

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 6, 2020 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Poll: Online learning concerns parents

Among parents of students who are learning online, 32% say they are very concerned their children are falling behind, and 36% saying they are somewhat concerned, according to a Pew Research Center survey. Despite concern about the coronavirus, data shows that parents are more satisfied with in-person learning.

Alexa Lardieri. "Online education has many worried, but even parents whose children are learning in person are concerned." *U.S. News & World Report*. October 29, 2020 <https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2020-10-29/most-parents-worry-students-will-fall-behind-due-to-coronavirus-survey-finds>

Poll: Educators predict growth in remote learning

Remote learning is expected to expand over the next three years, according to a survey of 1,200 teachers and school leaders by Promethean. Data shows diminished focus on robotics and coding.

Dian Schaffhauser. "Remote Learning Will Continue Growing over the Next Three Years." *T.H.E. Journal*. October 29, 2020 <https://thejournal.com/articles/2020/10/29/remote-learning-will-continue-growing-over-the-next-three-years.aspx>

How educators can help students with reading trauma

Book leveling, reading lists filled with "classics", and being shamed for reading choices are among the negative experiences that can turn students off to reading, asserts a veteran teacher-librarian of Denver Public Schools. She and a North Carolina teacher-librarian suggest ways to heal reading trauma, such as by redefining reading to include audiobooks and creating an inclusive, diverse library.

Amielle Major. "When Kids Say 'I'm not a reader': How Librarians Can Disrupt Traumatic Reading Practices." *KQED* (San Francisco). October 29, 2020 <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/56900/when-kids-say-im-not-a-reader-how-librarians-can-disrupt-traumatic-reading-practices>

Grading bias unfair to young learners

A June 2020 study, highlighted in this week's *Education Next*, shows how young Black boys can be unfairly graded on small school assignments, such as essays about their weekends. Education researcher David Quinn at the University of Southern California documented unfair grading in an experiment in which he had teachers evaluate nearly identical essays using Black versus white sounding names. He also successfully tested a solution to the biased grading problem. Teachers were 4.7% more likely to consider the white child's writing at or above 'grade level' than the identical writing from a Black child. White and female teachers, who compose the vast majority of U.S. teachers, were most likely to exhibit racial bias in grading. There was no connection between teachers' implicit and explicit racial attitudes and the differences in how they graded the Black and white students. Grading rubrics -- explicit grading criteria -- eliminated racial bias in essay evaluation in this experiment.

Jill Barshay. "White and female teachers show racial bias in evaluating second grade writing." *Hechinger Report*. November 2, 2020 https://hechingerreport.org/white-and-female-teachers-show-racial-bias-in-evaluating-second-grade-writing/?utm_source=The+Hechinger+Report&utm_campaign=cdc46172ae-PP_2020_10_30&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d3ee4c3e04-cdc46172ae-322606321
(Cited article) David M. Quinn. "How to Reduce Racial Bias in Grading." *Education Next*. Fall 2020 https://www.educationnext.org/how-to-reduce-racial-bias-in-grading-research/?utm_source=The+Hechinger+Report&utm_campaign=cdc46172ae-PP_2020_10_30&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d3ee4c3e04-cdc46172ae-322606321

Teachers cope with 'deep' learning

Despite the hurdles of remote instruction or socially distanced classrooms, some teachers continue to focus on "deep learning," in which students take deep dives into content. Jal Mehta, a professor at Harvard Graduate School of Education, says it is difficult for teachers, as the approach often relies on project-based learning and group work. The argument for "deep learning" is that it improves student engagement and prepares kids to be better problem solvers in a world with increasingly complex challenges around health, economics, social justice, and climate change. A broader approach, the counter argument goes, introduces students to a greater mix of topics.

Alyson Klein. "Why 'Deep Learning' Is Hard to Do in Remote or Hybrid Schooling." *Education Week*. November 4, 2020 <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/11/04/deep-learning-is-hard-to-do-virtually.html>

Commentary: Can at-home experiences factor into grades?

Many students have at-home demands that provide learning experiences during the coronavirus pandemic, explains the director of maker experiences and entrepreneurship at the Washington Leadership Academy. She encourages educators to value these experiences -- such as caring for siblings or preparing family meals -- and to determine how to apply academic grades to learning that takes place outside of the classroom.

Janet Hollingsworth. "Students Are Learning Outside of School. Why Don't They Earn Credit for It?" *Ed Surge*. November 4, 2020 <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-11-04-students-are-learning-outside-of-school-why-don-t-they-earn-credit-for-it>

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

How principals can relieve their own stress and anxiety

Principals are stressed and anxious. This article includes steps they can do—from exercise and meditation to tapping into the community—to give themselves support to cope with pandemic stress.

Denisa R. Superville. “Principals Are Stressed and Anxious, Especially Now. Here’s 10 Things They Can Do.” *Education Week*. October 29, 2020
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/District_Dossier/2020/10/principals_also_need_sel_amid_the_pandemic.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=%25%25MESSAGE_ID%25%25&U=%25%25CF_ICNACCOUNTNUMBER%25%25&UID=%25%25MD5_EMAIL%25%25

Financial ways districts can support, retain teachers

School districts could assist teachers and increase retention by subsidizing continuing professional education requirements, providing budgeting assistance, and forgiving student loans, writes Callie McGill of LendingTree. She cites data from the National Education Association indicating that teachers earn 21% less than other similarly educated workers in other professions.

Callie McGill. “Financial pressure for teachers is deeper than classroom supplies.” *District Administration*. October 28, 2020
<https://districtadministration.com/financial-pressure-for-teachers-is-deeper-than-classroom-supplies/>

How some districts are still teaching/learning on snow days

Remote learning plans developed to deal with the pandemic now make it possible to schools to avoid snow days. In some states, such instruction counts for state aid.

Matt Zalaznick. “How COVID online learning is canceling snow days.” *District Administration*. October 29, 2020
<https://districtadministration.com/covid-online-learning-keeps-school-open-snow-days/>

Public health expert encourages schools to reopen

Fear is driving too many schools to be overly cautious about providing in-person learning, says Dr. Ashish K. Jha, previous director of the Harvard Global Health Institute, and currently dean of Brown University’s School of Public Health. This article records an extensive interview with Jha who has been a leading voice on the importance of using science and data to guide decisions about the pandemic.

Catherine Gewertz. “‘Schools Need to Be Bolder’ About Reopening, Public Health Expert Says.” *Education Week*. November 3, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/11/03/schools-need-to-be-bolder-about-reopening.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59750025&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Survey: Educator morale, school job applicants declining

More than 80% of educators say teacher morale is lower than it was before the pandemic, an EdWeek Research Center survey found. School districts are reporting fewer job applicants. Student mask requirements are expanding. And there is a big range in the amount of live instruction schools offer daily. Those are four key findings from the EdWeek Research Center’s latest monthly survey about the impact of the coronavirus on schools and other timely topics. The Center administered the online survey in late October. The 1,630 responding educators included 495 district leaders, 310 principals, and 825 teachers.

Holly Kurtz. “Educator Morale, School Job Applicants Declining, Survey Shows.” *Education Week*. November 4, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/11/04/educator-morale-school-job-applicants-declining-survey.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59752757&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Report: Student achievement falls during pandemic

More students began the school year below grade level than the year before, according to a report from Curriculum Associates. Data shows that while students improved reading skills, outcomes in math declined, with 29% falling below grade level in the subject this school year. An analysis of early assessment data found that 28-29% of students began the 2020-2021 school year unprepared for on-grade level instruction in reading and math. And compared with the historical average of the previous three school years, more students began the latest school year behind grade level, especially in math. Yet, in reading, students were doing better in fall 2020 than the previous average in certain grade levels, including those from Black, Indigenous and People of color (BIPOC) and lower-income families.

Dian Schaffhauser. “After Campus Closures, More Students Began School Year Below Grade Level.” *T.H.E. Journal*. November 2, 2020
<https://thejournal.com/articles/2020/11/02/after-campus-closures-more-students-began-school-year-below-grade-level.aspx>

Education leaders focus on student needs, learning

School leaders anticipate that school closures related to the coronavirus pandemic likely led to learning loss among students. While some assessments are beginning to measure the potential effect, educators say they are focused on supporting students’ current needs and assessing their learning moving forward. Most states aren’t requiring all districts to administer uniform test to measure student slippage. Many districts are using their usual fall testing to guide instruction and assessing students’ mental well-being, an approach favored by many experts and educators. However, this approach to testing worries some policymakers who say it’s difficult to plan academic recovery without consistent data across districts and states.

Patrick Wall, Chalkbeat & Kantele Franko, Associated Press. “On pandemic ‘learning loss,’ schools look forward, not back.” *Associated Press*, October 30, 2020
<https://apnews.com/article/newark-schools-coronavirus-new-jersey-0dd87cdaeb60aeb9f2a5a011867f22a5>

College Board: Remote SAT under consideration

The coronavirus pandemic has upended traditional college admissions testing, with many students registered to take the exams unable to do so and about 30% of testing sites closed. The College Board says a remote SAT is under consideration, and some schools are administering an online SAT.

Jeremy Bauer-Wolf. "Difficulties taking SAT and ACT persist, signaling long-term problems for test makers." *Education Dive*. November 3, 2020
<https://www.educationdive.com/news/difficulties-taking-sat-and-act-persist-signaling-long-term-problems-for-t/588292/>

Report offers insight into E-rate program

Most respondents to the 10th annual E-rate Trends Report are pleased with the modernization and administration of the federal E-rate program, according to Funds For Learning. Yet, the report finds there is an overwhelming need for investment in off-campus internet, with 90% saying their communities have insufficient internet access.

Laura Ascione. "E-rate report reveals dire need for off-campus internet." *eSchool News*. November 5, 2020
<https://www.eschoolnews.com/2020/11/05/e-rate-report-reveals-dire-need-for-off-campus-internet/>

Trends in fall college enrollment

Data shows fewer students chose to enroll in public and private nonprofit colleges this fall compared with last year. Seven charts illustrate the nuances of this trend, with details on factors such as race and ethnicity, tuition price growth and two-year to four-year conversion.

Hallie Busta. "7 charts that give a snapshot of college enrollment this fall." *Education Dive*. November 3, 2020
<https://www.educationdive.com/news/7-charts-that-give-a-snapshot-of-college-enrollment-this-fall/588276/>

NEW YORK STATE

SED cancels January Regents exams

The NYSED has announced that the January administration of HS Regents exams is cancelled because officials can't safely or fairly offer the test this January with the pandemic still active. The announcement marks the third time in eight months that the state has scrubbed the exams since the COVID-19 pandemic erupted.

Michael Elsen-Rooney. "N.Y. state Education Dept. cancels January high school Regents exams." *NY Daily News*. November 5, 2020
<https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/ny-january-regents-exams-canceled-20201105-v727bumkaza4dfp24kjppz5sgq-story.html>
John Hildebrand. "January's Regents exams canceled, state education officials say." *Newsday*. November 5, 2020
https://www.newsday.com/long-island/education/regents-exams-1.50057138?user=5c8795827e553f56154105c0&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Afternoon-Update