

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

May 12, 2023 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Strategies to support collective teacher efficacy

Students succeed when teachers succeed, and that is what guided two Hawaiian educators to implement a support system for educators using collective efficacy practices. IN this article they explain their process, which includes a detailed path for professional development for educators.

Kanoe Namahoe. "Collective teacher efficacy: A 4-point plan." *Smart Brief/Education*. May 4, 2023

[Collective teacher efficacy: A 4-point plan - SmartBrief](#)

Tools & Apps to Foster Student Creativity

Mike Afdahl, an award-winning educator and Coordinator of Technology Services, believes one of the best ways educators can use technology in the classroom is to encourage students to be content creators rather than passive consumers. Using certain apps, sites, and other digital tools can help them to do that.

Erik Ofgang. "6 Tools & Apps to Foster Student Creativity." *Tech & Learning*. May 8, 2023

[6 Tools & Apps to Foster Student Creativity | Tech & Learning \(techlearning.com\)](#)

Educators share their go-to edtech tools

SmartBrief recently announced its Education EdTech Readers' Choice Awards, which includes top edtech tools and solutions readers recommend. Top edtech tools were announced in several categories including curriculum assessment, early education and professional development.

Kanoe Namahoe. "Edtech 2023: SmartBrief Readers' Choice Awards." *Smart Brief/Education*. May 4, 2023

[Edtech 2023: SmartBrief Readers' Choice Awards - SmartBrief](#)

Issues in Math education

Math is a crucial tool for developing students' critical thinking skills and the gateway to many careers. Teaching students math means developing their problem-solving and reasoning skills. It means moving students from understanding a "concrete" math concept, like addition, to grasping abstract concepts, like a series of formulas. Research shows that students have to keep working things out again and again, picking up pieces of a concept and fluency as they go. It's more common to focus on literacy than numeracy methods in teacher training. So, many teachers also seem to struggle with math concepts. Even teachers with numeracy skills may not feel empowered to focus time on ensuring students gain numeracy skills, especially in lower-performing schools. One answer is PD occurring at schools, during the school day, focusing on the curriculum teachers are using and the students being taught. This would allow teachers to collaborate and learn from one another in a meaningful way that supports them.

Daniel Mollenkamp. "Math Instruction Isn't Working. Could Better Teacher Training Help?" *Ed Surge News*. May 8, 2023

[Math Instruction Isn't Working. Could Better Teacher Training Help? | EdSurge News](#)

Commentary: Troubling Turnover

When a teacher leaves, students, families and schools experience profound loss of community, continuity and, in some cases, loss of funding, according to the educator/author. Getting teachers to stay is possible but requires systemic change, from improving working conditions to supporting teachers and better preparing leaders.

Tracy Edwards. "What's Lost When a Teacher Leaves a School." *Ed Surge News*. May 5, 2023

[What's Lost When a Teacher Leaves a School | EdSurge News](#)

Educators: Less mobile phone use = better student focus

Disruption, obsession, and behavioral and mental health problems have led schools in several states to prohibit mobile phones in classrooms. Schools have tried many ways to keep phones out of students' reach, and while none are perfect, more students are paying attention because of mobile phone bans.

Donna St. George. "Students can't get off their phones. Schools have had enough." *Washington Post*. May 9, 2023

[Schools are banning cellphones as students are more distracted than ever - The Washington Post \(behind a paywall\)](#)

Report: 3-tiered approach to curb absenteeism

A new report from FutureEd, released in partnership with Attendance Works, suggests strategies to help schools address chronic absenteeism. The strategies are divided into three tiers -- universal prevention, early intervention and intensive intervention -- and come as data show a spike in chronic absenteeism among students.

Anna Merod. "With chronic absenteeism on the upswing, how can schools tackle attendance issues?." *K-12 Dive*. May 10, 2023
[With chronic absenteeism on the upswing, how can schools tackle attendance issues? | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

Moving from Equity Awareness to Action

Building one's equity awareness is important, but change will never come if school leaders don't take action steps to address inequities. The authors show education leaders how to examine the ways their equity work translates into action. "We cannot read books and form committees forever—at some point, we must do."

Paul Gorski & Katy Swalwell. "Moving from Equity Awareness to Action." *Educational Leadership*. May 1, 2023
[Moving from Equity Awareness to Action \(ascd.org\)](#)

3 districts pilot US history curriculum from iCivics

Oklahoma City Public Schools is among three districts piloting a US history curriculum that was developed by iCivics as a joint project with Harvard, Tufts and Arizona State universities. The materials focus on civil discourse and the ideals of America while addressing challenging topics including race, slavery and the Tulsa Race Massacre.

Jennifer Palmer. "Pilot program takes new approach to teaching civics." *Enid News & Eagle* (Okla.), May 6, 2023
[Pilot program takes new approach to teaching civics | News | enidnews.com](#)

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

K-12 cybersecurity enhancement requires more funding

The government's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is calling on K-12 schools to enhance their cybersecurity infrastructure. However, officials say these new measures will take funding from state and local government to implement.

Rebecca Torchia. "Do Schools Have the Funding to Manage Third-Party Risk?" *Ed Tech*. May 4, 2023
[Do Schools Have the Funding to Manage Third-Party Risk? | EdTech Magazine](#)

Fewer applicants seek teaching roles, principals say

A Rand survey of K-12 principals reveals that more than half reported having insufficient teaching staff between 2020 and 2022, and almost three-quarters of the school leaders said that the lack of staff was because there were fewer applicants rather than an addition of teaching positions. The report largely debunks the idea that teacher vacancies have resulted from added positions related to federal emergency funding.

Naaz Modan. "Majority of principals attribute teacher vacancies to lack of applicants." *K-12 Dive*. May 3, 2023
[Majority of principals attribute teacher vacancies to lack of applicants | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

Federal program seeks to expand career options for HS students

Communities looking to bolster work-based learning can seek funding and recognition through a new \$2.5 million U.S.E.D. grant program. The Career Z Challenge was designed to highlight innovative efforts to provide real-world learning to high schoolers. It's part of the ongoing Biden administration initiative called "Raise the Bar: Unlocking Career Success" aimed at helping prepare students to fill millions of jobs through opportunities for college credit, apprenticeships and industry credentials.

Meghan Mangrum. "\$2.5M Gen Z Program Aims to Expand Career Options for High School Students." *The 74 Million*. May 4, 2023
[\\$2.5M Gen Z Program Aims to Expand Career Options for High School Students – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

To improve kids' mental health, some states consider later school start times

The idea of later school start times, pushed by many over the years as a way to help adolescents get more sleep, is getting a new look as a way to address the mental health crisis affecting teens across the U.S. At least nine states and several large school districts, including Denver and Philadelphia, are considering moving back the start of the school day to help students get more sleep and support their mental health.

Brooke Schultz. "To improve kids' mental health, some schools start later." *Associated Press*. May 7, 2023
[To improve kids' mental health, some schools start later | AP News](#)

Is the push for higher teacher salaries too late?

Teachers earn \$67K on average. As schools across the country struggle to find teachers to hire, more governors are pushing for pay increases, bonuses and other perks for the beleaguered profession — with some vowing to beat out other states competing for educators. Some policy makers wonder if it's too little to late.

Marc Levy. "Teachers earn \$67K on average. Is push for raises too late?" *Associated Press*. May 8, 2023
[Teacher Appreciation Week: Can governors raise school salary, pay? | AP News](#)

Poll: Most Students Don't Have Strong Connections to Their Teachers

Less than 25% of students said that their teachers make an effort to understand their life outside of school. Student perception of teacher connection has declined to a new low this school year, after a brief increase in spring 2020, according to [a new survey from YouthTruth](#), a nonprofit that surveys K-12 students and families for school districts.

Lauraine Langreo. "Most Students Don't Have Strong Connections to Their Teachers, Survey Finds." *Education Week*. May 09, 2023
[Most Students Don't Have Strong Connections to Their Teachers, Survey Finds \(edweek.org\)](#)

Survey: Top security threats are careless insiders & foreign governments

According to a recent survey, the most widely cited source of security problems among education professionals was "careless/untrained insiders," with 58% of respondents from the education sector saying this is a major source of threats. That was followed closely by foreign governments, at 56%. The "general hacking community" came in third, at 54%. 13% of education sector respondents said their organizations had been impacted by ransomware in the last year, yet only 26% of respondents cited ransomware as a concern.

David Nagel. "K-12 IT Pros See Careless Insiders and Foreign Governments as Top Security Threats." *T.H.E. Journal*. May 9, 2023
[K-12 IT Pros See Careless Insiders and Foreign Governments as Top Security Threats -- THE Journal](#)

Commentary: End of education reform means that real reform can begin

America's decades-long, bipartisan "education reform" movement, defined by an obsession with test scores and by viewing education largely as a tool for getting people higher-paying jobs, is finally in decline. What should replace it is an education system that values learning, creativity, integration and citizenship...Our education system should be about learning, not job credentialing. Schools and universities should teach Americans to be critical thinkers ... They should make sure Americans have enough understanding of economics, history and science to be good citizens, able to discern which candidate in an election has a better plan to, say, deal with a deadly pandemic. They should foster interest and appreciation of music, arts and literature. They should be places where people meet and learn from others who might not share their race, class, religion or ideology. Our schools and universities should of course also provide people the core skills for jobs that actually require higher education. They should provide a path to becoming a doctor, lawyer, professor or any profession that requires specialized training without going into debt. What our education system should not be is 16 years of required drudgery to make sure that you can get a job with stable hours and decent benefits — or a punching bag for politicians who have failed to do their jobs in reducing racial and economic inequality.

Perry Bacon, Jr. "Opinion: Education reform is dying. Now we can actually reform education." *Washington Post*. May 8, 2023
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/05/08/how-to-reform-education/>

Schools compete for fewer students

Three years since the pandemic, data show enrollment in the vast majority of the nation's largest school districts has yet to rebound. As birth rates decline, choice options expand, and budget deficits grow, districts are facing unpalatable options like shutting down half-empty buildings, consolidating with other districts, and laying off staff.

Linda Jacobson. "As post-pandemic enrollment lags, schools compete for fewer students." *The 74 Million*. May 10, 2023
[Exclusive Data: As Post-Pandemic Enrollment Lags, Schools Compete for Fewer Students – The 74 \(the74million.org\)](#)

Helping school boards improve

A.J. Crabill helps guide 78 urban districts as national director of the Council of the Great City Schools. Before that, he helped run one board as chair of the Kansas City (Missouri) school board. He puts all that expertise into his new book, *Great on Their Behalf: Why School Boards Fail, How Yours Can Become Effective*. His purpose is to encourage school boards nationwide to transition from focusing on adult inputs ... to focusing on student outcomes.

Conor P. Williams. "Can This School Board Be Saved? Author AJ Crabill Has a 5-Point Plan." *The 74 Million*. May 10, 2023

Avoiding common grant writing pitfalls

Donna Spangler, K-12 instructional coach department chair for Derry Township School District in Hershey, Pa., suggests educators consider pursuing grants to fund important educational projects. In this blog post, Spangler shares several tips to help write effective grant applications and offers suggestions to help teachers get funding.

Donna Spangler. "Writing grants to fund educational projects and innovation." *Smart Brief/Education*. May 10, 2023
[Writing grants to fund educational projects and innovation - SmartBrief](#)

Report: 26 states consider raising pay for teachers

Governors in 26 states have proposed pay raises for teachers -- an unprecedented number -- according to the nonprofit Teacher Salary Project. While teachers' salaries have fallen behind those of similarly educated peers in other professions, it's unclear whether pay raises will be enough to help recruit teachers to the field and retain those already in classrooms.

Marc Levy. "Teachers earn \$67K on average. Is push for raises too late?" *Associated Press*. May 8, 2023
[Teacher Appreciation Week: Can governors raise school salary, pay? | AP News](#)

NEW YORK STATE

N.Y. bill would mandate Asian American history in schools

A bill currently under consideration by the NYS legislature would require K-12 public schools to include Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history in social studies and history courses. NYC Public Schools has already issued a mandate for AAPI curriculum in all of the city's schools starting in September.

Sarah Belle Lin. "Here's what the new proposed history and social studies curriculum on Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander could look like." *amNewYork*. May 5, 2023
[Here's what the new proposed history and social studies curriculum on Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander could look like | amNewYork \(amny.com\)](#)

N.Y. students engage in civics readiness pilot program

A group of students at Holley MS and HS are participating in a pilot program to attain a Seal of Civic Readiness, which will be affixed to their HS diplomas. Aimed at promoting civic participation and youth leadership, the program has included student projects, such as organizing an outreach effort for veterans, planning a "Day of Silence" to honor LGBTQ victims of violence, and writing letters to the editor about current events.

Tom Rivers, Editor. "Holley students among pilot group in NYS pursuing Seal of Civic Readiness." *Orleans Hub* (Albion, NY). May 9, 2023
[Holley students among pilot group in NYS pursuing Seal of Civic Readiness | Orleans Hub](#)