

EDUCATION NEWS UPDATE

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January 13, 2023 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Why teachers should personalize learning this year

The authors write that the traditional model of schooling will not be enough to support academic improvement for all. They describe how educators can embrace personalized learning to support students academically and emotionally in 2023 and beyond.

Michael Horn is co-founder of the Christensen Institute, and Daniel Curtis is a master in public policy candidate at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Michael Horn & Daniel Curtis. "Personalizing learning even more urgent for districts in 2023 and beyond." *Smart Brief/Education*. January 4, 2023 [Personalizing learning even more urgent for districts in 2023 and beyond - SmartBrief](#)

About special ed inclusion

A new analysis by the Campbell Collaboration, a nonprofit organization that reviews research, didn't find clear benefits for students with disabilities who learn alongside general education peers. The report generated criticism because the researchers ignored hundreds of studies that didn't meet their scientific rigor, and based this analysis on just 15 studies that did. The researchers weren't being arbitrary. There are a lot of problems in the existing evidence base and maybe conventional wisdom that inclusion is always preferable is wrong. Math and reading scores, as well as psychosocial measures, were no higher for children with disabilities who learned in general ed classrooms, on average, compared to children who learned in separate special-ed classes. The disabilities in the studies ranged widely, from dyslexia, ADHD, speech impairments and autism, to Down syndrome and cerebral palsy.

Jill Barshay. "Evidence for special education inclusion." *Hechinger Report*. January 9, 2023

[Evidence for special education inclusion \(mailchi.mp\)](#)

Schools' student-to-counselor ratio improves

The average student-to-counselor ratio in schools fell from 415:1 in the 2020-21 school year to 408:1 in the 2021-22 school year, according to data released by the American School Counselor Association. However, the ratio still exceeds the organization's recommendation of 250:1.

Naaz Modan. "Counselor caseloads decrease to lowest level in over 30 years." *K-12 Dive*. January 6, 2023

[Counselor caseloads decrease to lowest level in over 30 years | K-12 Dive \(k12dive.com\)](#)

Strategies for Building Content Knowledge

Elementary students need rich content knowledge to become better readers and to be able to engage in project-based learning. Rigorous PBL is an inquiry-based approach that follows a specific pathway enabling students to develop three levels of learning: Surface (I know ideas or skills); Deep (I can relate ideas and/or skills); and Transfer (I can apply ideas or skills in multiple contexts). Rigorous PBL requires an equal intensity and integration of all three levels, and this is developed when students routinely engage in tasks that require reading, writing, and talking. This article lists four strategies to help students with all three levels.

Michael McDowell. "4 strategies for building content knowledge in elementary school." *Edutopia*. January 6, 2023

[4 Strategies for Building Content Knowledge in Elementary School | Edutopia](#)

Barriers to academic recovery

Despite aggressive efforts to jump-start academic recovery, a review of 12 school districts found that they struggled to exceed typical academic gains. Researchers at the National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research found several challenges exist, including difficulty with student engagement and staffing.

Caitlynn Peetz. "Why Districts' Initial Learning Recovery Efforts Missed the Mark." *Education Week*. January 10, 2023

[Why Districts' Initial Learning Recovery Efforts Missed the Mark \(edweek.org\)](#)

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Commentary: Voucher groups & anti-democracy combined

A professor of education writes that the real goal of a voucher system or its latest incarnation of 'educational freedom' is radical. Vouchers have had catastrophic impacts on student achievement, but the same political drivers have promoted policies for 25 years. Voucher activism and research is funded by groups like the [Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation](#)—a key player in the push to undermine confidence in the 2020 presidential outcomes. Voucher

activists are increasingly embracing cruelty to push toward their goals. The Heritage Foundation has been pushing book bans, and opposing diversity and transgender health care in its explicit exploitation of culture wars divisions, and has presented public school educators as [enemies to parents](#). The school privatization movement and its attacks on public education are some of the most extreme forces operating today.

Josh Cowen, a professor of education policy at Michigan State University, has engaged in voucher research for two decades. "Josh Cowen: The Extremism of the School Privatization Movement." *Diane Ravitch blog*. January 8, 2023

Public school enrollment down more than 1,00,000

Enrollment in US public schools fell from 50,880,000 students in fall 2019 to 49,400,000 in fall 2020, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. In some cases, the trend is causing cities in some states, including California and Colorado, to close underused schools. Covid-19 struck as enrollment was already dropping in many cities due to declines in numbers of school-age children and the rise of other educational options.

Ben Chapman & Andrea Fuller. "Public Schools Lost More Than One Million Students During Pandemic." *Wall Street Journal*. January 5, 2023 <https://www.wsj.com/articles/public-schools-lost-more-than-one-million-students-during-pandemic-11672881798>

Seattle district takes on big tech over mental health

Seattle Public Schools has filed a lawsuit against the big technology firms that own TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Snapchat, alleging they target their products to young people and are responsible for the youth mental health crisis. In response, Google and Snap said they take steps to protect youths who are on their social platforms. Gene Johnson. "Seattle schools sue tech giants over social media harm." *Associated Press*. January 8, 2023

[Seattle schools sue tech giants over social media harm | AP News](#)

Jyoti Narayan. "Seattle public schools blame tech giants for social media harm in lawsuit." *Reuters*. January 9, 2023

<https://www.reuters.com/technology/seattle-public-schools-blame-tech-giants-social-media-harm-lawsuit-2023-01-08/>

School-posted student photos a privacy concern

Educators like to promote their activities on social media, but including photos of students raises privacy issues, even with parental permission, experts say. Findings published in *Educational Researcher* reveal that students were identifiable in nearly 5 million of 18 million photos analyzed, raising concerns about companies accessing personal information and images being collected for facial recognition purposes and other "uses not intended."

Nadia Tamez-Rebledo. "When Does Posting Photos of Students Become a Data Privacy Problem?" *Ed Surge*. January 9, 2023

[When Does Posting Photos of Students Become a Data Privacy Problem? | EdSurge News](#)

School leaders should prepare for ransomware

It's no longer if, but when, a school or other institution will be targeted by a cyberattack, says Allen Jenkins, chief information security officer and vice president of cybersecurity consulting at InterVision. He shares several steps that school leaders can take to help protect against ransomware.

Allen Jenkins. "Education cybersecurity: How leaders should address rapid rise of ransomware." *Smart Brief/Education*. January 10, 2023

[Education cybersecurity: How leaders should address rapid rise of ransomware - SmartBrief](#)

Commentary: The need for federal oversight of state and local budgets

An influential good government group is calling for tighter standards and has published recommendations for how Congress and regulators can begin taking action. Hundreds of billions of dollars for pandemic recovery, infrastructure projects, economic development and climate programs that Congress and President Biden have approved for states, cities and counties during the past two years has drawn a great deal of attention. Even before the pandemic spending boom, the federal government was directing more than a \$1 trillion annually in grants and tax incentives toward states and localities. Despite that degree of financial aid, Congress and presidential administrations have "demanded surprisingly little in continuing, high-level oversight" of state and local budgeting and borrowing. The report makes a case for lawmakers and regulators to tighten up standards around state and local government finance, and offers recommendations for how they can go about it.

Bill Lucia. "The Case for More Federal Oversight of State and Local Budgets." *Route Fifty*. January 9, 2023

[The Case for More Federal Oversight of State and Local Budgets - Route Fifty \(route-fifty.com\)](#)

US military's approach to education offers model

While National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results were overall disappointing, schools operated by the US military did relatively well, writes an eighth-grade science teacher at Zama American Middle High School in Japan. Pope, also a member of the National Assessment Governing Board, attributes the findings to the Department of Defense Education Activity's focus on bringing outside experts, resources and learning into the classroom and on the support of partnerships and access to resources.

Michael A. Pope. "TEACHER VOICE: Educators need more resources, skills and partnerships to bring the world into their classrooms."

Hechinger Report. January 4, 2023

[There are plenty of lessons to be learned from DoDEA schools; here are a few \(hechingerreport.org\)](#)

The case for upending the status quo in education

The current system of education in Western societies has remained largely the same for 200 years, despite a plurality of research that suggests it does not work, the global director of leadership for New Pedagogies for Deep Learning.

The changes to education that occurred during the pandemic present an opportunity for educators to focus on well-being to facilitate deep learning, Fullan writes.

Michael Fullan. "Why We Can't Escape the Status Quo in Education." *Education Week*. January 09, 2023
[Why We Can't Escape the Status Quo in Education \(Opinion\) \(edweek.org\)](https://www.edweek.org/education/opinion/why-we-cant-escape-the-status-quo-in-education-2023-01-09)

Charter school pandemic profiteering

The Network for Public Education report titled **Chartered for Profit II: Pandemic Profiteering** chronicles the expansion of for-profit charter schools during the years of the Covid-19 pandemic. The for-profit sector dominated the charter school sector during the pandemic years. The percentage of students attending a charter school producing a profit for its management company soared; 20% of all charter school students were enrolled in a charter school managed by a for-profit management corporation by the pandemic's end. More disturbing is that 27% of the students attending for-profit-run schools were enrolled in low-quality virtual charter schools that teach students either exclusively or primarily online. The report details the ways in which charter owners extract profit via a lack of oversight and regulation. And it explains how the acquisition of real estate and exploitative lease and purchase agreements drive the expansion of for-profit-run charter schools and, in some cases, put the school at financial risk.

"Chartered for Profit II: Pandemic Profiteering." *Network for Public Education*. February 2023
<https://greatschoolwars.files.wordpress.com/2023/01/chartered-for-profit-2.pdf>

School book challenges have chilling effect

Efforts to challenge or ban some books from school libraries appear to be having a chilling effect on school library collections, according to a study by researchers at Boston University. As books are banned and challenged across the country, they might have a much larger impact than the removal of a few titles—they might be changing the makeup of entire school libraries.

Eesha Pendharkar. "What Book Bans Are Doing to School Library Purchases." *Education Week*. January 6, 2023
[What Book Bans Are Doing to School Library Purchases \(edweek.org\)](https://www.edweek.org/education/what-book-bans-are-doing-to-school-library-purchases-2023-01-06)

NEW YORK STATE

Number of states requiring 'exit' exams shrinks

Only eight states mandate that HS seniors pass standardized tests to earn diplomas, far fewer than in the mid-1990s, when most states required them. A report issued by FairTest finds that the number of states requiring such tests for HS graduates dropped from a high of 27 in the mid-1990s to 11 in 2019 to 8 for the current school year. FairTest leaders contend that the falling numbers reveal flaws in the testing system. In response, defenders say exit exams remain useful in determining whether students have a solid foundation in academic subjects such as English, history, algebra and science, and whether those students are prepared to enter college or the workplace. Regents exams, which have been used for more than 140 years, are widely regarded as a model of that approach.

John Hildebrand. "As debate grows over high school 'exit' exams, the number of states requiring them shrinks." *Newsday*. January 8, 2023
https://www.newsday.com/long-island/education/regents-exams-required-high-school-r3ts90ox#utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Top-Stories&utm_term=.7f80d4ea0ff17e08169c7036e559bbf4b9e7b92a72e79686b9188cc63f596bd4&utm_term=.non

Governor urged to fund free school meals

Students, lawmakers, and advocates are urging Governor Hochul to include funds for universal, free school meals in the state's 2024 budget. When federal meal waivers expired, officials say that 726,000 students lost access to free school meals statewide.

Jessie House. "Advocates call on Hochul to fund free school meals." *WTEN-TV/WXXA-TV* (Albany). January 6, 2023
[Advocates call on Hochul to fund free school meals \(news10.com\)](https://www.wten.com/news/advocates-call-on-hochul-to-fund-free-school-meals/)

Regents consider IEP for every student

The NYSED is piloting a program that could create an individualized education plan for every student. Dubbed Multi-tiered System of Supports – Integrated, the program was rolled out at 29 school districts, including Schenectady, which posted the worst state math test results for Black students among all districts in its category. The goal of the program is to vastly improve results for students when data shows them far behind due to the pandemic. Grades, attendance and discipline all show that the situation has worsened. The new program uses data to help teachers and administrators quickly identify and respond to students' needs and collaborate on solutions. One goal is to work smarter, not harder, using evidence-based practices that solve problems more effectively. Regents on January 9 said the program could be the answer they've been looking for as schools try to recover from the educational losses during the pandemic. An IEP is a learning plan developed by public school staff — in consultation with parents — for children who receive special education services, which can range from addressing reading and math learning delays, to speech and physical therapy.

Kathleen Moore. "Regents: Individualized plan for every child might help students recover from pandemic learning losses." *Albany Times Union*. January 10, 2023
<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Regents-an-IEP-for-every-child-might-help-them-17705431.php>

Governor seeks increased state aid to schools

Governor Hochul wants to complete a three-year deal to pump up state aid to NYS's nearly 700 school districts, despite the huge cost of doing so thanks to inflation. Hochul proposed on January 10 that the state should disperse \$24 billion in 'foundation aid' to districts for the 2023-24 school year, which would represent a 13% increase over this year's allotment. Districts will not know how much they will get until the state budget is adopted in April. During her State of the State address Tuesday, Hochul focused on the serious mental health needs of children, saying that because many schools provide no supports, the state will step in and try to reduce this unmet need by half over the next five years. She specifically proposed spending \$250 million in foundation aid on tutoring programs across the state, focused on helping students in grades 3 - 8 catch up in reading and math. Foundation aid is the main form of state aid to public schools, based on a formula designed to bring some level of financial equity to districts that have very different capacities to raise local property taxes. The formula was devised in response to a landmark 2006 state court decision that found NYC schools did not have enough money to provide a 'sound, basic education.' There have also been growing calls for the state to review and revise the formula so it more accurately captures the needs and wealth of school districts. The state Senate had started to review the formula before the pandemic. The governor also proposed:

< Spending \$125 million more on full-day prekindergarten, bringing the state's total to \$1.2 billion.

< Setting up a new \$20 million grant program to help HSs set up early college and P-TECH programs.

< Spending \$10 million over two years for districts, BOCES and community colleges to work with local industry on developing plans to promote readiness for the workforce.

< Authorizing 'modest' annual tuition increases for SUNY and CUNY, tied to the lesser of the Higher Education Price Index or 3% (allowing SUNY schools to raise tuition for in-state students 6 % above SUNY's base tuition rate each year for the next five years.

< Spending \$200 million on "digital transformation" across SUNY.

Gary Stern. "Hochul wants to boost state aid to schools." *Rockland/Westchester Journal News/Democrat & Chronicle*. January 12, 2023
<https://lbus7do-cdn.newsmemory.com?selDate=20230112&goTo=A04&artid=0>

Comptroller: Property taxes to be capped at 2%

State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli announced that growth in school property taxes statewide will be capped at a maximum 2% for the second year in a row, as inflationary pressures persist. Under the state's cap law, in effect since 2012, annual tax hikes for school districts and municipalities are limited to 2% or the inflation rate, whichever is lower. The inflation rate applied to the cap for the 2023-24 school year was 8% as of June and has since dipped to 6.5%. "School and local communities are still navigating the post-pandemic needs of their students and residents while dealing with high rates of inflation and employee turnover," DiNapoli said. "School district and municipal officials must exercise fiscal prudence to stay under the cap amid these challenges as they prepare their budgets."

John Hildebrand. "School property taxes capped at 2% for 2023-24, state comptroller says." *Newsday*. January 12, 2023
[School property taxes capped at 2% for 2023-24, state comptroller says - Newsday](#)