

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

April 1, 2023 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

9th grade algebra bridges racial equity gaps

A much-debated change to math course sequencing in the San Francisco schools designed to reduce racial inequities has increased Black students' access to higher-level courses. The district requires all students to take Algebra I in 9th grade which has led more students, including more Black and Latino students, to take advanced math courses, according to a Stanford University study. Data show Black students were more likely to take precalculus, not Advanced Placement Calculus or Statistics, and Latino students were more likely to take AP Statistics.

Sarah Schwartz. "San Francisco Insisted on Algebra in 9th Grade. Did It Improve Equity?" *Education Week*. March 20, 2023
[San Francisco Insisted on Algebra in 9th Grade. Did It Improve Equity? \(edweek.org\)](https://www.edweek.org/schools/san-francisco-insisted-on-algebra-in-9th-grade-did-it-improve-equity/2023/03/20)

What Educators Need to Know About ChatGPT's Next Chapter

ChatGPT Plus now utilizes GPT-4, which can analyze images, pass a bar exam, and power various education apps. GPT-4, the most advanced version of OpenAI's headline-grabbing chatbot, now powers ChatGPT Plus and other apps. The free version of ChatGPT we've all become familiar with since it was released in November uses GPT-3.5, and it's clear that the update has potentially significant implications for educators across the globe.

Erik Ofgang. "What is GPT-4? What Educators Need to Know About ChatGPT's Next Chapter." *Tech & Learning*. March 27, 2023
[What is GPT-4? What Educators Need to Know About ChatGPT's Next Chapter | Tech & Learning \(techlearning.com\)](https://www.techlearning.com/news/what-is-gpt-4-what-educators-need-to-know-about-chatgpts-next-chapter/)

How Yo Teach! works

Yo Teach! is an online collaborative workspace that allows educators and students to share across multiple devices in one digital location. It can be used for free to host classes and content that's easy to access for students.

Luke Edwards. "What is Yo Teach! and How Does It Work? Best Tips and Tricks." *Tech & Learning*. March 27, 2023
[What is Yo Teach! and How Does It Work? | Tech & Learning \(techlearning.com\)](https://www.techlearning.com/news/what-is-yo-teach!-and-how-does-it-work/)

What families really want from their schools

Transportation, safety, afterschool, special needs & academics are key for parents, not diversity. The author consulted with a critical mass of families who demographically were an exact match for the NYC school system, which is 72% economically disadvantaged, 21% students with disabilities, 14% English learners, 41% percent Hispanic and 24% Black. In the process, she learned what really matters to parents, versus what she had been led to believe matters to them by pundits, think tanks and pollsters. Diversity didn't make the top 5.

Alina Adams. "My Humbling Education in What Families Really Want from their Kids' Schools." *The 74 Million*. March 27, 2023
[My Humbling Education in What Families Really Want from their Kids' Schools – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](https://www.the74million.org/article/my-humbling-education-in-what-families-really-want-from-their-kids-schools/)

5 steps to help adopt collective leadership

Change is much easier when administrators lean on collective leadership and get early buy-in from key stakeholders. The author shares how his district transitioned to a collective input leadership style that requires administrators, teachers and the school board to weigh in. He shares a five-step process to put the approach into action.

Greg Taranto assistant to the superintendent for K-6 curriculum and instruction for the Canon-McMillan School District in Pennsylvania.
Greg Taranto. "Using Collective Leadership to Make a Major Shift in Your District." *Edutopia*. March 24, 2023
[A Framework for Making Major School Policy Changes Collectively | Edutopia](https://www.edutopia.org/article/using-collective-leadership-to-make-a-major-shift-in-your-district/)

Opinion: Technology poses risks for kids

The authors argue that the debate over ChatGPT in schools magnifies a troubling truth: Educators are making decisions about emerging technology without the answers to fundamental questions about the benefits and risks. Technology has the potential to modernize education and prepare students for an increasingly complex future. But the risks to children are just beginning to be uncovered. Creating a policy and regulatory framework focused on building a deeper understanding of emerging technologies, and protecting children where the evidence is incomplete, is a responsible course of action.

Andrew Buher & Hal Friedlander. "Virtual Reality & Other New Technologies Pose Risks for Kids. It's Time to Act." *The 74 Million*. March 27, 2023
[Virtual Reality & Other New Technologies Pose Risks for Kids. It's Time to Act – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](https://www.the74million.org/article/virtual-reality-and-other-new-technologies-pose-risks-for-kids-its-time-to-act/)

Study finds that portfolio management model benefits students

Denver, Colorado schools' "portfolio management model" is being credited with transforming achievement -- growing four-year graduation rates from 43% to 71% -- according to research by scholars at the University of Colorado Denver. The average Denver student saw learning gains in the 11-year period that was studied, and no student groups were harmed by the learning model.

Kevin Mahnken. "Denver's Reforms Led to Huge Academic Growth, Study Finds. But Will They Last?" *The 74 Million*. March 27, 2023
[Denver's Reforms Led to Huge Academic Growth, Study Finds. But Will They Last? – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

Report: How schools teach reading affects proficiency

Reading achievement varies among districts in California, according to a new report from the California Reading Coalition that focuses largely on Latino students from low-income households. Researchers say the data show that how schools teach reading has a greater impact than family income or background.

Zaidee Stavely. "California districts vary enormously in reading achievement, report finds." *Ed Source*. March 28, 2023
[California districts vary enormously in reading achievement, report finds | EdSource](#)

Commentary: Students need preventive mental health supports

"Unfortunately, our schools function much like our health system, which is often criticized for delivering 'sick care' and not 'health care,'" writes the author, adding that it is "focused too much on solving problems when they happen, rather than addressing the root cause before symptoms occur." As caregivers, educators and schools process and respond to trauma, she calls for more proactive, preventative support for adolescents in schools.

Sara Potler LaHayne. "Adolescents Need More Proactive, Preventative Mental Health Supports in School." *Ed Surge*. March 24, 2023
[Adolescents Need More Proactive, Preventative Mental Health Supports in School | EdSurge News](#)

Artificial Intelligence & the future of writing instruction

The use of AI for writing and communication presents an inherent contradiction: Those who can best write with AI will be those who can best write without it, according to Mark Warschauer professor of education and informatics at the University of California, Irvine, and founder of UCI's Digital Learning Lab. The article covers his thoughts about the potential of AI for teaching and learning, overcoming faculty skepticism about AI tools, research questions that should be asked about AI in education, and more.

Rhea Kelly. "AI and the Future of Writing Instruction." *Campus Technology*. March 29, 2023
[AI and the Future of Writing Instruction -- Campus Technology](#)

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Permanent funding increase sought for homeless students

Nearly 90 US lawmakers from both parties have signed a letter to the House Appropriations Committee seeking to make more permanent some emergency, pandemic-related aid for the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act Program from the Education and Health and Human Services departments, respectively. The US has about 1.1 million homeless students, schools report.

Evie Blad. "A Surge in Funding for Homeless Students Is Waning. What Now?" *Education Week*. March 21, 2023
[A Surge in Funding for Homeless Students Is Waning. What Now? \(edweek.org\)](#)

Utah adopts social media rules for state's youth

Utah is the first state to require that social media firms have parents' consent for their minor children to use social media platforms. The legislation also requires the companies to verify users' ages and give parents access to children's accounts. Utah's regulations come amid debates about the impact of social media on mental health. Versions of the regulations are being considered in four other states and in several federal proposals in Congress.

Ben Goggin. "Utah governor signs laws requiring parents' consent for minors to use social media." *NBC News*. March 23, 2023
[Utah governor signs parental consent laws for minor social media use \(nbcnews.com\)](#)

Parents' rights bill passes HR but likely will not pass in Senate

HR Republicans on March 24 passed their Parents' Bill of Rights, which would require greater transparency for families into what students learn. Democrats argue it would lead to book bans and discriminate against LGBTQ students. The measure is expected to be part of the Republican agenda heading in the 2024 elections

Linda Jacobson. "GOP Parents Rights Bill Passes House, But Faces Likely 'Dead End' in Senate." *The 74 Million*. March 24, 2023
[GOP Parents Rights Bill Passes House, But Faces Likely 'Dead End' in Senate – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

Research: Family income factors into youth fitness

Research shows an emerging trend of more affluent youth participating in sports and fitness activities at higher rates than their less well-off peers. Officials say the so-called physical divide stems in part from diminished access to physical education and organized sports at some schools while youth sports become increasingly privatized.

Matt Reichtel. "The Income Gap Is Becoming a Physical-Activity Divide." *NY Times*. March 24, 2023
[The Income Gap Is Becoming a Physical-Activity Divide - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

TikTok hearing raises concerns about student use of app

Members of the US House of Representatives in March questioned TikTok CEO Shou Chew about the platform's approach to privacy and data security, as well as lawmakers' concerns about students' use of the social media app. Committee members expressed concerns about content, safety risks and encouragement to participate in "challenges" that encourage dangerous behavior.

Alyson Klein. "Congress Tells TikTok CEO: The App Is Bad for Students and Privacy." *Education Week*. March 23, 2023
[Congress Tells TikTok CEO: The App Is Bad for Students and Privacy \(edweek.org\)](#)

COVID's education crisis: A lost generation?

"It may look like the pandemic is over; stadiums are open again, crowds are everywhere, and hardly a mask in sight. But COVID hurt a lot of things you can't easily see, especially in schools." Harlem Children's Zone founder Geoffrey Canada says, "I feel like I just need to stand on a mountaintop and just yell, 'Take this seriously! Everything is at stake right now!' There's a whole cohort of young people who are not going to get the kind of education that's going to allow them to get the best jobs. 'It's going to cost lots of kids tens of thousands of dollars over their earnings, or some, hundreds of thousands of dollars.'"

Tracy Smith. "COVID's education crisis: A lost generation?" *CBS Sunday Morning/CBS NEWS*. March 26, 2023
[COVID's education crisis: A lost generation? - CBS News](#)

COVID exacerbated political, racial, and health disparities

Despite being one of the world's highest income countries, with strong healthcare and a high rank for preparedness, the U.S. struggled with COVID-19 and the pandemic played out vastly different ways across the country. Researchers examined five key areas that might explain differences among states: the role of social inequities; healthcare and public health capacities; politics; state pandemic policies and how long they were sustained; and tradeoffs between COVID burden and education and economic outcomes. Overall, they found that states with higher poverty, lower levels of education, less access to quality health care and less trust in others had disproportionately higher rates of COVID infections and deaths.

The Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP; "SID-wrap") is a global leader in addressing public health preparedness and emerging infectious disease response. CIDRAP is part of the Office of the Vice President for Research at the University of Minnesota.
Lisa Schnirring. "COVID exploited US political divisions along with racial and health disparities." *CIDRAP*. March 24, 2023
[COVID exploited US political divisions along with racial and health disparities | CIDRAP \(umn.edu\)](#)

NEW YORK STATE

Trial court: NYSED exceeded authority

A trial court ruled on March 23 that the NYSED key enforcement measure that would have forced the closure of noncompliant yeshivas exceeds the agency's authority. A legal bid to stop state intervention in forcing ultra-Orthodox private schools to meet minimum standards for teaching subjects such as reading and math led to the ruling against a key enforcement tool. The trial court ruled that the SED can [regulate basic subjects such as reading and math in nonpublic schools](#), but that a key enforcement measure that would have forced noncompliant yeshivas to close exceeds the agency's authority.

Cayla Bamberger. "Key enforcement tool in clampdown on yeshiva educational standards tossed by judge." *NY Daily News*. March 24, 2023
[Key enforcement tool in clampdown on yeshiva educational standards tossed by judge - New York Daily News \(nydailynews.com\)](#)

School team names that referred to Indigenous people must go, an advisory group rules

Raiders, Warriors and other school team names that [once referred to Indigenous people](#) must go, an advisory group decided. The group, which was assembled by the NYSED, had been tasked with reviewing questions from school districts that wanted an exception to the ban on mascots and team names that refer to Indigenous people. The Board of Regents is expected to vote on the ban at its April 17 meeting, and districts had been sending in arguments for exceptions. Among the most common requests were to let a district call its team warriors, raiders or red raiders after they replaced Indigenous images with different images. Those were rejected, committee members said. Their recommendations will be considered by the NYSED, which will make the final determination.

Kathleen Moore. "State Ed advisory group: Get rid of 'Warriors,' 'Raiders' team names." *Albany Times Union*. March 25, 2023
[State Ed advisory group: Get rid of 'Warriors,' 'Raiders' team names \(timesunion.com\)](#)

Child care crisis continues

Working parents are still facing a child care crisis intensified by soaring costs, low availability and an exodus of child care providers due to low wages. As part of the 2023 state budget, Governor Hochul announced a \$125 million investment in early childhood education, including a plan to more than double the state's investment in child care with \$7 billion in funding over four years. Advocates argue that such funding is a [step in the right direction but is far](#) from what's needed to fully support and rebuild the dwindling child care workforce. (TU)

Melissa Manno. "Child care crisis continues to burden parents, providers and employers." *Albany Times Union*. March 26, 2023
[Child care crisis burdens parents, providers and employers \(timesunion.com\)](#)

Suit seeks to block charter school network from sharing NYC school buildings

A coalition of teachers and parents is suing to block NYC's [largest charter network](#), Success Academy, from setting up shop in shared buildings with district public schools. Three parents, a transfer school teacher, and the United Federation of Teachers filed a lawsuit in Manhattan Supreme Court alleging that officials violated state education law and local regulations when it moved to place two new Success Academy schools in Queens and Brooklyn, without a full analysis of how the plans would affect students already there.

Cayla Bamberger. "Teachers, parents sue to block charter school network from sharing NYC school buildings ." *NY Daily News*. March 28, 2023 [Teachers, parents sue to block charter school network from sharing NYC school buildings – New York Daily News \(nydailynews.com\)](#)

MINEOLA DISTRICT IN THE NEWS

Mineola district provides computer science for all students

Computer science is a priority for Mineola Public Schools (on Long Island), where students begin learning about coding in preK and continue through all grade levels into HS with Advanced Placement Computer Science offerings. The effort has expanded access to the subject and overcome hurdles by using coding in English and social studies classes, and working with vendors to access experts in the subject to support students and teachers.

Alyson Klein. "Few Students Take Computer Science. This District Offers a Blueprint for Changing That." *Education Week*. March 27, 2023 [Few Students Take Computer Science. This District Offers a Blueprint for Changing That \(edweek.org\)](#)

Mineola superintendent creates less-structured learning

Synergy at Mineola HS, created by district superintendent Michael Nagler, trades in traditional class blocks for a relaxed, living room-style atmosphere with morning teacher check-ins and game plans, end-of-day follow-ups and an interim featuring students on laptops managing their time to match their learning styles and interests. The school within a school, which replaced the district's credit-recovery program, serves about 30 students so far, but Nagler envisions the less-structured concept as a model for the future.

Alyson Klein. "What Happened When a District Decided to 'Mess With High School'." *Education Week*. March 27, 2023 [What Happened When a District Decided to 'Mess With High School' \(edweek.org\)](#)

Legislature removes \$250 million in school funding for small-group tutoring

NYS lawmakers have rejected a clause in the governor's proposed budget that would have devoted \$250 million for school districts' tutoring efforts. **The money will still reach schools as part of a total \$24 billion distributed via Foundation Aid**. But school systems will have no obligation to spend the funds on tutoring. NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli stated that the legislature's rejection of the tutoring proposal is a "missed opportunity." Robert Lowry, communications director for New York's Council of School Superintendents, said NYSCOSS opposed the tutoring measure as not well thought-out. He stated that many school leaders support tutoring and other academic recovery efforts, but fear they might face staffing challenges that could leave funds unspent if too narrowly earmarked. He also criticized the state's emphasis on tutoring from grades 3-8 without serving younger or older students and the move to add requirements to aid originally intended to provide unrestricted funds.

Asher Lehrer-Small. "Hochul's Proposal for Small-Group Tutoring Blocked by NY State Legislature." *The 74 Million*. March 29, 2023 [Hochul's Proposal for Small-Group Tutoring Blocked by NY State Legislature – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)