

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

March 17, 2023 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Commentary: SEL can help students feel safe

Students increasingly feel less safe and are more at risk for depression and anxiety, data show. Researchers have found that universal school-based social and emotional learning programs could help. The researcher authors say their findings show that SEL, in particular, improved students' outlook on their school climate and safety.

Christina Cipriano, et alia. "As Safety Threats Rise in Schools, Could SEL Programs Help?" *Ed Surge News*. March 9, 2023
[As Safety Threats Rise in Schools, Could SEL Programs Help? | EdSurge News](#)

Digital hall pass seen as 'game changer'

Educators at a Pennsylvania HS credit a new digital hall pass adopted this year for helping to cut down on student fights. The school had 24 incidents in the fall, but zero in January and February after adopting the Smart Pass app.

Jillian Hartmann. "Butler Area Senior High School cuts down on fights with new technology." *WPXI-TV (Pittsford)*. March 08, 2023
[Butler Area Senior High School cuts down on fights with new technology – WPXI](#)

Technology-enhanced schools

With intentional implementation strategies, school and district leaders can harness technologies to support teachers, empower students, and cultivate deeper learning for the future. Two professors discuss the potential for new and emerging technologies to transform learning and teaching.

Douglas Fisher & Nancy Frey. "The Technology-Enhanced School." *ASCD Educational Leadership*. March 1, 2023
[The Technology-Enhanced School \(ascd.org\)](#)

Minnesota school social workers use trauma-informed approach

Social workers in the St. Paul Public Schools system are using a trauma-informed approach to care for families with children age 5 or younger, with consideration of how adverse childhood experiences may have affected them. They also employ reflective practices, in which children's surrounding environment is discussed in context of child-caregiver relationships.

Mike Moen. "MN Applies 'Trauma Layer' to Early-Childhood Intervention Work." *Public News Service*. March 8, 2023
[MN Applies Trauma Layer to Early Childhood Intervention Work / Public News Service](#)

Factors that are changing K-12 learning the most

Microschools and other options that allow needs-based, personalized instruction have disrupted the traditional school landscape, according to a 2023 trends report. Deeper student thinking and use of artificial intelligence are also playing a greater role, and subject proficiency, rather than grades, has become a more important indicator of career readiness, the report says.

Micah Ward. "These are 7 of the most disruptive forces in education." *District Administration*. March 7, 2023
[These are 7 of the most disruptive forces in education in 2023 \(districtadministration.com\)](#)

Some educators argue that calculus should be dethroned

Some educators say it's time to reconsider calculus as an unofficial requirement for entrance to the nation's top colleges. Many HSs, particularly those serving large numbers of Black, Hispanic or low-income students, don't even offer the course. And even when they do, it's of dubious value, critics say.

Jo Napolitano. "'A Bankrupt Concept of Math': Some Educators Argue Calculus Should Be Dethroned." *The 74 Million*. March 13, 2023
['A Bankrupt Concept of Math': Some Educators Argue Calculus Should Be Dethroned – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

ES teachers must understand science to teach it

Teaching science to young students requires well-prepared teachers who can engage kids as well as deliver content knowledge. Investments in equipment, curricula and activities are moot if education leaders don't also attend to the science preparation of aspiring elementary teachers. Just 31% of elementary teachers report feeling very well prepared to teach science. Here are two resources for bridging these gaps.

Research Brief: Analysis — Disparities in Advanced Math and Science Skills Begin by Kindergarten;
Editor's View: Preschoolers As Young as 2 Can Learn About Science — and Love It. Here's How.

Heather Peske. "Elementary Educators Must Understand Science in Order to Teach It." *The 74 Million*. March 13, 2023
[Elementary Educators Must Understand Science in Order to Teach It – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

US students hungry at school

Pandemic-era support that provided universal access to free school meals ended around the same time as inflation rose, creating hardships for some US families. Educators and others say these and other factors have led to an increase in hunger among students and meal debt for students' families and districts.

Cheyenne Mumphrey & Arleigh Rodgers. " 'It's hard to focus': Schools say American kids are hungry." *Associated Press*. March 11, 2023
[It's hard to focus': Schools say American kids are hungry | AP News](#)

Strategies for successful tutoring

Successful outcomes from a tutoring program are more likely when tutoring is incorporated three to five days a week during the school day, and high-quality instructional materials and clear expectations are included, according to experts. Also essential are student-tutor relationships, as well as ongoing training and PD for tutors.

Lauraine Langreo. "5 Essential Ingredients for Effective Tutoring." *Education Week*. March 8, 2023
[5 Essential Ingredients for Effective Tutoring \(edweek.org\)](#)

HS revamping to improve learning outcomes

This article focuses on the efforts of a Tennessee HS biology teacher to personalize courses and have students learning by doing. The transition wasn't easy for her or her students. With time, support, and trial-and-error, her students are now thriving. She reflects on lessons learned from implementing project-based learning that offer real-world applications for students. The article also includes links to similar efforts elsewhere:

Bridging the Gap: As Utah schools embrace Mastery Learning, and confront challenges of GPAs and college admissions, consortium creates new 'Bridge' Transcript;

Indianapolis: How high schools use 'Badges' to help students demonstrate skills and land jobs;

Fixing a System that Set Up Youth to Fail: Rhode Island overhauls high school.

Nikki Wallace. "Transforming How High School Is Taught Is Tough, But Possible: How I Did It." *The 74 Million*. March 16, 2023
[Transforming How High School Is Taught Is Tough, But Possible: How I Did It – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Biden proposes 13.6% increase in education spending

President Biden's proposed fiscal year 2024 budget includes \$90 billion for the U.S.E.D.—13.6% more than this year's allocation. Under the proposal, high-poverty schools and special education programs would get the largest shares of K-12 funding. However, officials say the proposal is unlikely to be approved by Congress.

Kara Arundel & Anna Merod. "Biden requests \$90B for Education Department in FY24 budget." *K-12 Dive*. March 9, 2023
[Biden requests \\$90B for Education Department in FY24 budget | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

U.S.E.D. pushed to collect more admissions data

Eighteen lawmakers are urging the U.S.E.D. to expand college admissions data collection to include gender in addition to race and ethnicity, extend it to people who are admitted but don't attend, and make the information publicly available. The lawmakers say that such transparency would help tackle "persistent racial inequities."

Laura Spitalniak. "Legislators urge Education Department to expand race, legacy data in admissions." *Higher Ed Dive*. March 8, 2023
[Legislators urge Education Department to expand race, legacy data in admissions | Higher Ed Dive](#)

More districts receive funds for helping homeless students

Expanded funding helps with increased identification and support of homeless students, especially in rural areas. The number of school districts receiving dedicated funding to address needs of homeless students increased dramatically in the 2020-21 school year; yet more than 25 million children continued to attend schools in districts without this aid. Data show 53% of districts got dedicated homeless funding under the American Rescue Plan Act, a jump from just 19.5% prior to the pandemic. Still, in the 2020-21 school year, roughly half of all public school students nationwide continued to attend schools in districts that lacked dedicated homeless funding used to identify and support homeless students. Nationwide, rural districts enroll 20% of homeless children, even though they serve only 15% of the student population. Only 12% of rural districts receive homeless education funding.

Naaz Modan. "More districts receiving dedicated homeless student funding, but rural areas still lag." *K-12 Dive*. March 10, 2023
[More districts receiving dedicated homeless student funding, but rural areas still lag | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

Dueling proposals for 'Parent Bill of Rights' in HR

HR Democrats have introduced an alternative to the Republicans' controversial parental rights bill, which passed out of the education committee last week. The Democrats' version emphasizes ensuring schools provide a high-quality education, "inclusive" campuses and opposes efforts to censor curriculum. Hours of debate last week further clarified the partisan split over parents' role in their children's education. Republicans say their plan would increase transparency into curriculum, school funding and safety efforts.

Linda Jacobson. "Partisan Showdown Over Schools, Pandemic Response." *The 74 Million*. March 10, 2023
[ederal Parents' Bill of Rights: Dueling Proposals in Congress Set to Escalate Partisan Showdown Over Schools, Pandemic Response – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

Participation in school meals rose in 2021-22

School lunch participation grew by 51% during the 2021-22 school year, and breakfast participation was up 11.2%, according to a report from the Food Research and Action Center. The report says the increase came when schools reopened to in-person learning and cafeterias were serving universal, free meals.

Naaz Modan. "School lunch participation leapt 51% during 2021-22." *K-12 Dive*. March 10, 2023

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/FRAC-universal-meal-waivers-increase-students-eating/644702/>

Federal funds increase support for homeless students

In the 2020-21 school year, 53% of school districts received dedicated funding to support students experiencing homelessness through the American Rescue Plan Act -- up from 19.5% before the coronavirus pandemic. The federal program offered \$800 million to identify and support students experiencing homelessness.

Naaz Modan. "More districts receiving dedicated homeless student funding, but rural areas still lag." *K-12 Dive*. March 10, 2023

[More districts receiving dedicated homeless student funding, but rural areas still lag | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

Popular ed tech sites used by schools use 'extensive' tracking tools

Nearly all top ed tech sites use "extensive" tracking technologies. A majority of the most cited ed tech websites use cookies and trackers, which are not malicious but still record information. However, researchers found, that 7.4% of these ed tech sites also use session recorders that can capture more information, like which links a user clicked on and data they may enter but not submit. In interviews with 18 school district officials and IT personnel, the study found the districts lack resources to handle privacy and security issues generally when it comes to ed tech, because there is so little district training available. Additionally, researchers said those deciding which ed tech to use often lack room to negotiate their contracts over potential privacy and security concerns.

Anna Merod. "Top ed tech sites used by schools employ 'extensive' tracking tools." *K-12 Dive*. March 14, 2023

[Top ed tech sites used by schools employ 'extensive' tracking tools | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

Half of voucher tax credits go to families making more than \$200K

Recently released reports criticize private education voucher programs for taking taxpayer funding away from public schools and fueling expansion of school privatization through tax benefits used by mostly wealthy families. A report from [Public Funds Public Schools](#), a nonprofit that advocates for public schools, examined voucher programs in seven states and concluded that except for Ohio, investments in public schools declined as voucher spending grew.

A separate analysis from the [Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy](#) found that in three states, more than half of all voucher tax credits are going to families with annual incomes over \$200,000. Meanwhile, lawmakers [in at least 32 states](#) have proposed legislation this year to create or expand tax-funded programs to help parents with private school expenses, according to FutureEd at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy.

Kara Arundel. "Half of private school voucher tax credits go to families making above \$200K." *K-12 Dive*. March 14, 2023

[Half of private school voucher tax credits go to families making above \\$200K | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

U.S.E.D. to use 'secret shoppers' to monitor college admissions

The U.S. Department of Education will use secret shoppers to monitor whether colleges are misrepresenting themselves in areas like graduation rates and job placements. Shoppers will be one tool to "evaluate recruitment, enrollment, financial aid, and other practices of postsecondary institutions to help identify potentially deceptive or predatory practices used to recruit and enroll students," the Department [said in a statement](#). The agency will use secret shoppers' findings as evidence in ongoing investigations into colleges or use them to initiate such reviews.

Jeremy Bauer-Wolf. "Education Department will use 'secret shoppers' to monitor colleges." *Higher Ed Dive*. March 14, 2023

[Education Department will use 'secret shoppers' to monitor colleges | Higher Ed Dive](#)

NEPC: School Choice controversy

Despite growing popularity in recent years, there is little, if any, evidence that choice policies, in general, positively impact student outcomes in ways that can address longstanding inequities. In certain contexts choice policies have shown some gains, but in other places they have negatively impacted students, families, teachers, and leaders. The claims of choice advocates notwithstanding, the evidence available supports the conclusion that currently, choice policies often do more to exacerbate segregation than alleviate it. Policymakers should implement regulations that ensure students from marginalized groups require that all schools—choice schools and K-12 public schools—meet standards that ensure that they provide all students with high-quality learning opportunities.

Huriya Jabbar is professor of Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Texas at Austin.

Christopher Saldana & Huriya Jabbar. "NEPC Talks Education: Discussing K-12 School Choice Policy and Its Impacts on Educational Stakeholders." *National Education Policy Center* (U.Colorado/Boulder). March 16, 2023

www.icontact-archive.com/archive?c=1748247&f=3100&s=3172&m=283341&t=683ff6e55fceb8d669aa5ea6b8253ac84d14528c98c4873195440427f0ff88d5

NEW YORK STATE

One house budget proposals differ from executive budget proposal

The Assembly and Senate budget proposals go beyond the governor’s proposals in some areas, while rejecting her proposals regarding other issues such as expansion of charter schools and tuition hikes for state and city university college students.

Read summaries of the proposed Assembly's budget [here](#) and the proposed state Senate's budget [here](#).

“One house budgets are here and so let the negotiations begin.” *Albany Times Union*. March 15, 2023

[One house budgets are here and so let the negotiations begin \(timesunion.com\)](#)

Meanwhile, Governor Hochel has indicated that a late budget is likely if lawmakers reject her proposals on bail reform and charter school expansion.

Zach Williams. “Kathy Hochul teases late NY budget if Democrats don’t budge on charters, bail reform.” *NY Post*. March 13, 2023

[Gov. Kathy Hochul says NYS could miss April 1 budget deadline amid expected fights with Legislature \(nypost.com\)](#)

Differences among 3 state budget proposals

New York Focus [breaks down the differences](#) between the three budget proposals, and what’s at stake. The splits will define the year’s big legislative battles.

“Here’s Your Guide to the 2023 State Budget Fight.” *NY Focus*. March 16, 2023

[Here’s What’s at Stake in the 2023 State Budget \(nysfocus.com\)](#)

NYS 4th graders’ test scores low compared to those in other states

Hindered by the pandemic 4th-graders in NYS lost twice as much ground in math and reading than the national average, according to a report by state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. During the 49 weeks of school before classes went back to being fully in-person, NYS children only learned the equivalent of 19 weeks of schooling, a loss of 30 weeks. Nationally, the results were half as bad, with the average student showing they didn’t master the content from about 15 weeks of schooling.

Kathleen Moore. “New York fourth-graders' test scores twice as bad as national average.” *Albany Times Union*. March 15, 2023

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/new-york-fourth-graders-test-scores-twice-bad-17838822.php?cmpid=115195&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_term=headlines&utm_campaign=altu%20%7C%20daily%20headlines&sid=5ae0930791d15c3e666094a8

NYS lowers bar for student math, English proficiency

NYS will change what it takes for students to reach “proficiency” on state math and English language arts tests, calling last year’s [lower scores](#) the “new normal.” A scoring committee that reports to the Board of Regents said on March 13 that they must take into account the results of last year’s tests for students in grades three through eight to determine whether schools are showing improvement from year to year. On Thursday, the committee clarified that they must also reset scores because the tests will have new performance standards. The committee handles all scoring methodology, not just this year’s changes. In setting the lowest score a student can get to reach each achievement level, teachers on the committee consider what content a student must know, the committee told the Board of Regents. They reorganize the tests, ranking every question from easiest to hardest based on the percent of students who got it right. Then they decide how far into the test the student had to get, in terms of correct answers, to be rated a level 3, which means they are proficient. Then the committee considers how many students won’t reach proficiency if they set the score at that point. That’s where last year’s scores matter. The committee is resetting the lowest scores (cut scores) for each achievement level on this spring’s new English language arts and math tests.

Kathleen Moore. “NYS lowers minimum scores for student proficiency in math, English.” *Albany Times Union*. March 17, 2023.

[New York lowers bar for student math, English proficiency \(timesunion.com\)](#)