.org/return-to-school-safety-survey-2425592-2/>

Schools weigh risks, have no good options

School districts and families are faced with difficult decisions about whether to open schools and bring students to campus for in-person learning or keep them at home and deliver instruction remotely. On-site attendance carries risk for students, staff and families, but prolonged closures could affect children's social and academic development, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Sophie Bushwick. "Schools Have No Good Options for Reopening during COVID-19." *Scientific American*. August 20, 2020
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/schools-have-no-good-options-for-reopening-during-covid-19/>

COVID-19 relief fund for schools is running out

About 5% of the \$30.6 billion included in federal coronavirus relief funding for education approved in March has not been committed, according to spending data. The findings come as lawmakers appear stalled on a vote for another relief package, which could include more funds for schools.

Andrew Ujifusa. "As Beltway Dawdles, Schools Nearly Out of Money to Spend From Last Relief Package." *Education Week*. August 20, 2020
<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/08/schools-coronavirus-aid-used-money.html>

Federal judge issues injunction against U.S.E.D. coronavirus aid rule

A federal judge has ruled against U.S. Department of Education in a lawsuit over how much coronavirus aid public schools must set aside for private school students. Public school groups and officials argued that the department rule unfairly deprives their schools and disadvantaged students of crucial funding during the pandemic. In a preliminary injunction halting implementation of the rule while she considers the case pitting Washington state against the U.S.E.D., U.S. District Court Judge Barbara J. Rothstein rejected the department's arguments. The U.S.E.D. interim final rule, issued in July, pushes school districts to reserve money under the CARES Act, the federal coronavirus

stimulus plan, for services to all local private school students, irrespective of their backgrounds. That represents a major departure from how education law typically distributes federal money for "equitable services."

Andrew Ujifusa. "Judge Issues Blistering Injunction Against Betsy DeVos' Coronavirus Aid Rule." *Education Week*. August 22, 2020
<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/08/judge-devos-coronavirus-rule-injunction.html?cmp=soceml-twfdbltz-ewnwo>

Pandemic school reopening battle moves to courts

Lawsuits are percolating nationwide as state officials, parents, teachers, and others clash over how and whether school buildings should reopen amid the continuing pandemic.

Mark Walsh. "COVID-19 School Reopening Battle Moves to the Courts." *Education Week*. August 21, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/08/21/covid-19-school-reopening-battle-moves-to-the.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59657716&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Iowa district and union sue governor

An Iowa school district and teachers union have sued the governor over her mandate requiring schools to reopen for in-person instruction.

Andrea Noble. "A Showdown Over Returning to the Classroom." *Route Fifty*. August 21, 2020

<https://www.route50.com/management/2020/08/showdown-over-returning-classroom/167913/?oref=rf-today-nl>

COVID-19 meal waiver set to expire

The U.S. Department of Agriculture won't extend a waiver from school meal requirements that provided more flexibility to feed students during interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Evie Blad. "Schools Sound the Alarm as Key COVID-19 Meal Waiver Is Set to Expire." *Education Week*. August 21, 2020

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/08/school-meal-waivers-covid-child-hunger.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59657716&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Districts lay off paraprofessionals

With looming budget cuts and no clear need for teacher aides, administrators are gutting their paraprofessional staff, a move that could have long-term academic consequences.

Daarel Burnette II. "Districts Lay Off Thousands of Paraprofessionals as Students Switch to Remote Learning." *Education Week*. August 25, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/District_Dossier/2020/08/districts_layoff_thousands_of_.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59659919&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Trump lists education issues for next term

As the president accepts his party's nomination, his messaging reflects a bundle of priorities, from getting schools back open and pushing school choice to the hot-button issue of how American history is taught.

Andrew Ujifusa. "Trump Targets History Class as Well as School Choice in Bid for Second Term." *Education Week*. August 26, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/08/26/trump-targets-history-class-as-well-as.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1-rm&M=59661058&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

2nd federal judge blocks U.S.E.D. virus relief rule

A second federal judge has ruled against Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and her department's controversial rule governing how much coronavirus aid relief public schools must set aside for private school students. U.S. District Court Judge James Donato wrote that the Trump administration's coronavirus relief rule about private school students is "manifestly not in the public interest." He granted a preliminary injunction blocking the U.S.E.D. from implementing or enforcing its interim final rule in several states and school districts while he hears arguments in the case. Public school officials and advocates have sharply criticized her rule, saying it siphons money away from their schools at a time of immense need for many students during the pandemic.

Andrew Ujifusa. "Second Judge Blocks DeVos' Virus Relief Rule, Calls Her Reasoning 'Jiggery-Pokery'." *Education Week*. August 26, 2020

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/08/second-judge-blocks-devos-coronavirus-relief-rule.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59661058&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

NEW YORK STATE

NYC schools may move outside to provide learning

NYC schools will be able to use their yards, along with streets and nearby parks, as part of a new "outdoor learning" plan unveiled on August 24. Schools won't be required to use outdoor space, but principals who want to can apply to the Education Department to participate. Schools that wish to close streets or use nearby parks will be able to work with the Transportation and Parks departments to do so. The NYC principals' union wants more time to make workable arrangements. Officials encouraged schools that want to close off streets to apply by August 28, and promised a response by September 4. Schools will have to provide their own barriers and staffing to cordon off roads. Schools should prioritize outside space for classes like drama and gym that need more space, officials added.

Michael Elsen-Rooney & Shant Shahrigian. "NYC schools to use streets, parts under new 'outdoor learning' plan." *NY Daily News*. August 24, 2020

<https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/ny-outdoor-learning-bill-de-blasio-richard-carranza-20200824-b55ytiipppfk3fl2k2qlbrppm-story.html>

Some fall sports get state okay

Governor Cuomo gave permission for school teams to play 'low-risk' sports such as soccer, track, field hockey and swimming this fall, and for practice to begin on September 21. Full-physical contact sports like football may not. Such teams may practice but not compete.

James Allen. "Cuomo: 'Low-risk' high school sports may play Sept. 21, but not football." *Albany Times Union*. August 24, 2020
https://www.timesunion.com/sports/article/Low-risk-fall-high-school-sports-may-play-15510348.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424c17c09a3f115af

FAQ about school reopening in NYS

Here's what you need to know before kids start school for the academic year. The *USA TODAY* Network New York spoke to school officials and combed the state Education Department's re-opening guidance to help answer the questions and clear up any lingering confusion.

Maggie Gilroy, Sophie Grossrode, Joseph Spector. & Gary Stern. "FAQ: Here's everything you need to know about the start of the school year in New York." *Democrat & Chronicle*. August 27, 2020

https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/education/2020/08/27/schools-reopening-new-york-what-you-need-to-know/5632516002/?for-guid=bc6a7c11-cfcd-4c73-996-4962856c9d54&utm_source=democratandchronicle-daily%20Briefing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily_briefing&utm_term=hero

Agreement reached between educators, mayor on opening NYC schools

NYC teachers will get 30 minutes every morning to plan for the day, under an agreement the de Blasio administration reached with the United Federation of Teachers. The agreement is seen as an important step but concern about the scheduled September 10 opening remains high.

Shant Sharigian. "Mayor de Blasio announces agreement with teachers, educators on 'instructional guidance' for NYC schools." *NY Daily News*. August 27, 2020

<https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/ny-bill-de-blasio-united-federation-of-teachers-20200827-feorycnpvbfntghhip5qxkl6ye-story.html>

Colleges to go remote if coronavirus spikes

As students returned to campuses across NYS this month, Governor Cuomo announced on August 27 colleges will be required to move to remote learning for a two-week period if the campus sees a spike in coronavirus cases. Public health officials have warned of possible outbreaks in COVID-19 cases as college students return to campuses, and some universities and colleges have already experienced spikes in cases.

Amanda Fries. "Cuomo: Colleges must go remote if coronavirus cases spike." *Albany Times Union*. August 27, 2020

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Cuomo-to-colleges-See-a-spike-in-COVID-19-cases-15519235.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424c17c09a3f115af

Unions call on NYS Health Department to mandate mask wearing in school

Labor unions representing teachers across NYS have called on the state health department to mandate wearing face masks at all times indoors during the school day. NYSUT as well as the American Federation of Teachers joined local educators and others to send a letter to health Commissioner Howard Zucker citing ongoing concerns with schools' reopening plans and mask policies in some school districts.

Amanda Fries. "NYSUT calls for mandatory mask wearing indoors as school resumes." *Albany Times Union*. August 27, 2020

https://blog.timesunion.com/capitol/archives/290668/nysut-calls-for-mandatory-mask-wearing-indoors-as-school-resumes/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424c17c09a3f115af