

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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February 25, 2022 Education News Update

Here's hoping you have been able to enjoy some down time this past week. In the meanwhile, education news keeps coming.....

TEACHING & LEARNING

Commentary: Need to involve teachers in decision making

Teachers rarely have a seat at the table when district-level decisions are made, and at times learn about new developments at the same time as students and their families. The author calls for reforms to ensure there are stronger systems of collaboration and transparency in decision-making.

Aisha Douglas is an academic dean at Achievement First Brooklyn High School in NYC.

Aisha Douglas. "Teachers Have Little Say When School Districts Make Decisions. Here's How We Change That." *Ed Surge*. February 10, 2022 <https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-10-teachers-have-little-say-when-school-districts-make-decisions-here-s-how-we-change-that>

How to teach about climate change in conservative areas

After years of teaching courses on the social and cultural implications of climate change and studying the outcomes of those courses, a team of educators urge a shift in addressing rural students' identities and political and cultural economies, alongside scientific investigations of climate change and its local impacts. They describe projects capable of mitigating resistance to climate change science among political conservatives in their article in *Educational and Developmental Psychologist*. They argue that the most effective way to study climate change is to study the social, political, and cultural understandings that accompany the subject matter.

Theresa Danylak, University of Rochester. "HOW CAN TEACHERS EDUCATE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE IN CONSERVATIVE AREAS?" *Futurity*. February 10, 2022 <https://www.futurity.org/teaching-climate-change-rural-schools-2695072/>

Pandemic isolation & early childhood development

Many children under five years old have been "bunker babies" for two years. Whether this experience will lead to long-term mental health, development, or academic consequences depends on each family's challenges. Many parents are anxious about their kids missing normal experiences, and worry about the effects of isolation, disruption, loss of loved ones, economic pressure, and trauma on their tots. They still face difficult decisions about what their unvaccinated kids can safely do. For now, schools remain the best resource for families—as a stabilizing force, providing meals, mental health services, on-site health services, and connections to other resources. Mental health and special needs services need to be a priority. And teachers need to be prepared for students with more needs.

Sharon Guynup. "How pandemic isolation is affecting young kids' developing minds." *National Geographic*. February 11, 2022 https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/how-pandemic-isolation-is-affecting-young-kids-developing-minds?cmpid=org=ngp:mc=crm:email:src=ngp:cmp=editorial::add=SpecialEdition_20220211::rid=DCF379AF08119FA8D853CDC6F688BFC

Schools work to get 9th-graders back on graduation path

Schools across the country are working to address the academic needs of younger HS students amid data from states that shows many ninth-graders have fallen behind on the path to graduation. Interventions include creating more options for credit recovery, academic advising and adding staff to work with students.

Kalyn Belsha. "More high schoolers are off track to graduate. Here's how schools can help." *Chalkbeat*. February 8, 2022 <https://www.chalkbeat.org/2022/2/8/22923631/ninth-grade-credit-recovery-high-school-graduation-pandemic>

Bills to give parents more power could push teachers out

In at least 15 states, lawmakers are considering bills to give parents more school oversight.

Aallyah Wright, *Stateline*. "Educators Warn Bills to Give Parents More Power Could Push Teachers Out." *Route Fifty*. February 11, 2022 <https://www.route-fifty.com/management/2022/02/educators-warn-bills-give-parents-more-power-could-push-teachers-out/361911/>

Effectiveness of online tutoring investigated

The online tutoring business is booming but there's limited evidence for how well online tutoring works. An Italian study during the 2020-21 school year found that students' test scores shot up when they received four hours of online tutoring a week from university students. But when students received only two hours a week of such help, academic gains fell by more than half. A Chicago study found that MS students who received online tutoring in the spring of 2021 didn't do much better in reading or math than other students because of attendance: the program aimed for two 30-minute sessions a week over 12 weeks, but students received an average of three hours in total.

Jill Barshay. "Uncertain evidence for online tutoring." *Hechinger Report*. February 14, 2022 <https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-uncertain-evidence-for-online-tutoring/>

Study: Delayed HS start times works for parents also

Research has found that delayed MS and HS school start time is good for teens' health, concentration and academic performance. A new study published in *Sleep Health* suggests that later school start times are beneficial for parents, too, providing more sleep time with no negative impact on parents of primary school children who start earlier.

Parents of MS or HS children reported later wake times and increased sleep duration. More parents of MS and HS students reported good sleep quality, and fewer parents reported feeling tired during the day with later start times.

Rachel Silberstein. "Study: Delaying high school start times good for parents, too." *Albany Times Union*. February 14, 2022

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Study-Delaying-high-school-start-times-good-for-16908007.php?cmpid=115195&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_dailyheadlines&sid=5ae0930791d15c3e666094a8

Promoting civics education across subjects

Civics education can be a part of lessons across the curriculum, according to the authors who share strategies for promoting civics learning among HS students, including engaging in healthy civil discourse, such as by swapping debates for dialogues, which invite an understanding of differences.

Shawn McCusker is director of professional learning at *Digital Promise*. Tom Driscoll is an educational consultant and former HS social studies teacher.

Shawn McCusker & Tom Driscoll. "3 Strategies to Boost Civics Education." *Edutopia*. February 11, 2022

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/3-strategies-boost-civics-education>

District uses tech tool to address language barriers

The platform, ParentSquare, has helped to improve communication with families in a district where students speak more than 60 languages. The platform has helped to break down language barriers.

Shelly Reggiani. "4 Ways a Districtwide Communications Platform Strengthened Our Stakeholder Relationships." *T.H.E. Journal*. February 11, 2022

<https://thejournal.com/articles/2022/02/11/4-ways-a-districtwide-communications-platform-strengthened-our-stakeholder-relationships.aspx>

Strengthening the superintendent pipeline

The authors share strategies for superintendent recruitment and retention, including making the role more attractive and highlighting the achievements of underrepresented populations, such as women and people of color.

Doug Roberts is CEO of the *Institute for Education Innovation*, and Luvelle Brown is superintendent of the *Ithaca City School District*.

Luelle Brown & Doug Roberts. "Superintendent turnover is skyrocketing. What school districts can do now to retain experienced educators." *Smart Brief/Education*. February 14, 2022

https://corp.smartbrief.com/original/2022/02/superintendent-turnover-retain-experienced-educators?utm_source=brief

Book bans grounds for moral panic?

Books in schools and libraries increasingly have targets on their spines. The more partisan the battle has become, the more it manifests as a power struggle rather than an effort to find common ground on how best to serve children.

Lee Lawrence. "Rising book bans: Grounds for moral panic?" *Christian Science Monitor*. February 9, 2022

<https://www.csmonitor.com/The-Culture/2022/0209/Rising-book-bans-Grounds-for-moral-panic?cmpid=ema:mkt:20220215&src=highlight>

Proactive strategy for managing student pandemic behavior

Increasing issues with student conduct at schools amid the challenges of the pandemic call for a proactive approach to behavior management, a veteran HS Principal asserts. She developed the ARC -- articulate, reason and commit -- strategy and explains how the three steps can help keep students engaged in learning.

Teresa Sullivan. "Pandemic Behavior Management: It's All in the ARC." *ASCD Inservice*. February 14, 2022

<https://www.ascd.org/blogs/pandemic-behavior-management-its-all-in-the-arc>

What educators want in the new immersive metaverse

Educators are looking to shape the future of the immersive technology metaverse, offering advice to tech companies in a new Brookings Institution policy brief, "A Whole New World: Education Meets the Metaverse." In this interview, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, a professor of psychology at Temple University and one of the brief's authors, says educators are seeking to make the metaverse culturally responsive and equitable.

Jeffrey R. Young. "Educators Have Some Pointed Advice For Tech Companies Building the Metaverse." *Ed Surge*. February 15, 2022

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-15-educators-have-some-pointed-advice-for-tech-companies-building-the-metaverse>

Numbers of homeless students undercounted

The number of homeless students is undercounted, partly because of "hidden" homelessness, in which children temporarily stay at someone else's home and do not receive support. Advocates say this, with a lack of a uniform definition of homelessness and the stigma associated with it, makes supporting this population challenging.

Camila Beier. "Homeless youth and children are wildly undercounted, advocates say." *National Public Radio*. February 15, 2022

<https://www.npr.org/2022/02/15/1073791409/homeless-youth-and-children-are-wildly-undercounted-advocates-say>

Study: One-third of young students behind in reading

Intensive support is needed to help roughly one-third of K-3 children who are not reading at grade level, according to a study by the testing group Amplify. There are first-grade students who do not know the alphabet.

Linda Jacobson. "'We Have First-Graders Who Can't Sing the Alphabet Song': Pandemic Continues to Push Young Readers Off Track, New Data Shows." *The 74*. February 16, 2022

<https://www.the74million.org/article/we-have-first-graders-who-cant-sing-the-alphabet-song-pandemic-continues-to-push-young-readers-off-track-new-data-shows/>

Value of recess acknowledged

The No Child Left Behind era led to less time for recess to focus more on test prep, but that move may have been misguided, and recess is more important than ever because of the pandemic. A focus on more free playtime is part of the prioritization of students' well-being and social-emotional development along with their academic success.

Anna Merod. "Recess needed now more than ever for students amid COVID-19, experts say." *K-12 Dive*. February 18, 2022
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/recess-needed-now-more-than-ever-for-students-amid-covid-19-experts-say/619107/>

Teachers include Russia-Ukraine border crisis in lessons

Some teachers report that they are integrating news of the Russia-Ukraine border crisis in classroom lessons.

Richard Haass, president of the nonprofit Council on Foreign Relations, says the situation offers an opportunity for teachers to inform students about the crisis and why it matters to them.

Sarah Schwartz. "Why the Russia-Ukraine Crisis Is Relevant to Teachers." *Education Week*. February 18, 2022
<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/why-the-russia-ukraine-crisis-is-relevant-to-teachers/2022/02>

How districts address stress in principals

Leaders in one Michigan school district schedule weekly check-ins with school principals aimed at reducing their administrative load, reenergizing them and ensuring their needs are met. Holding appreciation events, limiting the flow of requests from central office and organizing stress-reduction sessions are tips from other education leaders.

Matt Zalaznick. "How K-12 leaders can help principals overcome stress and resist burnout." *District Administration*. February 16, 2022
<https://districtadministration.com/how-k-12-leaders-help-principals-overcome-stress-resist-burnout/>

Teachers: Students need to discuss racism, injustice

Teaching students about racism and racial injustice of the past helps equip them to address the same issues now, some Black educators say. Various teachers from across the US explain that open and transparent discussions about race and racism serve an important role for students of all backgrounds by helping them build empathy and understanding about others' experiences.

Kiara Alfonseca. "Black educators reflect on teaching history amid critical race theory backlash." *Good Morning America*. February 23, 2022. <https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/living/story/black-educators-reflect-teaching-history-amid-critical-race-83039236>

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Former education secretaries support social studies teaching

Former US education secretaries Arne Duncan, John King Jr. and Rod Paige spoke during the recent 100th Anniversary Conference of the National Council for the Social Studies. They addressed the current climate around, and importance of, social studies and civics education. King said, "Learning sometimes has to be uncomfortable so that you are thinking and doing the work to analyze where we've been and how we move forward."

Trigie Faley. "Teaching social studies will require courage." *Smart Brief/Education*. February 10, 2022
https://corp.smartbrief.com/original/2022/02/teaching-social-studies-will-require-courage?utm_source=brief

Schools facing historic workforce shortages

Schools are raising pay and offering signing bonuses to recruit school nutrition professionals, bus drivers and others amid a staggering labor shortage. "I have been in the school nutrition industry business for 25-plus years and have never seen things like this before in my career," said Beth Wallace, president of the School Nutrition Association.

Colin Lodewick. "Even with higher pay and signing bonuses, public schools struggle to hire bus drivers and cafeteria workers." *Fortune*. February 9, 2022
<https://fortune.com/2022/02/09/public-schools-struggle-to-fill-support-staff-roles/>

Senators introduce Kids Online Safety Act

Two US senators on February 16 introduced the Kids Online Safety Act to better protect children from potential harm caused by social media. Under the legislation, social media companies would be required to help prevent and mitigate harm to minors, including suicide and eating disorders; enhance privacy protections; and conduct and support scientific research about the effects of social media on youngsters.

Shannon Bond. "Senators aim to rewrite child safety rules on social media." *National Public Radio*. February 16, 2022
<https://www.npr.org/2022/02/16/1081000056/senators-aim-to-rewrite-child-safety-rules-on-social-media>

Suburban moms opposed to book bans are fighting back

Some suburban moms are teaming up to fight the conservative movement to ban from classrooms books dealing with race, sexuality, and gender. They're using unique strategies to convince board members to keep books.

Eesha Pendharkar. "As Book Bans Spread, Suburban Moms Who Oppose Them Are Fighting Back." *Education Week*. February 17, 2022
https://www.edweek.org/leadership/as-book-bans-spread-suburban-moms-who-oppose-them-are-fighting-back/2022/02?utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eu&M=64309681&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Abstract: Ties between school choice and privatization

The origins of today's campaigns for school vouchers and other modes of public funding for private education can be traced to efforts by Milton Friedman beginning in 1955, revealing that the endgame of the "school choice" enterprise for libertarians has never been to enhance education for all children, but rather to offload the full cost of schooling onto parents as part of his quest to privatize public services and resources. Friedman's case for vouchers to promote "educational freedom" buttressed the case of advocates of the policy of massive resistance to Brown v. Board of Education, and taught white supremacists a more sophisticated, court-proof way to preserve Jim Crow.

Nancy MacLean is Professor of History and Public Policy at Duke University and author of *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America*. Nancy MacLean. "How Milton Friedman Exploited White Supremacy to Privatize Education" (Working Paper No. 161). *Institute for New Economic Thinking*. September 1, 2021 https://www.ineteconomics.org/uploads/papers/WP_161-MacLean.pdf

SEL the latest flashpoint in education wars

Educators say Social Emotional Learning is intended to help kids cope with problems and succeed in school, but angry parents see connections between SEL curricula and discussions of controversial topics. Many educators have seen a reduction in behavior issues and incidents in since SEL was introduced. Cancelling it, as schools are trying to help kids recover from the pandemic, leaves educators with fewer resources when they desperately need more.

Kelly Field. "Social and emotional learning is the latest flashpoint in the education wars." *Hechinger Report*. February 21, 2022

https://hechingerreport.org/social-and-emotional-learning-is-the-latest-flashpoint-in-the-education-wars/?utm_source=The+Hechinger+Report&utm_campaign=9a0206668-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_02_22_07_04&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d3ee4c3e04-9a0206668-322606321

College data collection raises privacy concerns

Universities that use data collection to track students and faculty on campus are raising concerns about privacy on campuses. In a recent case, George Washington University's president apologized for not informing the campus of an analytics project in violation of university policy.

Suzanne Smalley. "A Data Collection Project at GW Leads to Privacy Questions." *Inside Higher Ed*. February 22, 2022

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/02/22/gw-data-collection-effort-sparks-campus-privacy-concerns>

Best practices for safeguarding student data

Cloud-based workspaces and backup systems provide a seamless workflow, but they can make schools vulnerable to hacking. Taking an inventory of all the places student data is stored and pinpointing data security vulnerabilities are two of five strategies experts advise for ensuring the information stays safe.

Rebecca Torchia. "The Checklist: 5 Steps to Secure Student Data." *Ed Tech*. February 22, 2022

<https://edtechmagazine.com/k12/article/2022/02/checklist-5-steps-secure-student-data>

NEW YORK STATE

NYSOH has no precise numerical goals for mask metrics

State health officials acknowledged they have no precise metrics for determining whether to end the masking mandate in NYS schools. That lack has riled opponents of the mask rules that have prompted showdowns at school board meetings and consternation among district leaders who must cope with the unrest. The admission comes despite Governor Hochul saying she is basing her decisions on data.

Joshua Solomon. "N.Y. officials admit no data targets for ending school masking." *Albany Times Union*. February 11, 2022

https://www.timesunion.com/state/article/No-one-rule-State-says-it-has-no-numerical-16910841.php?IPID=Times-Union-HP-state-package&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424e17c09a3f115af

Governor plans to evaluate school mask requirements on March 4

Governor Hochul confirmed that on March 4 she expects to reevaluate school mask requirements, and could potentially lift the mandate later that week. She emphasized that the state should follow a data-centric approach in making its determination, there remains no "magic number" to determine when to revise her administration's policy.

Joshua Solomon. "Hochul eyeing March 4 to reconsider masks in schools as she monitors trends." *Albany Times Union*. February 15, 2022

<https://www.timesunion.com/state/article/Hochul-eyeing-March-4-to-reconsider-masks-in-16921463.php>

State HS graduation rate inched up in 2021

The statewide HS graduation rate inched up last year to 86.1%, but officials cannot determine the extent to which the cancellation of Regents exams made it easier for some to graduate. The graduation rate in 2021 increased by 1.3% over 2020, according to the SED. Graduation rates rose for most student groups, including Hispanic students (3.4%), Black students (2.2%), Asian students (1%) and students with disabilities (2.3%). The graduation rate for English language learners jumped by 14.5%, which officials attributed to an intensifying statewide focus.

Gary Stern, *Rockland/Westchester Journal News*. "Class of 2021: Graduation rates inched up as Regents exam requirements eased."

Democrat & Chronicle. February 17, 2022

[NYS graduation rates rose in 2021, as Regents exams were canceled](#)

State urged to forgive school district fines

NYS legislators and SED officials agree that fines levied against school districts for late reports should be forgiven, but doing so is complicated. There are 288 claims for fine forgiveness dating back 17 years, but no one has included money in the budget to pay for it. Legislation providing blanket forgiveness of SED fines was included in the 2021-22 budgets approved by the Legislature, but it was removed during final negotiations. Governor Hochul vetoed nine bills in one day earlier this fall forgiving fines levied against school districts for late or improperly filed reports. John Whittaker, *Jamestown Post-Journal*. "State urged to forgive school districts' fines." *Democrat & Chronicle*. February 17, 2022 <https://rochesterdemocrat-ny.newsmemory.com?selDate=20220217&goTo=A02&artid=3>

Editorial: NYS school funding should be revamped

Governor Hochul included \$2 billion in her state budget proposal to cover a property tax rebate. Taxpayers get cash while politicians claim credit for sending checks — funded by taxpayers. But this ploy is just one of the flaws in NYS's education funding. The system needs a redesign that replaces gimmicks with rational tax policy by re-imagining how education funding is collected, and allotted. And the current level of federal funding, spiking income and sales tax inflows from a booming economy, with sports gambling contributing and legal marijuana on deck, there's a unique opportunity to remake the system that shouldn't be sacrificed for another gift-check gimmick.

Editorial Board "NY school funding should be revamped." *Newsday*. February 19, 2022 6:00 AM https://www.newsday.com/opinion/editorial/ny-property-tax-rebate-checks-funding-schools-1.50514705#utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=non-subs-Morning-Update&ctg=7180daea0ff17e08169c7036e559bfb4b9e7b92a72e79686b9188ce63f596bd4&utm_term=non

Why desegregation failed to take hold in upstate New York

For many years NYS has been the most segregated state in the nation for Black students and second-most segregated for Latino students. Since the U.S. Supreme Court found racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional, most NYS school districts have made little effort to integrate schools. Backlash by white parents to state-initiated integration efforts in the 1960s and 1970s followed by the flight of middle-class white families to suburbs contributed to today's stark racial and socioeconomic divide in much of upstate New York. Lack of collaboration between urban and suburban districts and the state's education funding structure exacerbate the problem.

Rachel Silberstein. "Nearly 70 years after Brown decision, New York schools still separate and unequal." *Albany Times Union*. February 20, 2022 <https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Nearly-70-years-after-Brown-decision-New-York-16828901.php>

Homeschooling booming in NYS

Homeschooling is likely to grow now that so many parents have tried it. Many businesses are creating programs to support home schooling, making it easier for parents. Middle-income families once made up the largest percentage of home-schoolers, but homeschooling among minority and low-income families has seen a steep rise since the pandemic began. NYS has some of the nation's most stringent homeschooling requirements. Parents must submit a notice of intent to their local superintendent and file individualized home instruction plans, quarterly reports and annual assessments. While districts must provide a copy of the home instruction regulations and assure a child receives instruction in certain required subjects, parents are responsible for curriculum materials and learning plans. Helu Wang. "Homeschooling has boomed, spurred on by the pandemic." *Middletown Times Herald-Record USA TODAY NETWORK* (in *Democrat & Chronicle*). February 21, 2022 <https://rochesterdemocrat-ny.newsmemory.com?selDate=20220221&goTo=A01&artid=2>

Poll: NYS majority want state to wait before mask mandate decision

A new Siena College poll found that a majority of New Yorkers want the Hochul administration to wait for more information before deciding whether to lift a statewide mandate on mask-wearing in schools. The same poll showed rising anxiety about crime and public safety and a desire to move forward from the pandemic. And the poll found growing discontent among New Yorkers with the direction both the state and country are taking. The poll found 58% of voters surveyed support the governor's plan to keep the mask mandate in place, that 30% of voters believe the mask rule should have ended by now and 10% want to see it conclude after the current February break.

Nick Reisman. "Siena poll: Most New York voters want to wait before lifting school mask rules." *NY State of Politics*. February 22, 2022 https://nystateofpolitics.com/state-of-politics/new-york/ny-state-of-politics/2022/02/21/siena-poll-most-voters-want-to-wait-before-lifting-school-mask-rules?utm_source=First+Read+Newsletters&utm_campaign=a883a06369-First_Read_02222&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_252d27c7d1-a883a06369-34743040&mc_cid=a883a06369&mc_eid=bc2625d4e3

Enrollment drops in NYS's public schools

New York's K-12 public schools are expected to see a drop in enrollment for the second year in a row, for a total decline of 5% since the start of the pandemic, preliminary enrollment data posted to the SED last month shows. The public school system lost 60,000 students — 2.38% of the total student population—in the past year alone. SED officials warn against comparing this year's preliminary enrollment numbers with last year's finalized enrollment data. The 2021-22 data reported by districts could change considerably before final enrollment is reported later this year due to a number of factors, including, students transferring out of districts or dropping out, officials said. The pandemic appears to have accelerated a steady decrease in public school enrollment since 2011.

Rachel Silberstein. "N.Y. public school enrollment expected to drop sharply for 2nd consecutive year." *Albany Times Union*. February 23, 2022 https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/New-York-public-school-enrollment-expected-to-16940536.php?IPID=Times-Union-HP-CP-spotlight&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424c17c09a3f115af