

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

October 12, 2018 News Round-up

TEACHING & LEARNING

Study examines effective teaching practices

Some long-held teaching practices have not been effective, such as customizing instruction to learner styles, according to a report from the National Research Council's Committee on Developments in the Science of Learning. The report examines the science behind learning and makes several recommendations for schools, including understanding students' prior knowledge and experiences and supporting students in directing their own learning.

Sarah D. Sparks. "How People Learn: A Landmark Report Gets an Update." *Education Week*. October 8, 2018
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2018/10/national_academies_How_People_Learn_II.html

GED attainment declines following changes

The number of HS general equivalency diplomas issued in the US fell by more than 45% between 2012 and 2016, according to a recent analysis. The decline comes amid an overhaul of the traditional GED exam, which includes new tests intended to align more closely with Common Core State Standards.

Jill Barshay. "GED and other high school equivalency degrees drop by more than 40% nationwide since 2012." *Hechinger Report*. October 8, 2018
<https://hechingerreport.org/ged-and-other-high-school-equivalency-degrees-drop-by-more-than-40-nationwide-since-2012/>

How schools can help teens to manage emotions & make better decisions

Cognitive and neuroscience research points ways schools can help leverage teenagers' strengths in this unique developmental period when they're learning to regulate emotions and make good decisions.

Sarah D. Sparks. "The Teen Brain: How Schools Can Help Students Manage Emotions and Make Better Decisions." *Education Week*. October 9, 2018
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/10/10/the-teen-brain-how-schools-can-help.html?cmp=e-ml-enl-eu-news1-rm&M=58635868&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Commentary: 3 strategies to keep good teachers

Top teachers in a Delaware school district are offered pathways for advancement and leadership opportunities. The district's assistant superintendent describes how the district keeps good teachers by creating instructional coach positions, involving them in an aspiring leader program and equipping teachers to lead professional development.

Peter Leida. "How to retain great teachers: Start with leadership opportunities." *eSchool News*. October 9th, 2018
<https://www.eschoolnews.com/2018/10/09/how-to-retain-great-teachers-start-with-leadership-opportunities/>

Experts speak out against online preschools

Some early-childhood education experts are calling for online preschool programs to be eliminated, saying they actually may harm young students. Josh Golin, executive director of the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, says young children learn best by engaging all of their senses, which does not happen when they learn via computers.

Jackie Mader. "Experts call for an end to online preschool programs." *Hechinger Report*. October 10, 2018
<https://hechingerreport.org/experts-call-for-an-end-to-online-preschool-programs/>

NATIONAL / FEDERAL

Federal support for charters and advocacy organizations

The U.S.E.D. has awarded \$399 million in federal grants to expand and support charter schools across the country under the Charter Schools Program under the department's Office of Innovation and Improvement.

— Eight states, including NYS, received \$313.4 million over five years to "support approximately 300 new, replicating, and expanding public charter schools."

— Four groups received grants totaling \$39.9 million to help charter schools enhance their credit and tap into private-sector capital to pay for the cost of new school buildings or renovations.

Mel Leonor. "Education Dept. overstated endorsements of for-profit college accreditor." *Politico/Morning Education*. October 5, 2018
<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-education/2018/10/05/education-dept-overstated-endorsements-of-for-profit-college-accreditor-363214>

Most states don't meet English-learner academic targets

Over the past decade, English-learner enrollment in K-12 schools has increased by more than 100% in 11 states. While the number of ELL students is rising, the quality of education those students receive may not be keeping pace.

Corey Mitchell. "Most States Failing to Meet English-Learner Academic Targets, Report Finds." *Education Week*. October 8, 2018
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning-the-language/2018/10/states_struggle_to_meet_ell_academic_targets.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=58634548&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

What can be done to deal with school segregation

School segregation may feel intractable, but there are steps school and district leaders can take.

Michele Shannon. "Commentary: What You Can Do in the Face of School Segregation." *Education Week*. October 8, 2018
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/10/10/what-you-can-do-in-the-face.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=58634548&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Landmark education science report updated

In an increasingly interconnected world, a new national report summarizes what decades of research tell us about how students' culture and connections shape how they learn.

Sarah D. Sparks. "How People Learn: A Landmark Report Gets an Update." *Education Week*. October 8, 2018
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2018/10/national_academies_How_People_Learn_II.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=58634548&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Congressmen want government to investigate virtual charter schools

Sens. Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Patty Murray of Washington state, both Democrats, highlight concerns about virtual charters' academic outcomes and management practices.

Andrew Ujifusa. "Democrats Want Government Watchdog to Sniff Around Virtual Charter Schools." *Education Week*. October 10, 2018
<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2018/10/democrats-congress-virtual-charter-schools-government-watchdog.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=58637199&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

NEW YORK STATE

Long Island the center of the opt-out movement

Long Island is opt-out central for NYS. Upstate, the movement has gained a foothold, but isn't as popular as it is in Nassau and Suffolk counties. Of 100 districts statewide with the highest numbers of test refusals, 70 are on the Island. On the Island, all districts have opt-out rates of 45% percent or higher. Statewide, opt-out rates averaged 18%. The opt-out movement is most successful in middle class communities, which political experts attribute largely to close contacts there between parents and teachers.

John Hildebrand. "Long Island is state's opt-out stronghold." *Newsday*. October 7, 2018
<https://www.newsday.com/long-island/education/long-island-is-state-s-opt-out-stronghold-1.21548713>

Common Core in NY produces writing failure

Since the introduction of the Common Core, the proportion of NY students who scored zero on the state writing test has doubled and the achievement gap has grown, according to a new study. On the English Language Arts exams between 2013 and 2016, in addition to multiple-choice questions, students had to read nine or 10 short stories or texts, then write responses aimed at showing their ability to think critically and cite evidence to support their answers. State officials deny that the exams were poorly designed.

Susan Edelman. "Many NYC students are bombing the writing portion of state exam." *NY Post*. October 6, 2018
<https://nypost.com/2018/10/06/many-nyc-students-are-bombing-the-writing-portion-of-state-exam/>

Full study -- Fred Smith & Robin Jacobowitz. "TESTS ARE TURNING OUR KIDS INTO ZEROES: A FOCUS ON FAILING." SUNY New Paltz/Benjamin Center for Public Policy Initiatives. Summer 2018

NYSUT sues SED over transfers

The NYS United Teachers has gone to court opposing a new state education regulation that governs which teachers should be assigned to the state's poorest-performing schools, claiming that teacher transfers are subject to contract bargaining.

Rick Karlin. "Teachers union sues over transfer regulations." *Albany Times Union*. October 11, 2018
https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Teachers-union-sues-over-transfer-regulations-13300132.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Timesunion_Capcon

2018 'community read' book is Daniel Koretz's, *The testing Charade*

Rochester NY's Coalition for Public Education, in collaboration with the University of Rochester, Writers & Books and the Rochester Teachers Association recently began a "community read" project using Daniel Koretz's book, "*The Testing Charade: Pretending to Make Schools Better.*" The project involves having as many community members as possible read the book and/or attending a meeting about high-stakes standardized testing.

DISCUSSION/PROBLEM-SOLVING/ACTION GROUP MEETINGS

10/15, Monday, 7:00-9:00 pm, St. John Fisher College, Mid-level Gateway Room, Basil Hall, led by Professor Jeffrey Liles

10/18, Thursday, 7:00-9:00 pm, Writers & Books, 740 University Avenue, led by Rochester Coalition for Public Education Coordinator, Dan Drmacich

10/29, Monday, 7:00-9:00 pm, Pittsford Barnes & Noble, led by Howard Maffucci, former East Rochester Superintendent & current Monroe County Legislator

11/8, Thursday, 3:45-4:45, LaChase Hall, Margaret Warner Graduate School of Education, University of Rochester, led by Professor David Hursh.

Go to www.roccoalitionforpubliceducation.com to register to attend any of these meetings.