

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 2, 2020 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Internet access a civil rights issue

In the world's wealthiest country, broadband access is denied to many. The pandemic has highlighted the chronic lack of home internet access for people of color, low-income households, and rural residents. That lack of access puts schools in an especially difficult position as they expand their use of technology during the pandemic, and beyond. It's important to remember that this technology challenge has been staring us in the face for decades.

Mark Lieberman. "Internet Access Is a Civil Rights Issue." *Education Week*. September 23, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/09/23/internet-access-is-a-civil-rights-issue.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1&M=59700851&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Central office can help principals during pandemic

Principals are on the front lines of navigating the biggest disruption to schooling in a generation. Here's how district administrators can help them do it. Central office, especially principal supervisors, are essential to helping principals lead through this current crisis, particularly as school leaders' role as the bridge between the district and students, staff, and parents has become even more vital.

Denuisa R. Superville. "6 Ways Central Office Can Help Principals Lead Through the COVID-19 Crisis." *Education Week*. September 25, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/District_Dossier/2020/09/leveraging_principal_supervisors.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59700851&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Grading during the pandemic

Two advocates of grading reform, Joe Feldman and Douglas Reeves, answer questions about how grading practices and policies could/should be influenced by the pandemic, and by the switch to distance learning. While differing on particulars, they agree that now's the time to look hard at "broken" grading practices.

Joe Feldman and Douglas Reeves. "Grading During the Pandemic: A Conversation." *Educational Leadership*. September 2020

http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept20/vol78/num01/Grading-During-the-Pandemic-A-Conversation.aspx?utm_source=marketing&utm_medium=smartbrief&utm_campaign=smartbrief-e10920-0920

Schools struggle to teach reading online

The pandemic, the limits of ed tech, and the often-unscientific way schools teach basic reading skills could mean trouble. Elementary school educators are faced with teaching hundreds of thousands of young children to read, without being able to interact with them in person, using instead digital tools and videoconferencing platforms in sweeping new ways that are mostly untested. Even before the pandemic, educators were concerned about the existing scattershot, often-unscientific approach to teaching the basic building blocks of reading, such as understanding how sounds are put together to form words.

Benjamin Herold. "Schools Already Struggled to Teach Reading Right. Now They Have to Do It Online." *Education Week*. September 30, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/09/30/schools-already-struggled-to-teach-reading-right.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59703818&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

New reality for some teachers: 50+ students in a class

The instructional techniques teachers normally use won't work in classes with 50, 60, or 70 students, educators say. And in districts where teachers instruct in-class and on-line classes simultaneously, multiple problems arise.

Sarah Schwartz. "50 or More Students, One Class: The New Reality for Some K-12 Teachers." *Education Week Teachers*. September 29, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2020/09/50_or_more_students_one_class_the_new_reality_for_some_k-12_teachers.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59703818&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Tips to strengthen SEL lessons

One of the most important roles that schools can serve during this uncertain time is to provide social and emotional support, writes an elementary-school counselor. The author shares strategies to help bolster students' emotional resilience, including using the RULER program, which teaches students to recognize, understand, label, express and regulate emotions.

Mikki Rogers. "Character education and development during the pandemic." *Smart Brief/Education*. September 29, 2020

https://www.smartbrief.com/original/2020/09/character-education-and-development-during-pandemic?utm_source=brief

HS senior develops anti-bias curriculum

Schools are not preparing students to enter an increasingly diverse world, writes high school senior Zoë Jenkins.

"By the time we walk across the graduation stage, few of us have learned how race has shaped every system in America or that race is fundamentally a social construct," she writes. Working with the University of Kentucky and Civics Unplugged, she has created a 14-week, entirely virtual, free training on diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-

racism. Because racism is not covered in any curriculum, she first sought existing programs, then set out to develop one. With spare time during quarantine, the project grew into a nine-person effort to teach the principles of equity and anti-racism and a factual history of race to as many young people around the country as possible. The program, Diversity, Inclusion, Cultural Competency, and Equity ([DICCE](#)) aims to expand students' notions about race, help them talk about it respectfully and coherently, and lead them in reevaluating the systems that perpetuate oppression. The training explores many facets of race that go unexplored in schools, teaching the truthful history of race in America and helping students recognize and tackle inequities in their own communities. DICCE wants to teach young people to teach other young people!

• **Special Report: Big Ideas for Confronting Racism in Education**

Zoe Jenkins. "Student: Why I'm designing anti-bias training for my classmates." *Education Week*. September 23, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/09/23/why-im-designing-anti-bias-training-for-my-classmates?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1&M=59705134&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Education Week offers key strategies for dealing with pandemic

This extensive article provides a recap of key findings for how to improve virtual learning, prioritize what to teach, make up for lost learning, and tend to students' well-being.

Stephen Sawchuk. "Key strategies for steering schools through COVID-19." *Education Week*. September 30, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/09/30/key-strategies-for-steering-schools-through-covid-19.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59705134&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

DeVos accepts court decision voiding her attempt to send coronavirus aid to private schools

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos said her department won't appeal a decision from a federal court that voided her controversial rule governing how public schools had to share coronavirus relief with private school students.

Andrew Ujifusa. "Betsy DeVos Admits Defeat in Legal Battle Over Coronavirus Aid." *Education Week*. September 25, 2020
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/09/betsy_devos_admits_defeat_coronavirus_aid.html?cmp=soceml-twfdbltz-ewnow

Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett

President Donald Trump on Saturday named Amy Coney Barrett, a Chicago-based federal appeals court judge and the leading contender on his shortlist, to replace the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the U.S. Supreme Court. Barrett, 48, is a former law clerk to the late Justice Antonin Scalia. She was appointed by Trump in 2017 to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit. In 2019, in her most significant education opinion to date, she made it easier for students accused of sexual assault to challenge college disciplinary procedures. She has also ruled on due process and qualified immunity, private schools, and other issues.

Mark Walsh. "Court Pick Ruled on Campus Sex Assault, Other Education Issues as Appeals Judge." *Education Week*. September 26, 2020
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/school_law/2020/09/court_pick_ruled_on_campus_sex_assault.html?cmp=soceml-twfdbltz-ewnow

Education platforms in presidential race

This interactive tracker shows where President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden stand on nearly a dozen major education topics.

Evie Blad and Andrew Ujifusa. "Education in the 2020 Presidential Race." *Education Week*. September 28, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/projects/education2020/index.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59700851&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Supreme Court nominee has ruled on education issues

Barrett, a Chicago-based federal appeals court judge, has ruled on due process and Title IX issues in campus sex assaults, qualified immunity, private schools, and other issues. [Read more.](#)

Mark Walsh. "Court Pick Ruled on Campus Sex Assault, Other Education Issues as Appeals Judge." *Education Week*. September 26, 2020
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/school_law/2020/09/court_pick_ruled_on_campus_sex_assault.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59700851&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

UNICEF: Child wellness in US one of lowest ranking among advanced nations

UNICEF released a ranking of nations in terms of child wellness and found that the U.S. is one of the lowest ranking among the advanced nations of the world. The rankings do not include test scores. It's important to understand that the test scores are the result of child wellness, not a cause. The report looks child poverty, access to healthcare, food security, access to high-quality pre-K, and other indicators of child wellness, not test scores.

"Worlds of Influence Understanding What Shapes Child Well-being in Rich Countries." *UNICEF*. September 2020
<https://greatschoolwars.files.wordpress.com/2020/09/report-card-16-worlds-of-influence-child-wellbeing.pdf>

COVID-19 testing rollout plans include schools

On September 28, President Trump announced that the federal government will begin distributing millions of rapid coronavirus tests to states and urged governors to use them to reopen schools for K-12 students. The move to expand testing comes as confirmed new COVID-19 cases remain elevated at more than 40,000 per day and experts warn of

a likely surge in infections soon. The tests will go out to states based on their population and can be used as states see fit, but the administration is encouraging a priority on schools. Officials said that 6.5 million tests will go out this week and that a total of 100 million tests will be distributed to governors over the next several weeks.

Matthew Perrone & Kevin Freking. "Feds to ship millions of tests in bid to reopen K-12 schools." *Associated Press*. September 28, 2020
<https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-virus-outbreak-donald-trump-archive-elections-7ad94115ac126ce1eb7a38bee6c5eedf>

Pandemic worsens education disparities

Longtime racial and economic disparities in education have worsened during the coronavirus pandemic. For example, most white students in Pennsylvania were able to opt for in-person learning, while their Hispanic and Black peers were more likely to attend schools in districts offering only remote instruction, according to a study by Penn State University researchers.

Nathan Layne. "Unequal education: Pandemic widens race, class gaps in U.S. schools." *Reuters*. September 29, 2020

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-pennsylvania-educa/unequal-education-pandemic-widens-race-class-gaps-in-u-s-schools-idUSKBN26K1WE>

NEW YORK STATE

A report titled "[The Lost Generation](#)" suggests multi-year state aid reductions would leave nearly 40% of NYS's school districts financially insolvent. The more than 700 public schools face a threat of irreparable harm from the one-two punch of sharp cuts in state aid and pandemic-related expenses, according to new analysis from the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) and the Association of School Business Officials of New York (ASBO). The report states that sending per student has risen \$219 due COVID-19-related expenses. The report is based on a survey of school business officials that suggests multi-year state aid reductions would leave nearly 40% of school districts financially insolvent or unable to provide a sound, basic education.

Rachel Silberstein. "Report: 4 in 10 NY school districts unable to pay bills if aid cuts continue." *Albany Times Union*. October 1, 2020

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Report-4-in-10-NY-school-districts-unable-to-pay-15612417.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&id=5931844424c17c09a3f115af