

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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May 29, 2020 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

How pandemic is affecting English language learners

The shift to remote education has been particularly challenging for the country's estimated 5 million English language learners. Educators report that many of the students lack reliable at-home internet connections, and in many cases language instruction has been diminished in favor of other priorities.

Yesenia Robles & Kalyn Belsha. "Less learning and late guidance: School districts struggle to help English language learners during COVID-19 crisis." *Chalkbeat*. May 21, 2020 <https://www.chalkbeat.org/2020/5/21/21265475/less-learning-late-guidance-school-districts-struggle-english-language-learners-during-covid-19>

Poll: Teachers and parents on pandemic and school re-opening

Most Americans expect schools to reopen in the fall, but many teachers and students may not be there. In a [USA TODAY/Ipsos poll](#), 20% of teachers said they are unlikely to go back if schools reopen in the fall. While most teachers reported working harder, nearly 2/3 said they haven't been able to properly do their jobs electronically. A poll of K-12 parents found that 60% said they would be likely to pursue at-home learning options instead of sending back their children this fall. 40% of parents and teachers oppose returning to the classroom before there is a coronavirus vaccine. Roughly two-thirds of teachers and parents support the idea of returning to the classroom for two or three days a week, and using distance learning the other days. Nearly 80% of teachers said they would likely wear a mask while teaching, and nearly 60% said they are likely to work longer hours. But nearly 90% warned that they foresee difficulties in enforcing social distancing among students. 70% of parents would ask their child to wear a mask at school, but more than two-thirds say their child would find it hard to comply with social distancing.

Susan Page, *USA Today*. "Back to school? 1 in 5 teachers are unlikely to return to reopened classrooms this fall, poll says." *Democrat & Chronicle*. May 26, 2020 <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/education/2020/05/26/coronavirus-schools-teachers-poll-ipsos-parents-fall-online/53547290027001> source=democratandchronicle-Daily%20Briefing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily_briefing&utm_term=.1st_article_thumb

Schools opening worldwide provide model for US schools

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have released a [report](#) setting out guidelines for opening child-care programs, day camps, and K-12 schools—or the report leaked, depending on who you read. The guidelines break school reopening into three phases—each with incrementally more relaxed rules, if infection rates are sufficiently low—but the big picture provides some good news: the recommendations reveal a path forward for schools to reopen, albeit with restrictions. In parts of Western Europe and Asia, where Covid-19 hit earlier than in the U.S., the threat from the virus has gradually diminished, and classroom have reopened. Reports from major news publications indicate that even with the strict new rules, children and teachers are generally [happy to be back](#), but the reopenings have not been without controversy. A recent article by *Business Insider*'s Emily Cavanagh peeked inside the equivalent of K-12 schools operating around the world, from Taiwan to Denmark, China, Norway, and Israel, and looked at the common safety precautions in place. This article reviews issues being dealt with globally.

Stephen Merrill. "Schools Are Opening Worldwide, Providing a Model for the U.S." *Edutopia*. May 8, 2020 https://www.edutopia.org/article/schools-are-opening-worldwide-providing-model-us?utm_source=Edutopia+Newsletter&utm_campaign=9f50493399-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_052720_enews_schoolsare&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f72e8cc8c4-9f50493399-78672633

Tutoring could help curb learning loss

Some states are considering investments in tutoring programs to help offset learning loss tied to prolonged pandemic school closures. One Harvard study summarizing multiple research projects found that frequent one-to-one sessions with a structured curriculum is most effective in boosting learning among low-performing students. Normally, the idea of giving every poor child a professional tutor would seem too expensive but extreme circumstances have put big ideas on the table and policymakers are suggesting cheaper, if not exactly cheap, ways to do it.

Jill Barshay. "Takeaways from research on tutoring to address coronavirus learning loss." *Hechinger Report*. May 25, 2020 <https://hechingerreport.org/takeaways-from-research-on-tutoring-to-address-coronavirus-learning-loss/>

Four potential CDC models for reopened schools

There are four potential scenarios -- all of which include some level of distance learning -- being proposed by the CDC concerning what schools will do in the fall. Schools could begin the year in person but plan for closures during a potential second outbreak; begin the year with online learning while monitoring health conditions; do blended learning; or perform 100% online learning.

Emily Tate. "What Will Schools Do in the Fall? Here Are 4 Possible Scenarios." *Ed Surge*. May 27, 2020

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-05-27-what-will-schools-do-in-the-fall-here-are-4-possible-scenarios>

Survey: Income factors in remote-learning

Students from wealthier families are more likely to be engaging in remote instruction, according to a recent survey. It found that 83% of students from families earning more than \$100,000 annually were participating in distance learning daily, compared with 40% of students from the poorest families accessing it about once a week or less.

Anya Kamenetz. "Survey Shows Big Remote Learning Gaps For Low-Income And Special Needs Children." *National Public Radio*. May 27, 2020

<https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/05/27/862705225/survey-shows-big-remote-learning-gaps-for-low-income-and-special-needs-children>

Three articles on instruction during and after the pandemic

Schools struggled to balance the tension between high expectations and the need for flexibility, a challenge that will likely continue next school year.

Catherine Gewertz. "Instruction During COVID-19: Less Learning Time Drives Fears of Academic Erosion." *Education Week*. May 28, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/05/27/instruction-during-covid-19-less-learning-time-drives.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1-rm&M=59584475&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Surveys by the EdWeek Research Center capture a picture of teaching and learning during the pandemic that reveals big instructional equity problems.

"Data: Students Are Getting Less Instruction Time During Coronavirus." *Education Week*. May 28, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/data-students-are-getting-less-instruction-time.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59584475&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Educators for Excellence asked 600 teachers about instruction during the school shutdowns, their perspectives on remote learning, and concerns for next school year.

Sara Schwartz. "What Teachers Want: 'Looping,' Grouping by Ability, and Digital Devices, Survey Says." *Education Week*. May 28, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2020/05/survey-shows-teachers-vision-for-next-school-year-try-looping-make-tech-access-top-priority.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59584475&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Secretary DeVos insists on COVID support going to private schools, gets backlash U.S.E.D. rule to cement COVID aid push for private education

In a letter to state education chiefs announcing her plan to publish a CARES Act rule for public comment, DeVos also highlighted what she called school leaders' "reflex" not to share COVID-19 aid.

Andrew Ujifusa. "DeVos to Release Rule Cementing COVID Aid Push for Private School Students." *Education Week*. May 26, 2020

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/05/devos-covid-aid-private-school-students-rule.html?cmp=soceml-twfdbltz-ewnow>

Republican senator opposes DeVos distribution of education aid

Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, on May 21 contradicted Betsy DeVos's guidance to states to include private schools when distributing federal funding of coronavirus relief. DeVos says the money should be divided according to enrollment. Alexander says it should follow the Title I funding and go to the neediest students, who are not in private schools.

Nicole Gaudio. "Alexander, DeVos split on stimulus support for private school kids." *Politico*. May 22, 2020

<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-education/2020/05/22/alexander-devos-split-on-stimulus-support-for-private-school-kids-787837>

Marta W. Aldrich. "Alexander questions DeVos guidance that shifts more coronavirus relief to private schools." *Chalkbeat/Tennessee*. May 21, 2020,

<https://tn.chalkbeat.org/2020/5/21/21266659/alexander-questions-devos-guidance-that-shifts-more-coronavirus-relief-to-private-schools>

Crowded classrooms and reopening after the pandemic

Classrooms that were crowded before the pandemic closures will complicate efforts to reopen safely.

Sarah D. Sparks. "Crowding and the Coronavirus: By the Numbers." *Education Week*. May 20, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2020/05/crowding_and_the_coronavirus_b.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1&M=59582147&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Uneven distribution of higher education funds

The U.S.E.D. is allocating money to schools, but some are getting much more money than others. The striking disparity in aid is a result of how the DOE distributed a portion of the \$14 billion in higher education relief that Congress approved to help schools struggling to support their students and institutions during the pandemic. The legislation was written in a hurry and the department has moved fast to get money out the door as quickly as possible. But the inconsistent distribution has created a scenario where some small schools say they will eventually return funds to the DOE, while larger colleges and universities are desperate for more relief.

Emilie Munson. "UAlbany got \$963 per pupil in coronavirus aid. Why another NY school will get \$16,667." *Albany Times Union*. May 25, 2020

https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/UAlbany-got-963-per-pupil-in-coronavirus-aid-15287189.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Timesunion_Capcon&stn=nt

Report: Benefits of distributing property taxes at county or state level

Local property tax revenue should be distributed more broadly -- at the county or state level -- rather than by district, according to a report from the nonprofit EdBuild. The report suggests that this approach, in place in 13 states, could help to improve equity and increase education funding for the country's most at-risk students.

Cory Turner. "A Bold Pitch To Boost School Funding For The Nation's Most Vulnerable Students." *National Public Radio*. May 27, 2020

<https://www.npr.org/2020/05/27/861325304/a-bold-pitch-to-boost-school-funding-for-the-nations-most-vulnerable-students>

NEW YORK STATE

SJGC grad is state monitor for RCSD

A St. John Fisher graduate and former New Jersey school administrator has been appointed state monitor for the Rochester School District. Shelley Jallow will oversee fiscal and academic matters in concert with newly appointed superintendent Lesli Myers-Small. The monitor position was a condition of the state's \$35 million bailout of RCSD for 2019-20. Dr. Jallow has successfully led school improvement efforts at the state and district levels. She will weigh in on district policies, practices and decisions as a non-voting ex-officio school board member. She will help craft financial and academic improvement plans for 2020-2021 and the four subsequent school years by November. Brian Sharp. "St. John Fisher grad Shelley Jallow to serve as state monitor of RCSD." *Democrat & Chronicle*. May 22, 2020
https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2020/05/22/shelley-jallow-to-serve-as-state-monitor-of-rcsd-rochester-ny/5241492002/?utm_source=democratandchronicle-Daily%20Briefing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily_briefing&utm_term=list_article_thumb

ELC urges Governor Cuomo to reject DeVos formula for CARES aid distribution

Without Congressional authorization, Betsy DeVos has urged states to dispense CARES Act funding based on enrollment, to include private schools, not based on economic need. The Education Law Center has written to Governor Cuomo urging him to reject the DeVos formula, which will divert money from the poorest children and defy the intent of Congress.

Letter assessable at <https://greatschoolwars.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/elc-ltr-to-ny-gov-equitable-services-5-19-final.pdf>

In anticipation of state aid cuts, one urban district seeks salary freeze

Because it's likely losing \$15 million in state aid, the urban Mount Vernon school district is asking all employees to agree to a pay freeze for the upcoming school year; three unions, all without contracts, have yet to respond.

Gary Stern. "School districts in need, like Mount Vernon, would suffer most if state aid cuts come." *Journal News/Lower Hudson*. May 25, 2020
https://www.lohud.com/story/news/education/2020/05/26/mount-vernon-n-y-school-districts-need-would-suffer-if-aid-cut/5243729002/?mc_cid=c5c75d31ba&mc_eid=bc2625d4e3

What happens if budgets voted down?

Districts will conduct their first all-mail budget votes in less than two weeks, and a question about what happens if budgets fail remains unanswered as Cuomo has given no indication on whether districts can still hold a revote.

Sophie Grosserode. "Coronavirus: If New York school budgets are defeated June 9, then what?" *Journal News/Lower Hudson*. May 28, 2020
https://www.lohud.com/story/news/education/2020/05/28/new-york-schools-may-have-one-shot-passing-budgets-before-contingency/5270286002/?mc_cid=04c9fb66e5&mc_eid=bc2625d4e3

Regents task force to focus on school reopening

The state Board of Regents will name its own task force to focus on the reopening of NYS schools, broken up into four regions, that will study issues like transportation, safety and mental health, and the possible repurposing of space within school buildings. The final report is expected by mid-July. It's not clear if or how the Regents' task force will work with Gov. Andrew Cuomo's initiatives focused on the schools, which have been closed since March because of the coronavirus pandemic. School districts, in turn, are supposed to submit reopening plans to the state in July. Cuomo has repeatedly said that it's too soon to determine whether schools can reopen in September. Cuomo advisor Jim Malatras, who is leading the Reimagine Education initiative, told Spectrum News in Albany on May 14 that the group expects to gradually release best practices for K-12 schools rather than a single report. Chancellor Rose stated that the Regents hope to name a new state education commissioner by early July; that the Regents' review of NYS HS graduation standards has been put on hold due to the pandemic; and that the Regents will also delay for probably a year its search for a company to develop new tests for grades 3-8.

Gary Stern. "Regents to name task force on reopening schools, Rosa says." *Journal News/Lower Hudson*. May 28, 2020
https://www.lohud.com/story/news/education/2020/05/27/reopening-schools-new-york-state-regents-name-its-own-task-force/5266078002/?mc_cid=04c9fb66e5&mc_eid=bc2625d4e3

NYS Senate asks Governor to allow HS graduation ceremonies outdoors in July

The state Senate majority urged Cuomo to allow "school districts to safely hold high school graduations outdoors and in-person in July," saying the ceremonies would follow social distancing and public health guidelines.

Catherine Carrera. "State senators ask governor to allow outdoor graduations in July." *Newsday*. May 27, 2020
https://www.newsday.com/news/health/coronavirus/letter-about-graduation-and-cuomo-1.44992362?mc_cid=04c9fb66e5&mc_eid=bc2625d4e3