

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

June 3, 2022 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

College Board seeks greater equity in advanced math

Beginning in the fall of 2023, the College Board will offer a new AP precalculus course. Adrian Mims Sr., founder and CEO of the Calculus Project and a member of the advisory committee that created the course, says it could help ease disparities in advanced math classes.

Ileana Najarro. "A New AP Precalculus Course Aims to Diversify the Math Pipeline." *Education Week*. May 19, 2022
<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/a-new-ap-precalculus-course-aims-to-diversify-the-math-pipeline/2022/05>

Addressing the school refusal phenomenon

Incidents of school refusal (which were seen before the pandemic in up to 5% of children nationwide who refuse to attend school on a regular basis), have been exacerbated by pandemic-caused school shutdowns. One possible way to mitigate the issue is to introduce a plan that encourages a gradual return to school to help build tolerance, says psychologist Dr. Stephanie Ruggiero.

Amy Zimmer. "'I'm lucky if I can get him out of bed': NYC families struggle with school refusal." *Chalkbeat New Year*. May 17, 2022
<https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2022/5/17/23099461/school-refusal-nyc-schools-students-anxiety-depression-chronic-absenteeism>

Widely used reading curriculum to include phonics

Reading instruction expert Lucy Calkins has rewritten her curriculum, "Units of Study," used in about 25% of the country's ESs, to include daily structured phonics lessons for grades K-2 for the first time and has replaced some light reading assignments with more difficult texts. Calkins says the change, which has drawn criticism, stems from her research on the science of reading.

Dana Goldstein. "In the Fight Over How to Teach Reading, This Guru Makes a Major Retreat." *NY Times*. May 22, 2022
<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/us/reading-teaching-curriculum-phonics.html>

Why some students hesitate to seek mental health care

The coronavirus pandemic has taken a toll on students' mental health, yet about one-third say they are hesitant to seek help for mental health issues, according to a recent survey. Findings show students' reluctance to seek care stems, in part, from stigma surrounding mental health treatment and concerns they would be treated differently.

Naaz Modan. "Survey: Third of students reluctant to seek help for mental health issues." *K-12 Dive*. May 23, 2022
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/survey-third-of-students-reluctant-to-seek-help-for-mental-health-issues/624200/>

Targeted lessons strengthen digital literacy

Research has shown that students have room for improvement in identifying false information online, but a study by Stanford University researchers found that targeted lessons can help bridge the gap. The researchers found that HS students' media literacy doubled after they received six 50-minute digital literacy lessons.

Anna Merod. "Students lag on media literacy — but the gap isn't unbridgeable." *K-12 Dive*. May 25, 2022
<https://www.k12dive.com/news/students-lag-on-media-literacy-but-the-gap-isnt-unbridgeable/624402/>

Companies offer live-streamed teachers amid shortages

Some companies, including Proximity Learning and Elevate K12, offer virtual teachers as a solution to vacancies and teacher shortages. However, some experts question possible negative effects -- live-streamed teaching not as effective as in-person instruction, and possible replacement and lower salaries for teachers.

Alyson Klein. "Using Virtual Teachers to Fill Vacancies: Smart Solution or Big Mistake?" *Education Week*. May 26, 2022
<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/using-virtual-teachers-to-fill-vacancies-smart-solution-or-big-mistake/2022/05>

Fact checking strategies that should be taught

Some states are exploring how to [address media literacy in schools](#), and nonprofit organizations like the News Literacy Project offer [news literacy training](#) for educators. Professional fact-checkers use a strategy that's at odds with how we usually teach information literacy. Fact-checkers move *laterally* rather than vertically, opening multiple browser tabs to validate claims and checking who is behind a site before continuing to read the initial page. They recognize that they're at a disadvantage if they stay within a website, so they cross-check information across many sites to get a second—or even a third, fourth, and fifth—opinion. It's a modern approach to identifying misinformation online that should be commonplace in schools.

Youki Terada. "What Fact-Checkers Know About Media Literacy—and Students Should, Too." *Edutopia*. May 26, 2022

https://www.edutopia.org/article/what-fact-checkers-know-about-media-literacy-and-students-should-too?utm_content=linkpost13&utm_campaign=website&utm_source=research-newsletter&utm_medium=email

Music primes brains for learning

The [non-profit program Intempo](#) serves more than 3,000 students each year in Stamford and Norwalk CT schools, underscoring music's profound impact on learning from both a cognitive and a social and emotional learning (SEL) vantage point. Consistent exposure to music, like learning to play a musical instrument, or taking voice lessons, strengthens a particular set of academic and social-emotional skills that are essential to learning. In ways that are unmatched by other pursuits, like athletics for instance, learning music powerfully reinforces language skills, builds and improves reading ability, and strengthens memory and attention, according to the latest research on the cognitive neuroscience of music. Experts hope this body of evidence might alter the current state of music education in schools—which is extremely uneven and, in some places, downright nonexistent.

Holly Korbey. "How Music Primes the Brain for Learning." *Edutopia*. April 22, 2022

https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-music-primes-brain-learning?utm_content=linkpos14&utm_source=research-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=website

How to help students develop real-world thinking skills

The world students will enter is full of complex, unpredictable problems -- and students will need sophisticated thinking skills to cope. Education experts Jay McTighe, Harvey Silver, and Abigail Boutz unpack five key thinking processes students need to internalize through opportunities in school assignments before they enter the real world.

Harvey F. Silver, Abigail L. Boutz, & Jay McTighe. "5 Ideas for Developing Real-World Thinking Skills." *ASCD Educational Leadership*.

May 1, 2022

<https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/5-ideas-for-developing-real-world-thinking-skills>

Reading conferences offer connection and belonging

Educator and literacy consultant Dan Feigelson writes that he uses individual reading conferences to help students connect with culturally relatable reading material, think deeper and feel understood by others. He outlines principles of good listening during such conferences, which are helpful for students who are reading below grade level.

Dan Feigelson. "Reading Conferences, Listening, and Identity." *Language Magazine*. May 31, 2022

<https://www.languagemagazine.com/2022/05/31/reading-conferences-listening-and-identity/>

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Teachers face limits on discussing race following shooting

Teachers in some communities, including in Texas, say they are limited in how they can discuss the recent shooting in Buffalo, due to new laws that place restrictions on discussions of race and other topics in the classroom. Anton Schulzki, a high-school social studies teacher in Colorado Springs and president of the National Council for the Social Studies, says some teachers are avoiding discussing such topics altogether.

Mike Hixenbaugh. "Laws restricting lessons on racism are making it hard for teachers to discuss the massacre in Buffalo." NBC News. May 18, 2022

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/buffalo-shooting-teachers-racism-laws-rcna29500>

How NAEP's proficiency standards are not realistic

The author shows how the benchmarks used by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) are misused to attack American education. NAEP data reveal that 81% of American 4th-graders are performing at grade level in math and 66% in reading. The National Assessment Governing Board chose to define the term 'proficient' as a desirable goal in the face of expert opinion that such a goal was indefensible. If people want to know how many students are performing at grade level, they should be looking at the 'basic' benchmark, not 'proficient'. Scientific consensus is that the benchmarks are absurd. NAEP's proficiency benchmark might be more convincing if most students in other countries had better results, but they don't. Recommendations to fix the problem include:

- The U.S.E.D. should rename the NAEP benchmarks as low, intermediate, high, and advanced.
- States should revisit the decision to tie their "college readiness" standards to NAEP's benchmarks.

James Harvey is a retired executive director of the National Superintendents' Roundtable and a member of the Network for Public Education Board.

James Harvey. "Why Virginia Gov. Youngkin is wrong about student NAEP scores." Valerie Strauss' Answer Sheet blog, *Washington Post*. May 20, 2022

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/05/20/youngkin-wrong-about-student-naep-scores/>

Commentary: Teachers should be included in edtech design, development

Teachers face challenges in finding the right education-technology tools to support student learning, and should be the ones behind much of the design and research involved in edtech to ensure their voices are heard.

Sierra Noakes is a former educator and current researcher.

Sierra Noakes. "Teacher experience should drive edtech design, research says." *Smart Brief/Education*. May 18, 2022

https://corp.smartbrief.com/original/2022/05/teacher-should-drive-edtech-design?utm_source=brief

Two sources offering teacher-focused reviews of edtech products

The EdTech Evidence Exchange is building the EdTech Genome Project, paying educators for 45 minutes' worth of detailed feedback on various programs, allowing schools to see where and why the edtech program has been successful or not based on 10 factors. Meanwhile, Leanlab Education's Codesign Product Certification is being awarded to edtech companies that have solicited feedback from educators and improved their products accordingly.

Matt Zalaznick. "Here are 2 reliable sources on ed-tech products that will work for your district." *District Administration*. May 24, 2022
<https://districtadministration.com/2-reliable-sources-ed-tech-product-work-your-schools/>

FTC seeks to limit student data collection

The Federal Trade Commission has announced that it would take further actions to identify education-technology tools that "illegally surveil children when they go online to learn" in violation of the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. The commissioners voted to approve a new policy statement to remind edtech firms that they are limited under the law in how they can use student data for commercial purposes.

Mark Keierleber. "FTC Announces Plan to Target Ed Tech Tools that 'Illegally Surveil Children'." *The 74*. May 20, 2022
<https://www.the74million.org/article/ftc-announces-plan-to-target-ed-tech-tools-that-illegally-surveil-children/>

College Board to offer AP precalculus that eases disparities

Beginning in the fall of 2023, the College Board will offer a new Advanced Placement precalculus course that the Board says could help ease disparities in advanced math classes.

Ileana Najarro. "New AP Precalculus Course Aims to Diversify the Math Pipeline." *Education Week*. May 19, 2022
<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/a-new-ap-precalculus-course-aims-to-diversify-the-math-pipeline/2022/05>

Analysis: Most ed tech programs share student data

About 90% of digital educational tools that students use for school share data about students with ad-technology companies, according to analysis by researchers with the advocacy group Human Rights Watch. Researchers found that the edtech platforms shared data with companies such as Facebook and Google, with some seeking access to students' cameras, contacts, locations -- and, in some cases, students' keystrokes.

Drew Harwell. "Remote learning apps shared children's data at a 'dizzying scale'." *Washington Post*. May 24, 2022
https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2022/05/24/remote-school-app-tracking-privacy/?wpisrc=nl_sb_smartbrief

Tips for leading during turmoil

As political and social issues churn around us, it's important for leaders to "hold your space," writes Susan Fowler, which involves recognizing the turmoil and helping others be resilient. Stay informed, Fowler writes, but use mindfulness techniques to stay centered so you can "hold your space and keep your lamp lit."

Susan Fowler. "Trying times: Release negativity and lead with vitality." *Smart Brief/Leadership*. May 25, 2022
https://corp.smartbrief.com/original/2022/05/trying-times-release-negativity-and-lead-with-vitality?utm_source=brief

U.S.E.D. OCR to review digital resources for accessibility for all users

The U.S.E.D.'s Office for Civil Rights is preparing to review K-12 online resources to ensure they are accessible for users of all abilities. The initiative will include everything from digital learning tools to school websites, officials said, and will involve creating a video series devoted to educating technology producers about the issues people with disabilities encounter when using digital resources.

Michelle Diament. "Ed Department Ramps Up Disability Related Compliance Reviews." *Disability Scoop*. May 24, 2022
<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2022/05/24/ed-department-ramps-up-disability-related-compliance-reviews/29871/>

Secretary Cardona: US must act to prevent school violence

US Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said Thursday during a House Education and Labor Committee hearing that the US needs to take action to prevent school shootings. Cardona, in his remarks -- in the wake of the tragic shooting in Uvalde, Texas -- said the country cannot "normalize" such incidents.

Carole Feldman. "US education chief seeks action to prevent school shootings." *Associated Press*. May 26, 2022
<https://apnews.com/article/uvalde-school-shooting-texas-education-united-states-e2ab745e9d8f0f2bc2cb6fba3b40b10e>

School nutrition programs face supply chain woes

School nutrition professionals nationwide report significant challenges caused by supply chain challenges and inflation, as well as rising gas prices. And many school nutrition professionals expect next year will be even worse.

Lauren Camera. "'It's Going To Be Catastrophic': Schools Brace for Crisis Over Meal Programs." *U.S. News & World Report*. May 26, 2022
<https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2022-05-26/its-going-to-be-catastrophic-schools-brace-for-crisis-over-meal-programs>

Worldwide violation of children's rights via online instruction

The respected organization Human Rights Watch has issued a damning report about the widespread violation of children's rights when they were required to use online instruction. Without their knowledge or their parents' consent, children in 49 of the world's countries were subject to surveillance by online tracking devices embedded in their online programs. The report includes an examination of 290 companies found to have collected, processed, or received children's data since March 2021, and calls on governments to adopt modern child data protection laws to protect children online. Most online learning platforms examined installed tracking technologies that trailed children outside of their virtual classrooms and across the internet, over time.

"Governments Harm Children's Rights in Online Learning." *Human Rights Watch*. May 25, 2022
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/05/25/governments-harm-childrens-rights-online-learning>

School choice lures with false promises

Though school choice is touted as liberating, charter and private schools offer parents less power, not more. Peter Greene. "School Choice and the False Promise of Parent 'Empowerment'." *The Progressive*. May 21, 2022 <https://progressive.org/public-schools-advocate/school-choice-false-promise-parent-empowerment-greene-220521/>

FCC warns ed tech companies about student data privacy

The Federal Trade Commission has warned education technology companies that stricter enforcement is coming against those who illegally surveil children who go online to learn. In a [policy statement](#) the commission reiterated the provisions of the federal [Children's Online Privacy Protection Act](#), under which companies cannot force parents and schools to surrender children's privacy rights in exchange for access to educational tools. This includes platforms for completing schoolwork online or to attend class remotely. Violators could face potential civil penalties, as well as new requirements and limitations on their business practices. This includes imposed fines of up to \$43,280 per privacy violation per child, a number that could increase each year based on inflation.

Alexandria Ng. "Federal Trade Commission Issues Warning to Ed-Tech Companies on Student Data Privacy." *Education Week Market Brief*. May 25, 2022 https://marketbrief.edweek.org/marketplace-k-12/federal-trade-commission-issues-warning-ed-tech-companies-student-data-privacy/?utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=su&M=4373307&UID=dcf379aff08119fa8d853dc6f688bfca

What districts need to know about data privacy in edtech

Edtech product makers can expect more scrutiny as the Federal Trade Commission examines their compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. Experts offer three tips for districts to follow to avoid violating the privacy of students, including advice to read an edtech company's terms of use.

Anna Merod. "3 ways to keep student data privacy top-of-mind in ed tech procurement." *K-12 Dive*, June 1, 2022 <https://www.k12dive.com/news/3-ways-to-keep-student-data-privacy-top-of-mind-in-ed-tech-procurement/624698/>

NEW YORK STATE

NYS Regents cancel U.S. History Regents exam after Buffalo mass shooting

A newly developed Regents exam in U.S. History and Government that had been scheduled to be first administered June 1 has been canceled, the NYS education commissioner said, because content in the test had the potential to "compound student trauma caused by the recent violence in Buffalo."

Michael Elsen-Rooney. "New York cancels U.S. History Regents exam after Buffalo shooting." *NY Daily News*. May 24, 2022 <https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/ny-canceled-regents-exam-ny-buffalo-shooting-20220524-tao2g7uomafgm2gimncev2iwu-story.html>

RCSD teachers removed from classroom over text messages

Six teachers at RCSD's Enrico Fermi School 17 are on leave after students discovered a series of text messages among them using vulgar slurs to describe students and their parents. The students discovered the messages May 21 when one of the teachers in question allowed them to use her phone to make a video. They saw the group text notification come up and recognized a fellow student's name in it. The teachers admitted they'd written the texts and apologized. According to Superintendent Lesli Myers-Small, "The staff members have been put on leave and the District will use all forms of available discipline up to and including termination."

Justin Murphy. "Teachers on leave due to offensive messages." *Democrat & Chronicle*. May 28, 2022 <https://rochesterdemocrat-nv.newsmemory.com?selDate=20220528&goTo=A01&artid=2>

Bill to erase criminal records clears Assembly after changes to address SED concerns

The measure, which had previously passed in the State Senate, would seal criminal convictions for more than 2 million New Yorkers who often struggle to find jobs and housing due to their past. The SED raised concerns about schools hiring individuals whose backgrounds would be unknown. The Department, in a rare memo raising concerns about legislation that is not directly related to education, also noted that individuals seeking licensed positions would be able to do so without disclosing their New York criminal history. An Assembly spokesperson says SED objections 'had been handled.' The measure was expected to go to the Assembly floor for a vote, possibly on June 3 — a day after the scheduled end of this year's legislative session. The legislation would enable someone to have their most recent misdemeanor conviction sealed three years after their case is adjudicated and seven years after their most recent felony conviction — if they are not on parole or under other court-authorized supervision.

Joshua Solomon. "Late changes clear way for bill that would erase criminal records for some." *Albany Times Union*. June 2, 2022 https://www.timesunion.com/state/article/Concerns-from-State-Education-Department-stalling-17213783.php?IPID=Times-Union-HP-latest-news&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=593184424c17c09a3f115af

An overview of what NYS lawmakers accomplished in the final hours of the 2022 legislative session can be found at Rebecca C. Lewis. "NY lawmakers rush to address guns, abortion rights, in last days of session." *City & State NY*. June 2, 2022 <https://www.cityandstateny.com/policy/2022/06/ny-lawmakers-rush-address-guns-abortion-rights-last-days-session/367561/>