

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

November 13, 2020 Education News Update

Four tips on stopping online misinformation, a shared responsibility

Experts urge Americans to fight misinformation as a shared responsibility. About two-thirds of U.S. adults got their news from social media in 2018. Americans are more likely to share misinformation (inaccurate content shared unknowingly), rather than disinformation (inaccurate content shared to deceive), experts say. As tech companies and researchers continue working to thwart a range of “information disorder,” experts say citizens can also play important roles in combating misinformation – not just as critically minded consumers, but as concerned family and friends. PEN America, a nonprofit that advocates for writers and human rights, is among a growing group of organizations offering media literacy training. Its tip sheet on how to talk to acquaintances constructively about misinformation came in response to participants’ demand. The tips include -

Fact-check first. Before confronting others, make sure your facts are straight. Check with reputable fact-check websites like the Poynter Institute’s PolitiFact, The Washington Post Fact Checker, Snopes, or FactCheck.org.

Alert the platform early. Correct misinformation and disinformation as early as possible. Experts encourage users to flag troubling posts on social media sites, which may remove the content, and the earlier the better.

Public or private outreach? Observing others’ public correction can reduce misperceptions. Yet publicly engaging with a post can actually amplify its false content and/or be seen as shaming. A private note politely pointing out what’s incorrect might be better. The “truth sandwich” from linguist George Lakoff might help: Lead with the truth, point out the lie, then conclude with the truth, so that correct information is most memorable. It also helps to offer credible sources, providing truthful alternatives.

Lead with empathy. Attacking someone’s content can be perceived as a personal attack and lead to defensiveness. In lieu of lecturing, empathetic outreach could focus on a user’s online behaviors rather than their content. One expert suggests invoking a shared commitment to a healthier democracy, such as, “I’m worried that maybe this is a deliberate tactic to try and make us angry, or to divide us, or to confuse us.”

Hone your verification skills with resources from First Draft News, MediaWise, the Shorenstein Center, and PEN America’s online training.

Sarah Matusek. “Online misinformation is rampant. Four tips on stopping it.” *Christian Science Monitor*. November 3, 2020
<https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/2020/1103/Online-misinformation-is-rampant.-Four-tips-on-stopping-it?cmpid=ema:mkt:20201112&src=highlight>

TEACHING & LEARNING

Teacher-retention methods

The COVID-19 crisis is highlighting the need for strategies that prevent teachers from leaving the profession. Shaking up teacher-retention methods can reduce resignations, save money in retraining (especially with special-education teachers) and improve student outcomes, says US Office of Special Education Programs Director Laurie VanderPloeg. She outlines three ways to retain teachers, such as by valuing teachers as talent.

Kara Arundel. “3 ways to build teacher retention: mentoring, PD, leadership opportunities.” *Education Dive*. November 2, 2020
<https://www.educationdive.com/news/build-teacher-retention-through-leadership-roles-value-based-culture/588183/>

Support for youngest students during a pandemic

The November 2020 issue of *Educational Leadership*® examines what our youngest learners need to get a great start. Expert authors share strategies and research for supporting students in Grades K–3 during a time when much learning still needs to happen remotely and families face unusual pressures. Articles include:

“Reader’s Guide / Care in the Curriculum” by Tara Laskowski

“In a Time of Calamity, What Do Children Need from Us?” by Justin Minkel

“Teaching Young Children Remotely” by Wendy L. Ostroff

“When Young Readers Get Stuck” by Nell K. Duke

“To Be Young, Gifted, and Innocent” by Alexis Pate.

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http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov20/vol78/num03/3toc.aspx?utm_campaign=ALL-EL-TheEarlyGrades-November2020-20201106&utm_medium=email&_hsni=99209675&_hsenc=p2ANqr-90vXxfr0N0i18WbKzn5VcD6mFvAYdE-3NafuWmRUVEnsaRFLV-+PEBcHmz3Z51c6f6OCz+P8MKUv1Jz&utm_content=99209675&utm_source=hs_email

Commentary: Children left alone to learn from home have troubles

Leaving children to teach themselves from home might be the greatest untold tragedy of the pandemic. The pandemic has forced teachers and principals into roles as social workers and tech support, and most schools simply don’t have the bodies to connect parents to unemployment benefits or the internet.

Ginia Bellafante. “Are We Losing a Generation of Children to Remote Learning?” *NY Times*. November 6, 2020

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/06/nyregion/nyc-remote-learning.html>

How leaders decide between in-school and remote

As coronavirus cases surge again, district leaders are faced with letting students come into classrooms, or requiring that they stay home to learn. It's a no-win decision being made with drastically imperfect information. If districts adopt remote-only instruction, they risk the wrath of parents who want their kids back in classrooms. If they push face-to-face learning, they could be criticized for gambling with the health of students, staff, and their families. Equity -- along with health data, safety protocols, labor negotiations and political pressure -- is part of the equation in determining whether to reopen school buildings, education leaders say. One superintendent in Tennessee doesn't want to risk reopening when many of his district's families do not have health insurance.

Catherine Gewertz & Stephen Sawchuk. "Getting Schools Open: Misguided or Visionary?" *Education Week*. November 5, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/11/05/getting-schools-open-misguided-or-visionary.html>

Commentary: Students need to learn news literacy

Students are not prepared to navigate a complicated information superhighway, writes a high school history and US government teacher. She writes that the most recent US election has highlighted the importance of teaching news literacy in schools so students learn to think critically and be informed, engaged citizens.

Liz Ramos. "The U.S. Election Underscores the Need for Teaching News Literacy in Our Schools." *Ed Surge*. November 7, 2020
<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-11-07-the-u-s-election-underscores-the-need-for-teaching-news-literacy-in-our-schools>

Home schooling up during pandemic; will it last?

Concerns over exposure to the coronavirus, excessive screen time, and instability in school schedules have driven an unprecedented number of parents to home school their children this academic year—a shift that could have lasting effects on both public schools and the home-schooling movement. The number of parents home schooling is 9% this school year, compared with the normal 3%.

Arianna Prothero & Christine A. Samuels. "Home Schooling Is Way Up With COVID-19. Will It Last?" *Education Week*. November 9, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/11/09/home-schooling-is-way-up-with-covid-19.html?cmp=enl-enl-eu-news2&M=59758564&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfc>

Free program offers online training to teach Holocaust

An increase in the number of hate crimes and Holocaust deniers along with the loss of elderly Holocaust survivors have led Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem and University College of London to create a free, three-week online course, "Teaching the Holocaust," that is open to anyone. The goal is to provide facts blended with true stories through a lens of world history as a resource for teachers, but also help people "understand what hatred can lead to," says course manager Sandra Rosenfeld.

Deborah Fineblum. "Knowledge is power against hate: Online course designed to set Holocaust record straight." *Jewish News Syndicate*. November 3, 2020
<https://www.jns.org/knowledge-is-power-against-hate-online-course-designed-to-set-holocaust-record-straight/>

Pandemic adds to challenges of teaching physics

The success of physics education depends upon the availability of qualified educators and course accessibility to all students. The author writes about the pandemic, science literacy, education inequalities, and how a lack of lab work during remote learning has complicated the challenges already facing many science and physics departments.

Jess Wadw. "The importance of teachers to bridge the educational divide." *Physics World*. November 3, 2020
<https://physicsworld.com/a/the-importance-of-teachers-to-bridge-the-educational-divide/>

New project hopes to test and scale 'high impact' tutoring

With six pilot sites already, a new project aims to study the features of good programs and help expand them throughout the United States. There is widespread agreement that **of all the ways to help students struggling academically due to the COVID-19 pandemic, "high-impact" tutoring is the most promising**: It's personalized. It's an approach that's been used for centuries by the well-heeled. And it has a lot of research behind it. This has led to a consensus (at least among think-tank types) that the U.S. needs a significant investment to expand high-quality tutoring programs. (High-impact tutoring, also called high-dosage tutoring, is sustained and regular contact between a tutor and a student over several months.)

Stephen Sawchuk. "To Combat Learning Loss, New Project Hopes to Test and Scale 'High Impact' Tutoring." *Education Week*. November 10, 2020
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/District_Dossier/2020/11/scaling_tutoring_annenberg.html?cmp=enl-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59760147&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfc

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Biden election could result in massive K-12 policy

Candidate Joseph Biden has promised a sharp U-turn from the current education philosophy and policies, in areas including the pandemic, civil rights enforcement in schools, and aid for underprivileged students via K-12 funding.

Evie Blad. "Joe Biden's Election as President Tees Up Massive Shifts for K-12 Policy." *Education Week*. November 7, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/11/03/joe-bidens-election-as-president-tees-up.html?cmp=soceml-twfdbltz-ewnow>

Linda Darling-Hammond rejects possible role as education secretary

Ending speculation in media and education circles, Linda Darling-Hammond, president of the California State Board of Education, says she is committed to staying in California, and is not interested in becoming the next US Secretary

of Education. Darling-Hammond is currently heading up the education transition team for President-elect Joe Biden, although she would not confirm that in an interview Sunday, or discuss her role in the transition.

Louis Freedberg. "Linda Darling-Hammond removes herself from possible consideration as Secretary of Education." *Ed Source*. November 8, 2020 <https://edsource.org/2020/linda-darling-hammond-rejects-consideration-as-secretary-of-education-in-biden-administration/643327>

Biden's education transition team

President-elect Biden's education transition team members are identified on this website.

Biden transition website: "Restoring American Leadership." <https://buildbackbetter.com/the-transition/agency-review-teams/>

Amy Coney Barrett and education

Amy Coney Barrett, the U.S. Supreme Court's newest member, will soon begin to rule on cases that could affect generations of students, teachers, and schools. Barrett's writings, positions, and track record so far suggest that her education-related decisions may be the antithesis of those of her predecessor, the late Ruth Bader Ginsberg, who supported gender equity, LGBTQ rights, and the separation of church and state. Barrett has limited personal experience with public education as a graduate of a Catholic girls' school who sent her own children to religious schools. She served on the board of trustees of a network of private, Christian schools that discriminated against LGBTQ parents, students, and employees. This article describes some of her decisions affecting education.

"Amy Coney Barrett and Education: Where Does She Stand?" *National Education Policy Center Newsletter*. November 10, 2020 <http://www.icontact-archive.com/archive?c=1748247&f=3100&s=3172&m=183302&t=683ff6e55fceb8d669aa5ea6b8253ac84d14528c98c4873195440427f0ff88d5>

Biden's plan for education support

President-elect Joe Biden says educators will have "one of your own" in the White House, referring to his wife Jill Biden, an English professor at a community college in Northern Virginia. In Biden's education plan, New York educators say they see a more collaborative approach that prioritizes funding for public schools, higher teacher salaries, and a focus on equity and restoring Obama-era protections for marginalized groups.

Rachel Silberstein. "How education will change under Biden." *Albany Times Union*. November 9, 2020

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/How-education-policy-will-change-under-Biden-15712466.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Timesunion_DailyBrief&stn=nl&sid=5ae0930791d15c3e666094a8

How will schools pay for special ed student services?

States' efforts so far suggest there won't be enough money to go around for all the learning losses of students with disabilities from COVID-19 school shutdowns.

Corey Mitchell. "How Will Schools Pay for Compensatory Services for Special Ed. Students?" *Education Week*. November 10, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/11/10/how-will-schools-pay-for-compensatory-services.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59760147&U=252955&UID=4cf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

How educators can prevent neglect, abuse

Reports of child abuse declined 30% - 70% nationally during the pandemic when more students were learning remotely. In this interview, the chief research and strategy officer at Prevent Child Abuse America, offers strategies to help educators identify and prevent potential neglect or abuse.

Emily Tate. "Child Abuse Is Harder to Spot During the Pandemic. What Can Educators Do?" *Ed Surge*. November 10, 2020

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-11-10-child-abuse-is-harder-to-spot-during-the-pandemic-what-can-educators-do>

Biden's 5-point plan to reopen schools

President-elect Biden's five-point Roadmap for Reopening Schools Safely plan -- released ahead of the start of the 2020-21 school year -- empowers state and local leaders to make decisions about reopening that are responsive to community health. The plan also includes a focus on contact tracing, testing and personal protective equipment.

Rachel Burstein. "Biden's School Reopening Plan Promises More Funding, Clearer Guidance for Local Decision-Making." *Ed Surge*. November 10, 2020 <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-11-10-biden-s-school-reopening-plan-promises-more-funding-clearer-guidance-for-local-decision-making>

E-learning puts strain on school IT teams

School technology teams worked rapidly in the spring to ensure students and staff had the capability to teach and learn remotely. Chief technology officers say they worked long days and faced challenges, such as lack of access to the internet and determining how to repair hardware.

Nadia Tamez-Robledo. "COVID-19 Is Pushing School Tech Departments to Their Limits — and Then Some." *Ed Surge*. November 10, 2020

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-11-10-covid-19-is-pushing-school-tech-departments-to-their-limits-and-then-some>

What district leaders want from the Biden administration

School leaders' decision-making has been in the public eye during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has thrown into relief the kinds of services districts provide that tend to be invisible during "business-as-usual times": health care, nutrition, after-school care. And in the absence of any coordinated federal response to the K-12 challenges of the pandemic, the nation's school districts have been forced by default into making consequential decisions about staffing, security, and health. Now the groups representing the nation's more than 13,000 school districts are putting out their markers for what they want the new administration to prioritize.

Stephen Sawchuk. "What School Superintendents Want From the Biden Administration." *Education Week*. November 11, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/District_Dossier/2020/11/school_district_leaders_ask_biden_admin.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59761598&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca