

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 10, 2021 Education News Update

TEACHING & LEARNING

Commentary: Use popular culture to engage students

Teachers shouldn't try to compete with students' phones and other technology, argues this blogger who offers ways to use popular culture to engage students in social studies lessons, including assigning videos as homework.

Darcy White is a social studies curriculum developer and former social studies teacher.

Darcy White. "Incorporating popular media into social studies learning." *Smart Brief/Education*. September 7, 2021
[Incorporating popular media into social studies learning | SmartBrief](#)

Study: Mindfulness improves student behavior

Mindfulness helped to reduce such behaviors as impulsivity and hyperactivity by 18% among students in kindergarten through second grade at an elementary school in Bethlehem, Pa. The students participated in Shanthi Project's eight-week course, which engages teachers, who eventually lead students in mindfulness exercises.

Matt Zalaznick. "How mindfulness is helping students and teachers create kinder classrooms." *District Administration*. September 3, 2021
[How mindfulness skills are creating kinder classrooms \(districtadministration.com\)](#)

Why students disengage

Instead of assuming students "don't care," investigate the barriers they may be facing. The authors share nine cognitive barriers to student learning, as well as teaching strategies that aim to overcome them.

Douglas Fisher & Nancy Frey. "Show & Tell: A Video Column / Why Do Students Disengage?" *ASCD*. September 1, 2021
[Show & Tell: A Video Column / Why Do Students Disengage? - ASCD](#)

Fall college options for online learning

Many colleges planned to return to campus full time for fall, but as coronavirus cases surge, students and faculty have expressed reluctance about in-person lessons. This article looks at some of the approaches that schools are taking to keeping academic standards high in a constantly shifting environment. Some colleges are offering 50 percent or more of their classes online, while others are 90 percent-plus in person.

Elizabeth Redden "How Online Learning Fits in This Fall." *Inside Higher Education*. September 3, 2021
[With momentum behind an in-person fall, where does online learning fit? \(insidehighered.com\)](#)

After-school literacy program launched by creator of 1619 Project

Led by Nikole Hannah-Jones, lead author of the controversial 1619 Project, the 1619 Freedom School is a free, five-day-a-week program. The new Black history-focused literacy program has launched in Iowa and will make its curriculum available nationwide as a free, open-source online tool in 2022.

Ileana Najjarro. "Creator of 1619 Project Launching After-School Literacy Program." *Education Week*. September 07, 2021
[Creator of 1619 Project Launching After-School Literacy Program \(edweek.org\)](#)

Prep programs needed to help 1st-year educators

Teachers and administrators stepping into the classroom or school office for the first time during the pandemic likely need support. Educator-preparation programs have a role in stemming teacher attrition.

Linda S. McKee. "First-Year Teachers Need Support This Year. Here Are 5 Ways Prep Programs Can Help." *Education Week*. September 03, 2021
[First-Year Teachers Need Support This Year. Here Are 5 Ways Prep Programs Can Help \(Opinion\) \(edweek.org\)](#)

Educators: Learning loss is not top concern for schools

Learning loss, getting back to normal, and reviving lagging test scores are not the top concerns facing schools, according to 4,000 students interviewed by over 200 teachers. These issues are promoted by the media and policymakers as the main K12 challenges, but teachers and students say the biggest concerns are rundown facilities and a curriculum that lacks opportunity for personal connection and interest-based exploration, among others.

Justin Reich & Jal Mehta. "How Do You Open School in a Pandemic? Start by Asking Teachers and Students." *Ed Surge*. September 7, 2021
[How Do You Open School in a Pandemic? Start by Asking Teachers and Students | EdSurge News](#)

FEDERAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Coronavirus complicates return to in-person learning

Many schools that had planned to forgo virtual and hybrid learning this year, in favor of in-person classes, have changed plans as outbreaks require students to quarantine. Some classes and campuses have already been forced to close. In Mississippi, more than 20,000 students were quarantined after the first week of the school year.

Daniella Silva. "Schools grapple with thousands in isolation or quarantine as delta variant rages." *NBC News*. September 4, 2021

[Schools grapple with thousands in isolation or quarantine as delta variant rages \(nbcnews.com\)](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/children/schools-grapple-thousands-isolation-quarantine-delta-variant-rages-ncmc103823)

Justice Kagan rejects bid to block school suspension in sexual harassment claim

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan denied a California HS student's effort to return to school after his 'emergency' suspension under Title IX regulations on sexual harassment.

Mark Walsh. "High Court Justice Rejects Student's Bid to Block Removal Over Sexual Harassment Claim." *Education Week*.

September 07, 2021

[High Court Justice Rejects Student's Bid to Block Removal Over Sexual Harassment Claim \(edweek.org\)](https://www.edweek.org/education/high-court-justice-rejects-student-bid-to-block-removal-over-sexual-harassment-claim/2021/09/07)

European countries retain pandemic-related school restrictions

The start of a new school year in many Northern Hemisphere nations comes as the highly infectious delta variant continues to drive a surge in coronavirus cases. Still, many governments are determined to get children back into classrooms after 18 stop-start months of lockdowns, remote learning and abandoned exams.

Jill Lawless. "Excitement meets worry as European kids head back to school." *Associated Press*. September 3, 2021

[Excitement meets worry as European kids head back to school \(apnews.com\)](https://apnews.com/Excitement-meets-worry-as-European-kids-head-back-to-school)

Should video game use by students be limited?

China's ban on student use of video games on weekdays has some questioning whether there should be similar limits elsewhere. The director of the Digital Wellness Lab at Boston Children's Hospital suggests that time for video games be scheduled in balance with other activities, and not be used as a reward or punishment.

Julie Jargon. "China Sets Weekday Ban on Kids' Videogame Play. Should You Do That, Too?" *Wall Street Journal*. September 4, 2021

[China Sets Weekday Ban on Kids' Videogame Play. Should You Do That, Too? - WSJ](https://www.wsj.com/articles/china-sets-weekday-ban-on-kids-videogame-play-should-you-do-that-too-11630812000)

Poll: 2/3 of parents want mask wearing in schools

U.S. parents are eager for kids to return to school, but are concerned their children will get seriously ill if they catch COVID-19. Two-thirds support requiring masks and teacher vaccinations. Plus, parents are more skeptical of online learning than they were last school year, according to a new USA TODAY/Ipsos poll, which found declining optimism about distance learning. Concerns are especially high among Black parents, 37% of whom say their children were well-prepared for distance learning. More than 50% of parents say online learning caused their children to fall behind; 70% support returning to full-time instruction in classrooms.

Alia Wong. "COVID-19 at school? 2 in 3 parents support mask mandates as many worry kids will get very sick." *USA TODAY*.

September 7, 2021

[COVID in kids: School mask mandates find support to keep kids healthy \(usatoday.com\)](https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2021/09/07/covid-19-at-school-2-in-3-parents-support-mask-mandates-as-many-worry-kids-will-get-very-sick/103823)

President seeks more COVID testing in schools, vaccinations for teachers

President Biden set teacher vaccine requirements for federally operated schools as part of a new effort to drive down COVID's spread.

Evie Blad. "Biden Pushes Schools to Expand COVID-19 Testing, Get More Teachers Vaccinated." *Education Week*. September 9, 2021

[Biden Pushes Schools to Expand COVID-19 Testing, Get More Teachers Vaccinated \(edweek.org\)](https://www.edweek.org/education/biden-pushes-schools-to-expand-covid-19-testing-get-more-teachers-vaccinated/2021/09/09)

NEW YORK STATE

NYS suing college students statewide, forcing them to appear in Albany court

Some 16,000 SUNY students have been taken to court since 2013 by the state attorney general for unpaid bills. Many ended up in default because they couldn't make it to Albany to defend themselves in court, as required. One student was just three credits short of graduation, and spent three years struggling to pay a settlement of \$2,900 on a debt she didn't believe she owed. In response to this reporter's questions, the AG's office said it intends to make changes to the system and begin filing lawsuits in counties other than Albany.

Meredith Kolodner. "Why does New York state sue its college students?" *Hechinger Report*. September 3, 2021

[New York state sues students for SUNY debts \(hechingerreport.org\)](https://hechingerreport.org/new-york-state-sues-students-for-suny-debts/)

Special ed students fell behind using remote learning

The NYSED report found services and therapies that typically require hands-on, face-to-face interaction or specialized equipment were less effective when done remotely.

Robert Brodsky. "Report: Remote learning caused special education students to fall behind during pandemic." *Newsday*. September 9, 2021

[Report: Remote learning caused special education students to fall behind during pandemic | Newsday](https://www.nysed.gov/remote-learning-caused-special-education-students-to-fall-behind-during-pandemic)

Morgan McKay. "Remote learning could have caused special education students to fall behind." *NY State of politics/Spectrum News*.

September 9, 2021

[Remote learning impacted special education students \(nystateofpolitics.com\)](https://www.nystateofpolitics.com/remote-learning-impacted-special-education-students/)

N.Y. school uses QR codes in cafeteria for check-in

Paul V. Moore High School in the Central Square CSD (NE of Syracuse) is asking students to check into assigned cafeteria seats using a QR code that will track students' names, tables and seat numbers and, in the event of a coronavirus outbreak, help determine who needs to quarantine, and hopefully prevent school closures. Schools are challenged to maintain required distances between students, especially in cafeterias.

Andrew Donovan. "Local school using QR codes to fight COVID spread." *WSYR-TV* (Syracuse). September 9, 2021
[Local school using QR codes to fight COVID spread | WSYR \(localsyr.com\)](#)