

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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April 7, 2023 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Commentary: Reading instruction hinders love of reading

Children today are not reading for fun as much as they used to. NAEP data say so; parents as well. Cell phones, the Internet, and television explain some of that decline in reading. But a major issue is the way children are taught reading. The pedagogical approach that is required by the Common Core, which involves analyzing while reading, kills the joy of reading, she argues. She notes that “critical reading is an important skill, especially for a generation bombarded with information, much of it unreliable or deceptive. But this hyperfocus on analysis comes at a steep price: The love of books and storytelling is being lost.” The advent of accountability laws and policies and accompanying high-stakes assessments based on standards has put enormous pressure on instructors to teach to these tests at the expense of best practices.

Katherine Marsh is an award-winning novelist who writes for children in 5th-8th grades.

Katherine March. “Why kids aren’t falling in love with reading.” *The Atlantic*. March 22, 2023

[Why Kids Aren’t Falling in Love With Reading - The Atlantic](#)

Balancing pros and cons of generative artificial intelligence

The sudden advent of generative artificial intelligence -- in the form of OpenAI's ChatGPT and GPT-4 and Google's chatbot Bard -- has prompted educators to quickly define how chatbots should be used, or not used, in the classroom. While some classes and schools have banned ChatGPT as a form of academic misconduct, others are incorporating the tool into lessons with an emphasis on analyzing bias and inaccuracy.

Suchi Rudra. “ChatGPT in Education: The Pros, Cons and Unknowns of Generative AI.” *Ed Tech*. March 31, 2023

[ChatGPT in Education: Generative AI Pros, Cons & Unknowns | EdTech Magazine](#)

Student success is more than grades, test scores

Test scores and grade point averages alone will not help students succeed and thrive, said education psychologist and author Michele Borba during her keynote presentation at the 2023 ASCD Annual Conference. She details skills students need and activities that educators can weave into their instruction to help students develop these traits.

Kanoe Namahoe. “Michele Borba: Thrivers are made not born.” *Smart Brief/Education*. April 3, 2023

[Michele Borba: Thrivers are made not born - SmartBrief](#)

Develop a vision, change process for your school

School leaders need to invest time creating a vision for their school -- why they are doing what they're doing -- or risk having an environment of chaos and stress in their buildings, a former principal writes. He outlines how he worked with his staff to create a vision and change process and the benefits they saw as a result.

Paul G. Young. “Creating a Vision of Leadership for Your School.” *Edutopia*. April 3, 2023

[A School Principal’s Vision of Management | Edutopia](#)

Research: 4-day school weeks lead to pandemic-level learning losses

The move to a 4-day school week is popular because it saves money and boosts morale, but there is increasing evidence that student learning suffers. The authors compared English and math achievement in g. 3-8 for kids whose schools adopted 4-day school weeks against that of their 5-day-a-week peers. They found that students in 4-day school week districts fell behind a little each year; over 8 years this deficit added up to COVID-level learning losses.

Christopher Doss, Andrea Phillips, & Rebecca Kilburn. “Students in 4-Day-a-Week Schools Can Suffer COVID-Level Learning Losses.”

The 74 Million. April 3, 2023 [Students in 4-Day-a-Week Schools Can Suffer COVID-Level Learning Losses – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

School bus drivers can help districts identify and support homeless students

School bus drivers can play an essential role in schools’ efforts to serve students experiencing homelessness, as the only adults in the district who actually see students’ homes each day. Transportation staff can be trained to recognize signs of possible homelessness. Several districts in northern Vermont have already implemented this strategy — and are helping students who might have otherwise slipped through the cracks.

Asher Lehrer-Small. “Often Unseen, Bus Drivers Can Help Schools Find And Support Homeless Students”. *The 74 Million*. April 5, 2023

[Often Unseen, Bus Drivers Can Help Schools Find And Support Homeless Students – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

School wellness center offers mental health support

A new student-led wellness center at one California HS supports the mental and emotional health of students by allowing them to drop by and relax or drop in to talk with a therapist. The center aims for accessibility and student agency, as the most recent California Healthy Kids mental health survey revealed more than 30% of students felt "chronic sadness" and one in seven considered suicide.

Hannah Kanik, Mercury News. "Student-led wellness center supports high schoolers' mental, emotional health." *Pittsford Post-Gazette*. April 2, 2023. [Student-led wellness center supports high schoolers' mental, emotional health | Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)

Collection of articles about artificial intelligence in education

Whether you need to start at the beginning to catch up, or you're thinking far ahead about the possibilities of generative AI in the classroom, we've collected all of *EdSurge's* reporting about this technology into [a new guide](#). It also contains links to stories that raise bigger questions about the use of AI in education.

"For Education, ChatGPT Holds Promise — and Creates Problems." *Ed Surge*. April 6, 2023
[For Education, ChatGPT Holds Promise — and Creates Problems | EdSurge Guides](#)

How one teacher uses tech to keep math lessons moving

A 1st-grade teacher uses an education technology platform during math lessons, starting with the whole class learning and then breaking into two groups for the second part: one that stays on-level and another that uses works on lessons below or above. The tech platforms give autonomy to students while keeping an in-person component.

Lauraine Langreo. "Using Tech to Accelerate Learning: One Teacher's Story." *Education Week*. April 4, 2023
[Using Tech to Accelerate Learning: One Teacher's Story \(edweek.org\)](#)

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Why parents bills of rights are sweeping US

Multiple pieces of proposed legislation at the state level seek broad protections for parents, using language such as to "direct the upbringing" of their children. Legislation in Connecticut would create a bill of rights for parents of students learning English as a second language. The proposed laws have fueled questions about the role parents should play in their children's education, and have fanned partisan flames, weaponizing a longstanding concept – parental rights – that academic experts and advocates say should not be political. As of mid-March, proposed parental rights legislation has emerged in at least 32 states. The nationwide parental rights movement has taken heat for association with hostile interactions at school board meetings. Most state proposals remain pending in legislatures, and at least six have failed this year. In prior legislative sessions, the bulk of them failed. Other organizations have opposed what they see as a culture war-influenced movement that could lead to book bans and curriculum changes. Even supporters of parent engagement are concerned the legislative trend may only "flex voices that are loud and maybe even strident" without regard for what the majority of parents may believe or want.

Jackie Valley. "32 states and counting: Why parents bills of rights are sweeping US." *Christian Science Monitor*. March 24, 2023

[32 states and counting: Why parents bills of rights are sweeping US](#)

School districts sue social media giants

Teenagers' mental health has so taxed and alarmed school districts that many are suing the social media giants they say helped cause the crisis. At least 11 districts, one county and one county system that oversees 23 districts have filed suits this year, representing roughly 469,000 students. Sources say more will follow.

Marianna McMurdock. "Teen crisis pushes school districts to sue social media giants." *The 74 Million*. March 31, 2023

[Teen Mental Health Crisis Pushes More School Districts to Sue Social Media Giants – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

Governments target social media's effect on mental health

State and local governments are suing social media companies, as evidence mounts that social media can take a toll on young people's mental health. Via lawsuits, officials in at least five states have accused social media platforms of delivering harmful contents, while several states have passed or are considering measures to limit social media use.

Brian Fung. "Arkansas sues TikTok, ByteDance and Meta over mental health claims." *CNN*. March 29, 2023

[Arkansas sues TikTok, ByteDance and Meta over mental health claims | CNN Business](#)

Teaching historical truth when it's threatened

The author worked with other educator-activists at the Center for Black Educator Development to create the Freedom Schools Literacy Academy. Now in four cities, the program trains the next generation of Black educators while teaching early literacy to Black and Hispanic students in a culturally, racially affirming environment. It is a sharp counterpoint to a growing movement to suppress history in conservative states that harkens back to historical assessment of public schools as tools of white supremacy.

Sharif El-Mekki. "The Mis-Education of Black Students: Teaching the Truth in a Time of Oppression." *The 74 Million*. April 2, 2023

[The Mis-Education of Black Students: Teaching the Truth in a Time of Oppression – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

Failing to plan and other common K-12 security mistakes

Ignoring the need for a school safety planning team and believing bad things won't happen at their schools top the list of mistakes made by some K-12 administrators, according to the Partner Alliance for Safer Schools, or PASS. Its report includes eight other common K-12 security mistakes, outlines best practices, and explains why some tactics aren't the best use of money.

Micah Ward. "These are the 10 most common K12 security mistakes districts make." *District Administration*. March 24, 2023
[These are the top 10 most common K12 security mistakes \(districtadministration.com\)](#)

Turnitin to release AI-detection feature

Turnitin will release a new AI-detection tool that will tell educators if a student's work was generated by artificial intelligence. Keeping up with the pace of evolving generative AI tools could be difficult, critics say, a problem that educators and education technology companies will continue to grapple with in coming years. However, the speedy launch has academics worried.

Liam Knox. "Can Turnitin Cure Higher Ed's AI Fever?" *Inside Higher Ed*. April 3, 2023
[Turnitin's solution to AI cheating raises faculty concerns \(insidehighered.com\)](#)

5 ways to know whether or not your ed tech is working

Edtech tools are instrumental in achieving academic benchmarks, but if they aren't the right match for a district's needs, they'll eat away at the budget with no data to explain where the money's going. Here, Linewize's Ross Young gives school leaders five warning signs to help them recognize early that education tech tools aren't working.

Micah Ward. "5 signs your district's edtech tools aren't the right fit." *District Administration*. April 4, 2023
[5 signs your district's edtech tools aren't a good fit \(districtadministration.com\)](#)

Survey: Cyberattacks affected 94% of organizations in 2022

A constant barrage of malicious activity has organizations reeling, negatively impacting their ability to strategize or accomplish IT projects. Cyberattacks hit 94% of all organizations in one form or another last year, according to a global survey of IT executives, which warns every company should prepare to be a target this year. More than 90% of respondents reported having difficulty with essential security issues, and about 75% said they have trouble tracking down the cause of attacks.

Matt Kapko. "Cyberattacks hit almost all companies last year, Sophos says." *Cybersecurity Dive*. April 4, 2023
[Cyberattacks hit almost all companies last year, Sophos says | Cybersecurity Dive](#)

USDA still seeking feedback on school nutrition standards

The USDA is giving the public another month, until May 10, to weigh in on its proposed revisions to school meal nutrition rules for whole grains, sugar and sodium. Under the USDA's proposal, schools will use mostly whole grain products starting in fall 2024, and sugar and sodium content will gradually be dialed down through 2029.

Anna Merod. "USDA extends comment period for proposed changes to school nutrition standards." *K-12 Dive*. April 4, 2023
[USDA extends comment period for proposed changes to school nutrition standards | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

Groups seek emergency connectivity spending extension

Education technology groups have asked the Federal Communications Commission to extend the deadline for districts and schools to use money from the Emergency Connectivity Fund by one year, from the current date of June 30, 2023 until June 30, 2024. The Consortium for School Networking and the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition cited delays in supply chain and other factors for the request for additional time.

David Nagel. "Ed Tech Groups Ask FCC to Extend Emergency Connectivity Fund Deadlines." *T.H.E. Journal*. April 5, 2023
[Ed Tech Groups Ask FCC to Extend Emergency Connectivity Fund Deadlines -- THE Journal](#)

Federal administration applies Title IX to limits on trans athletes

It is the first time the administration has substantively weighed in on the charged debate. The proposal would also prevent schools from enacting across-the-board bans.

Sarah Mervosh, Remy Tumin, & Ava Sasani. "Biden Plan Allows Limits on Trans Athletes' Participation in School Sports." *NY Times*. April 7, 2023
[Biden Plan Sets New Rules for Transgender Athletes and School Sports - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

U.S. education post 1954

A new report investigates the history of the U.S. education system since 1954, the year that the Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that racial segregation of children in public schools is unconstitutional. Despite that Decision, the researchers argue that "the promise of Brown has yet to be fulfilled." They examine the ways in which racism shapes the policies that influence American schools and classrooms, and how our education systems maintain or disrupt racial inequality for students and families.

Juontel White, et alia. "Racial Inequality in the U.S. Education System Post-Brown: An Introduction to the History and Policies that Shape Our Contemporary Context." *Columbia University*. April 2023
[Inequality Report - Education Draft 2 \(updated Copy of Report Edits - from Monica\).docx \(columbia.edu\)](#)

NEW YORK STATE

Assembly bill seeks minimum safety standards and best practices for safe schools

NYS schools would have a set of minimum safety standards and best practices for securing buildings under legislation proposed by two Democratic lawmakers in the state Assembly. “With the increase in mass shootings and other violent crimes across our nation, being prepared must be a priority,” said Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara. “I’m cosponsoring this legislation to ensure that all school buildings and grounds are as safe as possible. Ensuring that minimum safety standards are in place is a commonsense step that can help save lives.” The measure would require the NYSED to create minimum safety standards and a set of best practices for safety on school property. The State Police superintendent and the commissioner of the state Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services would help provide input and guidance for the standards.

Nick Reisman. “New York lawmakers want best practices for school security.” *NY State of Politics*. April 4, 2023
[New York lawmakers want best practices for school security \(nystateofpolitics.com\)](https://nystateofpolitics.com/new-york-lawmakers-want-best-practices-for-school-security/)

Lawmakers consider reaction to ‘swatting’

State lawmakers this week proposed measures meant to hold perpetrators accountable.

The measure backed by Republicans in the state Senate would make swatting, currently a misdemeanor, a felony criminal charge. The proposal is one of several measures proposed this week by lawmakers in response to the swatting incidents — ranging from training for school guards to expanding criminal charges for making threats against targets like schools. A bipartisan Assembly bill proposed on April 6 would create two new sets of crimes: making a threat of mass violence a felony with a \$35,000 fine and three-year prison sentence. A second-degree charge for a person under 18 would lead to the same fine, along with 10 days in juvenile detention. A Senate bill calls for school-specific security training for guards. Governor Hochul, meanwhile, says state officials are still investigating. But finding the perpetrator may be difficult as law enforcement and homeland security officials believe the calls are coming from sources outside the country.

Nick Reisman. “After ‘swatting’ incidents at New York schools, lawmakers want to address threats.” *NY State of Politics*. April 6, 2023
[N.Y. lawmakers: Address ‘swatting’ threats at schools \(nystateofpolitics.com\)](https://nystateofpolitics.com/n-y-lawmakers-address-swatting-threats-at-schools/)