

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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April 29, 2022 Education News Update

I apologize for not mentioning on 4/8 that there would be no ed news update until after the spring vacation break. I hope you had the opportunity to make happy memories with family and friends.

TEACHING & LEARNING

Task force recommends mental health screenings for kids

New draft guidance from the US Preventive Services Task Force recommends screening students ages 8 - 18 for anxiety, as mental health crisis rates have risen, as well as screening for depressive disorder among adolescents.

Eli Cahan & Mary Kekatos. "As youth mental illness soars, US task force recommends screening children as young as age 8 for anxiety." *ABC News*. April 12, 2022. <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/youth-mental-illness-soars-us-task-force-recommends/story?id=84036348>

How districts can increase teacher diversity

A program led by teachers of color identified promising strategies for increasing diversity in the teacher workforce, including building better pathways to education careers, providing a welcoming environment to bring up concerns and creating regional networks for teachers of color. Teacher diversity has many benefits for students.

Kimberly Smith. "Teacher diversity: Bold steps toward solutions that work." *Smart Brief/Education*. April 13, 2022

https://corp.smartbrief.com/original/2022/04/teacher-diversity-bold-steps-toward-solutions-that-work?utm_source=brief

How student-teacher relationships affect learning

Positive student-teacher relationships can improve teaching and learning, according to University of Missouri researchers. These relationships and accompanying "prosocial classroom behaviors," such as compassion, were found to boost teachers' motivation and confidence, help curb burnout, and lead to improved outcomes for students.

Kara Arundel. "Positive student-teacher relationships boost instructional quality." *K-12 Dive*. April 8, 2022

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/teachers-benefit-from-positive-relationships-with-students-research-shows/621803/>

Student screen time contributes to behavior issues

Students' screen time outside of class and academic purposes rose 17% between 2019 and 2021, according to a report from the nonprofit Common Sense Media. In a recent EdWeek Research Center survey, a majority of educators said the increased screen time is connected to learning challenges and worsened behavior.

Sarah D. Sparks. "Students Are Behaving Badly in Class. Excessive Screen Time Might Be to Blame." *Education Week*. April 12, 2022

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/students-are-behaving-badly-in-class-excessive-screen-time-might-be-to-blame/2022/04>

Should employee assistance programs be rebranded?

Some school district officials say they are seeing an uptick in employees taking advantage of employee assistance programs to support mental health, financial and other needs. Yet, officials say employees may not be fully utilizing these resources, in part, because of the stigma associated with them and suggest the need to rebrand the programs.

Denisa R. Superville. "To Support Stressed Staff Members, Districts Are Turning to an Overlooked Resource." *Education Week*. April 12, 2022

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/to-support-stressed-staff-members-districts-are-turning-to-an-overlooked-resource/2022/04>

Report: Classroom tech use spikes in 3 areas

Growth in education technology in the past two school years has surpassed expectations, according to survey data.

The largest areas of growth were using software to help close elementary-school literacy gaps, expanding the use of learning management systems, and using online math instructional tools to supplement the core curriculum.

Benjamin Herold. "How Tech-Driven Teaching Strategies Have Changed During the Pandemic." *Education Week*. April 14, 2022

<https://www.edweek.org/technology/how-tech-driven-teaching-strategies-have-changed-during-the-pandemic/2022/04>

Responding to chronic absenteeism

School districts nationwide are reporting significant increases in chronic absenteeism; 22% of parents said their children were at risk of being chronically absent, a nearly threefold increase since before the pandemic. This article examines some responses, including adopting value-added attendance incentives and improving school climate.

Naaz Modan. "As chronic absenteeism skyrockets amid reopenings, how can states and districts reengage students?" *K-12 Dive*. April 13, 2022

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/as-chronic-absenteeism-skyrockets-amid-reopenings-how-can-states-and-distr/622058/>

How schools struggle to safeguard student data

There are so many issues involved in protecting student data, and these have been enhanced by the pandemic, which has "given a lot of companies access to student data that has not been sufficiently protected." Experts say the recent breach that affected student data in New York City highlights the issue.

Mark Walsh. "There Are So Many Issues: Why Schools Are Struggling to Protect Student Data." *Education Week*. April 12, 2022
<https://www.edweek.org/technology/there-are-so-many-issues-why-schools-are-struggling-to-protect-student-data/2022/04>

Study: Average teacher works 54 hours a week

The average teacher works approximately 54 hours each week, according to a survey by the EdWeek Research Center. Teachers report that, of those hours, just under half of the time is spent teaching students.

Ileana Najarro. "Here's How Many Hours a Week Teachers Work." *Education Week*. April 14, 2022
<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/heres-how-many-hours-a-week-teachers-work/2022/04>

Structured literacy improves reading instruction outcomes

A school district in Washington has seen improvement in achievement in reading since adopting a structured literacy approach in 2019. The learning strategy uses brain science and a focus on reading fundamentals, including phonics.

Dahlia Bazzaz. "Fed up with lackluster reading scores, Wenatchee schools turned to science." *Seattle Times*. April 18, 2022
<https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/fed-up-with-low-reading-scores-wenatchee-schools-turned-to-science/>

Tech helps outdoors serve as classroom

Increased student autonomy, less bullying, and better observation skills are among the benefits of outdoor learning, so some districts are extending Wi-Fi to outdoor areas and creating solar-energy-powered greenhouses.

Erika Gimbel. "How K-12 Schools Are Bringing Classroom Technology to Outdoor Learning." *Ed Tech*. April 14, 2022
<https://edtechmagazine.com/k12/article/2022/04/how-k-12-schools-are-bringing-classroom-technology-outdoor-learning>

Global studies show benefits of online tutoring

Online tutoring can be effective to help students complete unfinished learning, according to new studies out of Spain and Italy. In Spain, researchers found students who worked with tutors for three 50-minute sessions each week to support math skills had higher standardized test scores and were less likely to repeat a grade.

Catherine Gewertz. "Online Tutoring Can Be Effective, Research Shows." *Education Week*. April 18, 2022
<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/online-tutoring-can-be-effective-research-shows/2022/04>

How schools can revamp reading programs

Some schools are overhauling reading instruction with a variety of approaches to address the pandemic's impact on learning. Many have improved reading scores by using a combination of science-based practices and curricula in conjunction with culturally relevant books, ongoing professional development and guidance on using data.

Caralee Adams. "Weighing the best strategies for reading intervention." *Hechinger Report*. April 18, 2022
<https://hechingerreport.org/weighing-the-best-strategies-for-reading-intervention/>

Primary students can learn to read in virtual classrooms

Children can develop key reading skills and learn to read in a virtual classroom with other students, a new study shows. In addition they can build social connections online.

Kim Eckart, Washington University. "Little kids can learn to read just fine in virtual classrooms." *Futurity*. April 18, 2022
<https://www.futurity.org/reading-virtual-classrooms-2726282/>

Scans show how poverty and crime affect young brains

Scanning the brains of newborns, researchers have found exposure to poverty and crime can influence the structure and function of young brains even before birth.

Jim Dryden, Washington University. "Baby scans show how poverty and crime affect brains." *Futurity*. April 18, 2022
<https://www.futurity.org/baby-brains-poverty-crime-pregnancy-2725462/>

More principal responsibilities don't equal higher salaries

Principals are working longer and harder and facing more challenges, but salary increases aren't accounting for the rising cost of living, nor are they comparable to the wages of similar leaders outside education.

Matt Zalaznack. "Are principal salaries keeping up with COVID's challenges? Some say no." *District Administration*. April 19, 2022
<https://districtadministration.com/principal-salaries-rising-keep-up-with-covid-challenges/>

Open educational resources (OER) boost student engagement

Proponents are touting open educational resources as a cost-effective alternative to pricey textbooks. Faculty who have adopted OER also report higher student engagement, according to a new report.

Daniel Mollenkamp. "Expensive Textbooks Are Still A Problem. Will Higher Quality OER Help?" *Ed Surge*. April 20, 2022
<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-04-19-expensive-textbooks-are-still-a-problem-will-higher-quality-oir-help>

Childhood trauma can show up in the classroom

Trauma can affect children's learning and behavior in the classroom, with signs that include difficulty concentrating and angry outbursts, but trauma-informed practices can help students feel safe and improve their performance.

Hilary I. Lebow & Kendra Kubala. "How Can Childhood Trauma Affect Learning?" *Psych Central*. April 18, 2022
<https://psychcentral.com/ptsd/complex-ptsd-trauma-learning-and-behavior-in-the-classroom#trauma-informed-practices>

Preparing teachers for lessons in civil discourse

The authors assert that students should be taught how to think about social issues, not what to think. One of the authors leads *Students Taking Action Together* at Rutgers University, which offers strategies to help prepare educators to teach civil discourse.

Laura F. Bond, Lauren M. Fullmer, Maurice J. Elias. "5 Strategies to Integrate Civil Discourse and Civic Action in Schools." *ASCD Inservice*. April 20, 2022 <https://www.ascd.org/blogs/5-strategies-to-integrate-civil-discourse-and-civic-action-in-schools>

The value of brain breaks vastly underestimated

When it comes to optimizing learning, we don't value breaks enough, neuroscientists suggest in a new study.

https://www.edutopia.org/article/we-dramatically-underestimate-importance-brain-breaks?utm_content=linkpos13&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=website&utm_source=research-newsletter

Principals scrambling to find substitutes

Long before Covid forced states to take desperate measures to find substitutes, schools often struggled to cover teacher absences. The stakes are much higher now, and the need for permanent solutions enormous. The author identifies districts that are trying solutions to the substitute shortage.

Neal Morton. "More than a warm body": Schools try long-term solutions to substitute teacher shortage." *Hechinger Report*. April 26, 2022
https://hechingerreport.org/more-than-a-warm-body-schools-try-long-term-solutions-to-substitute-teacher-shortage/?utm_source=The+Hechinger+Report&utm_campaign=cb9f4cc60e-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_04_26_05_55&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d3eedc3e04-cb9f4cc60e-322606321

Report: Preschool enrollment falls about 20%

Enrollment in state-funded preK programs declined last year for the first time in at least 20 years, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research's 2021 State of Preschool report. The institute reports a drop of close to 20%, with the greatest decline among students from low-income households and students of color.

Lauren Camera. "How the Pandemic Devastated State-Run Early Education." *U.S. News & World Report*. April 26, 2022
<https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2022-04-26/how-the-pandemic-devastated-state-run-early-education>

Institute to pilot different approach to gifted education

A new effort is bringing a fresh approach to gifted education and it doesn't take place in a school building. It's a homeschool curriculum and support system, with a boarding school option that involves taking small groups of students on a kind of educational road trip. There will be a curriculum, but the effort is primarily project based, tailored to the interests of each student. It's called the Collins Institute for the Gifted, and it is just about to publicly launch with a focus on MS and HS. Its leaders hope to run its first very small pilot program in the fall.

Jeffrey R. Young. "Institute Promotes New Model of Gifted Education." Institute to pilot different approach to gifted education." *Ed Surge*. April 26, 2022
<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-04-26-institute-promotes-new-model-of-gifted-education>

Study: Math texts dismal world wide

Researchers have discovered that student "opportunities to learn and develop mathematics literacy are so few as to almost be nonexistent" in 8th grade texts. Traditional word problems are little more than numbers surrounded by words. Countries have made some progress in math instruction but textbooks aren't helping. Previous research indicates a "strikingly large correlation (0.9) between teacher content coverage and textbook content coverage." One suggestion is for governments to reimagine policies and to set standards to which textbooks must adhere.

Kim Ward, Michigan State University. "Most math textbooks get a failing grade." *Futurity*. April 26, 2022.
<https://www.futurity.org/math-textbooks-education-learning-2730812/>

Report: More HS students taking personal finance course

Nearly 23% of HS graduates have taken a personal finance course in 2022, up from 16.4% in 2018, according to a report published by Next Gen Personal Finance. The findings show more states are recognizing the importance of offering personal finance, but gaps remain.

Naaz Modan. "Financial literacy is growing, but uneven access could widen racial wealth gap." *K-12 Dive*. April 27, 2022
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/financial-literacy-is-growing-but-uneven-access-could-widen-racial-wealth/622786/>

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

More than 25% of U.S. superintendents plan to retire

A RAND survey finds that more than a quarter of US superintendents plan to step down soon and hundreds of others are unsure about their future plans, especially superintendents of schools in urban areas.

Marianna McMurdock. "Fears of a School Superintendent Exodus: With Data Revealing Massive Pandemic Turnover, New Survey Shows Another 1 in 4 Leaders Expect to 'Leave Soon'." *The 74*. April 7, 2022
<https://www.the74million.org/fears-of-a-school-superintendent-exodus-with-data-revealing-massive-pandemic-turnover-new-survey-shows-another-1-in-4-leaders-expect-to-leave-soon/>

Learning to request and accept feedback gracefully

Asking for and receiving feedback can help school leaders overcome unintentional biases, writes a leadership coach and school improvement consultant, who offers tips for accepting feedback.

Jill Harrison Berg. "Leading Together / Breaking Through Blind Spots." *Educational Leadership*. April 1, 2022
<https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/breaking-through-blind-spots>

State LGBTQ restrictions countered by federal action

Several Biden Administration initiatives are aimed at supporting LGBTQ students amid a trend toward more restrictions at the state level.

Matt Zalaznick. "Why new LGBTQ restrictions could undo 10 years of improving climate for students." *District Administration*. April 6, 2022
<https://districtadministration.com/new-school-lgbtq-students-restrictions-mask-10-years-improve-climate/>

Cardona: It's time to prioritize the whole educator

Boosting outcomes for the whole child starts by prioritizing support for the whole educator, says US Education Secretary Miguel Cardona. He offered three ways to improve support for educators -- competitive wages, better working conditions and meaningful engagement.

Kanoe Namahoe. "Cardona: 'We are at the doorstep of a new chapter in American education'." *Smart Brief/Education*. April 13, 2022
https://corp.smartbrief.com/original/2022/04/cardona-we-are-at-the-doorstep-of-a-new-chapter-in-american-education?utm_source=brief

Report ranks states by support for public schools

A recent report ranks states by their commitment to public schools. Researchers examined laws and regulations in all 50 states to measure how policymakers protect public funds from exploitative privatization through low-quality charter schools, environments without fully-vetted staff, and profit-centered systems. They found state laws that allow charter and voucher schools to leave students behind, discriminating against the most vulnerable. Researchers graded each state based on use of public dollars to support privatized systems as well as their protections against discrimination, fraud, student endangerment, corruption, transparency, and accountability. To view the grades for each state, view the report in its entirety [here](#).

"Public Schooling in America." *Network for Public Education*. April 2022.
<https://networkforpubliceducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Public-Schooling-in-America.pdf>

Video: What's behind the 'critical race theory' panic?

The [video](#) explains the history of racist attacks. "When African Americans won voting rights, access to segregated spaces, and public benefits, a racist core of the public reacted by vilifying public goods. These goods became viewed, inaccurately, as things that white people gave to black people, and this racist segment of the public simultaneously denied that they themselves were also beneficiaries of public goods."

Video: "Critical Race Theory Panic: What's REALLY Behind It?" *In the Public Interest*. April 2022
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HN_ox2RBn3o

Houghton Mifflin becomes part of Veritas Capital

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, which recently completed its sale to Veritas Capital, plans to continue its transition to digital, having decided to adopt adaptive-learning tools to ensure their products are more than a textbook.

Daniel Mollenkamp. "A Major Textbook Publisher Has Gone Private. What Does That Mean For Its Transition To Digital?" *Ed Surge*. April 12, 2022
<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-04-12-a-major-textbook-publisher-has-gone-private-what-does-that-mean-for-its-transition-to-digital>

Teacher pay, state laws, and a pandemic report card

Some states are giving teachers raises this year, but do they match the level of education and multiple roles we ask of teachers? This report considers this as well as increase in state laws about education, and a report card of each state's success in warding off COVID-19 in schools.

Diane Benson Harrington. "Extra Credit: Teacher tip jars, state laws and a pandemic report card." *Smart Brief/Education*. April 15, 2022
https://corp.smartbrief.com/original/2022/04/extra-credit-teacher-tip-jars-state-laws-and-a-pandemic-report-card?utm_source=brief

Study: Integration more effective in South than in North

Most of the school desegregation orders based on the SCOTUS decision more than 60 years ago have expired or are no longer enforced, but scholars have argued that these lapsed efforts were enormously successful in improving education and livelihoods of Black people. A new large historical analysis found those gains only in the South. One analyst thinks a major cause has been white flight from desegregating districts in the North than in the South.

Jill Barshay. "Reconsidering the benefits of desegregation." *Hechinger Report*. April 18, 2022
https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-reconsidering-desegregation/?utm_source=The+Hechinger+Report&utm_campaign=3ef89fc736-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_04_18_02_52&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d3ee4c3e04-3ef89fc736-322606321

(Under the heading: “Who would have thought this needed to be reported”)

Increase conversation quality by putting away phones

Education leaders' conversations in schools, workplaces and at home can become "deeper, better, more joyful and more important" when mobile phones are out of reach, asserts the author. Researchers have found that putting phones away can "transform surface interactions into conversations that build authentic connection."

Jim Knight. "The Learning Zone / One Habit that Improves Conversation Skills." *ASCD Express*. April 13, 2022

<https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/one-habit-that-improves-conversation-skills>

How school choice exacerbates segregation

In a **brief** published by the **National Coalition on School Diversity**, **Casey Cobb** of the University of Connecticut used research to show that school choice programs resegregate American schools in the following ways:

- 1. Parent Preference:** White parents tend to opt for schools with lower proportions of students of color.
- 2. Parent Privilege:** Upper-middle-class/middle-class parents can better navigate complicated choice programs.
- 3. Charter School Choice:** Charters are less likely to serve English learners or students with disabilities.
- 4. Lack of Accountability:** Choice programs are largely unregulated, which combined with a lack of attention to racial integration, leads to segregation. Unregulated choice systems undermine societal goals.

"Four Ways School Choice Worsens Segregation." *National Education Policy Center*. April 21, 2022

<http://www.icontact-archive.com/archive?c=1748247&f=3100&s=3172&m=246426&t=683ff6e55fceb8d669aa5ea6b8253ac84d14528c98c4873195440427f0ff88d5>

AFT supports U.S.E.D. proposed regulations on charter schools

The U.S.E.D.'s proposed regulations to the Charter Schools Program grant programs represent a positive development, and if fully implemented, will advance equity, and restore charter schools to their original purpose by integrating them into the broader education community—according to the American Federation of Teachers. The AFT also stated that Charter Schools Programs grant programs have ignored the economic reality of charter school growth and its impact on the resources available to traditional public school students.

News release/letter to U.S.E.D. "AFT Responds to Department of Education on Charter School Regulations." American Federation of Teachers (AFT). April 20, 2022.

https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/ltr_randi-doe-charters_041122.pdf

Despite Media Narratives, Support for Teachers Rises

News reports might suggest that schools are faltering in their mission to provide students with a safe, high-quality education—and provoking the anger of parents across the country. But in a **national survey** conducted in December 2021 and released this year, 78% of parents reported that the "quality and performance of their children's teachers is excellent or good." That's up 7 points from when the question was asked in 2013. These on-the-ground numbers suggest that the pandemic didn't dampen parental enthusiasm for teachers, and might even have improved it.

"National Survey of Public School Parent Voters." Hart Research Associates and Lake Research Partners. January 7, 2022

https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/hart-lake_natl-parent-survey_010722.pdf?utm_source=research-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=website

Many school districts underestimate cyber risks

Most education-technology leaders underestimate the risk posed by cyberattacks, according to a survey by the Consortium for School Networking. Just half of school districts report that they require cybersecurity training for school staff members, and many report IT staffing challenges.

Alyson Klein. "Stopping Cyberattacks Is Top Priority for Ed-Tech Leaders. But Many Underestimate the Risk." *Education Week*. April 26, 2022

<https://www.edweek.org/technology/stopping-cyberattacks-is-top-priority-for-ed-tech-leaders-but-many-underestimate-the-risk/2022/04>

NEW YORK STATE

SED officials: Prestigious summer arts program may clash with equity objectives

It appeared that SED decision to cancel the 2022 NYS Summer School of the Arts (NYSSSA) program was financial. But at a recent Board of Regents meeting, officials suggested that the highly selective program for gifted teens may be incompatible with the department's mission of promoting diversity, equity and inclusion.

Rachel Silberstein. "State Education officials: Prestigious summer arts program may clash with equity objectives." *Albany Times Union*. April 11, 2022

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/State-Education-officials-Prestigious-summer-17072298.php?PID=Times-Union-HP-CP-spotlight&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424c17c09a3f115af

NYSUT hails end of edTPA test, but questions remain

Critics have long worried that the edTPA exam shut out candidates of color from the teaching workforce. NYSUT, which has fought the use of edTPA, celebrated its end.

Reema Amin. "New York officials vote to scrap edTPA teacher certification exam." *Chalkbeat NY*. April 12, 2022

<https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2022/4/12/23022429/ny-edtpa-board-of-regents-teacher-certification-assessment>

State budget: School buses to run on electricity by 2035

A provision in the state budget seeks to transform school transportation by requiring all school buses purchased after 2027 to run on electricity and replacing all 50,000 diesel-fueled buses in the state with electric vehicles by 2035.

Rachel Silberstein. "New York schools have five years to begin electric bus conversion." *Albany Times Union*. April 13, 2022
<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/New-York-schools-have-five-years-to-begin-17072485.php>

Comptroller: Mental health staff lagging in schools

An audit by NYS Comptroller Thomas DeNapoli covering 2018-2021 found that more than a dozen school districts lack mental health staff and programs, while hundreds more lack enough social workers or counselors to aid pupils facing challenges. He said more funding is needed for schools to handle a crisis of mental health in schools, as well as more oversight of mental health education in classrooms and schools. Schools are placing a greater emphasis on mental health programs and counseling as part of the return to classrooms following the pandemic shutdown.

Nick Reisman. "Audit finds mental health staff lagged in New York schools." *State of Politics/NY*. April 15, 2022

https://nystateofpolitics.com/state-of-politics/new-york/nv-state-of-politics/2022/04/15/audit-finds-mental-health-staff-lagged-in-schools/?utm_source=First+Read+Newsletters&utm_campaign=40cf6dc994-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_04_16_11_25&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_252d2767d1-40cf6dc994-34743040&mc_cid=40cf6dc994&mc_eid=bc2625d4e3

State athletic association reversed position on hair beads

The NYS Public High School Athletic Association reversed its position on April 26 regarding athletes wearing hair beads after a firestorm erupted inside Section II track circles on the subject. NYSPHSAA officers voted to put a moratorium on enforcing a jewelry rule stating hair adornments were prohibited until the organization's governing body can meet to discuss the matter further.

James Allen. "State association reverses stance on track athletes wearing hair beads." *Albany Times Union*. April 26, 2022

https://www.timesunion.com/sports/article/NYSPHSAA-reverses-stance-on-track-athletes-17128413.php?IPID=Times-Union-HP-CP-spotlight&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424e17c09a3f115af