

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

Compiled by Judy Wadsworth, Alpha Alpha, for the Monroe County School Boards Association and shared by permission. Send comments to judithw@frontiernet.net

January 14, 2022 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Educator debunks myths about inclusive education

Jamie Maier, assistive technology specialist and district tech support for the Tigard-Tualatin School District in Oregon, addresses three common myths about inclusive education. He writes that despite these myths, assistive technology is not only for students in special education and universal design for learning is not a passing fad.

Jamie Maier. "3 inclusive education myths busted." *K-12 Dive*. January 6, 2022

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/3-inclusive-education-myths-busted/616717/>

Teachers running out of sick days

Working in crowded school buildings during a pandemic has created anxiety for many educators. But for some school employees who have run out of paid leave, there's a financial cost of getting sick, too. With a shortage of substitutes and pressure to stay open, administrators are reluctant to extend paid time off for teachers with COVID.

Mark Lieberman & Madeline Will. "Some Teachers Are Running Out of Sick Days, and Administrators Are Hesitant to Help." *Education Week*. January 07, 2022

https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/some-teachers-are-running-out-of-sick-days-and-administrators-are-hesitant-to-help/2022/01?utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eu&M=64270867&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Low-income students expected to fall further behind during the 2021-22 school year

Since the summer of 2021, eight new reports include fresh data and analysis on how remote learning is harming student achievement. Key findings include:

- * Students learned less than usual, leaving them a few months behind; math declines are larger than reading.
- * There are signs that high-achieving students aren't behind at all.
- * Low-income students who learned remotely during the 2020-21 school year are suffering the most academically.
- * Fall data testing show that 2021 summer school generally didn't help kids catch up.

Jill Barshay. "More studies mark the pandemic's toll on student achievement." *Hechinger Report*. January 10, 2022

https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-more-studies-mark-the-pandemics-toll-on-student-achievement/?utm_source=The+Hechinger+Report&utm_campaign=79ec7253f0-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_01_07_07_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d3ee4c3e04-79ec7253f0-322606321

Report: How districts use SEL to improve outcomes

Ten years ago, eight school districts formed the Collaborative Districts Initiative through the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, along with assistance from the American Institutes for Research. The initiative has grown to include 12 more districts, and a recent report shares lessons learned about SEL best practices.

Kara Arundel. "Decade of data highlights SEL best practices from 20 districts." *K-12 Dive*. January 7, 2022

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/how-large-school-districts-have-expanded-sustained-sel-practices/616811/>

Pandemic worsening students' mental health

The coronavirus pandemic has worsened an already problematic rise in mental health challenges for K-12 students, educators and experts say. In some cases they are seeing spikes in aggression and violence in schools as a result.

Rhithu Chatterjee. "Kids are back in school — and struggling with mental health issues." *National Public Radio*. January 7, 2022

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2022/01/07/1070969456/kids-are-back-in-school-and-struggling-with-mental-health-issues>

Teachers: Mentoring is valuable for students

A recent survey has found that 88% of teachers say one-on-one mentoring is valuable for students, with 82% saying mentoring helps improve academic performance, and that students who have a mentor are more likely to volunteer in their communities and less likely to skip school.

Kristal Kuykendall. "National Survey Shows Mentoring More Important Than Ever for Student Success." *T.H.E. Journal*. January 10, 2022.

<https://thejournal.com/articles/2022/01/10/national-survey-shows-mentoring-more-important-than-ever-for-student-success.aspx>

More equitable and engaging way to teach ES writing

When teachers tie writing instruction to what students are reading, learners begin with a more level playing field. Knowledge-building curricula include materials that help students learn about important topics while developing critical skills at the same time. [Research shows](#) that increasing students' background knowledge on important topics supports their understanding of texts and ability to absorb and retain information. So, with a literacy approach that explicitly emphasizes the development of knowledge and skills, writing and reading lessons are intertwined, rather

than taught as two separate and disconnected blocks. Writing assignments are rooted in the texts that students are reading, and texts connect important topics like history, science, or art.

Tanisha Washington. "A More Equitable (and Engaging) Way to Teach Writing in Elementary School." *Edutopia*. January 7, 2022
https://www.edutopia.org/article/more-equitable-and-engaging-way-teach-writing-elementary-school?utm_content=linkpos3&utm_source=edu-legacy&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=weekly-2022-01-12

Virtual IEP meetings & ed tech aid special ed compliance

Some school districts are using education-technology supplements and virtual individualized education program meetings that include parents to better address the needs of students with disabilities as the pandemic continues. Without federally approved flexibility on equity rules, some school systems have come under fire for not complying with or falling behind in students' IEPs.

Kara Arundel. "Districts get creative to maintain special ed services as COVID drags on." *K-12 Dive*. January 11, 2022
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/special-education-programs-work-through-covid-19-hardships/616971/>

Tips for promoting student independence

A fear of failure may be interfering with students' independence, but teachers can help build self-confidence by offering trust and helping students become competent. Allowing students to fail in a safe environment also teaches them that failure is not "the end of the world," which emboldens students to try again.

Lenore Skenazy. "Anxious, Passive, Glum Students Are No Fun. Here's An Alternative." *T.H.E. Journal*. January 10, 2022
<https://thejournal.com/articles/2022/01/10/anxious-passive-glum-students-are-no-fun-heres-an-alternative.aspx>

Can credit recovery improve graduation rates?

Utah and Michigan have dedicated federal relief funds for education to support credit recovery programs. The goal is to help students stay on track to graduate HS. Personalizing and growing credit recovery options are among popular nontraditional approaches districts have supported with relief funding. This article highlights the pros and cons of such programs.

Kara Arundel. "Schools expand credit recovery to keep students on track for graduation." *K-12 Dive*. January 12, 2022
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/schools-expand-credit-recovery-programs-to-keep-students-on-track/617054/>

Commentary: Movement-oriented SEL could improve student learning

An education researcher makes the case for incorporating physical actions. Whether learning in-person or virtually, students can benefit from the practice, especially those students who don't sit still very well.

Zoe Darazsdi is a counseling and education researcher, mental-health counselor, and autism-rights advocate. She is in a master's of science program in clinical mental-health counseling at Villanova University.

Zoe Darazsdi. "Movement-Oriented SEL Might Just Improve Student Learning." *Education Week*. January 13, 2022
https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/opinion-movement-oriented-sel-might-just-improve-student-learning/2022/01?utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eu&M=64274793&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Shortage of substitute teachers widespread

As some school districts switch to virtual instruction because of coronavirus infections, officials say those continuing in person are struggling to find substitute teachers. Higher teacher absences due to the more contagious Omicron variant have some administrators filling in for teachers.

Michael Melia. "Schools sticking with in-person learning scramble for subs." *Associated Press*. January 6, 2022
<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-health-education-pandemics-cincinnati-6c6be609e8d74d402f714a06beb52dea>

Final \$41 billion in relief funding to schools to be released

The U.S.E.D. has approved spending plans for all 50 states and the District of Columbia, paving the way for the release of a final \$41 billion portion of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief aid under the American Rescue Plan. The fund dispersed \$81 billion for schools in early 2021, and states and districts must obligate the funding by September 30, 2024.

Naaz Modan. "With all 50 states' ARP plans approved, Ed Dept to release remaining \$41B." *K-12 Dive*. January 5, 2022
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/with-all-50-states-arp-plans-approved-ed-dept-to-release-remaining-41b/616668/>

U.S.D.A. raises reimbursement rate for school lunches

The USDA on January 7 announced \$750 million in support for school nutrition programs nationwide in response to supply chain challenges and inflation. USDA said it would adjust reimbursement rates, sending an additional \$0.25 per meal to schools.

Tami Luhby. "USDA pumps \$750 million into school meals to counter inflation, supply chain woes." *CNN*. January 7, 2022
<https://www.cnn.com/2022/01/07/politics/usda-school-lunch-inflation-supply-chain/index.html>

Value of virtual recruiting

Virtual recruiting provides an opportunity for school districts to adopt a less-costly job-filling process, hire teachers and administrators from farther away, and increase staff diversity. Districts can use virtual tools to create a strong, easy-to-find online presence via websites and social media.

Elizabeth Heubeck. "How School Districts Can Get Better at Virtual Recruiting." *Education Week*. January 07, 2022

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/how-school-districts-can-get-better-at-virtual-recruiting/2022/01>

Cybersecurity actions that can make districts safer

Nearly half of school district IT officials replying to an *EdTech* survey say they need help with cybersecurity prevention, detection and recovery. K–12 schools that don't have a solid approach to preventing and handling cyber incidents can create one — even if they're understaffed — using these key phases. Evaluating systems annually and employing penetration tests can help teach and reinforce important measures.

Erin Brereton. "The 4 Phases of a Cybersecurity Strategy That Schools Must Implement." *Ed Tech*. January 11, 2022

<https://edtechmagazine.com/k12/article/2022/01/4-phases-cybersecurity-strategy-schools-must-implement>

NEW YORK STATE

Changing pandemic guidance confusing to schools

The changing rules for isolating people who have COVID-19 left school administrators navigating in the dark Thursday night as they announced that students can return to class while still sick.

Kathleen Moore. "Schools tackle confusing, conflicting new CDC rules." *Albany Times Union*. January 8, 2022

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Schools-tackle-confusing-conflicting-new-CDC-16758189.php?utm_source=First+Read+Newsletters&utm_campaign=744f8e47db-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_01_08_12_08&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_252d27c7d1-744f8e47db-34743040&mc_cid=744f8e47db&mc_eid=bc2625d4e3

Comptroller: Hikes in school property taxes to be capped at 2%

With inflation on the rise, Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli announced on January 12 that increases in school property taxes for the 2022-23 academic year would be capped at 2% — up from the current year's 1.23%. Under the state's cap law, in effect since 2012, annual tax hikes for school districts and other local governments are limited to 2% or the inflation rate, whichever is lower. The last time the maximum hit 2% was 2019. The 2% limit is below the inflation rate, which is running at 4.7%, according to the State Comptroller's Office. The 2% cap applies to 676 school districts across NYS in the fiscal year starting July 1. The cap also applies to 10 cities.

John Hildebrand. "Hikes in school property taxes to be capped at 2%, state comptroller says." *Newsday*. January 12, 2022.

https://www.newsday.com/long-island/education/state-levy-capped-at-2-1.50475075#utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Afternoon-Update&utm_term=non

State health department clarifies K-12 five-day quarantine policy

NYS Department of Health officials on January 10 clarified quarantine and isolation standards for K-12 schools statewide. In a letter to school leaders, the department addressed questions from school districts about guidance by the Centers for Disease Control on Thursday that reduces quarantine and isolation time from 10 days to five. Most school districts by January 11 had adopted the new five-day standard. People who are immunocompromised are advised to follow the standard 10-day isolation guidance. The lack of statewide standards caused confusion for school leaders and parents as each district and county health department was left to address the CDC's new guidance while attempting to keep children in in-person school.

Rachel Silberstein. "State clarifies five-day quarantine policy for K-12, restricts unboosted teens." *Albany Times Union*. January 12, 2022

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/State-clarifies-five-day-quarantine-policy-for-16769509.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_dailyheadlines&sid=5ae0930791d15c3e666094a8

State health department guidance requires booster for after school activities

New guidance from the NYS Department of Health will restrict some students, teachers, and school staff from participating in sports, extracurriculars, and other after school activities, depending on their booster status. The guidance — issued to school districts and local health departments on January 10 — says those aged 12 and older who are eligible for a COVID-19 booster shot, and who are not yet boosted, will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular or after school activities if they are exposed to an individual with COVID-19. This new guidance only impacts extracurriculars, and says all fully vaccinated students who have been exposed may continue to attend school regardless of booster shots. This same rule applies for teachers and school staff members.

"New booster requirement for after school activities, state guidance says." *WROC-TV8*. January 12, 2022

https://www.rochesterfirst.com/coronavirus/booster-shots-now-required-eligible-exposed-after-school-activities-sports-extracurriculars-new-york-state-guidance-health-department-districts-covid19-coronavirus-rules-testing-vaccine/nxs_link=big-story_1_title_6&email=5d13d09406fe309325210cc455be4940065cc236&utm_source=Salithru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=WROC%20Daily%20News%202022-01-13&utm_term=Daily%20News