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 30, 2020 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Racial differences in CTE programs

Data shows a racial divide among students enrolled in career and technical education courses, according to an analysis from 2017-18 by the *Hechinger Report* and *The Associated Press*. White students were more likely to enroll in STEM courses, while Black and Latino students were well-represented in hospitality and human services career programs. Historically, a two-tier educational system tracked predominantly low-income students and students of color into career and technical classes (vocational education). But schools have revamped these courses to prepare students for higher education and lucrative work in fields such as technology, health care and engineering. The *Hechinger Report/Associated Press* analysis of CTE enrollment data from 40 states reveals deep racial disparities in who takes these career-oriented courses. Black and Latino students were often less likely than their white peers to enroll in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and information technology classes, but they were more likely to enroll in courses in hospitality and, in the case of Black students in particular, human services.

Sarah Butrymowicz, Jeff Amy, & Larry Fenn. "How career and technical education shuts out Black and Latino students from high-paying professions." *Hechinger Report*. October 22, 2020
https://hechingerreport.org/how-career-and-technical-education-shuts-out-black-and-latino-students-from-high-paying-professions/

How one district ensures students attend class

Social workers are among employees of California's Robla School District looking for students who don't show up to online classes, with a teacher and then a principal trying to contact families, followed by a social worker's efforts. Many area families have lost jobs and homes during the pandemic, which can make school a secondary concern, but sometimes the solution to attending class is as simple as replacing a computer cable.

Bianna Golodryga & Yon Pomrenze. "Teachers and social workers search for students who are 'missing' in the pandemic." *CNN*. October 19, 2020
https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/19/us/students-missing-class-pandemic-wellness/index.html

SEL skills can be supported by edtech

More than 83% of teachers say instructional technology can support students' social-emotional skills, according to an Edsurge Research survey. Kim Lewis, a MS and HS Spanish teacher in rural New York, says her district uses Microsoft Teams, which she says allows for encouraging students to solve problems and collaborate with peers.

Rachel Burstein. "Educators Are Using Edtech to Facilitate SEL. Here's How They Gauge Student Success." *Ed Surge*. October 22, 2020
https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-10-22-educators-are-using-edtech-to-facilitate-sel-here-s-how-they-gauge-student-success

Needs of students with disabilities being met better during in-person school

Many school districts struggled to meet the needs of students with disabilities remotely this spring, but as more students head back into classrooms, teachers are finding it easier to give students with disabilities what they need and parents say it's making a real difference.

Kalyn Belsha. "For students with disabilities, a return to schools means more learning and needed services — even if nothing's normal yet." *Chalkbeat NY*. October 22, 2020
https://www.chalkbeat.org/2020/10/22/21529431/students-with-disabilities-return-to-schools-more-learning-and-needed-services-not-normal-yet

How to prioritize student mental health

The mental health of students during the coronavirus pandemic continues to be a pressing concern for schools, and opportunities are increasing to address it as more students return to physical classrooms. On method is to provide faculty and staff with targeted training to address signs of depression, anxiety and other mental health issues.

Justin Reilly. "Supporting Student Mental Health Now and in the Future." *T.H.E. Journal*. October 22, 2020
https://thejournal.com/articles/2020/10/22/supporting-student-mental-health-now-and-in-the-future.aspx

Online kindergarten could have long-term impact

As many as 62% of the estimated 3.7 million students expected to enroll in kindergarten this year could be starting their education online because of the pandemic. Laura Bornfreund, director of early and elementary education policy at New America, says this change likely will result in loss of foundational knowledge that could affect outcomes for students long term -- particularly for students who already are considered at risk.

Lillian Mongeau. "What kids stand to lose if 2020 steals kindergarten." *Hechinger Report*. October 27, 2020
https://hechingerreport.org/what-kids-stand-to-lose-if-2020-steals-kindergarten/

How 4 schools adopted outdoor learning
Some schools are opting to take lessons outdoors to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus during in-person instruction. This article highlights four such schools, including a program in an Arkansas district that teaches students with special needs in a university botanical garden.
Amelia Nierenberg. "Classrooms without walls, and hopefully COVID." *NY Times*. October 27, 2020
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/us/outdoor-classroom-design.html

Long-term takeaways from digital learning
The move to digital learning during the pandemic has resulted in a greater appreciation by parents and students for technology as a learning tool, according to a report by Project Tomorrow. The report -- based on responses from more than 110,000 students, nearly 12,000 teachers and others --also found the increase in technology use provides more opportunities and context for defining value and rigor of resources.
Roger Riddell. "How deeply will digital learning transform K-12 long term?" *Education Dive*. October 22, 2020
https://www.educationdive.com/news/how-deeply-will-digital-learning-transform-k-12-long-term/587507/

Student designs resource for online learning
A HS junior in Toronto created a list of learning tools after wondering why it didn't already exist to help during the pandemic. Her online resource for students and teachers, eLearn.fyi, includes over 300 online learning tools.
Cayla Bamberger. "Student seeks to create the 'Netflix of online learning'." *Hechinger Report*. October 22, 2020
https://hechingerreport.org/student-seeks-to-create-the-netflix-of-online-learning/

Schools reopening worldwide with modifications
Schools around the world are trying different methods to safely reopen, according to a University of Washington study that looks at "protective bubbles" of 12 students in Denmark; students in different grades alternating in-person learning days in South Korea; and students from rural areas getting to the classroom in Uruguay. The report's data suggests these modifications could help to safely reopen schools in the US.
Kaitlyn Folmer, Doug Vollmayer, Mya Green & Angeline Jane Bernabe. "New study shows how students around the world are returning back to school amid COVID-19." *Good Morning America*. October 20, 2020
https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/living/story/study-shows-students-world-returning-back-school-amid-73708037

Study: Peer interventions can lead to more bullying
School-bullying interventions that involve working with the peers of bullied students may lead to increases in bullying behavior and may boost feelings of distress and victimization by disempowering victims of bullying, according to a study in *Child Development Perspectives*. "Having lots of peers involved makes the situation more public, which can be damaging to the social reputation of victims, [and] also prevents the victim from handling a situation themselves and may make them look weak in the eyes of the bully," researcher Karyn Healy said.
Brian P. Dunleavy. "Peer-based anti-bullying initiatives may harm victims more, researcher says." *United Press International*. October 20, 2020
https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2020/10/20/Peer-based-anti-bullying-initiatives-may-harm-victims-more-researcher-says/5011603210749/

Parents disrupting online lessons
Teachers in many ways rely on parents' involvement during remote instruction. Yet, some teachers say parental involvement has been enhanced and is sometimes disruptive, with some parents asking questions during live, online lessons, prompting their children to speak and even texting teachers during lessons.
Julie Jargon. "Parents Are the New Remote-School Zoom Bombers." *Wall Street Journal*. October 27, 2020
https://www.wsj.com/articles/parents-are-the-new-remote-school-zoom-bombers-11603800001

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Students with disabilities still restrained, secluded
New figures from U.S.E.D. Civil Rights Data Collection reveal that in 2017-18 nearly 80,000 of the approximately 102,000 students restrained or secluded for behavior issues in schools nationwide fell under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Because numbers have not decreased, despite increased education on the issue, some are calling for federal legislation to protect such students.
Michelle Diament. "Schools Fail To Curtail Restraint, Seclusion Of Students With Disabilities." *Disability Scoop*. October 22, 2020
https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/10/22/schools-fail-to-curtail-restraint-seclusion-of-students-with-disabilities/29047/

Are free-college programs accessible?
Many states have so many restrictions on free-college programs that those who need free college most are excluded, according to a report from the nonprofit Education Trust. In a review of 23 programs, 13 did not permit part-time students, 11 denied students who are living in the country illegally and 14 did not offer funds for living expenses.
Delece Smith-Barrow. " 'Free college' programs sound great – but who gets excluded?" *Hechinger Report*. October 23, 2020
https://hechingerreport.org/free-college-programs-sound-great-but-who-gets-excluded/

Virtual schooling offers insight into home life

Some teachers are asked to scan students' surroundings and demeanor during virtual lessons for potential signs they are unwell or unsafe, such as signs of injuries, poor hygiene, or drug paraphernalia. Some teachers have flagged instances when students were provided technology to log on to virtual school, but they were frequently absent.

Carolyn Thonpson. "In video classes teachers parse clues to student wellbeing." *Associated Press*. October 23, 2020
https://apnews.com/article/us-news-virus-outbreak-c23fa6426ba2aab1bc40492d9cb46012

Framework helps educators lead discussions about race

Robert Runcie, superintendent of Florida's Broward County Public Schools, has adopted a professional development framework to guide discussions about race. One of his primary tools has been Courageous Conversation, a PD framework that guides administrators, teachers and other staff in leading discussions about race, diversity and tolerance. When the district launched Courageous Conversation, 300 teachers trained to become equity liaisons to champion the program's goals with their colleagues and to work with their principals to develop school-based equity plans. While the program isn't mandatory, Runcie has encouraged central office leaderships, principals and assistant principals in his district to participate in Courageous Conversation professional development sessions this year.

Matt Zalaznick. "How one of nation's biggest districts talks about race and racism." *District Administration*. October 23, 2020
https://districtadministration.com/broward-county-schools-talk-race-systemic-racism-courageous-conversations/

Superintendents do not feel prepared to deal with lead conversations on race, equity

Student populations are becoming more diverse, yet a majority of school superintendents say they have not been "very well prepared" to lead conversations about race and equity, according to a survey from AASA, The School Superintendents Association. Results found that urban and suburban superintendents and leaders of color place a greater priority on this work.

Kara Arundel. "Most superintendents say they're not 'very well prepared' to lead race, equity conversations." *Education Dive*. October 26, 2020
https://www.educationdive.com/news/superintendents-not--ready-to-lead-race-conversations/587717/

60% of students to attend some in-person school by November

Roughly 60% of students in the US are estimated to have access to some in-person instruction by early next month -- up from 38% on Labor Day -- according to a report from Burbio. The data, culled from school websites and other online resources, estimates that nearly 38% of students will attend all-virtual schools, and about 35% will attend schools offering all in-person instruction, with the rest following a hybrid schedule.

Anya Kamenetz. "A Rising Number Of U.S. Children Have The Option Of In-Person School." *National Public Radio*. October 22, 2020
https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/10/22/926757172/a-rising-number-of-u-s-children-have-the-option-of-in-person-school

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 through the air in schools

Learn what does and does not work to protect your students and staff from contracting coronavirus through the air.

Mark Lieberman. "Air Purifiers, Fans, and Filters: A COVID-19 Explainer for Schools." *Education Week*. October 27. 2020
https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/10/27/air-purifiers-fans-and-filters-a-covid-19.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1&M=59743402&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

How districts are coping with the need for substitute teachers

Some districts are paying bonuses, some are lowering qualifications, and one is assigning central office staff to substitute at least one day per week.

Elizabeth Heubeck. "The Scramble to Find Substitute Teachers." *Education Week*. October 26, 2020
https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/10/26/the-scramble-to-find-substitute-teachers.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59743402&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

NAEP: Reading scores decline among HS seniors

Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress show a drop in average reading scores for HS seniors in the US. Data released on October 28 shows that average math scores overall remain steady, but achievement among the country's lowest-performing students fell in both reading and math.

Lauren Camera. "Reading Scores Fall Among U.S. High School Seniors." U*.S. News & World Report*. October 28, 2020
https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2020-10-28/reading-scores-fall-among-us-high-school-seniors

Matt Barnum. "High school seniors have made no progress in math or reading on closely watched federal test." *Chalkbeat*. October 28, 2020
https://www.chalkbeat.org/2020/10/28/21537127/high-school-naep-scores-covid

NEW YORK STATE

More Albany-area districts expected to go remote

Several Albany-area school districts have already shifted classes to remote instruction because of school-tied COVID-19 cases. The decision to go all-remote depends in part on local health officials' guidance.

Rachel Silberstein. "More schools expected to go remote as COVID-19 cases rise." *Albany Times Union*. October 27, 2020
https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/More-schools-expected-to-go-remote-as-COVID-19-15675333.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Timesunion_DailyBrief&stn=nf&sid=5ae0930791d15c3e666094a8

SED posts resources to implement Erin's law

The NYSED has posted curriculum resources on its website to assist schools and educators in implementing Erin's law, which requires public schools to teach child sexual abuse and exploitation prevention in grades K-8. Materials will help educators help children to develop the awareness, skills, self-confidence to prevent and stop the abuse.

Rachel Silberstein. "State rolls out website with resources to prevent child sex abuse." *Albany Times Union*. October 29, 2020
https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/NYSED-rolls-out-curriculum-resources-for-schools-15685719.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424c17c09a3f115af