

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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September 25, 2020 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Students offer input on justice and equity in schools

Californians for Justice, which focuses on organizing marginalized communities, used youth-led action research to develop a Relationship-Centered Schools campaign to encourage equity-based reforms. At their request, students put forward three concrete steps that schools can take to become more equitable: value student voice, invest in staff, create space for relationship building.

"Want to Reduce Racism in Schools? Listen to These Students." *National Education Policy Center*. September 22, 2020.

<http://www.icontact-archive.com/archive?c=1748247&f=3100&s=3172&m=176816&t=683ff6e55fceb8d669aa5ea6b8253ac84d14528c98c4873195440427f0ff88d5>
Full report accessible at <https://caljustice.egnyte.com/dl/XDr3C96lKt/>

Teens input: Online learning worse than in-person

60% of teens say that online learning is worse than in-person learning, and nearly 20% say it's "much worse." Even so, only 19% say that instruction should be fully in-person this fall. The nationally representative [survey, from Common Sense Media](#), found that 42% of teens think school should be fully remote

Arianna Prothero. "Is Online Learning Worse Than Being in School? Majority of Teens Say Yes." *Education Week*. September 18, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/2020/09/online_learning_teens_survey.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=%25%25MESSAGE_ID%25%25&U=%25%25CF_ICNACCOUNTNUMBER%25%25&UID=%25%25MID5_EMAIL%25%25

What parents think of online learning

Parents overall support online learning, but have big questions about student privacy, a survey by a nonprofit found. 76% of parents say they are likely to support more online education at home, even after the threat of COVID-19 has passed. But they have big questions about data privacy issues, with 68% saying they are worried about "unauthorized access of online activities or unauthorized communication" with their children

Alyson Klein. "What Do Parents Think of Online Learning?" *Education Week*. September 21, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/DigitalEducation/2020/09/online-learning-privacy-covid.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=%25%25MESSAGE_ID%25%25&U=%25%25CF_ICNACCOUNTNUMBER%25%25&UID=%25%25MID5_EMAIL%25%25

Dealing with 'Zoombombing'

Early into the new school year, 'Zoombombings' are already becoming an all-too common learning disruption for students and their teachers. This article offers tips for controlling the intrusions.

Alyson Klein. "How to Thwart 'Zoombombing' in the Remote Classroom: 10 Tips." *Education Week*. September 22, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/09/22/how-to-thwart-zoombombing-in-the-remote.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news1-rm&M=59695195&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

New evaluation system for professional development

A new process for judging the quality of professional development has made its debut, with the aim of answering a difficult question: Which PD is high-quality and which isn't?

Catherine Gewertz. "It's Notoriously Hard to Evaluate PD. A New System Aims to Change That." *Education Week Teacher*. September 22, 2020

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2020/09/its_notoriously_hard_to_evaluate_pd_a_new_system_aims_to_change_that.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=59695195&U=252955&UID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca

Can tight relationships form online?

The pandemic has demonstrated that it is possible to form strong friendships and connections among students online, according to one source. And one program, nXu, embeds relationship-building in its virtual programming.

Julia Freeland Fisher. "Helping Students Make New Friends During COVID Is Possible. Two Programs Show How." *Ed Surge*. September 21, 2020

<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2020-09-21-helping-students-make-new-friends-during-covid-is-possible-two-programs-show-how>

More students opt for trade schools

The percentage of HS seniors considering trade schools or entering the workforce or military increased this year amid the coronavirus pandemic, according to a recent survey. Data show a decline in students considering college -- 83% this year compared to 88% last year.

Gerri Willis. "High school grads opt out of higher ed amid coronavirus pandemic." *Fox Business News*. September 19, 2020

<https://www.foxbusiness.com/lifestyle/high-school-grads-opt-out-higher-ed-college-students>

Schools take classes outside for safety

Outdoor classes provide safety fresh air. Schools nationwide are experimenting with fresh-air instruction in new ways. The NYC Department of Education launched an [Outdoor Initiative](#), encouraging schools to use public parks

or closed-off streets as exterior classrooms, and many schools are planning ways to do that when they reopen. Dr. Anthony Fauci, head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, says: “Get as much outdoors as you can... If you look at the superspreader events that have occurred, they’re almost always inside.”

Laura Lee. “With Safety in Mind, Schools Take Classes Outdoors.” *Edutopia*. September 18, 2020

https://www.edutopia.org/article/safety-mind-schools-take-classes-outdoors?utm_content=linkpos1&utm_campaign=weekly-2020-09-23&utm_source=edu-legacy&utm_medium=email

Dual enrollment rising in popularity

More students now take college classes while still in HS, boosting degree attainment but raising doubts about rigor. Close to 1.4 million HS students earned college credits between the 2002-03 and 2010-11 school years through dual-enrollment programs -- a 68% increase -- and nearly 70% of HSs had dual-enrollment programs by 2015, according to the Government Accountability Office. Research supports benefits of dual enrollment, yet some question whether the programs are as rigorous as traditional college courses.

Kelly Field. “The Rise of Dual Credit.” *Education Next*. September 23, 2020

<https://www.educationnext.org/rise-dual-credit-more-students-take-college-classes-high-school-degree-attainment-rigor/>

Students ‘roadschooling’ with families

As COVID keeps many schools closed, a growing number of “roadschoolers” across America do science experiments and algebra in the family R.V. Some families are taking advantage of virtual learning to go on road trips, which can cause challenges, such as having to retake a math test when the internet connection drops

Zach Helfand. “On the Road with the Three ‘R’s.” *The New Yorker*. September 21, 2020

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/09/28/on-the-road-with-the-three-rs>

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

35 studies look at school turn-arounds

Two researchers have synthesized results from 35 studies and have found that school turnarounds aren’t useless. Attendance, test scores and graduation rates all tend to improve in schools that embark on a turnaround, albeit not by much. One clear insight from the analysis is that closing down low-performing schools and sending the students to better schools elsewhere didn’t work. A second insight is that there are no quick wins; achievement gains can take several years. Most of these efforts were accompanied by a huge influx of federal funds, and a growing body of research shows that student achievement tends to go up when you spend more money on students.

Jill Barshay. “A turnaround on school turnarounds.” *Hechinger Report*. September 21, 2020

<https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-a-turnaround-on-school-turnarounds/>

Federal guidance on reopening schools is unclear

Federal guidance on how to safely begin the school year during the pandemic has been unclear, even contradictory, according to a report from the independent Government Accountability Office. The report states that the issue is conflicting guidance from federal health officials and directives from the White House about in-person learning.

Evie Blad. “Government Watchdog Finds Fault With Trump’s School Reopening Push.” *Education Week*. September 22, 2020

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/09/government-watchdog-trump-school-reopening-push.html>

Lack of pandemic education relief frustrates educators

The failure to reach a deal on emergency coronavirus pandemic aid with the school year already underway leaves the education community frustrated and worried as challenges multiply.

Andrew Ujifusa. “COVID-19 Education Relief: Congress Dithers and Advocates Fume.” *Education Week*. September 23, 2020

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/09/23/covid-education-relief-congress-dithers-and-advocates.html?cmp=e-ml-enl-eu-news2&M=59696321&U=252955&UIID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

Some policy makers now think money should not follow students

The pandemic has caused student enrollment to fluctuate so dramatically that it’s now inevitable that thousands of districts will lose millions of dollars in funding next year based on how many students actually show up to class. As administrators scramble to find students who have gone missing, a growing number of policymakers have urged states to finally update funding formulas that prescribe how much money districts get based on enrollment. Urban districts inundated by charter schools and rural districts bordering suburban districts that serve as enrollment magnets have long suffered financially from states’ insistence that state aid should follow the student. Some states are now considering altering their funding formulas so such districts aren’t fiscally punished.

Daarel Burnette II. “Five Reasons Policymakers Now Think Money Should No Longer Follow Students’.” *Education Week*. September 23, 2020

<http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/09/five-reasons-policymakers-now.html?cmp=e-ml-enl-eu-news2&M=59696321&U=252955&UIID=dcf379af08119fa8d853cdc6f688bfca>

NEW YORK STATE

NYS website provides school COVID-19 testing data

A state website that provides data on positive COVID-19 tests by each school and district in NYS has gone live. One can look up any public, private or charter school by name to see positive COVID-19 tests of any students or staff connected to those schools in September. However, some data on the site lag behind district self-reporting.

Lauren Stanforth. "New York launches website that tracks COVID-19 in all schools." *Albany Times Union*. September 21, 2020
https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/New-York-launches-website-that-tracks-COVID-19-in-15583782.php?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headlines&utm_campaign=tu_capitolconfidential&sid=5931844424c17c09a3f115af
Access the website at <https://schoolcovidreportcard.health.ny.gov/#/home>.

Education leaders concerned about accuracy of new NYS COVID-19 website

A new online tool that reports COVID-19 cases in NYS schools contains flawed information, educators warn. The website posting COVID-19 data for schools statewide is run by the Department of Health. But school officials note that the current system for collecting statistics could result in reporting delays and double-counts in some cases, effectively misrepresenting the risk. Officials might also struggle to obtain negative COVID-19 testing results as required, according to school leadership groups, which noted all of the potential problems could worsen in coming weeks of the virus' positive rates increase. A *USA TODAY Network* review of the website on Monday found some school districts listed as reporting no data. Several school districts also had zero COVID-19 cases reported on the database, despite previously making public statements about having COVID-19 cases in a school.

David Robinson. "Website tracking COVID-19 in NY schools launched, but educators have concerns about data delays, accuracy." *Democrat & Chronicle*. September 24, 2020
https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/coronavirus/2020/09/24/new-york-educators-voice-concerns-schools-covid-19-data/3507179001/?for-guid=bc6a7c11-cfed-4c73-9f96-b962856c9d54&utm_source=democratandchronicle-Daily%20Briefing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily_briefing&utm_term=list_article_thumb

No immunizations = no school (even virtual)

Rochester and other urban school districts are rushing to ensure students have the scheduled immunizations, even if they're learning remotely. Tens of thousands of New York students started the school year remotely to avoid the risk of spreading illness — but some are being excluded from their online classrooms on public health grounds. NYS Department of Health guidelines about required immunizations remain in effect this year, even for students who will not set foot in a classroom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. That means students who lack all their immunizations 14 days after the beginning of the school year cannot attend school, either in-person or remotely.

Justin Murphy. "No immunizations means no school - even for students studying remotely." *Democrat and Chronicle*. September 23, 2020
https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/education/2020/09/23/no-immunizations-school-remote-covid-measles-erim-graupman-rsrd/5865307002/?for-guid=bc6a7c11-cfed-4c73-9f96-b962856c9d54&utm_source=democratandchronicle-Daily%20Briefing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily_briefing&utm_term=hero

Buffalo teachers will still be required to report to school at least two days a week while students are learning remotely, a judge ruled in a dispute between the Buffalo Public Schools and the Buffalo Teachers Federation, [The Buffalo News reports](#).