

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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November 12, 2021 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

How one HS switched to standards-based grading

This extensive article describes how one HS switched from traditional to standards-based grading to combat the perception that grades are more about showing up than learning. Grading became an issue during the pandemic, and the staff at this school decided on standards-based grading, a system that bases grades only on the mastery of specific skills (or “standards”). Students can demonstrate mastery in multiple ways, not just a written test, and can take assessments multiple times to show mastery if they don’t get it at first. When used with project-based learning, education and measuring progress becomes more specialized for each student. And, there are no bumps in grades for being organized, coming on time, attending class, or turning in homework on time. The only thing students are graded on is their demonstration that they have mastered the standard.

Next City’s journalism centers around seeking solutions to problems of people in cities, to share stories and workable ideas.

Melanie Bavaria. “For This LA High School, the Pandemic Meant the End of Traditional Grades.” *Next City*. November 2, 2021
[For This LA High School, the Pandemic Meant the End of Traditional Grades \(nextcity.org\)](https://nextcity.org/story/education/for-this-la-high-school-the-pandemic-meant-the-end-of-traditional-grades/)

Commentary: Why, how to increase numbers of male elementary teachers

A NYC teacher offers several suggestions for increasing the percentage of male public-school elementary teachers -- which the National Center for Educational Statistics says was just 11% in 2017-18 -- including using male HS students to tutor younger students. He notes that male students often connect better with male teachers, which can reduce heavily gender-slanted behavior referrals and lead to academic success.

Jason Baez. “There aren’t enough men teaching elementary school. Here’s how we can change that — and why we must.” *Chalkbeat/New York*. November 2, 2021
[There aren’t enough men teaching elementary school - Chalkbeat New York](https://www.chalkbeat.com/story/education/there-arent-enough-men-teaching-elementary-school-2021-11-02/)

How to create cooperative learning opportunities

The author, a neurologist, states that cooperative learning tasks that have been carefully designed can help students recover from diminished interpersonal opportunities during the ongoing pandemic. She shares examples of cooperative learning across curricula, including math and social studies lessons.

Judy Willis. “How Cooperative Learning Can Benefit Students This Year.” *Edutopia*. November 5, 2021

[How Cooperative Learning Can Benefit Middle and High School Students This Year | Edutopia](https://www.edutopia.org/how-cooperative-learning-can-benefit-middle-and-high-school-students-this-year)

Tips for successful principal coaching

Research shows that coaches [can play an integral role in supporting school leaders](#). What are the elements of a successful coach-principal relationship? Read on for some key advice from veteran coaches.

The article includes access to a PDF file.

Denisa R Superville & Laura Baker. “Making Principal Coaching Work: 5 Tips.” *Education Week*. November 2, 2021

[Making Principal Coaching Work: 5 Tips \(edweek.org\)](https://www.edweek.org/leadership/making-principal-coaching-work-5-tips/2021/11/02)

Running to help curb learning loss

Childhood obesity rose during school closures last year, and physical-education teachers now are working to overcome “physical learning loss” as PE is being squeezed by competing priorities. A teacher in a Connecticut school district has introduced The Daily Mile program, in which ES students take daily walk or run breaks to help boost attentiveness -- and ultimately learning.

Kelly Field. “How PE teachers are tackling ‘physical learning loss’.” *Hechinger Report*. November 8, 2021

[How PE teachers are tackling ‘physical learning loss’ \(hechingerreport.org\)](https://www.hechingerreport.org/how-pe-teachers-are-tackling-physical-learning-loss/)

Global Brigades helps students solve real-world problems

Students in the Empowering Discovery of the Global Experience microschool within Liberty HS in Missouri are working virtually with the coordinators of a community water project in Honduras as they learn to address various challenges in other countries. The pairings have been facilitated by the Global Brigades nonprofit, which switched from in-person to virtual connections and has expanded access to more students.

Kara Arundel. “Even virtually, students in one program continue solving global challenges.” *K-12 Dive*. November 2, 2021

[Even virtually, students in one program continue solving global challenges | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](https://www.k12dive.com/even-virtually-students-in-one-program-continue-solving-global-challenges/)

Strategies for schools to welcome refugees

U.S. schools will play a large role in welcoming refugees from Afghanistan, the Middle East, and North Africa. The authors offer tips to help welcome these newcomers, including promoting social and emotional learning.

Cyril Bennouna is a faculty member at Brown University; Lindsay Stark and Ilana Seff are faculty members at the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis.

Cyril Bennouna, Lindsay Stark & Ilana Seff. "How Can Schools Help to Welcome Young Afghan Newcomers?" *Ed Surge News*. November 3, 2021 [How Can Schools Help to Welcome Young Afghan Newcomers? | EdSurge News](#)

How to make online learning sustainable

In many cases, online learning programs established during the coronavirus pandemic are not sustainable, but districts can create a long-term virtual learning space. In this article, Education consultant Mandy Froehlich shares several tips to help schools plan for sustainable programs.

Mandy Froehlich. "5 Elements of a Sustainable Online Learning Program." *Edutopia*. November 9, 2021 [5 Elements of a Sustainable Online Learning Program | Edutopia](#)

English teachers should be anti-racist and digital-media literate

The long-awaited standards from the National Council of Teachers of English emphasize teacher training, stating that prospective MS and HS English teachers should be trained to be anti-racist and to incorporate digital media in their instruction.

Madeline Will. "English Teachers Must Be Anti-Racist, National Group Says." *Education Week*. November 10, 2021 [English Teachers Must Be Anti-Racist, National Group Says \(edweek.org\)](#)

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

School board members face rising threats

Across the country, parents have threatened board members and vandalized their homes. One board member scans his driveway before walking to his car.

Alan Feuer. "School board members face rising threats across the U.S." *NY Times*. November 5, 2021 [School Board Members Face Rising Threats Across the U.S. - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

Broadband affordability gap still exists

Nearly two-thirds of households without at-home access to broadband internet have the capacity to connect, but cost is a barrier, according to a report released by the nonprofit EducationSuperHighway. The report finds that only about 17% of eligible people are enrolled in federal broadband affordability programs.

Alyson Klein. "The Number One Reason Students Still Lack Internet at Home: Parents Can't Afford It." *Education Week*. November 4, 2021 [The Number One Reason Students Still Lack Internet at Home: Parents Can't Afford It \(edweek.org\)](#)

School modernization struck from U.S. infrastructure package

Many of the nation's public schools are in poor physical condition. Since the 2008 recession, states stopped or cut the funding necessary repairs and upgrades. In a major blow that left educators, school leaders and advocates stunned, Democrats pared back – and then eliminated – \$100 billion that President Biden earmarked for school modernization in his spending bill. The story details the woeful conditions of Philadelphia's schools.

Lauren Camera. "Democrats Quietly Nix Biden's \$100B for School Modernization From Infrastructure Package." *U.S. News & World Report*. November 5, 2021 [Democrats Quietly Nix Biden's \\$100B for School Modernization From Infrastructure Package | Education News | US News](#)

Infrastructure plan covers school lead pipe removal and expansion of internet services

Congress removed President Biden's plan to provide \$100 billion to build and modernize schools from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act but left money to replace dangerous lead service pipes bringing water to schools, to expand access to high speed internet connectivity, and provide clean energy school buses.

Kara Arundel. "Infrastructure plan would replace lead pipes in schools, expand internet." *K-12 Dive*. November 9, 2021 [Infrastructure plan would replace lead pipes in schools, expand internet | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

District hires students for food service, other jobs

About two dozen students at a Missouri HS have applied for nine part-time district positions in before- and after-school care, food service and custodial work. The severe staff shortage led the district to broaden its candidate pool and provide real-world experience for interested students, says school spokesman Chuck McPherson.

Blythe Bernhard. "Students help fill staffing shortages at Jefferson County schools." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. November 4, 2021 [Students help fill staffing shortages at Jefferson County schools | Education | stltoday.com](#)

Poll: Most Americans approve COVID protocols in schools

A new poll found that most Americans think local schools have done a good job handling COVID health and safety concerns.

Ileana Najarro. "Parents May Not Be as Upset With Schools About COVID Protocols as You Think, Polls Show." *Education Week*.

November 10, 2021

[Parents May Not Be as Upset With Schools About COVID Protocols as You Think, Polls Show \(edweek.org\)](#)

Ed Secretary Cardona sees hybrid learning coming to an end

There should be no need for remote or hybrid learning now that vaccinations of children are underway, said Education Secretary Miguel Cardona, who pointed out that communities have the tools they need to stop the spread of the coronavirus. He also touched on efforts to re-imagine summer learning and the pediatric vaccine rollout.

Lauren Peller & Kimani Hayes. 'Education Secretary Cardona says there should be "no need" for hybrid or remote learning after kids are vaccinated.' *CBS NEWS*. November 9, 2021

[Education Secretary Cardona says there should be "no need" for hybrid or remote learning after kids are vaccinated - CBS News](#)

Schools alter schedules due to staffing shortage

Some school districts are making the difficult decision to schedule last-minute closures or alter holiday schedules because of staffing challenges. Daniel Domenech, executive director of AASA, the School Superintendents Association, says educators are taking planned and unplanned paid time off, but there are not enough substitute teachers to staff classrooms.

Asher Lehrer-Small. "Wave of Teacher Time Off Forces Districts Short on Subs to Cancel School." *The 74*. November 10, 2021

[Wave of Teacher Time Off Forces Districts Short on Subs to Cancel School | The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)