

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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June 12, 2020 Education News Update

RACISM IN SCHOOLS

Commentary: Dealing with racism in schools

The author offers four steps for combating anti-Black racism in schools.

Tyrone C. Howard. "How to root out anti-Black racism from your school." *Education Week*. June 3, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/04/how-to-root-out-anti-black-racism-from.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59590322&U=252955&UIID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Opinion: What to do and not do in response to the death of George Floyd

Two educators offer suggestions on what to do-and not do-in the wake of George Floyd's death, such as learning about the legacy of racism before taking action and not just limiting actions to empty messages of support.

Larry Ferlazzo. "What Educators Should—and Should Not Do—in Response to George Floyd's Death." *Education Week*. June 2, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/classroom_qa_with_larry_ferlazzo/2020/06/what-educators-should-and-should-not-do-in-response-to-the-killing-of-george-floyd.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59590322&U=252955&UIID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Teachers seeking to support black students following protests

Teachers are tasked with helping their students work through their feelings about the protests and police killings of unarmed black men and women. Protests against police brutality have erupted across the country, leading to tough classroom conversations about race, racism, and police violence. Teachers, already struggling to reach students during the coronavirus pandemic, are now searching for ways to help them work through their feelings about the protests and killings. It's a daunting conversation to have through a screen, many teachers said.

Madeline Will. "Teachers Cannot Be Silent!: How Educators Are Showing Up for Black Students Following Protests." *Education Week*. June 1, 2020

https://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2020/06/as_protests_erupt_after_george_floyds_death_teachers_grieve_with_students_from_a_distance.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59590322&U=252955&UIID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Discussions about achievement gaps can worsen biases against black students

The way education media and policymakers frame education debates can have longer-term effects on how the public thinks about students, and which policies they are likely to support to improve students' learning.

Sara D. Sparks. "How We Talk About the Achievement Gap Could Worsen Public Racial Biases Against Black Students." *Education Week*. June 3, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2020/06/achievement_gap_discourse_may_worsen_public_bias_against_black_students.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59590322&U=252955&UIID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Tips for addressing race with students

Teachers may be considering how they can best address racial injustice with students, writes a curriculum designer and district tech lead. He shares lesson plans, videos and other resources to help integrate race into lessons.

Hedreich Nichols. "A Guide to Equity and Antiracism for Educators." *Edutopia*. June 5, 2020

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/guide-equity-and-antiracism-educators>

Superintendents striving for equality

School superintendents are responding to the protests for racial justice by calling for conversations with students and taking other steps to combat racism. Steve Walts, Prince William County, Va., Schools superintendent (and former superintendent of Greece CSD) is quoted as seeking to rename schools named for Stonewall Jackson, proposing a ban on the Confederate flag in schools, and reviewing its relationship with police.

Matt Zalaznick. "Superintendents chart new courses for combatting racism." *District Administration*. June 8, 2020

<https://districtadministration.com/superintendents-racism-equity-protests-george-floyd-confederate-flag/>

Teachers among the racially biased

A paper published by researchers from Princeton and Tufts universities compares teachers' explicit and implicit biases with those of other American adults.

Madeline Will. "Teachers Are as Racially Biased as Everybody Else, Study Shows." *Education Week*. June 9, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/09/teachers-have-racial-biases-too-study-shows.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1&M=59592980&U=252955&UIID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Students demand anti-racist curriculum

Students in cities around the country are organizing petition drives that are generating thousands of signatures to demand that their schools offer anti-racist curricula and instruction.

Catherine Gewertz. "Attention School Leaders: Students Are Demanding Anti-Racist Curriculum and Instruction." *Education Week*. June 9, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2020/06/students-are-demanding-anti-racist-curriculum-and-instruction.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59592980&U=252955&UIID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

TEACHING & LEARNING

COVID-19 and racism resources

Children's Institute, which focuses on children's social emotional health, offers resources to help children and their families navigate through the pandemic. It also offers an account of the toll of longstanding racial inequities on communities and people of color, revealed during the current pandemic.

"COVID-19 Resources for Families." *Children's Institute*. June 2020

<https://www.childrensinstitute.net/about-us/covid19-resources-for-families>

"How has the pandemic exposed structural racism: A review of literature." *Children's Institute*. June 2020

<https://www.childrensinstitute.net/sites/default/files/documents/racial-disparities-COVID-13.pdf>

Promising effort in New Mexico to reimagine the future of schools

New Mexico test scores are very low, its child poverty rate is very high, and it funds its schools less than it did in 2008. Some schools there have adopted the community schools model to meet academic and non-academic needs of children as schools reopen to the new realities caused by COVID-19. Community schools use a whole child approach to include students' health, mental, socioeconomic, and cultural conditions that impact students' abilities.

Jeff Bryant. "The Future of K-12 Schools Isn't Online; It's in New Mexico." *Ed Politics*. May 19, 2020

<https://edpolitics.org/the-future-of-k-12-schools-isnt-online-its-in-new-mexico/>

"Community Schools May Be the Best Post-Pandemic Educational Strategy." *Jan Resseger's blog*. June 3, 2020

<https://janresseger.wordpress.com/2020/06/03/24897/>

Students falling months behind due to the pandemic

A picture is emerging of the extent of the learning loss among students, and the size of the gaps schools will be asked to fill when they reopen. The abrupt switch to remote learning wiped out academic gains for many students, and widened racial and economic gaps. Catching up in the fall won't be easy.

Dana Goldstein. "Research Shows Students Falling Months Behind During Virus Disruptions." *NY Times*. June 5, 2020

https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/us/coronavirus-education-lost-learning.html?campaign_id=2&emc=edit_th_200606&instance_id=19107&nl=todaysheadlines®i_id=18877907&segment_id=30245&user_id=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfc

Could scheduling changes affect achievement gaps?

Rigid schedules and prerequisites may hamper students' ability to learn and chip away at equity. The author suggests having extra class sections for those who struggle with math and other core subjects and easing prerequisites, so more students can take college- or technical-preparation courses.

Cheryl Hibbein. "What Transcripts Reveal About Our Schools' Values, Priorities and Inequities." *Ed Surge*. June 2, 2020

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-06-02-what-transcripts-reveal-about-our-schools-values-priorities-and-inequities>

Teachers more likely to leave profession due to pandemic

According to an EdWeek Research Center survey, two-thirds of educators are concerned about the health implications of resuming in-person instruction in the fall; some say the coronavirus outbreak—and its dramatic effects on schooling—has increased the likelihood that they will leave the classroom altogether.

Madeline Will. "Teachers Say They're More Likely to Leave the Classroom Because of Coronavirus." *Education Week/Teachers*. June 3, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2020/06/teachers_say_they_re_more_likely_leave_classroom_because_coronavirus.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59591300&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfc

Teachers concerned about return to in-person teaching & learning

School districts are under increasing pressure, from parents and politicians, for reopening plans that include at least some in-person learning. Some teachers -- particularly those more vulnerable to the coronavirus -- say they are worried that planned safety measures will not keep them safe. Teachers say they want to be involved in plans for reopening. They can't envision students maintaining social distance, keeping masks on or walking in the same directions in hallways, all things health officials are recommending. Even before the pandemic, teachers said, their schools struggled to keep ample soap and water running in the bathrooms.

Perry Stein & Joe Heim. "Students in masks? Sick kids staying home? Teachers aren't convinced plans will keep them safe." *Washington Post*. June 5, 2020

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/teacher-health-fall-schools-coronavirus/2020/06/05/12bf261a-99f9-11ea-ac72-3841fcc9b35f_story.html?wpisrc=nl_sb_smartbrief

How the pandemic is shaping tech use—now and when schools reopen

Surveys by the EdWeek Research Center show teachers seeing their ability to use technology improving during school closures, but huge tech-equity issues could get worse.

Kevin Bushweller. "How COVID-19 Is Shaping Tech Use. What That Means When Schools Reopen." *Education Week*. June 2, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/03/how-covid-19-is-shaping-tech-use-what.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59591300&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfc>

Pandemic forces consideration of devices for youngest students

Pandemic-related school building closures are leading to some tough decisions about providing iPads and Chromebooks, even for kindergartners.

David Saleh Rauf. "COVID-19 Forces the Question: Should the Youngest Learners Have Devices?" *Education Week*. June 8, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/08/covid-19-forces-the-question-chromebooks-ipads-for.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59592046&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfc>

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Cities re-consider role of police in schools

Activists in New York City are seeking to remove local police officers from schools. The move follows a vote in Minneapolis to sever ties between the police department and schools, and a similar proposal in Denver.

Alex Zimmerman. "Activists demand removing the NYPD from schools. De Blasio plans to give school police more money." *Chalkbeat/NY*. June 4, 2020, <https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2020/6/4/21280549/nypd-schools-funding>

Commentary: Time for new approach to discipline

The author argues that educators should consider using the current public health crisis and disruption in education to reconsider the typical rule-consequence approach used in schools. He suggests an alternative that promotes the common good -- a norm-based approach rooted in shared values.

Jim Dillon. "Going beyond the rules -- for the common good." *Smart Brief/Education*. June 4, 2020
https://www.smartbrief.com/original/2020/06/going-beyond-rules-common-good?utm_source=brief

School spending analysis finds widening gap between top 1% and the rest of us

A new analysis finds that the school funding gap between a top 1% school district and an average-spending district widened by 32% between 2000 and 2015. The top 1% districts across the nation funded their schools by an average \$21,000 per student in 2015, almost three times the level of the bottom 1% of districts that spent \$7,500 per student. The top 1,300 districts educate fewer than 500,000 children, who are mostly wealthy and white. NYS has the highest concentration of students attending 1% schools because it has many tiny districts where most of the residents are wealthy and districts rely on local taxation for revenue. State sales and income tax revenues are now plummeting and states are expected to cut school aid. Low-income schools are especially reliant on state funds.

Jill Barshay. "Rich schools get richer." *Hechinger Report*. June 8, 2020
https://hechingerreport.org/rich-schools-get-richer/?utm_source=The+Hechinger+Report&utm_campaign=6afbb4363b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_PP_2020_06_05&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d3ee43e04-6afbb4363b-322606321

State and national reports on school finance

The *Education Week* Quality Counts 2020 Highlights Reports capture the key data needed to assess the performance of every state on key school spending and funding equity indicators. (National report available as well.)

Education Week Quality Counts 2020 Highlights Reports. June 2020
https://www.edweek.org/ew/collections/quality-counts-2020/state-and-national-highlights-reports-quality-counts.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2_rm&M=59591300&U=252955&UID=dcf379a08119fa8d853cd6f688bfc

U.S.E.D. seized tax refunds to student borrowers illegally

In response to a class action lawsuit filed by student loan borrowers, the U.S.E.D. disclosed that it had intercepted and seized over \$2.2 billion in tax refunds owed to a million student loan borrowers, in violation of the CARES Act. The CARES Act suspended all collections on defaulted federally-held student loans from March 13, 2020 until September 30, 2020. The Act mandates that involuntary collections efforts by the U.S.E.D. and U.S. Department of Treasury — including the interception and seizure of tax refunds — are to be suspended.

Adam S. Minsky. "Dept. Of Education Discloses Illegal Seizure Of \$2.2 Billion From Student Loan Borrowers." *Forbes*. June 1, 2020
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adamminsky/2020/06/01/dept-of-education-discloses-illegal-seizure-of-22-billion-from-student-loan-borrowers/#7635a8855ede>

U.S.E.D. regulations to enforce restrictions on pandemic relief grants

The U.S.E.D. is rolling out a regulation restricting which college students will receive emergency grants to cover expenses like food and housing. The 'interim final rule' requires colleges to exclude undocumented students and others who don't qualify for federal student aid from a more than \$6 billion emergency cash grant program under the CARES Act, H.R. 748 (116). Democrats and college officials have argued that it goes against the intent of the CARES Act, which does not include any explicit restrictions on which students can receive the funding.

Michale Stratford. "DeVos will unveil rule on pandemic relief grants for college students." *Politico*. June 9, 2020
<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-education/2020/06/09/devos-will-unveil-rule-on-pandemic-relief-grants-for-college-students-788357>

AFT: Average school needs extra \$1.2 million to reopen

The average school in the US will need an additional \$1.2 million (\$2,300 per student) to reopen following the pandemic, according to an estimate by the American Federation of Teachers. The union's estimate is more than four times previous estimates, with extra academic support and instructional staff among the largest expenditures.

Lauren Camera. "New Estimate to Reopen Schools After Coronavirus: \$116.5 Billion." *U.S. News & World Report*. June 9, 2020
<https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2020-06-09/new-estimate-to-reopen-schools-after-coronavirus-1165-billion>

The uber rich who want to privatize public education

The News Schools Venture Fund develops and funds plans to destroy public schools. The New Schools Venture Fund (NSVF) promotes education technology development, bankrolls charter school creation, develops charter management organizations and sponsors school leadership training groups. Since its founding in 1998, a small group of people with extraordinary wealth have been munificent in their support. NSVF is a significant asset in the billionaire funded drive to end democratically run public schools and replace them with privatized corporate structures. This article lists some of the most influential billionaires involved.

Thomas Ultican. "Organized to Disrupt." *Tultican blog*. June 10, 2020
<https://tultican.com/2020/06/10/organized-to-disrupt/>

Schools face challenges in planning student meals

The USDA on Wednesday said it will extend through the summer a COVID-19 waiver allowing school districts and nonprofits to continue to provide universal free meals in areas where less than half of students are from low-income families. Districts are still waiting for decisions on waivers affecting the 2020-21 school year, however, creating uncertainty in planning student meals.

Ellyn Furguson. "Unclear back-to-school plans add uncertainty for meal providers." *Roll Call*. June 10, 2020
<https://www.rollcall.com/2020/06/10/unclear-back-to-school-plans-add-uncertainty-for-meal-providers/>

NEW YORK STATE

State extends mail-in school budget ballot deadlines

On June 7, the governor said districts have to receive mailed ballots by June 16. An executive order allows ballots on school district budgets and board candidates to be hand delivered through 5 p.m. June 9 and received by mail through June 16. All ballots previously had to be received by June 9.

Robert Brodsky & Joie Tyrrell. "State extends mail-in school budget ballot deadlines." *Newsday*. June 7, 2020
https://www.newsday.com/news/health/coronavirus/school-budget-vote-extension-pandemic-1.45436666?user=5c8795827e553f56154105c0&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Morning-Update

Assembly might seek higher taxes on the rich

Without needed federal aid, Assembly Speaker Heastie would not rule out tax hikes on the rich to help make up the billions of dollars in lost revenue as a result of the crisis. NYS is seeking billions of dollars in direct pandemic relief after losing billions in sales tax revenue and spending heavily to respond to the health crisis.

Rick Reisman. "Heastie says deep spending cuts would be unacceptable." *Spectrum Local News/Albany*. June 8, 2020
<https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/ny-state-of-politics/2020/06/08/heastie-says-deep-spending-cuts-would-be-unacceptable->

Added week to return budget and board ballots causes new problem for many districts

Governor Cuomo's executive order allowing voters an additional week to return their school budget and board ballots by mail is causing another issue: a possible lack of scanners to count ballots, since scanners are borrowed for a specific length of time.

Wendy Liberatore. "Confusion lingers over NY June 9 school votes." *Albany Times Union*. June 8, 2020
https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Uncertainty-over-school-ballot-count-lingers-15324521.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Timesunion_Capcon&stn=nf

Regents to hold four online regional meetings this month

The Board of Regents will hold four regional meetings this month, all virtual, to discuss what it will take to reopen schools in the fall, with plans to use input from the meetings to develop guidelines on reopening for school districts.

Sophie Grosserode. "Regents to hold four regional meetings on reopening schools; will develop guidelines for districts." *Rockland/Westchester Journal News*. June 8, 2020
https://www.lohud.com/story/news/education/2020/06/08/regents-hold-four-regional-meetings-reopening-schools/5319430002?mc_cid=6cc9798632&mc_eid=bc2625d4e3

Issues with summer special education

Governor Cuomo signed an executive order on June 5 allowing NYS school districts to resume in-person classes for children with disabilities during the summer session, which begins July 7. However, school districts might not be able to provide those services with so little time to prepare, and parents are unsure about exposing their children.

Rachel Silberstein. "New York special education students in summer limbo." *Albany Times Union*. June 10, 2020
https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/New-York-special-education-students-in-summer-15327386.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Timesunion_DailyBrief&stn=nf

Second budget votes now possible

Governor Cuomo will allow school districts that lose their budget votes on June 16 to hold a second vote, apparently responding to concerns that districts would have to make steep spending cuts if forced to adopt contingency budgets.

Gary Stern. "New York allows for second budget votes for school districts if they fail." *Journal News/Lower Hudson*. June 10, 2020
<https://www.lohud.com/story/news/education/2020/06/10/ny-allows-second-budget-votes-school-districts-if-they-fail/5335843002/>

Education Week articles: ISSUES REGARDING THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

Every facet of the school day will have to change when school buildings reopen. This article includes recommendations, strategies, cost estimates, and pros and cons.

Madeline Will. The socially distanced school day. *Education Week*. June 10, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/reopening-schools/the-socially-distanced-school-day.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1-rm&M=59593831&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Face coverings for staff, copious handwashing, and daily, deep cleaning of surfaces are a must, while measures like checking temperatures and requiring students to wear masks are still being debated.

Madeline Will. "Keeping students and staff healthy and save when schools reopen." *Education Week*. June 10, 2020
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/11/keeping-students-and-staff-healthy-and-safe.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59593831&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

This article contains models for operating schools while adhering to health and safety requirements.

Madeline Will. "6 ways to bring students and staff back to schools." *Education Week*. June 10, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/11/6-ways-to-bring-students-and-staff.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59593831&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

This article discusses how to overhaul school routines for students, from ditching lockers to eating in classrooms.

Madeline Will. "The new routines for students when schools reopen." *Education Week*. June 10, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/11/the-new-routines-for-students-when-schools.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59593831&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Here are key considerations and big questions on how to safely transport students to school in the pandemic.

Madeline Will. "Managing buses may be the hardest part of reopening schools." *Education Week*. June 10, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/11/managing-buses-may-be-the-hardest-part.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59593831&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Added resource • [School Buses and Social Distancing: A Downloadable Guide](#)

Here's a checklist of changes for inside and outside buildings to keep students and staff six feet apart and ensure cleanliness-and how much it could cost.

Madeline Will. "What needs to change inside school buildings before they reopen." *Education Week*. June 10, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/11/what-needs-to-change-inside-school-buildings.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59593831&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Added resource • [School Buildings and Social Distancing: A Downloadable Guide](#)

Ideas from Australia, Denmark, and Taiwan can help American district and school leaders reopen schools.

Madeline Will. "How schools in other countries have reopened." *Education Week*. June 10, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/11/how-schools-in-other-countries-have-reopened.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59593831&U=252955&UUID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

And now for a re-opening chuckle or two, perhaps

Considering some possible conversations in elementary schools with students wearing face masks:

"Please don't snap Billy's mask in his face."

"Your mask is not a necklace, bracelet, or any other form of jewelry."

"You should not be using your mask as a slingshot. Please put it back on your face."

"Your mask should be on your face, not on the back of your head."

"I'm sorry you sneezed. Here's a tissue. Wipe off your mask as well as you can."

"I'm sorry you broke your mask by stretching its elastic. You'll have to hold it on your face...or use this duct tape."

"Please take the mask off of your pencil and stop twirling it."

"Please don't share or trade masks. I don't care if you like Ingrid's mask better than yours."

"I'm sorry, but your mask is not school appropriate."

"We're not comparing our masks to other kids' masks... everyone's mask is unique and special."

"Please don't use your mask to pick your nose."

"No, your mask doesn't make it hard to get your work done."

"Who's making that noise?"

"I'm sorry your ponytail is stuck, that's what happens when you wrap it around your mask."

Mary Talbot found this list online. It's been abbreviated from the original.