

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

September 23, 2022 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Commentary: Students who can't read cursive can't read many source documents

An inability to read cursive handwriting stemming from years in which it hasn't been taught in schools has prevented many students from being able to read original documents, from the Declaration of Independence to Virginia Woolf letters -- sometimes limiting their research abilities. Students have even told history professor Drew Gilpin Faust that they frequently ignore teacher comments on their assignments if they're written in cursive.

Drew Gilpin Faust. "GEN Z NEVER LEARNED TO READ CURSIVE." *The Atlantic*. September 16, 2022
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2022/10/gen-z-handwriting-teaching-cursive-history/671246/>

Survey: Reasons behind public school enrollment drop

Education experiences during the pandemic appear to have led about 3.7 million students (9% of students) to leave public schools for charter or private schools or homeschooling, according to new research. The data, gleaned from surveys of over 6,000 K-12 parents in May, shows flexible schedules, smaller classes, increased parental involvement, school choice, and safety concerns were among the reasons for the switch.

Micah Ward. "How pandemic-related disturbances drove a 9% decline in public school enrollment." *District Administration*. September 20, 2022
<https://districtadministration.com/how-pandemic-related-disturbances-drove-a-9-decline-in-public-school-enrollment/>

Research: Inclusive ed boosts student success

Results of a study by researchers from Indiana University indicate that students with disabilities achieved higher scores on state assessments when they spent at least 80% of their learning time in general-education classrooms. These students also fared better in college and finding jobs, researchers noted.

Gianna Melillo. "Students with disabilities fare better when integrated into gen-ed classrooms." *The Hill*. September 16, 2022
<https://thehill.com/changing-america/enrichment/education/3646255-students-with-disabilities-fare-better-when-integrated-into-gen-ed-classrooms/>

Rising temps affect schools

High temperatures in schools can keep brains from functioning well, make it harder to learn and even broaden academic divides, researchers say. Nonexistent or under-maintained school air conditioning is also leading to canceled classes and frustrated students and teachers.

Caroline Preston. "Canceled classes, sweltering classrooms: How extreme heat impairs learning." *Hechinger Report*. September 16, 2022
<https://hechingerreport.org/canceled-classes-sweltering-classrooms-how-extreme-heat-impairs-learning/>

Two schools thrive with team teaching

Some schools are seeing benefits such as a better teacher-student ratio and more mentoring for newer teachers when using a team teaching model. Whether a school puts teachers in pairs or groups, it can lighten the planning load and "helps to create a sense of community that really can't be replicated elsewhere," an assistant HS principal says.

Matt Zalaznick. "Can the increasingly popular team-teaching models reenergize the profession?" *District Administration*. September 21, 2022
<https://districtadministration.com/team-teaching-co-teaching-re-energize-k-12-education/>

NBA player & educators create free SEL curriculum

Five-time All-Star Cleveland Cavaliers player Kevin Love worked with educators and experts to develop a social and emotional learning curriculum, piloted it for two years and is now offering the materials for free to HSs. Love, who has been open about his struggle with mental illness and an on-court panic attack, formed a foundation that created the materials for use HSs and plans to expand into MSs and colleges as well as train teachers on the materials that encourage students to express their emotions in healthy ways, including writing and music.

Julie Kliegman. "Kevin Love Launches Mental Health Program for High School Students." *Sports Illustrated*. September 21, 2022
[HTTPS://WWW.SI.COM/NBA/2022/09/21/KEVIN-LOVE-FUND-FREE-MENTAL-HEALTH-CURRICULUM](https://www.si.com/nba/2022/09/21/kevin-love-fund-free-mental-health-curriculum)

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

ACLU challenges laws limiting classroom discussion

Legislators in 42 states have proposed bills to limit classroom discussions about race and gender, and 17 states have adopted such legislation. Now the American Civil Liberties Union is challenging many of those laws - via lawsuits,

public records requests and other actions. The legal organization is opposing book bans and anti-critical race theory laws in 10 states, with the possibility of more lawsuits to come.

Asher Lehrer-Small. "The ACLU'S Fight Against Classroom Censorship, State By State." *The 74*. September 10, 2022
<https://www.the74million.org/article/the-aclus-fight-against-classroom-censorship-state-by-state/>

PACs seeking to control local school boards

School board races, traditionally local contests, are now the latest targets for a handful of national conservative groups with backing from a GOP megadonor seeking to shape how potentially difficult discussions on race and gender identity happen – or don't – in classrooms across the country. The NYS-based 1776 Project PAC endorsed more than 100 school board candidates this year in states like Florida, Texas, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Andrew Atterbury. "National conservative groups pour money into local school board races." *Politico*. September 19, 2022
https://www.politico.com/news/2022/09/19/conservative-school-board-fundraising-florida-00057325?oref=csny_firstread_nl

Federal lawmakers seek to extend universal school meals

Over 50 House of Representative members have signed on to support the extension of federal pandemic-era school meal waivers for the 2022-23 school year. New York's Rep. Joseph Morelle has co-sponsored The Universal School Meals Program Act and Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act, which proposes to permanently provide free meals to all children regardless of their family's income level, expand summer food service, increase the reimbursement rate for lunch and offer grants to purchase kitchen equipment.

Bob Beckstead. "House members call on Congress to extend free school meals for all students." *NNY360 (Watertown Daily Times and Northern New York Newspapers)*. September 17, 2022
https://www.nny360.com/communitynews/education/house-members-call-on-congress-to-extend-free-school-meals-for-all-students/article_4fb79f33-f7e8-50e3-9342-87d45994d7c3.html

Winning support for school repairs

School buildings aren't getting any younger, and replacing them is costly, but putting off the work will only make the problems worse—and more expensive to solve. At a recent annual conference for the Association of School Business Officials International, school leaders from Littleton, Colo., shared insights for planning and securing taxpayer support for school repair and replacement projects. Among their tips are to secure community involvement and buy-in, and to find ways to save money where possible during the process.

Mark Lieberman. "What It Takes to Stay on Top of Improving School Facilities." *Education Week*. September 15, 2022
<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/what-it-takes-to-stay-on-top-of-improving-school-facilities/2022/09>

U.S.E.D. allocates \$1B for safe, healthy schools

The US Department of Education will provide \$1 billion to school districts for creating "healthier learning environments" for students. The funding will be distributed on a competitive basis to local education agencies under the Stronger Connections Grant, part of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona is encouraging projects designed to address the needs of students from historically underserved backgrounds.

Charles Hendrix. "Security stimulus: Schools are getting \$1 billion for student health and safety." *District Administration*. September 16, 2022
<https://districtadministration.com/1-billion-school-safety-funding-student-health-wellness/>

Former FBI agent: Dealing with cyber attacks

Smaller school districts must let their local counterparts and federal authorities know about cyberattacks because they don't have the resources to handle them themselves, says the former chief information officer for the FBI.

Districts tend to be easy targets for new criminal organizations because their cybersecurity technology isn't mature.

Micah Ward. "This is why it's imperative for smaller districts to share information about cyberattacks." *District Administration*. September 15, 2022
<https://districtadministration.com/this-is-why-its-imperative-for-smaller-districts-to-share-information-about-cyberattacks/>

Better data security requires advanced tech

A combination of abundant student and faculty data, and low security sophistication, makes educational institutions attractive targets for cyberattackers. For boosting data security, an expert on disaster recovery suggests artificial intelligence-driven tools to detect ransomware, automated phishing defenses, and tech that monitors the dark web for stolen credentials.

Joe Noonan. "Four Ways IT Pros Can Boost Data Protection." *T.H.E. Journal*. September 19, 2022
<https://thejournal.com/articles/2022/09/19/four-ways-it-pros-can-boost-data-protection.aspx>