

# Examining the Impacts, Changes and Innovations Schools Have Experienced During the COVID-19 Pandemic

*A Report from The Learning Collective & Venn Education*

*Supported by The Governor John Engler Center for  
Charter Schools at Central Michigan University*



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## Context & Background

On March 13, 2020, the rapidly spreading Covid-19 pandemic had reached nearly every corner of the United States, its impact had grown so profound, the President declared a National Emergency. Almost immediately, schools from coast to coast closed their doors and paused. In the days and months that followed, school leaders, school boards and teachers constructed altered, and presumably temporary, education models aimed to help their teachers deliver instruction to their students as soon as possible.

Since March 2020, schools have had no choice but to respond to the on-going expectations and realities brought by educating students during the global pandemic. This reality has challenged every aspect of schools including methods of instruction, staffing, and student & staff mental health (to mention a few). These challenges have affected schools and led many to operate in crisis-mode much longer than anticipated and their stakeholders have suffered from long-term fatigue. To make this worse, it has become clear that school may not return to "normal" for a long time, if ever.

The full scope of outcomes students and schools face due to this disruption are not clear yet and may not be fully recognized for years or decades. What we know to date from NWEA assessments of student performance is that in Fall 2020, student achievement and growth scores dropped in math and by Fall 2021, both reading and math scores dropped. The Governor John Engler Center for Charter Schools at Central Michigan University (CMU) has actively monitored the academic performance of their portfolio of charter schools during this crisis and have seen similar outcomes at the 57 charter schools the university authorizes.

In March 2022, CMU found themselves in a unique position to respond to this crisis. CMU engaged Venn Education (Venn) and The Learning Collective (TLC) to review existing and emerging research and connect (through focus groups and surveys) with charter school stakeholders from the schools in their portfolio. CMU recognized the need to listen to, and learn from, the board members, school leaders, teachers and support organizations of its authorized schools. The project's objective is to provide context, findings and recommendations that charter schools in CMU's portfolio can use to make informed decisions as they plan for the 2022-23 school year. The findings and recommendations that follow are grouped in seven categories: education programming, instructional leadership, teacher planning & support, communications, budget, accountability, and strategic planning.

***“I would like to salute all of the educators worldwide for winning this war against COVID.”***

***“We have evolved, adjusted and grown in so many ways it seems almost impossible to differentiate. The sustainable, meaningful changes have never come in purchased programs or fancy boxes from vendors. True change has evolved for us because of mindset, beliefs and perseverance.”***

***“Focusing on the academic scores of student-first is a micro approach to a problem that requires change at the macro level. Meaningful change that eventually translates to academic success will take time to achieve. It will require new approaches and significant trust to even begin the necessary conversations. I appreciate the intent of this [project] and sincerely hope this is the start of some of those conversations and not a sweeping mandate to appease those who do not fully understand the scope of what lies ahead.”***

# EDUCATION PROGRAMING

## Academic Performance

*Academic performance in schools has suffered during the pandemic. Though the full effects of unfinished instruction and learning are not fully apparent, black and brown and low socio-economic status students have suffered more than other groups, and some suspect these effects will be long standing for the entire generation of students currently enrolled in schools. Many schools report that they have redoubled efforts to use data they accumulate to address student attendance, behavior and academic performance.*

### **What happened 2020-2022?**

- CMU reported that state assessments were canceled thus some schools were not able to effectively collect growth data (e.g. NWEA assessment). "Issues with remote testing are well-documented and include - parents/siblings helping students take tests, lack of supervision while test taking, and student disengagement during test sessions."<sup>1</sup>
- In response to assessment cancellations, CMU waived assessment-based evaluation and accountability for 2 years.
- In its Fall 2020 study, CMU noted that: "Student performance during the pandemic is consistent with prior years in reading but not in mathematics where there was a noticeable decline."
- By Spring 2021, CMU noted that drops in student performance in reading had followed the drops in math seen in Fall 2020.<sup>2</sup>
- Especially in the lower grades, according to CMU and GVSU research as well as surveys and focus groups, remote learning had greater deleterious effects on math, than ELA, achievement.<sup>3</sup>
- Gaps based on income have widened in elementary schools by 20% in math and 15% in reading. Majority-Black schools were up to "six months behind in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Fall-Assessment-Analysis.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Fall-2021-22-COVID-19-Performance-Impact-Report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup>

[https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/gvsu\\_nwea\\_report\\_dec2021\\_final\\_tagged.pdf](https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/gvsu_nwea_report_dec2021_final_tagged.pdf)

math and reading, while students in majority-white schools ended up just four months behind in math and three months behind in reading.”<sup>4</sup>

### ***What does it mean now?***

- Unfinished learning and unfinished instruction persist.
- Some teachers provided limited grade-level content to students due to challenges of remote learning. For example, in some schools second grade teachers taught just 80% of the grade-level math curriculum in one academic year. (focus groups)<sup>5</sup>
- The extent of unfinished learning’s effects on students academically and behaviorally is not yet apparent. (focus groups)<sup>6</sup>
- Due in part to significant student absences during 2021-22, unfinished learning persists.<sup>7</sup>
- NWEA researchers found the pandemic has caused significantly more damage to students’ long-term academic progress than natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.
- “[T]oday’s students may earn \$49,000 to \$61,000 less over their lifetime owing to the impact of the pandemic on their schooling. The impact on the US economy could amount to \$128 billion to \$188 billion every year as this cohort enters the workforce.”<sup>8</sup>
- Unknowns remain regarding how schools can best support English Learners (ELs) and students with disabilities (SWDs) in remote learning:
  - Remote learning disproportionately malaffected ELs. ELs lost substantial access to education and exposure to language acquisition. (focus groups)<sup>9</sup>
  - Many schools had difficulties meeting the needs of SWDs during remote learning. (focus groups)
  - Some school stakeholders reported that there is no publicly available resource on how to co-teach - simultaneous general education and special education teachers in the same classroom - in a remote learning environment. (focus groups)

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<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>

<sup>5</sup> In this report, parenthetical references to “surveys” and “focus groups” refer to surveys and focus groups conducted with board members, school leaders, teachers and support organizations of CMU’s portfolio charter schools as well as focus group with CMU staff members.

<sup>6</sup> <https://crpe.org/wp-content/uploads/SEL-report-2021-final-8-10.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.edworkingpapers.com/sites/default/files/ai22-521.pdf>

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<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>

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<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>

### ***What are schools doing as a result?***

- Some schools are not just waiting for quarterly tracking of student progress but conducting more frequent monitoring and analysis in order to intervene more quickly to address student learning needs. Accordingly, some schools created a weekly assessment and review cycle. (surveys, focus groups)
- Some virtual schools have codified data more during the pandemic and examined data weekly among school leaders and/or in teacher-led professional learning communities (PLCs). (focus groups)
- Some teachers are creating more small groups – to facilitate differentiation – than they have ever done previously. Some teachers are leveraging compatibility between NWEA MAP scores and Khan Academy by inputting MAP scores into the Khan Academy system in order for Khan Academy to then deliver suggested and differentiated lessons to students. (surveys)
- Some Education Service Providers (ESPs) are redoubling efforts to implement multiple measures of student achievement. (focus groups)

### ***What can you do?***

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations for Improving Academic Performance*

- Consider tracking and analyzing student progress school-wide weekly or by unit.
- Use quantitative measures to track and analyze student academic and cognitive/interpersonal/emotional development (CIED) progress.
- Prioritize growth in academic and CIED attainment, over absolute achievement.
- Many individuals began and/or were trained at schools during remote learning e.g.:
  - students in grades K-2;
  - new teachers that conducted their teacher training during remote learning;
  - teachers that began teaching full-time during remote learning;
  - administrators that began their school leadership during remote learning;
  - board members that began during remote learning;
  - schools that began working with an ESP for the first time during remote learning....identify individuals representing these cohorts and create a plan to monitor and provide additional and differentiated support for them.
- Commit resources, including people and time, to gather feedback from parents and students, to try to learn more about how the last two years

have affected ELs and SWDs at your school. Adjust school programming based on that feedback.

- Create a contingency plan for a return to remote learning that includes specific action steps on how to effectively co-teach and meet the needs of ELs.

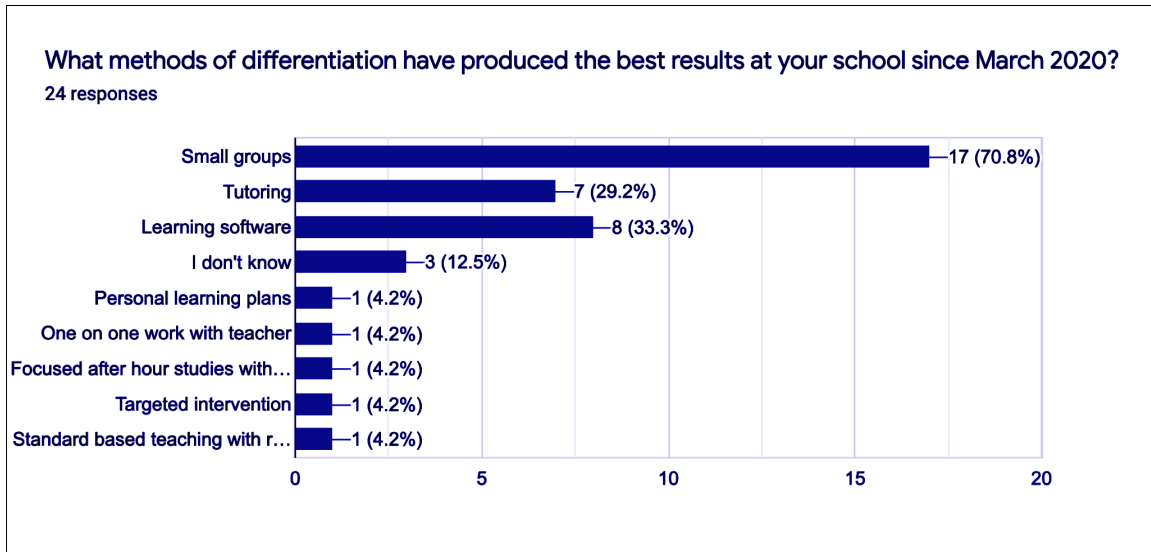
## *Accelerated Learning*

As noted above, fall 2020 math scores lagged and in 2021, reading scores followed a similar downward trend. Heading into school year 2022-23, schools face a challenge to support students to make progress back toward grade-level achievement via accelerated learning. When asked, the best definition of *accelerated learning* shared in focus groups was: *academic content and learning that is rigorous, not focused on over-remediation and addresses the most important learning standards.*

### ***How did some schools attempt to accelerate learning during the pandemic?***

- Some schools brought in curriculum specialists to identify the most important standards to cover in a year. (focus groups)
- Some schools reduced the number of standards identified in standards-based report cards to approximately six standards per subject. (focus groups)
- Some 2021 summer programs were reportedly effective when focused on re-introducing student behavior protocols and/or including enrichment activities in addition to academics. (focus groups)
- Some schools provided "learning loss guides" to help teachers identify and focus on the highest priority standards. Administrators provided input to teachers on how to adjust teaching to address the most important needs. (surveys)
- 50% of survey respondents said their accelerated learning efforts in 2022-23 will focus on ELA and math equally, not preferencing one over the other.





### ***What are some emerging lessons learned regarding accelerated learning?***

- After-school programs are the fourth most popular way to spend federal funds to address unfinished learning, behind summer school, software and instructional materials. However, research does not uniformly support the overall effectiveness of after-school programs, in part due to inconsistent student attendance.<sup>10</sup>
- Based on survey responses, the reportedly most effective forms of differentiation have been small groups, learning software and tutoring. Personal learning plans, one-on-one work between students and teachers, focused after hours studies with teachers and students, and targeted intervention have reportedly been less effective.
- One advantage small student groups have over tutoring is that the data and outcomes from small group work are immediately available to teachers, whereas the data and outcomes from tutoring may not be made readily available to the classroom teacher. (surveys)

### ***How are some schools approaching accelerated learning in academic year 2022-23?***

- In focus groups, there were no ready or quick answers to how accelerated learning would or should continue in 2022-23.
- For 2021-22 and 2022-23, 40 Dallas Independent School District schools committed to extending the school year to start at the beginning of August and end in late June.

<sup>10</sup> <https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-1-5-billion-in-recovery-funds-go-to-afterschool/>

- To address lost or dis-engaged students, Chicago Public Schools and the University of Chicago developed an index to identify “students at highest risk of unfinished learning and dropping out of school.”<sup>11</sup>
- Bloomberg Philanthropies is spearheading Summer Boost NYC, a new \$50 million program that will support summer learning in 2022 at public charter schools in New York City for approximately 25,000 K-8 students who have significant “learning gaps” that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>12</sup>
- Los Angeles Unified School District is adding four days onto the 2022-23 school year.<sup>13</sup>

### ***What can you do?***

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations to Accelerate Learning*

- In 2022-23, identify and focus on the highest priority standards.
- Consider extending the school year and/or offering summer school to provide additional and targeted academic and cognitive/interpersonal/emotional student support.
- Re-evaluate how small student groups are utilized at your school; determine whether small groups are implemented with sufficient frequency, appropriately differentiated and generate data to assess whether they achieve the desired outcomes.
- Ensure all data and outcomes from tutoring is immediately made available to classroom teachers.
- If attempting to accelerate learning through after school programs, incorporate fun activities (such as arts and sports) into those programs to first, encourage and motivate students to attend daily and second, address unfinished instruction. Consider partnering with an organization that has prior experience running high-quality after-school programs.<sup>14</sup>
- High schools create a plan with clear action steps and milestones to reduce the number of dropouts as much as possible in 2022-23. Assign specific staff members to identify, monitor and support students most at-risk of dropping out.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cps.edu/strategic-initiatives/moving-forward-together/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.org/press/bloomberg-philanthropies-summer-boost-nyc-summer-2022-learning-program-launched-at-new-york-city-public-charter-schools/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-04-26/l-a-adds-days-to-next-school-year-for-pandemic-recovery>

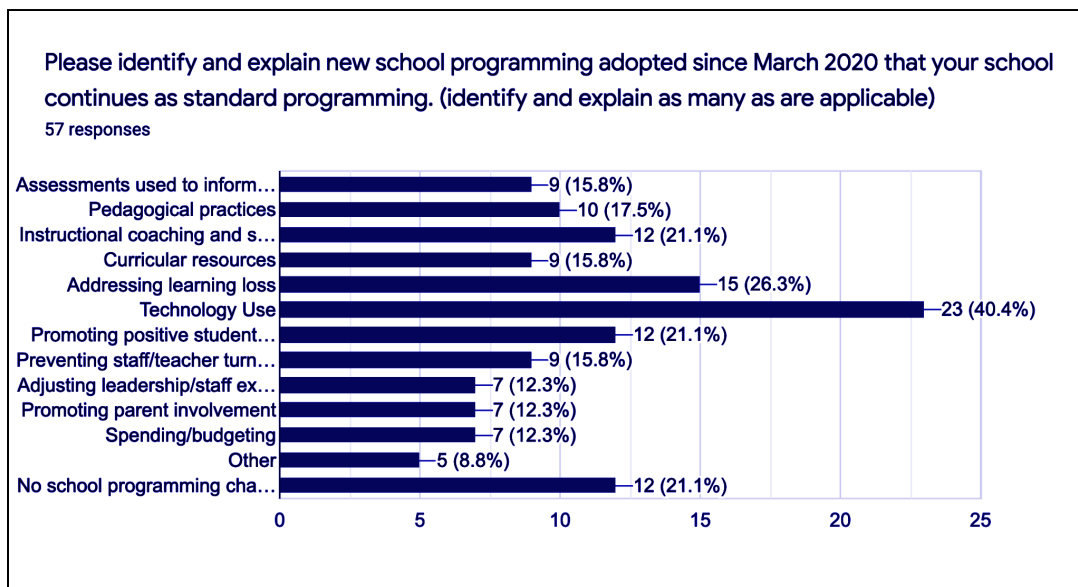
<sup>14</sup> <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/371>

## Leveraging Technology

As the pandemic forced schools to close their doors, schools turned to remote learning. Students relied on computers to access their lessons and their teachers via Internet connections. Some schools experienced remote learning as a temporary solution for a few months while others relied on it for more than a year. The rapid transition to remote learning forced schools to try new technology and tools at rates never before seen.

### What did schools experience with remote learning?

- Many schools deem hybrid learning ineffective. Hybrid learning is defined as when a teacher teaches a synchronous class in which some students are in a classroom in-person and other students are remote - or when an entire class of students rotates on a daily basis (e.g. an A/B schedule) between in-person and remote learning. (surveys, focus groups)
- Some teachers recorded their lessons for re-use for themselves or other teachers in the school. (surveys, focus groups)



### ***What has happened since remote learning ended?***

Some schools continue to utilize flipped learning<sup>15</sup> even after a return to daily in-person instruction:

- More schools have 1:1 devices as a function of the move to remote learning in 2020.
- Some high-performing high schools are utilizing flipped learning primarily in advanced courses such as Advanced Placement. (focus groups)
- Flipped learning has reportedly been effective in some urban K-8 schools in which there are high ratios of devices per student. (focus groups)
- Some schools currently have two devices for every student so that every student has a laptop at home and at school. (focus groups)
- The majority of survey respondents represent schools that either do not plan on using flipped learning in 2022-23 or are unsure whether flipped learning will be utilized in 2022-23.
- “In the traditional sense of the term ‘flipped learning’ we have never required essential elements of learning at home where factors for success cannot be guaranteed. This is a key flaw in the ‘flipped learning’ approach that is in direct opposition to the research around requiring students to tackle new content at home. Best practices in learning at home would suggest that homework is somewhat effective when it involves practicing skills a student is already familiar with and can navigate independently. I realize there is a distinction between homework and the flipped approach but both rely heavily on ideal home environments and favor high achieving students.” (survey response)
- “We have had little success getting students and families to complete home assignments.” (survey response)
  - “Several teachers have tried flipped learning but those classes have low passing rates and it isn't proving to be effective.” (survey response)

### **What have Virtual Schools experienced?**

- Some virtual schools have shifted their model to higher rates of synchronous, and lower rates of asynchronous, learning. (focus groups)
- Some schools learned during the pandemic that online resources - such as <https://michiganvirtual.org> - can provide resources to meet the needs of higher performing students. For example, online high school classes and resources can be delivered to high achieving middle school students (focus groups).

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<sup>15</sup> Flipped learning refers to teachers assigning students lecture materials and presentations to be viewed at home or outside of class. The intent is to then focus in-class time on practice activities and students attempting to apply acquired skills and knowledge.

### ***What can you do?***

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations to Leverage Technology*

- Use recorded videos of all teachers for instructional leaders to discuss with teachers during coaching sessions.
- Use recorded videos of highly effective teachers as instructional tools for students across the school (small groups, etc.) and as a resource for professional development in 2022-23 and beyond.
- Consider utilizing flipped learning when:
  1. There are clear expectations for parent and student roles, and training thereof, regarding flipped learning;
  2. There are sufficient ratios of devices (1:1 or 2:1 – 2 devices per 1 child so that one device remains at home and the other remains at school); and
  3. Your school has a policy and expectation regarding assigning homework.
- If using flipped learning, set and track measurable goals for flipped learning to determine whether it is having the desired impact.
- Virtual schools, that rely primarily on asynchronous learning, should consider piloting (and possibly adopting) more synchronous learning.
- Consider online resources such as <https://michiganvirtual.org> to provide higher grade-level content, not offered at your school, for high achieving students.

### *Cognitive / Interpersonal / Emotional Development (CIED)*

Like no other topic in this study, all participants reported profound impacts on student and adult well-being and mental health during the pandemic. The importance of what we term “cognitive/interpersonal/emotional development” (CIED) arose numerous times in survey and focus group responses even when questions were not targeted to that topic. What individuals experienced and how schools responded varied. One of the primary learnings from the pandemic and remote learning is the importance of CIED and the desire of stakeholders to prioritize student well-being as a means to increase students’ ability to learn.

### ***What is cognitive, interpersonal, social development?***

- CIED principles are reflected somewhat in the findings of a national Aspen Institute commission, in which Former Michigan governor John Engler served:<sup>16</sup>
  - Cognitive skills such as the ability to: focus and pay attention, set goals, plan and organize, persevere and problem solve;
  - Interpersonal skills such as the ability to: navigate social situations, resolve conflicts, demonstrate respect toward others, and cooperate and work on a team; and
  - Emotional skills including the ability to: recognize and manage one's emotions, understand the emotions and perspectives of others, demonstrate empathy, and cope with frustration and stress.
- Some schools are turning to common standards for CIED.<sup>17</sup>
- “Students need time and support by trained behavior and mental health professionals to learn social, emotional, and behavioral skills that were not developed during students' isolation. This cannot be implemented by teachers alone.” (survey response)
- Students learn best when they are given opportunities to be social. (surveys)
- Students have the ability to focus on content after their safety and security is established in school. (surveys, focus groups)

### ***What are some effects on student cognitive/interpersonal/emotional development that some schools are observing?***

- Student behavior upon returning from remote learning is reportedly more disruptive in middle school grades than at elementary level or high school level. (focus groups)
- Rates of anxiety and attempted suicides, already on the rise pre-pandemic, appear to have increased among all students, especially among girls.<sup>18</sup>
- Most research efforts focused on adolescent students. According to the Center on Reinventing Public Education, there is little clear evidence on the pandemic's impact on the mental well-being of children ages 5 to 10.
- There is an estimate that an additional 617,000 to 1.2 million 8th–12th graders could drop out of school altogether because of the pandemic if efforts were not sufficiently made to re-engage these students in learning during 2021-22.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>

[https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/UPDATED-FINAL-Aspen\\_Integrating-Report\\_4\\_Single.pdf](https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/UPDATED-FINAL-Aspen_Integrating-Report_4_Single.pdf)

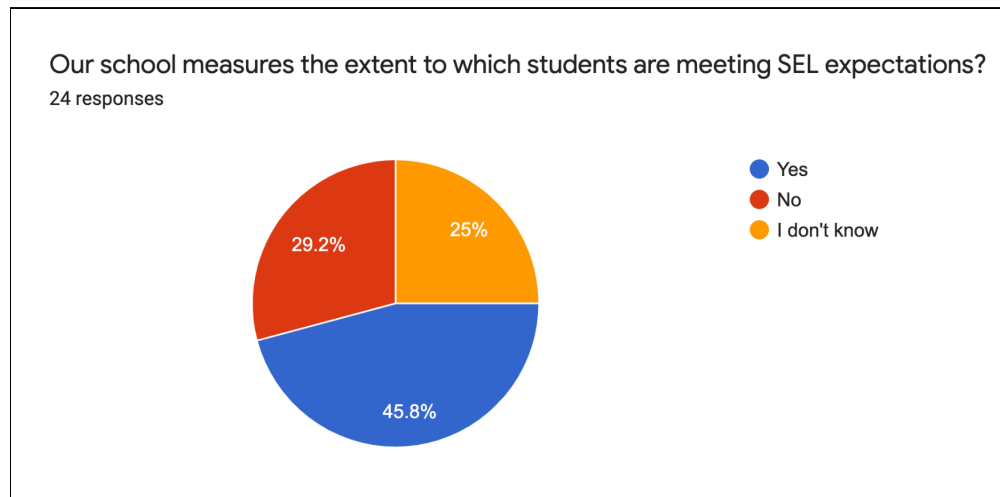
<sup>17</sup> <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://crpe.org/wp-content/uploads/SEL-report-2021-final-8-10.pdf>

<sup>19</sup>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>

- Some focus group participants indicated there will be an increase in student dropouts in 2021-22 as compared to years prior to the pandemic.
- “My biggest fear looking forward is that we are going to make a giant step backwards as we double down in the name of ‘accountability’ and remediation of learning loss.” (survey response)
- Schools have recognized the need for increased CIED supports but have not been highly strategic in setting school-wide CIED standards or criteria. (surveys, focus groups)



***What are some schools doing to address student and adult cognitive/interpersonal/emotional development needs?***

- Some school leaders identified establishing healthy adult relationships as their highest priority. (focus groups)
- 70% of survey respondents believe their schools would benefit from hiring additional mental health professionals in 2022-23.
- Some schools have moved from monthly to weekly celebrations of student successes – even small successes. (focus groups)
- Some research suggests that teachers should have individualized meetings at the start of school - with the previous year’s teachers, caregivers/parents and students - to effectively receive information on individual students’ CIED needs. If such meetings are not feasible, research suggests teachers should consider asking the caregiver/parent and student to complete a form about the student’s CIED needs prior to the start of the new school year.
- In focus groups, participants indicated there are no clear plans to share, between teachers across grade levels, the CIED needs of individual students as students matriculate to a higher grade level in 2022-23.

## **What can you do?**

### *Opportunities and Recommendations for Cognitive/ Interpersonal/ Emotional Development*

- Go slow to go fast. Allocate time at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year to establish a strong and supportive school culture through CIED-supportive programming.
- Create, and budget for, a CIED school-wide plan for 2022-23 and consider these steps in doing so <https://schoolguide.casel.org/focus-area-1b/overview/>. Ensure that individuals involved in developing the plan reflect the racial and demographic composition of the students and that students also play a role in developing the plan.
- Just like with academic programming, train staff in CIED programming and methods. Monitor and track the extent to which CIED standards are met throughout the year. Utilize multiple measures to track meeting of CIED standards.
- Before the 2023-24 school year, share the 2022-23 student-specific results of CIED monitoring between teachers across grade levels so that every student's needs are leveraged and understood by students' 2023-24 teachers.
- Consider these research-based videos to teach students mental health and well-being skills <https://childmind.org/healthyminds/educators/>.
- With input from an array of stakeholders including students, establish school-wide CIED standards. Implement CIED programming throughout the school year that supports school-wide those standards.
- Individual students identify, among the school's CIED standards, the standards each student most wants to meet and develop a personalized plan on how to reach those standards. Celebrate students and teacher/s every time a student meets one of the standards.
- Encourage and support a school-wide and asset-based approach to highlight, and build on, positive student trends in data and celebrate teachers' successes.
- Proactively provide and create additional opportunities for students to collaborate and socialize during the school day.
- Incorporate more physical exercise into the school day to improve student mood and well-being. Consider using a morning movement model like that in place at Girls Athletic Leadership School Los Angeles <https://www.galsla.org/movement>.



# INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

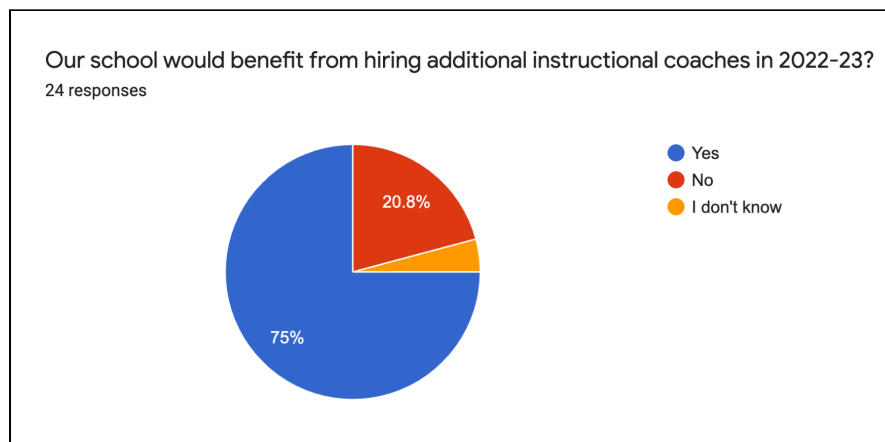
Some schools report that they have more teachers, new to the teaching profession, now than prior to 2020. Due to this, and other factors, most schools report deliberate efforts to invest in support of high quality instruction in classrooms.

## ***What is happening?***

- Investments in instructional coaches and leadership and support since 2020 have been widespread and appreciated by teachers. (surveys, focus groups)
- 75% of survey respondents said their school would benefit from hiring additional instructional coaches.

## ***How can leaders be supported?***

- Many ESPs create networks for leaders to learn from each other and provide a safe space to collaborate and admit when mistakes are made. (focus groups)



## ***What are some challenges?***

- Many participants reported that instructional leaders' time should be protected, but the shortage of teachers took instructional leaders away from their primary responsibilities. (surveys, focus groups)
- Some schools are resisting hiring non-educators in classrooms as substitute teachers. Some school leaders reported those untrained adults can be not only ineffective but do more harm than good. (focus groups)
- Some school leaders reported they did not know where to find mentors to coach and support school and instructional leaders. (focus groups)

### **What can you do?**

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations for Improving Instructional Leadership*

- Support instruction and teacher retention by hiring an adequate number of additional instructional leaders that are focused exclusively on instructional leadership, such as participating daily in grade-level or academic department meetings and regularly leading professional development.
- Consider hiring executive coaches to support school leaders. Consider investing with other charter schools to share a leadership coach. If a highly qualified leadership coach is not available in your geographic area, consider utilizing a remote leadership coach.
- Contact the leader of a successful charter school and ask that leader for a monthly coaching call with your school's leader.
- If you are an experienced leader of a successful charter school, offer to volunteer time to mentor other school leaders.
- Leaders of independent charter schools reach out to leaders of other independent charter schools to establish opportunities to network and learn from each other.

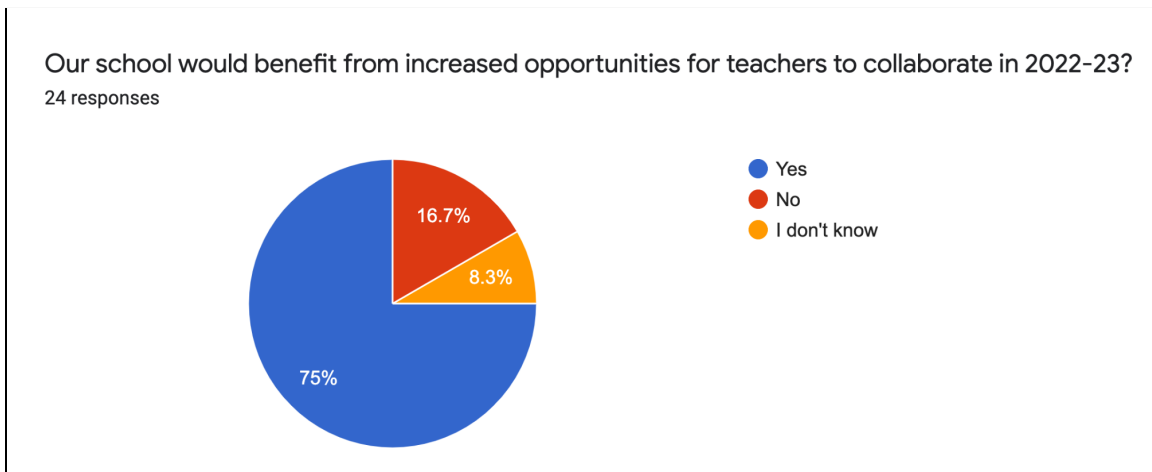
## TEACHER PLANNING & SUPPORT

Research suggests that trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, school leaders and school staff are foundational to improving practice that increases student learning. Some schools have been creative and focused on respectfully giving teachers space and time for planning and collaboration.

### **What we learned.**

- Many focus group participants stressed the importance of teacher collaboration time. Some also expressed the importance of co-scheduled teacher free time during the work day; at one school, teachers go to a weekly lunch off-site together before returning to campus for weekly teacher collaboration.
- More time for teacher collaboration can directly contribute to higher rates of teacher retention. Teacher retention rates have improved in some schools that made teacher collaboration a top priority during the pandemic; in some of those schools, the pre-pandemic retention teacher rate was 70%-80% and the current teacher retention is 90%. (focus groups)

- Michigan teachers want more individual and collaborative planning time.<sup>20</sup>
- 75% of survey respondents believe their school would benefit from increased opportunities for teachers to collaborate in 2022-23.
- At least one school will hire an additional full-time licensed counselor in 2022-23 to, not only serve the needs of students, but also provide opportunities for staff members to receive free counseling, if desired, during work hours. (focus groups)



### ***What some schools are doing to recognize and praise teachers.***

- Some focus group participants suggested schools have a room, other than a teacher workroom, for teachers to “decompress” and relax, during the work day.
- Some schools have purchased massage chairs for their teachers. (focus groups)
- Some schools have reported that donuts or pizza parties are inadequate proxies for building a better school culture. (focus groups)

### ***What can you do?***

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations for Improving Teacher Planning & Support*

- Prioritize providing structured time weekly for teacher collaboration through PLCs or other formats. Use clear structures and protocols and, when possible, base collaborations on data analyses.

- Provide opportunities for veteran teachers to mentor less experienced teachers.
- Consider allowing teachers to receive counseling from your school counselor during school hours and free of charge.
- Ensure your school has a teachers' lounge and that the lounge is inviting and a place of comfort and rest for teachers.
- Consider allocating one day per week to be "meetings-free" so that teachers can focus on what they need to do to plan for instruction.

## COMMUNICATIONS

At some schools, open discussions around realistic expectations of staff and leadership have taken place. Offering more grace, listening more, and being more gentle with each other are just some ways schools have shifted what is expected from others. During the pandemic, some schools responded by changing internal communications with their staff and to their external community.

### ***How are some schools changing their internal communications?***

- In spring and fall 2020, some schools sent weekly surveys to teachers, shared the results with teachers, and acted on those results. In retrospect, some of those schools wished they had continued that practice. (focus groups)
- Some schools stated that stakeholder surveys are too impersonal and sometimes the questions are not understood by parents. (focus groups)
- Some schools embrace social media as a way to communicate and learn from their constituents about their desires and fears. (focus groups)

### ***How are some schools changing their direct communication?***

- At one school, teachers meet as a group weekly to have a free-form discussion and to express any desires or frustrations they may have with their professional or home lives. The school leader facilitates three of these sessions monthly and the fourth is not attended by the school leader. (focus groups)
- Remote parent-teacher conferences are reportedly well attended. At some schools, remote conferences have increased parent-teacher conference participation from 50% pre-pandemic rates to 90% currently. (focus groups)
- Student-led parent-teacher remote conferences are reportedly difficult for some teachers to conduct. (focus groups)
- Remote board meetings were reportedly well attended. (focus groups)

- Some charter schools are streaming their board meetings to enable parents and the larger community to be better informed. (focus groups)
- The Open Meeting Act (OMA) allows for remote committee meetings. The OMA does not allow for remote board meetings.
- During the pandemic, some charter schools collaborated with local school districts on safety and security initiatives, thus facilitating opportunities for future partnerships. (focus groups)

### ***What can you do?***

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations for Improving Communications*

- Establish structures and systems for staff and school leaders to continue to listen to all stakeholders, including students. Consider these four steps:
  1. Listen to stakeholders (including students) through multiple mediums: surveys, social media, in-person meetings and focus groups.
  2. Communicate to stakeholders what is learned through listening.
  3. Put in place actions based on what is learned.
  4. Report on the results of these actions to the school community throughout the school year.
- Send electronic surveys (and conduct other regular measures of getting feedback) to teachers weekly to understand their needs and desires. Consider tools such as <https://www.teachupbeat.com/engagement> for teacher surveys and <https://youthtruthsurvey.org> for student surveys. Consider the EPOCH model for measuring adolescent well-being [https://www.peggykern.org/uploads/5/6/6/7/56678211/epoch\\_measure\\_of\\_adolescent\\_well-being\\_102014.pdf](https://www.peggykern.org/uploads/5/6/6/7/56678211/epoch_measure_of_adolescent_well-being_102014.pdf).
- Set, and track achievement toward, a school goal for adult culture. Celebrate when that goal is achieved. Measurement of attainment of such a goal could be tracked, in part, by monitoring the number of days staff are absent. Consider Dr. Martin Seligman's, former president of the American Psychological Association, suggested components of well-being when setting your school's adult culture goal <https://positivepsychology.com/perma-model/> and steps for creating a plan for adult culture here <https://schoolguide.casel.org/focus-area-2/overview/>.
- Give parents the option to attend parent-teacher conferences remotely.
- Stream board meetings.
- Hold virtual board committee meetings to do more of the nuanced, detailed governance work so that the full board can be more strategic during its full board meetings.

# BUDGET

## *Teacher Compensation*

The pandemic brought new and more numerous challenges for teachers and schools every day. Many school leaders report that they fear losing many teachers between school-years 2021-22 and 2022-23. To address this, some schools are considering creative and different means to motivate staff to stay.

### ***Some schools have made adjustments to the financial compensation they offer staff.***

- Some schools report that teacher morale is lower than in years past despite additional teacher bonuses provided through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER). (surveys, focus groups)
- Some schools report that offering bonuses to teachers with no absences for a particular month has improved teacher attendance. (focus groups)
- Some schools are currently adjusting insurance rates and 401K contributions to further benefit teachers. (focus groups)

### ***Other schools have explored non-financial means to compensate and recognize staff.***

- In focus groups, few participants were able to cite examples of how schools are systematically tracking the well-being of staff members. Some stakeholders acknowledged that schools focus on tactics to address teacher burnout but not on creating a deliberate plan or strategy accordingly.
- Some schools have made efforts to restart social activities for staff, such as bowling nights. (focus groups)

### ***What can you do?***

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations for Improving Teacher Compensation*

- Because accelerated learning and instruction cannot occur if teachers are absent for extended periods, consider providing monthly bonuses to teachers with improved attendance.
- Consider providing bonuses to teachers based on the extent to which teachers implement practices discussed in professional development. nnn

- Create a deliberate plan, with particular action steps, to improve teacher well-being and retention that includes, but is not limited to, increased compensation.
- Provide off-site social activities for staff that are paid by the school.

## *ESSER Funds*

The federal government has appropriated a once-in-a-lifetime financial response to support individual school responses with locally-appropriate strategies. This comes as a blessing and a curse due to its large amount and unsustainability.

### ***What money and how to spend it?***

- Michigan schools are receiving \$3.7 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) funds. Detroit Public Schools will receive approximately \$800 million in ESSER funds.<sup>21</sup>
- Some stakeholders report that it is difficult to plan long-term when the levels of funding from year to year are unclear. (surveys, focus groups)

### ***Creative use of funds.***

- To account for ESSER funds sunsetting in two years, some schools have built recently hired social worker positions into long-term budgets beyond ESSER. (surveys)
- Some ESP charter networks ensure there is at least one social worker in every school. (focus groups)

### ***Using the funds is challenging.***

- It is not always clear what is the best use of ESSER funds. (focus groups)
- Since ESSER funds became available, there has been an increase in the number of vendors soliciting schools with services. Some schools are wary of the purported experience the vendors have in what they advertise. (surveys, focus groups)
- A stakeholder recalled a university study in which only 10% of vendors' educational software had been tested on children prior to going to market at schools. (focus groups)

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<https://detroit.chalkbeat.org/2021/3/19/22340754/see-how-much-your-school-district-will-receive-in-federal-stimulus-dollars>

### ***What can you do?***

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations for use of ESSER funds*

- Prioritize ESSER funds on one-time expenditures to support accelerated learning.
- Establish systems, such as committees and/or rubrics, to evaluate vendor offerings. Require vendors to provide research-based evidence on the effectiveness of their offerings. Share your vendor evaluations with other schools.
- For instructional materials, consider those highly rated by <https://edreports.org> and aligned with the Common Core using <https://achievethecore.org/peersandpedagogy/intro-to-the-imet/>.
- When setting CIED standards, ensure sufficient resources - curricula, staff - are in place to meet those standards.
- Budget for mental health professionals to support students and teachers.
- Communicate to other schools which are effective uses of ESSER funds at your school.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

In the absence of state assessments and greater challenges over the last two years, schools have struggled to find appropriate internal measures of accountability and have limited confidence in accountability measures established prior to the pandemic. Additionally, there is an opportunity for The Center for Charter Schools at CMU to explore its role with schools in 2022-23.

### ***Has accountability changed during the pandemic?***

- Some school leaders are concerned that a reduction in accountability for teachers has hampered student learning. (focus groups)
- One ESP shared that while one of its schools has a very high rate of proficiency, that same school has a growth rate less than the national norm. They questioned whether this represented a high quality school. (focus groups)
- Some schools have made accountability measures more explicit for leaders and staff through quarterly departmental evaluations, increased classroom observations and feedback, and increased alignment between teacher evaluation and expectations of teacher performance and professionalism. This



is in contrast to a reduction in teacher accountability that occurred at many other schools. (surveys, focus groups)

- Some research suggests the importance of student portfolios during this era of substantial unfinished learning.

**CMU can be a resource to schools and boards.**

- Some schools have found the turnover in CMU Leads/Liaisons difficult to navigate. (focus groups)
- To some board members that recently joined charter boards, the role of CMU as an authorizer is unclear. (focus groups)
- “If possible, it would be nice to come together under our authorizer's schools to hear the plans for other schools and perhaps gain insights that we didn't have before.” (survey response)

**What can you do?**

*Opportunities and Recommendations - Accountability*

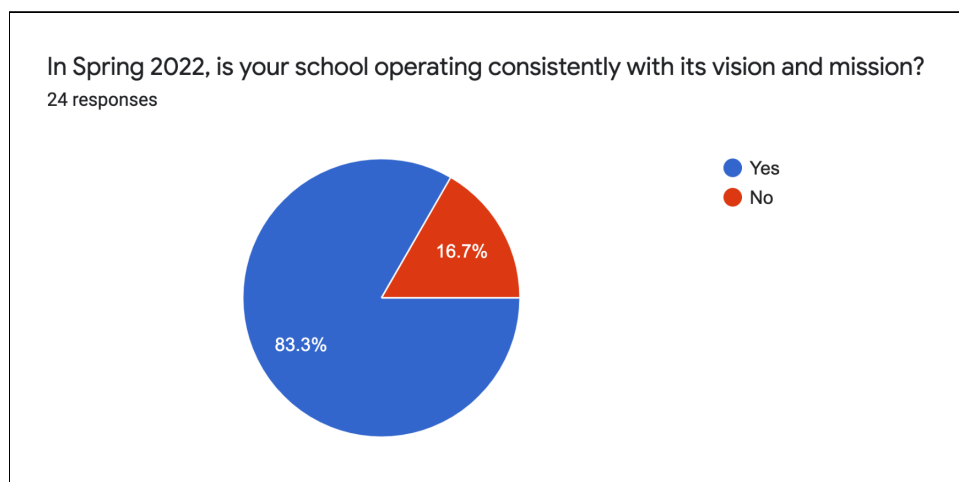
- Your authorizer collaborates with boards and school leaders to develop realistic accountability targets, and multiple measures of success, for 2022-23. Diversify assessment methods to measure achievement and growth through multiple means (assessment results, portfolio performance, a school's mission-specific goals, etc.). Consider findings from the SUNY Charter Schools Institute's Active Ingredients project <https://www.newyorkcharters.org/resource-center/researchers/active-ingredients/>.
- Your board collaborates with your school leaders to develop realistic accountability targets, and multiple measures of success, for 2022-23.
- Your school leaders collaborate with teachers to develop realistic accountability targets, and multiple measures of success, for 2022-23.
- Prioritize accountability measures or growth in 2022-23.
- Monitor and measure the extent of implementation of inputs (not just outcomes), especially when those inputs are research-based. Consider research-based best practices referenced here <https://www.region10.org/r10website/assets/File/Best%20Practices%20Aligned%20with%20CSFs.pdf>
- As part of the onboarding process for new board members, fully explain the role and expectations of the authorizer.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Mike Tyson said: “Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth.” Some schools struggled to stay focused on pre-pandemic strategies in the crush of the challenges faced during the pandemic. It appears that schools’ capacity to return to strategic thinking may be returning.

### ***What some schools experienced during the last two years.***

- Nearly 92% of survey respondents indicated that in the fall of 2019 their school operated consistent with its mission and vision. 83% of survey respondents indicated the school operates consistent with its mission and vision in Spring 2022.
- Some teachers believe leaders have become more reactive rather than proactive. (surveys, focus groups)
- Some schools have reacted to needs in the last two years by adding programming and/or staff responsibilities while not eliminating programming or adding staff members accordingly. (focus groups)
- Some boards paused board training and development for themselves over the past two years. (surveys, focus groups)



### ***Some schools are able to re-engage in strategic planning.***

- 100% of survey respondents believe their school will strategically address issues in 2022-23.
- As a new practice, some schools are including students in developing schools' strategic plans. (focus groups)

### ***What can you do?***

#### *Opportunities and Recommendations - Strategic Planning*

- If your school does not already, engage in strategic planning as soon as possible.
- If your school has a pre-existing strategic plan, revisit that plan to adjust as necessary, based on current circumstances.
- Boards and school leadership should regularly review schedules, programming and content to determine whether programming aligns with the school's vision & mission and whether ineffective, duplicate or temporary programming is planned in school year 2022-23.
- Especially for middle and high schools, include students and student voice when developing strategic plans.
- Prioritize board training, especially for newer board members.

## Next Steps

We know the global pandemic is not over and new challenges may still present themselves. While the impacts to schools and the education of students are profound, we hope this report's findings and recommendations can serve schools as they develop plans for the 2022-23 school year.

## Methodology

Through support by The Center for Charter Schools at Central Michigan University, Venn Education (represented by David Hartman) and The Learning Collective (represented by Adam Aberman) authored this report.

Project Milestones:

- Research
- Survey Round One
- Interview Round One
- Survey Round Two
- Interviews Round Two
- Published research, findings, and recommendations
- Presentation

Project Objective: To help schools make informed decisions as schools plan for the 2022-23 school year.

Documentary evidence was considered via research, a comprehensive listing of the research considered is noted in the section below titled: *Research Summary & Sources*

### Focus Group Interviews

Stakeholder evidence was collected via survey and focus group interview.

We convened 18 focus group., representing 22.5 hours of focus group time

The focus groups were convened by type:

- Teachers,
- School leaders,
- Board members,
- ESP representatives,
- CMU leads
- CMU Dean of Education

We collected 81 responses to two surveys.

The percentage of survey respondents to survey #1 by type:

- 21.1% = Charter School Board Member
- 38.8% = Charter School Leader/Administrator
- 40.4% = Teacher
- 1.8% = Representative of Education Service Provider/Support Organization

### Survey Questions:

#### Round 1:

- Please identify and explain any school programming changes made after March 2020 that you found to be effective. (identify and explain as many as are applicable)
- Please identify and explain any school programming changes made after March 2020 that you found to be ineffective. (identify and explain as many as are applicable)
- Please identify and explain school programming paused or abandoned in, or shortly after, March 2020 that your school has resumed (or plans to resume in 2022-23). (identify and explain as many as are applicable)
- Please identify and explain new school programming adopted since March 2020 that your school continues as standard programming. (identify and explain as many as are applicable)

- What are three important reflections you have regarding school programming since March 2020?
- Is there anything else you'd like to say or suggest about your school's specific response or experience dealing with school programming changes made since March 2020?

## **Round 2:**

- What methods of differentiation have produced the best results at your school since March 2020? How do you know this?
- Is your school planning to use flipped learning (e.g. students complete readings at home and focus on live problem-solving during class time) in 2022-23? How have you used flipped classroom?
- Our school would benefit from hiring additional instructional coaches in 2022-23? Why?
- Our school would benefit from increased opportunities for teachers to collaborate in 2022-23? Why?
- Our school would benefit from hiring (part-time or full-time) additional mental health professionals in 2022-23? Why?
- Our school measures the extent to which students are meeting SEL expectations? Why?
- Our school has identified a priority to focus on accelerated learning in: ... Why?
- In Fall 2019, was your school operating consistently with its vision and mission?
- In Spring 2022, is your school operating consistently with its vision and mission?
- Please provide a brief explanation for your answer to the previous two questions regarding vision and mission.
- I anticipate our school will be reactive in responding to issues in 2022-23.
- I believe our school will strategically address issues in 2022-23.
- Please provide a brief explanation for your answer to the previous two questions regarding issues in 2022-23.
- Is there anything else you'd like to say or suggest about your school's plans for the 2022-23 school year?
- Is there anything else you'd like to say or suggest about your school's specific response or experience dealing with school programming changes made since March 2020?

## **Focus Group Questions**

### **Round 1:**

- What school programming changes made after March 2020, especially this school year, have you found to be most effective? Why?
- Are you differentiating more now and to what extent is that having the desired effect? Do you have evidence?
- Has your school used assessments to inform instruction differently and in a more effective way, especially this school year? If so, how?
- What are some creative and effective ways your schools made sure student mental health was supported during remote learning? And to what extent has this remained?
- What uses of ESSER funding have been most effective?
- In what ways have you effectively reallocated resources to help schools?
- What uses of ESSER funding have been most effective and can be sustainable?
- What school programming changes made after March 2020, especially this school year, have you found to be ineffective? Why?
- What has your school tried to meet the SEL needs of students and adults that hasn't worked? Why?
- What has not worked in terms of addressing learning loss? Why?
- In what ways have you reallocated resources that has not been as effective as you had planned?
- What mistakes have schools made in the past two years, especially this year?
- What school programming paused or abandoned in March 2020 has your school/s resumed (or plans to resume in 2022-23)? Why?
- What have you or your school done to effectively involve parents this school year?
- How will, if at all, summer programming be different this summer than in summers prior to COVID?
- Have you experienced burnout/fatigue in your board and, if so, how are you addressing it?
- What innovative and effective programs are schools using to re-engage parents?
- What innovative programs are schools planning to re-engage parents?
- What new school programming adopted after March 2020 has your school continued as standard programming? Why?
- Has the support you received from leaders/coaches changed, especially this school year? Why?
- To what extent has the board made changes to how to hold school leaders and/or the ESP accountable? Why?

- To what extent has your organization made changes to how to hold school leaders accountable? Why and How?
- What innovative and effective programs are schools using to hold school leaders accountable?
- What is the most important learning you'd like to express/share with other schools?

## Focus Group Questions

### Round 2:

- Provide feedback on Select Education Program \_ Draft Findings:
  - Focus on most important standards and skills to address in a given year.
  - Hybrid learning is ineffective.
  - Re-use recorded teacher lessons
  - Maslow's Hierarchy first, Bloom's Taxonomy second
  - Unfinished learning persists
  - Schools are adding programming while not eliminating programming
- Provide feedback on Select Education Program \_ Draft Recommendations:
  - Use an asset-based approach to highlight, and build on, positive student trends in data and celebrate teachers' successes.
  - Track student progress more regularly – weekly or daily.
  - Utilize more flipped learning.
  - Set SEL standards, track extent to which those standards are being met, and have plans in place for when those standards are not met.
  - Accelerated learning efforts should continue in 2022-23, with a clear plan that identifies the most critical knowledge and skills that students need and integrate into lessons. Content should be rigorous and not focused on over-remediation.
- Is/Should your school's approach to meeting the needs of ELLs or SWDs change next year? Why?
- If you have 1:1 devices at your school, what is/should be your plan to utilize them in the learning program next year? Why?
- How is your school measuring the extent to which staff well-being is occurring and the reasons for it?
- What should your school do to accelerate student learning in 2022-23?
- For virtual schools: Have you moved from primarily asynchronous to primarily synchronous instruction? Why?
- How is/should your school plan to share the SEL needs of particular students from teacher-to-teacher as students matriculate to the higher grade level in 2022-23?
- What is your school doing effectively to prevent students dropping out?
- What are your school's plans for summer school? Why?
- Is there gravitation to synchronous learning in virtual schools? Explain.
- Provide feedback on Select Staffing Draft Findings:
  - Investments in instructional coaches and support have been widespread and appreciated by teachers.
  - More time for teacher collaboration can directly contribute to higher rates of teacher retention.
- Provide feedback on Select Staffing Draft Recommendations:
  - Send electronic survey (and other regular measures) to teachers weekly to understand their needs and desires
  - Resist putting a warm body in front of students--untrained adults are not only ineffective, but can do harm.
  - Consider providing coaches for school leaders"
- Are/Should accountability systems and expectations change for school leaders and teachers/staff next year? Why?
- Is your school working harder but not smarter and, if so, in what ways?
- Are you aware of teachers who plan to leave the profession after this school year? Why?
- Provide feedback on Select Community & Communication Draft Findings:
  - Remote board meetings are better attended
  - Remote teacher conferences are better attended
  - Schools are trying to listen more to teacher and staff needs, creating avenues for regular feedback
- Provide feedback on Select Community & Communication Draft Recommendations:
  - Stream board meetings

- Set up structures for staff and school leaders to continue to listen to all stakeholders, including student.
- What structures do staff and school leaders currently have in place to listen to school stakeholders, especially students, this year? Is/Should that change next school year?
- Provide feedback on Select Budget Draft Findings:
  - Since ESSER funds became available, there has been an increase in the number of vendors. There is a lot of vetting to do and some schools are wary of the experience the vendors have in what they advertise.
  - Teacher pay/bonuses or other monetary incentives will not make up for ineffective practices, poor communication or weak organizational culture.
- Feedback on Select Budget Draft Findings:
  - Since ESSER funds became available, there has been an increase in the number of vendors. There is a lot of vetting to do and some schools are wary of the experience the vendors have in what they advertise.
  - Teacher pay/bonuses or other monetary incentives will not make up for ineffective practices, poor communication or weak organizational culture.
- What plan does your school have in place next year to promote teacher well-being and reduce teacher turnover?
- Provide feedback on Select Other Draft Findings:
  - Some teachers believe leaders have become more reactive rather than proactive
  - Some boards paused training and development for boards over the past two years
  - Though some stakeholders believe no significant reforms/changes have taken root, others state significant changes have taken place
  - Some school stakeholders are concerned that a renewed focus on academic accountability requirements will outweigh the focus on student and staff wellbeing over the past two years.
- Provide feedback on Select Other Draft Recommendations:
  - Communicate with your authorizer, they are often a valuable resource and discussion also can lead to level-setting on expectations.
  - Create a plan to monitor the effectiveness, and provide differentiated and additional support, for these cohorts that began/were trained during remote learning: students in grades K-2; teachers that did student/teacher training during remote learning; teachers that began teaching full-time during remote learning; administrators that began during remote learning; board members that began during remote learning; ESPs that the school engaged during remote learning
  - Board Committees utilize virtual meetings to do more of the detailed governance work so that the full board can be more strategic during its full board meetings and focus more on longer-term goal-setting.
- What effective steps, if any, has your school taken to address Diversity Equity and Inclusion?
- Is there anything else you'd like to say or suggest about your school's plans for the 2022-23 school year?



## Research Summary & Sources

### KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS: *What we know has happened* **Effects on Academic Achievement**

#### CMU PORTFOLIO DATA

<https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Fall-Assessment-Analysis.pdf>

- For the 2019-20 school year, the percentage of **sliders** in MAP math performance increased substantially (>10 percentage points) as compared to previous years in CMU authorized schools. For the 2019-20 school year, the percentage of **gainers** in MAP math performance decreased (~6percentage points) as compared to previous years in CMU authorized schools.
- Also similarly, at CMU “for 2019-2020, lower grade levels were affected more than higher grade levels most notably in mathematics. It is imperative for mathematics educators and policymakers to investigate the factors that make mathematics learning, in lower grade levels, so ‘fragile’ to disruption.”
- Based on the Fall 2020 CMU study, “the gap in performance between low achieving and high achieving students increased in reading during the pandemic but remained the same for mathematics.”
- Based on the Fall 2020 CMU study, “Hispanic students are not doing as well as Black and White students in mathematics during the pandemic and Black students are lagging behind in reading compared to their White and Hispanic counterparts.”
- “For nearly all demographic groups, growth in the COVID school year declined. There are a couple of notable exceptions. Non-FRL Asian students saw consistent growth in both reading and mathematics in both time periods. Asian/FRL students, however, did see declines ... the growth trajectory of FRL students has shifted downward and in general, further away from the benchmark.”
- CMU schools’ fall ‘21 data ...  
<https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Fall-2021-22-COVID-19-Performance-Impact-Report.pdf>

#### ADDITIONAL MICHIGAN DATA

##### GVSU

- At GVSU charter schools, students’ NWEA MAP achievement in spring 2021 was lower compared to the pre-pandemic period, with larger declines in math as compared to reading.  
[https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/gvsu\\_nwea\\_report\\_dec2021\\_final\\_tagged.pdf](https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/gvsu_nwea_report_dec2021_final_tagged.pdf)
- At GVSU schools, students from historically marginalized communities had larger declines in NWEA MAP math and reading relative to White peers comparing spring 2021 and spring 2019 performance.
- “While math and reading achievement declined across grades, the decline is particularly noticeable in grades three through four. A larger percentage of students in grades three and four made little to no growth in math and reading in the past year as compared to the year prior to the pandemic. Moreover, the present gap in math achievement continues to widen in grades three and four.”  
[https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/gvsu\\_nwea\\_report\\_dec2021\\_final\\_tagged.pdf](https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/gvsu_nwea_report_dec2021_final_tagged.pdf)

#### NATIONAL DATA

##### NWEA Results:

- Comparing Fall 2021 and Fall 2019 NWEA MAP scores nationally of 5.4 million grade 3-8 students, these are results of this study - <https://www.edworkingpapers.com/sites/default/files/ai22-521.pdf>:
  - Math achievement dropped across the first two years of the pandemic, while reading achievement dropped primarily between fall 2020 and fall 2021.
  - Achievement gaps between low- and high-poverty schools widened in elementary grades and gaps increased primarily during the 2020-21 school year.
  - Learning losses are worse for lower grades.
  - Due to ongoing rolling school closures and student absences, 2021-22 won’t be a year of full recovery ... said Kuhfeld, the lead author of the NWEA working paper. “I want to believe that by March, kids will be in the classroom most days and staff won’t be out sick as much, but ... I’m not feeling super optimistic that this will be the school year of recovery as we anticipated after the last school year ... This is really going to be a multiyear effort to help catch up kids.”
  - Income-based academic gaps in elementary schools have widened by 20 percent in math and 15 percent in reading since the pandemic began.
  - NWEA researchers found the pandemic has caused significantly more damage to students’ long-term academic progress than natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.
  - “Using test scores from 5.4 million U.S. students in grades 3-8, we tracked changes in math and reading achievement across the first two years of the pandemic.
    - Average fall 2021 math test scores in grades 3-8 were .20-.27 standard deviations (SDs) lower relative to same-grade peers in fall 2019, while
    - [R]eading test scores decreased by .09-.18 SDs.

- Achievement gaps between students in low-poverty and high-poverty elementary schools grew by .10-.20 SDs, primarily during the 2020-21 school year.
- Observed declines are more substantial than during other recent school disruptions, such as those due to natural disasters."

#### Curriculum Associates:

- "Students testing in 2021 were about ten points behind in math and nine points behind in reading, compared with matched students in previous years." (Curriculum Associates' i-Ready) *Uses both CA and NWEA data to make the data point.*  
<https://www.curriculumassociates.com/blog/accelerated-learning-in-2021>
- CA = 2 years of pandemic F19-S21
  - *math*
    - 3 months behind normal progress 19 to 20
    - 5 months behind normal progress 19 to 21
  - *Reading*
    - 1 month behind normal progress 19 to 20
    - 4 months behind normal progress 19 to 21
  - 2 years of pandemic F19-S21 have exacerbated racial performance disparities
    - Black students in CA - *overall*
      - (3 months behind normal progress 19 to 20)
      - 6 months behind normal progress 19 to 21
      - Mental health needs increased (reported by parents)
      - Absenteeism increased

#### EdWeek - ACT

- "High school students lost on average the equivalent of 3.4 months of instruction in reading, 3.3 months in math, 3.1 months in science, and 2.3 months in English even as schools continued to offer remote instruction through the worst of the pandemic. Students of all racial groups and across rural, suburban, and urban schools showed significant declines in test scores, ACT found, based on scores from about 600,000 students from nearly 4,000 schools in 38 states."  
<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/the-covid-academic-slide-could-be-worse-than-expected/2022/02>
- "The average high school junior who took the ACT college-entry test in spring 2021 fell from the 50th to the 46th percentile across English, reading, math, and science—equal to about three months of learning—compared to performance in 2020 and 2019. As a result, the ACT figures, two fewer students out of every 100 who took the test last spring are on track to do well in college courses after graduation."

#### McKinsey: (iReady) -

- Remote learning disproportionately affected the learning of English Learners and some students with disabilities.  
<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>
- Based on i-Ready assessment results of 1.6 million students across 40 states, at the end of the 2020-21 school year elementary school students were five months behind in math and four months behind in reading compared with the expected levels based on pre pandemic data. "Students in majority-Black schools ended the school year six months behind in both math and reading, while students in majority-white schools ended up just four months behind in math and three months behind in reading. Students in predominantly low-income schools and in urban locations also lost more learning during the pandemic than their peers in high-income rural and suburban schools."
- Research suggests 2.3 million to 4.6 million additional 8th- to 12th-grade students were chronically absent from school during 2020-21, in addition to the 3.1 million who are chronically absent in non pandemic years. There is an estimate that an additional 617,000 to 1.2 million 8th–12th graders could drop out of school altogether because of the pandemic if efforts are not made to re-engage them in learning during 2021-22.
- During the summer of 2021, Rhode Island took a "Broccoli and Ice Cream" approach to summer school to prepare students for the new school year, combining reading and math instruction with enrichment activities provided by community-based partners. Enrichment activities such as sailing, Italian cooking lessons, and Olympic sports were utilized to try to persuade students to participate.

#### IES (Slide 8) - Amplify data

- Losses in the percentage of students-on-track is greater in lower grades.

	k	1	2	3	4	5
19-20	-6%	-12%	-5%	-4%	-8%	-6%
20-21	-18%	-13%	-8%	-7%	-8%	-10%

[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/relwestFiles/pdf/4-2-4-50\\_Tutoring\\_Webinar\\_2\\_Participant\\_Slide\\_s\\_508c.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/relwestFiles/pdf/4-2-4-50_Tutoring_Webinar_2_Participant_Slide_s_508c.pdf)

#### LA Times:

- Nearly half of Los Angeles Unified students — more than 200,000 children — have been chronically absent in 2021-22, meaning they have missed at least 9% of the academic year.
- In the three years just before the pandemic the LAUSD's chronic absentee rate, already considered high, averaged about 19%. In 2021-22 it has been about 46%.
- "A statewide analysis in January [2022] prepared at the request of the California Department of Education showed that nearly 30% of students in a sample of districts representing more than 320,000 students were chronically absent this school year, compared to nearly 13% two years earlier."
- "'We thought we were going to go back to normal this year and it just hasn't happened at all,' said Erica Peterson, national education manager for School Innovations & Achievement, a company that works with districts to track and improve attendance, which created the report. 'It is going to take a long time to right the ship.'"
- Attendance is the top predictor of dropout and graduation rates.  
[https://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/FINALChronicAbsenteeismReport\\_May16.pdf](https://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/FINALChronicAbsenteeismReport_May16.pdf)

### **Effects on Mental Health and Social-Emotional Well-Being**

#### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6945a3.htm>

- "Whereas the overall number of children's mental health–related ED [emergency department] visits decreased, the proportion of all ED visits for children's mental health–related concerns increased, reaching levels substantially higher beginning in late-March to October 2020 than those during the same period during 2019. Describing both the number and the proportion of mental health–related ED visits provides crucial context for these findings and suggests that children's mental health warranted sufficient concern to visit EDs during a time when non emergent ED visits were discouraged."
- Among children, adolescents aged 12–17 years accounted for the highest proportion of mental health–related ED visits in both 2019 and 2020, followed by children aged 5–11 years.
- "These findings demonstrate continued need for mental health care for children during the pandemic and highlight the importance of expanding mental health services, such as telemental health and technology-based solutions (e.g., mobile mental health applications)."

#### **Center on Reinventing Public Education:**

<https://crpe.org/wp-content/uploads/SEL-report-2021-final-8-10.pdf>

- "A significant portion of young people, likely 30 to 40 percent, have experienced negative impacts on their mental or social-emotional health during the pandemic.
- Students who learned remotely for long periods of time and historically marginalized students were more likely to experience these negative effects.
- Rates of anxiety and attempted suicides, already on the rise pre-pandemic, appear to have increased among all students, especially among girls.
- While some students fared well initially, or even fared better when learning remotely than they did in person before the pandemic, these positive effects did not last. Negative effects for students increased over time.
- Schools and districts, especially in rural areas without a strong social-service infrastructure, lacked systems to track student well-being or strategies to address and improve it.
- Most research efforts focused on adolescent students. We have little clear evidence on the pandemic's impact on the well-being of children ages 5 to 10.
- There is almost no systematic data that detailed the pandemic's impact on students' social-emotional development. Some students reported that they had gained skills in time management and self-direction. However, teachers reported a concerning lack of student motivation and engagement in learning."

#### **EdSurge:**

[https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-14-america-s-teachers-aren-t-burned-out-we-are-demoralized?utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmt=205593403&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz--bnPPL2vzpXqIA6673-hpMdOq0z46BTOxpyRKQvAmewdBR2RbC-flQjUCYPzoPObf6jqlvjRK7E1WRPk6J1RXckehSC4ut0ePdJDBbQDx\\_tulen5c&utm\\_content=205593403&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-14-america-s-teachers-aren-t-burned-out-we-are-demoralized?utm_medium=email&_hsmt=205593403&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--bnPPL2vzpXqIA6673-hpMdOq0z46BTOxpyRKQvAmewdBR2RbC-flQjUCYPzoPObf6jqlvjRK7E1WRPk6J1RXckehSC4ut0ePdJDBbQDx_tulen5c&utm_content=205593403&utm_source=hs_email)

- Some teachers feel demoralized rather than burnt out. "Often in education we hear that teachers are burned out, but that isn't quite accurate. As teacher demoralization expert Doris Santoro says, 'burnout tells the wrong story about the kinds of pain educators are experiencing because it suggests that the problem lies within individual teachers themselves.' Those outside education assume that the teacher can't hack it in the classroom. But in reality, teachers are forced to operate in systems that aren't functioning properly, which makes teachers feel demoralized, discouraged and overwhelmed. According to Santoro, demoralization occurs because teachers 'care deeply about students and the profession, and they realize that school policies and conditions make it impossible for them to do what is good, right and just.'"

#### **JAMA Pediatrics Study:**

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2787966>

- Parents reported that their children's behaviors at home were worse during remote learning than during in-person learning.
- Parents perceived their children's behaviors as having shifted systematically through the COVID-19 pandemic's educational interruptions.

#### **EdWeek:**

[https://www.edweek.org/leadership/teen-mental-health-during-covid-what-new-federal-data-reveal/2022/03?utm\\_source=nl&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=popweek&utm\\_content=list&M=64384201&U=1062883&UUID=35007a173acfcc14ec984d7eef62b892](https://www.edweek.org/leadership/teen-mental-health-during-covid-what-new-federal-data-reveal/2022/03?utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=popweek&utm_content=list&M=64384201&U=1062883&UUID=35007a173acfcc14ec984d7eef62b892)

- Summary of the key findings of a national survey of 7,700 high school students administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention January-June 2021.
- Thirty-seven percent of the survey's 7,700 respondents said they had experienced poor mental health during the pandemic.
- Forty-four percent of students said they had experienced "persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness" within the previous year, 20 percent had considered attempting suicide, and 9 percent of respondents said they had attempted suicide.
- Twenty-eight percent of survey respondents who reported that they felt close to people at school reported poor mental health, compared to 45 percent who did not report such close relationships.
- Twenty-two percent of students reported their own job loss.
- Over half of respondents, 55 percent, said their parents had sworn at them, insulted them, or put them down during the pandemic. Eleven percent reported that a parent had physically abused them at some point during the pandemic.
- Sixty-seven percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that doing schoolwork "was more difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic than before the pandemic started."

### **Effects on Programming - National**

#### **- CREDO Survey**

<https://credo.stanford.edu/report/charter-schools-response-to-the-pandemic-in-california-new-york-and-washington-state/>

- *Programming changed between SY 18-19, 19-20, and 20-21. (slide 13)*
  - Fewer Offerings/Dropped courses 12% (19-20) 22% (20-21)
  - Modify Graduation Requirements 13% (19-20) 18% (20-21)
  - Modify Promotion Requirements 44% (19-20) 40% (20-21)
  - Reduced Course Content N/A (19-20) 55% (20-21)
- Survey reveals learning time was lost in 19-20 and 20-21, across all subjects (least in english and math) (Slide 18-19)

### **Effect on Economy - National**

#### **- McKinsey: (iReady) -**

<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>

- "Our analysis suggests that, unless steps are taken to address unfinished learning, today's students may earn \$49,000 to \$61,000 less over their lifetime owing to the impact of the pandemic on their schooling. The impact on the US economy could amount to \$128 billion to \$188 billion every year as this cohort enters the workforce."

### **Effect on Teachers - Michigan**

#### **- Grand Valley:**

[https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/gvsu\\_school\\_operations\\_survey\\_november\\_2021\\_final\\_tagged.pdf](https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/gvsu_school_operations_survey_november_2021_final_tagged.pdf)

- Teachers' perceptions of working conditions are eroding.
- Higher level of support of leaders, when they model effective instruction, improves teacher satisfaction. "Among teachers whose school leadership regularly models effective instruction 96% are satisfied being a teacher in the school...Among teachers whose school leadership does not regularly model effective instruction 55% are satisfied being a teacher in the school."
- Teachers want more individual and collaborative planning time.

#### **Chalkbeat:**

<https://detroit.chalkbeat.org/2021/3/19/22340754/see-how-much-your-school-district-will-receive-in-federal-stimulus-dollars>

- Michigan schools are receiving \$3.7 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.
- Detroit Public Schools will receive approximately \$800 million in ESSER funds.

### **Key Research Recommendations for future school success**

#### **Accelerated Learning**

- Adopt a clear strategy for accelerated learning.
- To accelerate learning, learning opportunities must be differentiated.
- To accelerate learning, identify the most critical knowledge and skills that students need and integrate into lessons.
- Do not attempt to accelerate learning through a "drill and kill" approach to developing skills.
- To address learning loss, the physical and social-emotional needs of students must be attended to. Good relationships with students are critical to successful accelerated learning.

- Trauma-informed instruction and cultural, social, and emotional responsiveness and strong, grade-level-aligned instruction are not mutually exclusive.
- Teachers must be well supported with resources and coaching when attempting to accelerate learning.
- Engage families in the acceleration process/the process to address learning loss.
- To accelerate learning, focus on grade-level content and do not spend large amounts of time reviewing all previous content and skills. Content should be rigorous. “Now let’s imagine that you’re a math teacher or someone who supports mathematics in a system. The natural inclination here might be to make room for reteaching last year’s missed units by wholly eliminating any on-grade level units focused on ‘additional standards’ and then, once the ‘reteach’ portion of the year is complete, turning your attention to units focused on the ‘major work of the grade.’ But we know this approach did not lead to student growth in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.”  
[https://tntp.org/assets/set-resources/TNTP\\_Learning\\_Acceleration\\_Guide\\_Final.pdf](https://tntp.org/assets/set-resources/TNTP_Learning_Acceleration_Guide_Final.pdf)
- “Scaffolding up” is critical. “Instead of simplifying activities and bringing content down to what students can currently do, scaffolding up focuses on getting students to master the key practices and concepts in grade-level content, with students able to do so increasingly independently over time.”  
(<https://tntp.org/student-experience-toolkit/view/scaffolding-strategies>)
- Teachers should set aside time, when creating unit and lesson plans, to plan when and how to incorporate specific scaffolds.
- When necessary, teachers should provide repeated and varied opportunities to engage with grade-level content, such as having students read the same text multiple times with different purposes and supports.
- Teachers should spend no more than a few hours administering diagnostics to each individual student. Most diagnostics do not provide granular data on students’ needs, regardless of the amount of time administering diagnostics.
- Rather than giving one significant diagnostic assessment up front, math teachers should consider giving shorter diagnostics prior to each unit that relates to skills for that unit.
- Utilize student portfolios – that contain test scores, grades, essays and samples of what students feel is their best work – which enable students to collaborate in their own growth, seek constructive criticism and know what they need to improve.
- Try not to use the phrase “learning loss” ... “If we accept the learning-loss narrative, we’re more likely to focus on remediation, which would mean slowing down and focusing on isolated skills. This makes students feel punished, embarrassed, and inferior. Often, they are bored in remediation efforts and pay little attention to the experience. Instead, we should be focusing on acceleration.”  
<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/opinion-five-strategies-for-implementing-accelerated-learning/2021/08>
- Increasing the relevance of lessons can accelerate learning. Teachers should connect some lessons to students’ passions.
- Teachers should focus on building student confidence and their willingness to stick with challenges. Some students are less confident in their learning than they were pre-pandemic.
- Teachers should harness the power of technology to engage students in learning activities and to quickly assess student progress.
- Classrooms should be learner-centered rather than teacher-centered. “Learning is not a spectator sport, but a participatory one.” These activities promote student-centered learning: brainstorming, field trips, games, problem-solving activities, mind-mapping, group discussions, debate, role-playing, storytelling, and learners teach someone else what they are learning.  
<https://thepeakperformancecenter.com/educational-learning/learning/theories/accelerated-learning/accelerated-learning-delivery-methods/>
- Recommendations from the IES REL webinar series regarding tutoring:  
<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/west/Events/Details/371>
  - Professional tutors are more effective.
  - In-school tutoring is better through: high-frequency of three times per week; 1:1 in elementary; and small group in high school.
  - Math tutoring is more effective with high school students. Reading should be prioritized in elementary.
  - Data should be used to prioritize tutoring to highest risk students.
  - Maintain high levels of rigor despite language learning needs, i.e. do not eliminate language problems in math for English Learner students.
  - School leadership should champion tutoring programming as a priority.
- Recommendations from a Ciresi Walburn Foundation white paper:  
<https://www.ciresiwalburnfoundation.org/we-know-what-works-why-dont-we-take-action-1> :
  - Provide low-income children access to high quality early childhood education.
  - Research-informed tutoring programs are effective. Tennessee is devoting \$200 million for a statewide tutoring program for 150,000 students in reading and math.
  - Explicit phonics instruction is effective.
  - Teacher diversity should be increased.
- All Fairfax County Public School students will soon have unlimited access to online tutoring support services at no cost in school years 2022-23 and 2023-24 through an ESSER III Unfinished Learning Grant.

[https://www.fcps.edu/blog/fcps-week-e-newsletter-march-16-2022?utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmt=207675646&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9R6Xx4TyxNuWPg-aRg8kmpDDDXBfVim3p9v9AcUxDrE2FqmZ6stYKUFHw7xFyHz-KzXQzUp8p-xEDczAr\\_cTWL6EvyGamlbaqVaR67WBniihOFYc&utm\\_content=207675646&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.fcps.edu/blog/fcps-week-e-newsletter-march-16-2022?utm_medium=email&_hsmt=207675646&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9R6Xx4TyxNuWPg-aRg8kmpDDDXBfVim3p9v9AcUxDrE2FqmZ6stYKUFHw7xFyHz-KzXQzUp8p-xEDczAr_cTWL6EvyGamlbaqVaR67WBniihOFYc&utm_content=207675646&utm_source=hs_email)

- In Chicago Public Schools, a \$25 million investment in FY22 will be used to hire and train 850 literacy tutors in grades K-5 and math tutors in grades 6-12 at schools with students who most need support, in part to help the district reach its goal of ensuring all students are proficient readers by the end of second grade. <https://www.cps.edu/strategic-initiatives/moving-forward-together/>
- Recommendations from Studenttreasures.com: Collaborate, communicate, engage families, do not compromise SEL programming, use technology [effectively](#), be prepared to support mental health for all stakeholders. <https://studenttreasures.com/blog/social-emotional-learning/critical-issues-in-education-2022/>
- Recommendations from this international report: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/416991638768297704/pdf/The-State-of-the-Global-Education-Crisis-A-Path-to-Recovery.pdf>
  - Consider consolidating curriculum. To help teachers prioritize essential materials, some countries are consolidating their curricula combining curricula for multiple years (ex: first and second grade) into one year.
  - Extend instructional time by extending the school day, make the school year longer, or offer summer school for all students or those in need.
- Recommendations from The Hechinger Report <https://hechingerreport.org/proof-points-1-5-billion-in-recovery-funds-go-to-afterschool/>
  - “Based on the spending patterns of more than 3,000 school districts, U.S. schools are on track to spend more than \$1.5 billion of their federal pandemic recovery funds on after-school programs, according to FutureEd, an independent think tank at Georgetown University’s McCourt School of Public Policy ... This figure makes after-school programs the fourth most popular way to spend federal funds to address learning loss, behind summer school, software and instructional materials.”
  - “After-school programs might seem like a good idea to help students catch up because they give teachers extra time to cover material that students missed during the months of remote schooling. But getting students to attend regularly is a chronic problem. High quality after-school programs sometimes produce reading or math gains for students who do show up, but many programs operate with poorly trained teachers and lessons that are disconnected from what students are learning in their regular classes.”
  - “When researchers look across studies, they usually don’t see meaningful gains in reading or math achievement, according to a 2014 American Institutes for Research analysis for the Department of Education. The analysis also found no improvement in social and emotional skills, although there was a tiny boost to student motivation.”
  - “After-school programs aimed at helping students recoup learning losses offer a mix of academics and fun [such as arts and sports]. Without the fun, kids won’t come. Rinehart also says that kids need to attend regularly, almost daily, for a decent stretch of time. Students who come only once a week for tutoring, for example, are unlikely to see gains.”

### **Meeting Students’ Social-Emotional Learning Needs**

- Teachers should have individual meetings at the start of school that include the previous year’s teachers, caregivers/parents and students for the current teachers to efficiently receive direct information on students’ social and emotional learning needs. If such meetings are not feasible, teachers should consider asking the caregiver/parent and student to complete a form about the student’s social and emotional needs.
- When trying to determine students’ social emotional learning needs, teachers should keep in mind: loss of family and community members; food insecurity; financial and housing insecurity; and concerns about racism, especially for Asian Americans.
- “If students know that teachers value and believe in them, no matter what they have gone through over the past year, educators can create a classroom environment where high expectations are the norm. When students feel empowered, they care more and work harder.” <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/03/how-to-get-our-kids-back-on-track/618269/>
- In Chicago Public Schools:
  - In partnership with the University of Chicago, has developed a student prioritization index (SPI) that identifies students at highest risk of unfinished learning and dropping out of school.
  - \$16 million in FY22 will ensure all schools have their own behavioral and mental health teams and that students’ social and emotional needs are met through resources like the district’s new Healing-Centered Framework, expanded mental health services through community partnerships, and new SEL and bullying prevention curriculum. This is in addition to our ongoing commitment to increase social worker staffing and provide a social worker for all schools by 2023-24. <https://www.cps.edu/strategic-initiatives/moving-forward-together/>
  - CPS will invest \$5 million over the next two years to increase the number of school counselors in our highest-need schools to help ensure CPS students have the academic, social-emotional and



postsecondary counseling and supports necessary to succeed in school, career, and life. The district will fund 64 additional positions over the next two years.

- In Florida's Miami-Dade schools, each school employee was assigned 30 households to contact personally, starting with a phone call and then showing up for a home visit.
- In southwest Virginia, the United Way partnered with five school systems on a trauma-informed schools initiative, providing teachers and staff with training and resources on trauma recovery.
- Prior to the 2021-22 school year, San Antonio planned to hire more licensed therapists and social workers and place a licensed social worker on every campus.
- Beyond addressing learning losses, address children's socioemotional losses is essential.  
<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/416991638768297704/pdf/The-State-of-the-Global-Education-Crisis-A-Path-to-Recovery.pdf>
- Future research should prioritize the following:
  - Develop a deeper and more complex understanding of the differences among student experiences, including those of students at different developmental stages, with diverse backgrounds, or who experienced positive growth amid adversity.
  - Identify innovations that can dramatically improve student social-emotional learning and help schools meet students' mental health needs.
  - Investigate ways to leverage community assets and acknowledge the role of race in communities and student experiences.
  - Reimagine measurement. "Simply measuring student learning is not sufficient. Without some effort to ensure that users of that student achievement data understand the factors that might have contributed to outcomes, we run the risk of misinterpretation and stigma, especially when disparities across subgroups are large."  
<https://crpe.org/wp-content/uploads/SEL-report-2021-final-8-10.pdf>
- Districts are increasingly conducting "mental health school closures." In the 2021-22 school year, Burbio, a company that tracks school schedules, has found 65 district-wide mental health closures that impacted 2,535 K-12 schools across the country, with the greatest concentration in North Carolina and Virginia.  
[https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-02-why-more-schools-are-adding-mental-health-breaks-to-the-calendar?utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmt=205593403&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz--mwh-0XfO\\_0f92qLEqP4Tetmy2ISrVYnbl7UUOEe-Rzea9Yo\\_qnRZvH-nVOFRJkibLaqOubFBjGDEKXlevYMXyKiM4eXHVqAad6Sk4lihlscsOssM&utm\\_content=205593403&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-02-why-more-schools-are-adding-mental-health-breaks-to-the-calendar?utm_medium=email&_hsmt=205593403&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--mwh-0XfO_0f92qLEqP4Tetmy2ISrVYnbl7UUOEe-Rzea9Yo_qnRZvH-nVOFRJkibLaqOubFBjGDEKXlevYMXyKiM4eXHVqAad6Sk4lihlscsOssM&utm_content=205593403&utm_source=hs_email)
- Launched in January 2022, the state of California teamed up with Child Mind to launch the California Healthy Minds, Thriving Kids Project, a collection of 34 video lessons and worksheets designed to help teachers, students and parents cope with stress, anxiety and isolation. The \$25 million project includes lessons on topics like mindfulness, managing intense emotions and relaxation strategies. The program is available in English and Spanish, and it also includes financial incentives for teachers to participate in the lessons. All of this comes as California is in the midst of a five-year, \$4.4 billion overhaul in how it supports the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.  
<https://childmind.org/blog/child-mind-institute-launches-the-california-healthy-minds-thriving-kids-project/>
- Critics of SEL have focused on programming that involves gender and racial equity, that helps students identify their own biases and prejudices, and that encourages student activism, which is referenced in Transformative SEL. Transformative SEL promotes "issues of culture, identity, agency, belonging, and engagement" as ways of expressing the core tenets of social-emotional learning.  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/03/28/social-emotional-learning-critical-race-theory/>
- From Aspen Institute's SEAD Action Guide  
[https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/UPDATED-FINAL-Aspen\\_Integrating-Report\\_4\\_Single.pdf](https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/UPDATED-FINAL-Aspen_Integrating-Report_4_Single.pdf):
  - Former Michigan governor John Engler (R) served on the Aspen National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development (SEAD) national bipartisan commission. In an interview John Engler stated: "'We worked very hard to make sure it wasn't something that leaned to the right or to the left. This was focused on the children, and what are their needs, and what are the barriers to learning.'" (source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/03/28/social-emotional-learning-critical-race-theory/>)
  - Enacting SEAD depends on three parts:
    - 1 - Cognitive skills such as the ability to: focus and pay attention, set goals, plan and organize, persevere, problem solve
    - 2 - Social and interpersonal skills such as the ability to: navigate social situations, resolve conflicts, demonstrate respect toward others, cooperate and work on a team, self-advocate and demonstrate agency
    - 3 - Emotional skills including the ability to: recognize and manage one's emotions, understand the emotions and perspectives of others, demonstrate empathy, cope with frustration and stress
  - Success in life, and in college and career specifically, relies on students' cognitive, social, emotional, and academic development.

- Learning is a social process and students need to feel connected to their school, classrooms, teachers, and peers.
  - Schools should develop measurable outcomes for each critical aspect of achieving the vision for student success (i.e., what data tell us whether students meet our expectations for learning and development, in addition to annual state test scores and accountability measures?).
  - Schools should broaden assessment practices to include project-based assessments and student self-assessments to more accurately measure progress towards academic, social and emotional goals.
  - Trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, school leaders, and school staff are foundational to improving practice that increases student learning ... Teachers improve their practice most effectively when they are organized in teams that convene regularly for discussions of content and student progress toward goals.
  - Provide regular opportunities—in multiple modes & structures—for seeking and integrating student, parent, family, and community feedback on learning environment and school culture.
  - “To enact a research-based vision for social, emotional and academic development, school leadership teams must identify the full scope of resources available to support implementation and how well they are currently being used. School resources include more than the traditionally defined school discretionary budgets: a school’s staff, time, technology, physical space, community assets, and budget must be considered in designing around the desired vision for student success. Meaningful improvements to the student and teacher experience demand changes in resource use.”
- Based on an adult positive psychology model, there is an adolescent model that consists of five different positive characteristics that together support higher levels of well-being: engagement, perseverance, optimism, connectedness, and happiness.  
[https://www.peggykern.org/uploads/5/6/6/7/56678211/epoch\\_measure\\_of\\_adolescent\\_well-being\\_102014.pdf](https://www.peggykern.org/uploads/5/6/6/7/56678211/epoch_measure_of_adolescent_well-being_102014.pdf)
- This report on PositivePsychology.com highlights the need for positive- and asset-based practices  
<https://positivepsychology.com/perma-model/>
  - “In 1998, Dr. Martin Seligman used his inaugural address as the incoming president of the American Psychological Association to shift the focus from mental illness and pathology to studying what is good and positive in life. From this point in time, theories and research examined positive psychology interventions that help make life worth living and how to define, quantify, and create wellbeing (Rusk & Waters, 2015).”
  - “In developing a theory to address this, Seligman (2012) selected five components that people pursue because they are intrinsically motivating and they contribute to wellbeing.”
  - The five components (PERMA; Seligman, 2012) are: Positive emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishments.
- Per a recent Catalyst Ed report, incorporating social-emotional learning into academic programs is critically important to facilitate student learning  
<https://catalyst-ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/CatalystEd-SEL-Report-Synopsis.pdf>
  - Neuroscience research tells us that when students are too stressed, they cannot learn.
  - Social and emotional learning is pitted against rather than seen as integral to academic success.
  - In order to effectively teach SEL you also have to shift school culture from an adult/teacher centered culture to a student led and student agency based culture.

### **Other Considerations from Research**

#### **Funding**

“Through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act); the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA); and the American Rescue Plan (ARP), the federal government has already committed more than \$200 billion to K–12 education over the next three years, a significant increase over the approximately \$750 billion spent annually on public schooling. The majority of these funds are routed through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER), of which 90 percent flows to districts and 10 percent to state education agencies. These are vast sums of money, particularly in historical context. As part of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Obama administration committed more than \$80 billion toward K–12 schools—at the time the biggest federal infusion of funds to public schools in the nation’s history. Today’s funding more than doubles that previous record and gives districts much more freedom in how they spend the money.”

<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>

- “Edgecombe County Public Schools in North Carolina [for the 2021-22 academic year] is planning to continue its use of learning hubs this fall to better meet student needs. In the district’s hub-and-spoke model, students will spend half of their time learning core content (the “hub”). For the other half they will engage in enrichment activities aligned to learning standards (the “spokes”). For elementary and middle school students, enrichment activities will involve interest-based projects in science and social studies; for high schoolers, activities could include exploring their passions through targeted English language arts and social studies projects or getting work experience—either paid or volunteer.”



<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>

- In Tennessee, the new Advanced Placement (AP) Access for All program will provide students across the state with access to AP courses, virtually, to eliminate financial barriers and help students take AP courses not currently offered at their school.  
<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>
- In 2021-22, more than 40 public schools in Dallas opted to add five additional intercession weeks to the year to provide targeted academics and enrichment activities.
- "Now more than ever, leaders need to engage students in genuine conversations to find out what they need."  
<https://www.edweek.org/leaders/leadership/leaders-to-learn-from-a-decade-of-lessons-for-leading-in-tumultuous-times/2022/02>

#### **Research-Based Educational Best Practices**

- Research-based best practices aligned with critical success factors.  
<https://www.region10.org/r10website/assets/File/Best%20Practices%20Aligned%20with%20CSFs.pdf>

#### **Links to Research considered**

- <https://www.carnegie.org/topics/topic-articles/professional-learning-educators/how-implement-accelerated-learning-successfully/>
- <https://www.curriculumassociates.com/blog/accelerated-learning-in-2021>
- <https://tntp.org/student-experience-toolkit/view/scaffolding-strategies>
- [https://tntp.org/assets/set-resources/TNTP\\_Learning\\_Acceleration\\_Guide\\_Final.pdf](https://tntp.org/assets/set-resources/TNTP_Learning_Acceleration_Guide_Final.pdf)
- <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/03/how-to-get-our-kids-back-on-track/618269/>
- <https://www.edweek.org/Our Kids Are Not Broken/teaching-learning/opinion-five-strategies-for-implementing-accelerated-learning/2021/08>
- <https://www.hmhco.com/blog/accelerated-learning-techniques-for-the-classroom>
- <https://thepeakperformancecenter.com/educational-learning/learning/theories/accelerated-learning/accelerated-learning-delivery-methods/>
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- <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>, <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2021/09/cover-remote-learning>
- <https://www.qvsu.edu/cso/research-78.htm>
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- [https://www.qvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/qvsu\\_nwea\\_report\\_dec2021\\_final\\_tagged.pdf](https://www.qvsu.edu/cms4/asset/4A92D201-FA66-CAE2-297124435204EE1A/qvsu_nwea_report_dec2021_final_tagged.pdf)
- <https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/research-and-analysis>
- <https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Spring-Pandemic-Performance-Impact-Report.pdf>
- <https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Spring-Pandemic-Impact-Report-Guidance-Documents.pdf>
- <https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Fall-Assessment-Analysis.pdf>
- <https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/COVID%20Impact%20on%20Education%20Outcomes.pdf>
- <https://www.thecenterforcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Fall-2021-22-COVID-19-Performance-Impact-Report.pdf>
- <https://credo.stanford.edu/report/charter-schools-response-to-the-pandemic-in-california-new-york-and-washington-state/>
- <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/the-covid-academic-slide-could-be-worse-than-expected/2022/02>
- <https://www.edworkingpapers.com/sites/default/files/ai22-521.pdf>
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- <https://edsources.org/2022/california-education-issues-to-watch-in-2022-and-predictions-of-what-will-happen/665322>
- <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/416991638768297704/pdf/The-State-of-the-Global-Education-Crisis-A-Path-to-Recovery.pdf>
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- [https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-14-america-s-teachers-aren-t-burned-out-we-are-demoralized?utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmt=205593403&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz--bnPPL2vzpXqIA6673-hpMdQq0z46BTOxpyRKQvAmewdBR2RbC-fl0juCYPzoPObf6iglviRK7E1WRPk6J1RXckehSC4ut0ePdIDBbQDx\\_tulen5c&utm\\_content=205593403&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-14-america-s-teachers-aren-t-burned-out-we-are-demoralized?utm_medium=email&_hsmt=205593403&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--bnPPL2vzpXqIA6673-hpMdQq0z46BTOxpyRKQvAmewdBR2RbC-fl0juCYPzoPObf6iglviRK7E1WRPk6J1RXckehSC4ut0ePdIDBbQDx_tulen5c&utm_content=205593403&utm_source=hs_email)
- <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2787966>
- [https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-08-toxic-resilience-helped-my-students-through-tragedy-but-teachers-deserve-more?utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmt=205593403&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9L9oUDYrLE7q7liHtuRIIV\\_Zw76uvqzRpaS\\_gCX1PoQ8cZvtOWHJvH8mMq6xbMy3ynjvTSPBwa1YvTvomrnGkGjdtEXShXB2SGhkjOqF6cFXKDUw&utm\\_content=205593403&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-08-toxic-resilience-helped-my-students-through-tragedy-but-teachers-deserve-more?utm_medium=email&_hsmt=205593403&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9L9oUDYrLE7q7liHtuRIIV_Zw76uvqzRpaS_gCX1PoQ8cZvtOWHJvH8mMq6xbMy3ynjvTSPBwa1YvTvomrnGkGjdtEXShXB2SGhkjOqF6cFXKDUw&utm_content=205593403&utm_source=hs_email)
- [https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-02-why-more-schools-are-adding-mental-health-breaks-to-the-calendar?utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmt=205593403&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz--mwh-0Xfo\\_0f92qLEqP4Tetmy2ISrWYnb17UUQFe-Rzea9Yo\\_qnRZvH-nVOERJkibLaqOubFBJGDEKXlevYMXyKiM4eXHVqAad6Sk4lih1scsOssM&utm\\_content=205593403&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.edsurge.com/news/2022-02-02-why-more-schools-are-adding-mental-health-breaks-to-the-calendar?utm_medium=email&_hsmt=205593403&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--mwh-0Xfo_0f92qLEqP4Tetmy2ISrWYnb17UUQFe-Rzea9Yo_qnRZvH-nVOERJkibLaqOubFBJGDEKXlevYMXyKiM4eXHVqAad6Sk4lih1scsOssM&utm_content=205593403&utm_source=hs_email)
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- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/03/28/social-emotional-learning-critical-race-theory/>
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- [https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/2018/04/12/SEL\\_Competencies-ADA\\_Compliant\\_FINAL.pdf?rev=1f0a9865782f495fbb8bf3f4ada59806](https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/2018/04/12/SEL_Competencies-ADA_Compliant_FINAL.pdf?rev=1f0a9865782f495fbb8bf3f4ada59806)
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## Authors

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Adam is the CEO and Founder of The Learning Collective <https://thelearningcollective.net>. Adam has a 25+ year track record in numerous educational venues. Adam has assessed over 250 current, and 100 proposed, charter schools nationally (California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York and Washington), including lead writer for charter renewal inspection visits, charged with evaluating the school and writing the report that is submitted to authorizers. Recently, Adam worked with the Tennessee State Board of Education to lead its strategic planning and goal-setting process AND is currently leading the New Orleans Public Schools charter application evaluation process. Adam has also worked with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) and other organizations on evaluation and strategic planning projects regarding Florida, Idaho, Minnesota, New York, Oklahoma and Ohio authorizers. Other TLC clients have included Alliance College-Ready Public Schools, Chicago Public Schools, College Board, Inglewood Unified School District, KIPP, Tiger Woods Foundation and UCLA. Adam is also the founder, former acting board member and current board member emeritus of [www.icouldbe.org](http://www.icouldbe.org), the non-profit Internet-based career mentoring program that has served over 25,000 students, and hundreds of schools, nationally since 2000. Adam began his career in education as a Spanish bilingual public school teacher in Los Angeles. Adam earned a B.A. from Vassar College and Master in Public Policy, with an emphasis on Education, from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

### David Hartman

David is the Founder of Venn Education <https://www.venneducation.com/>, where he specializes in expert evaluation, smart change making, and high-stakes decisions based on evidence. He has spent over 25 years working in public education, most of them in support of authorizers across the country. He served the Minnesota Department of Education, where he led the design and implementation of the nation's first high-stakes charter school authorizer performance evaluation. Notable engagements include leading and developing statewide charter school authorizer evaluations in Ohio and Tennessee, turnaround of an alternative high school, strategic planning for a state association, and numerous school reviews. In addition, David has taught in high schools and universities.