

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

August 24, 2018 News Round-up

The next edition will come on September 7 when we resume weekly updates.

TEACHING & LEARNING

Ideas for principals

Principals, want to change things up this school year? Here are 10 suggestions-big and small-for tackling a perennial issue or rethinking one of your standard practices.

Stacey Decker. "10 bold ideas principals can embrace this school year." *Education Week*. August 10, 2018

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/08/10/10-bold-ideas-principals-can-embrace-this.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=58575544&U=252955>

Qualified bilingual & ELL teachers hard to find

School districts have struggled for years to find qualified bilingual and ELL-trained teachers, especially in immigrant-rich communities. New data shows the problem may not be going away anytime soon.

Corey Mitchell. "Few Aspiring Teachers Aim to Work With English-Learners, Report Finds." *Education Week*. August 10, 2018

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning-the-language/2018/08/english_learner_teacher_shortage_persists.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=58575544&U=252955

Mobile apps and preschoolers

Some top math and literacy apps designed for preschool students are not effective, according to researchers from the University of California, Irvine. Researchers looked at 171 mobile applications and found that many lacked adequate instructions and guidance for young children and did not provide constructive feedback to boost learning.

Benjamin Herold. "Bad Teaching for Preschoolers? There Are Lots of Apps for That." *Education Week*. August 10, 2018

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/DigitalEducation/2018/08/bad_teaching_preschoolers_apps.html

Student interest in journalism increasing in US

Students across the US are showing a renewed interest in journalism careers amid President Donald Trump's criticism of the media. Some universities and colleges have seen an increase in journalism program applications, and students want to report truthful information and help their communities, observers say.

Adam Harris. "Student Journalism in the Age of Media Distrust." *The Atlantic*. August 9, 2018

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2018/08/student-journalism-in-the-age-of-media-distrust/567089/>

Student-to-counselor ration unhelpful

Public school counselors are overworked and under-resourced-and that's a big problem for students.

Alanna Fuschillo. "Commentary: The Troubling Student-to-Counselor Ratio That Doesn't Add Up." *Education Week*. August 14, 2018

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/08/14/the-troubling-student-to-counselor-ratio-that-doesnt-add.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1&M=58578827&U=252955>

Study: Effect of No Child Left Behind

A study shows that pressuring schools to raise test scores under parts of No Child Left Behind resulted in only modest student achievement gains in math and reading. The study shows that students with disabilities, English-language learners and those who began at the lowest performance levels benefited the most from NCLB.

Matt Barnum. "Pressuring schools to raise test scores got diminishing returns, new study of No Child Left Behind finds." *Chalkbeat*. August 13, 2018

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/us/2018/08/13/pressuring-schools-to-raise-test-scores-got-diminishing-returns-new-study-of-no-child-left-behind-finds/>

Trauma-informed teaching

In a Twitter chat, educators discuss building trauma-informed social and emotional learning environments.

Alex Shevrin. "The How and Why of Trauma-Informed Teaching." *Edutopia*. August 3, 2018

https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-and-why-trauma-informed-teaching?utm_source=Edutopia+Newsletter&utm_campaign=17d1f60946-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_081518_enews_thehowandwhy&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f72e8cc8c4-17d1f60946-78672623

Teaching civics

Nearly 30 states have considered ways to address how civics education should be taught in schools. This article highlights advice on such topics as when civics lessons should start and how to teach students to think critically about what they see in the media.

Emily Cardinali. "How To Make A Civics Education Stick." *National Public Radio*. August 14, 2018
<https://www.npr.org/2018/08/14/632666071/how-to-make-a-civics-education-stick>

Digital multitasking can hurt long-term learning

Students who multitask with devices during class -- taking lecture notes while scrolling social media -- can process information in the moment but struggle to retain that information long term, according to a study published in *Educational Psychology*. The researchers also report lower exam performance and risk of distracting other students. Tina Nazerian. "Digital Devices in the Classroom Can Hinder Long-Term Retention." *Ed Surge*. August 17, 2018
<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2018-08-17-digital-devices-in-the-classroom-can-hinder-long-term-retention>

Program uses buses, cafeterias to get the words out

The school nutrition and transportation departments in a Georgia district are piloting a new literacy program. Words will be posted on school buses and in cafeterias to help students identify hundreds of words by sight by the end of the third grade.

Lindsay Moscarello. "Fulton County Schools embraces buses as 'rolling classrooms' for literacy pilot program." *Marietta Daily Journal* (Georgia). August 17, 2018
https://www.mdjonline.com/neighbor_newspapers/fulton-county-schools-embraces-buses-as-rolling-classrooms-for-literacy/article_5610e0a2-a16c-11e8-9a4a-d76b9a0443b1.html

PD program credited with boosting equity

Matthew Utterback, the 2017 National School Superintendent of the Year, credits a professional development program for helping to bridge the racial achievement gap in his school district. He made the Coaching for Education Equity training program, which focuses on equity and dialogue, mandatory for all district leaders six years ago. Victoria Clayton. "Implementing equity in education." *District Administration*. August 17, 2018

<https://www.districtadministration.com/article/Implementing-equity-in-education>

'Soft skills' should be taught in school

Schools should assess students on both their "academic knowledge" and "nonacademic skills," parents and educators said in a new survey.

Evie Blad. "Schools Should Teach (and Measure) 'Soft Skills,' Parents and Educators Agree." *Education Week*. August 21, 2018
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/2018/08/schools_should_teach_and_measure_soft_skills_parents_and_educators_agree.html?cmp=e-ml-enl-eu-news2&M=58585970&U=252955

NATIONAL / FEDERAL

Essential reading: "The Testing Charade"

The author argues that Daniel Koretz's book, *The Testing Charade*, is essential reading. He notes that high stakes testing has ruined our schools and made it more difficult to accomplish NCLB's stated goal of reducing educational inequality. *I recommend Daniel Koretz's book all the time as essential reading for anyone trying to figure out how we got to the deplorable morass that is today's federal and state educational policy.*

"Repeating My Recommendation: Please Read Daniel Koretz's Book, 'The Testing Charade'." Jan Resseger's blog. August 7, 2018
<https://janresseger.wordpress.com/2018/08/07/16973/>

Districts shopping for safeguards

The shooting in Parkland, Fla., spurred school districts into reinforcing buildings, hiring armed guards and training staff to handle mass casualty events.

Patricia Mazzei. "Back-to-school shopping for districts: Armed guards, cameras and metal detectors." *NY Times*. August 11, 2018
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/11/us/back-to-school-security-guns.html>

Do anonymous tip lines work to thwart violence in schools?

There's a surge of interest in anonymous school violence reporting systems since the mass shooting in Parkland, Fla. Students, often the best source of information about threats, can be reluctant to report what they know.

Evie Blad. "More Schools Are Using Anonymous Tip Lines to Thwart Violence. Do They Work?" *Education Week*. August 10, 2018
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/08/10/more-schools-are-using-anonymous-tip-lines.html?cmp=e-ml-enl-eu-news1&M=58575544&U=252955>

US could redefine rules for online education

The U.S.E.D. is considering how to define a requirement that online coursework include "regular and substantive" interaction between teachers and students. Those arguing for a change say the current definition, set in 1992, does not reflect today's technology, while others say easing the standards could make online education too automated.

Greg Toppo. "Defining 'Regular and Substantive' Interaction in the Online Era." *Inside Higher Education*. August 8, 2018
<https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2018/08/08/new-debate-regular-and-substantive-interaction-between>

Charter school Q & A

Are charter schools public or private? Who oversees them? And are they better at educating students than regular public schools? Find answer these questions and more about charter schools in this explainer.

Arianna Prothero. "Charter Schools: 7 Common Questions, Answered." *Education Week*. August 9, 2018

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/charter-schools/index.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1-rm&M=58577581&U=252955>

Literacy lawsuits take new tack

Lawsuits have been filed in Michigan and California arguing that literacy is a constitutional right because other rights, such as voting, depend on it. The suits come after a federal judge in Michigan ruled that states have no constitutional obligation to make sure children can read and write.

"Literacy lawsuits take new tack." *Smart Brief/Education*. August 14, 2018

<http://www.smartbrief.com/branded/3E572E12-3FBC-11D5-AD13-000244141872/A7F556F7-74F8-4333-8770-A7F460BDF6EE>

K-12 funding seen as issue in fall elections

Republican and Democratic candidates in many states are clashing over funding for schools.

Daarel Burnette II. "Tuesday Primary Results Make It Clear K-12 Funding Will Be a Wedge Issue This Fall." *Education Week*. August 15, 2018

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/state_edwatch/2018/08/tuesdays_state_primaries_makes_one_thing_clear_k-12_funding_is_on_voters_minds.html?cmp=soceml-twfdbltz-ewnow

Democrats for Education Reform (DFER) defined

Democrats for Education Reform (DFER) was created by a group of hedge fund managers who support charter schools, high-stakes testing, teacher evaluation by student test scores, merit pay, and free market education—in spite of research demonstrating the failure of these ideas. They appear to oppose local democratic control of schools and seek to buy elections for their candidates even in districts where they do not live. [Here is a graphic](#) showing links among DFER and others who also want to privatize public education. DFER is a major source of money for Governor Cuomo and other charter-friendly Democrats.

"What is DFER (Democrats for Education Reform?)" Diane Ravitch's blog. August 17, 2018

<https://dianeravitch.net/2018/08/17/what-is-dfer-democrats-for-education-reform/>

DeVos moves to protect for-profit colleges from students

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has taken steps to protect for-profit colleges from their students. These for-profit schools prepare students for a career, whether it's computer engineering or cooking or auto mechanics. The new DeVos plan would pretty much limit relief to people who've fallen into deep financial distress. DeVos has staffed the U.S.E.D. with people from the for-profit education industry.

Gail Collins. "The Bane that is Betsy DeVos." *NY Times*. August 17, 2018

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/17/opinion/betsy-devos-for-profit-colleges.html?emc=edit_th_180818&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=188779070818

New group seeks to privatize public schools

Billionaire Netflix CEO, Reed Hastings, has joined with billionaire former Enron executive, John Arnold, to launch an aggressive Destroy Public Education (DPE) initiative. They have invested \$200 million to start The City Fund. The fund "will help cities across America institute proven school reform successes such as increasing the number of public schools that are governed by non-profit organizations." Ending local control of public schools through democratic means is a priority for DPE forces.

Tom Ultican. "DPE 2.0 The City Fund." Tultican blog. August 18, 2018

<https://tultican.com/2018/08/18/dpe-2-0-the-city-fund/>

Public supports teacher pay wages

Support for raising teacher salaries jumped nationally in the wake of this spring's wave of teacher activism, according to a national poll by the journal *Education Next*.

Madeline Will. "Teachers Are Winning Public Support for Pay Raises, Survey Finds." *Education Week*. August 21, 2018

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/08/22/teachers-are-winning-public-support-for-pay.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1&M=58584459&U=252955>

DeVos plan to let schools use federal money to buy guns creates firestorm

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos is weighing whether districts can use grants intended to support a well-rounded education and student health and wellness for firearms purchases. News that the U.S.E.D. is pondering whether districts can spend federal money to buy guns to arm school staff is drawing widespread condemnation. Such a would reverse a longstanding position taken by the federal government that it should not pay to outfit schools with weapons. And it would also undermine efforts by Congress to restrict the use of federal funding on guns.

"Education Secretary considers using federal funds to arm schools." *NY Times*. August 22, 2018

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/22/us/politics/betsy-devos-guns.html?emc=edit_na_20180822&nl=breaking-news&nid=18877907ing-news&ref=headline

Andrew Ujifusa & Evid Blad. "Firestorm Erupts as Betsy DeVos Weighs If Districts Can Buy Guns With Federal Money." *Education Week*.

August 23, 2018 <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/08/23/firestorm-erupts-as-betsy-devos-weighs-if.html?cmp=soceml-twfdbltz-ewnow>

NEW YORK STATE

Elementary school in NYS balances play and learning

Elementary-school students need ample time for recess and scheduled "brain breaks," asserts a NYS elementary school principal. She writes that students in her school balance academics with 50 minutes of recess daily, formal yoga instruction and more breaks to help students refocus -- all while increasing instructional time.

Lori Koerner is the principal at Tremont Elementary, part of the Patchogue-Medford School District in New York.

Lori Keorner. "The play's the thing for elementary ed." *District Administrator*. August 20, 2018

<https://www.districtadministration.com/article/play-s-thing-for-elementary-ed>