



Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

January 2014

Akron Schools: Common Core is changing how kids learn in English class

Teacher Karen Hazlett, who teaches fourth grade at Akron City's Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts, says one of the biggest changes with the new Common Core English standards is a greater emphasis on non-fiction material. The new standards are tougher than Ohio's old standards, Hazlett says, and they require students to analyze writing more deeply. Read more at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU164>.

Cincinnati City gives open enrollment passing grades so far

Cincinnati City Superintendent Gabe Lofton said the adoption of an open-enrollment policy has resulted in the transfer of several hundred additional students into the district, who each bring about \$5,700 in state funding. Before shifting to open enrollment, district officials said they were losing students and funding to other districts, where such policies are in place. Go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU165> to learn more.

"Maker Spaces" are making headlines in Virginia

A Virginia high school has been hosting visitors who are interested in its "Maker Spaces," dedicated areas of the school for students to create and design their own work. The program is in place for all grades in the district, but the high school's library transformation is creating buzz and bringing visitors from universities. The library features a music studio, a "hacker" room for computer programming, a 3D printer and a "genius bar" for students to help repair computers. For the rest of the story, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU166>.

Thousands of schools nationwide participate in Hour of Code

Most U.S. states don't recognize computer science as a core subject, and there's been a 10-year decline in the number of schools that teach it, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. But, [Code.org](http://code.org) is trying to change that with the Hour of Code program, held during Computer Science Education Week in December. The program provided an interactive introduction to coding featuring video game characters, video lectures from Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg, and words of encouragement from President Barack Obama. Go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU167> to learn more.

How to use book clubs to motivate student readers

Book clubs create communities of readers, even among students in seventh grade, Colorado language arts teacher Jessica Cuthbertson writes. Among the tips she shares about book clubs are having students help select titles to read, use journals to keep track of thoughts and brainstorm any problems that arise. Her full article is at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU168>.

Student achievement research brief

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Transfer Incentives for High-Performing Teachers: Results from a Multisite Randomized Experiment

A new report from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences looks at a randomized experiment that tested whether selective transfer incentives — incentives that move high-performing teachers to low-performing schools — improve student test scores.

The Talent Transfer Initiative (TTI) was implemented in 10 districts in seven states. The highest-performing teachers in each district were identified and offered \$20,000 in installments over a two-year period to transfer into and remain in designated schools with low average test scores. The main findings of the study are as follows:

- **The transfer incentive successfully attracted high value-added teachers to fill targeted vacancies.**

Almost nine out of ten targeted vacancies (88%) were filled by the high-performing teachers who had been identified as candidates eligible for the transfer intervention. To achieve those results, a large pool of high-performing teachers was identified (1,514) relative to the number of vacancies filled (81). The majority of candidates did not attend an information session (68%) or complete an online application to participate in the transfer intervention (78%).

- **The transfer incentive had a positive impact on test scores (math and reading) in targeted elementary classrooms.**

These impacts were positive in each of the two years after transfer, between 0.10 and 0.25 standard deviations relative to each student's state norms. This is equivalent to moving up each student by 4 to 10 percentile points relative to all students in their state. In middle schools, no evidence was found of impacts on student achievement. When elementary and middle school data were combined, the overall impacts were positive and statistically significant for math in year one and year two, and for reading only in year two. The calculations suggest that this transfer incentive intervention in elementary schools would save approximately \$13,000 per grade per school compared with the cost of class-size reduction aimed at generating the same size impacts. However, according to the study, overall cost-effectiveness can vary, depending on a number of factors, such as what happens after the last installments of the incentive are paid out after the second year. The study also found there was significant variation in impacts across districts.

- **The transfer incentive had a positive impact on teacher-retention rates during the payout period; retention of the high-performing teachers who transferred was similar to their counterparts in the fall immediately after the last payout.**

Teachers were followed during both the period when they were receiving bonus payments and afterward. Retention rates were significantly higher during the payout periods — 93% versus 70%. After the payments stopped, the difference between cumulative retention of the high-performing teachers who transferred and their counterparts (60% versus 51%) was not statistically significant.

To read the full report, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU169>.

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Hilliard City among districts giving students choices for assignments

Hilliard City's Hilliard Darby High School is among several Ohio schools allowing students to choose assignments and how they will complete the work based on their learning style. A learning "menu" gives students a point goal for the assignment and allows them to choose assignments such as producing a video, completing a hands-on project or worksheet or developing a study guide to master the subject. Read more at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU170>.

Nordonia Hills City superintendent uses Twitter for professional development

Nordonia Hills City Superintendent Dr. Joe Clark is among a growing number of educators using Twitter to connect and share ideas. Clark says Twitter offers a 24/7 free professional development outlet. Ohio educators often use the Twitter hashtag #OhEdChat to join a weekly online chat and sometimes have "tweetups," where they can connect in real time. Go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU171> to find out more information.

Later start of school day may help teens get enough sleep

When the start of school was delayed by 25 minutes during the winter term, the number of high school students who slept eight hours or more on a school night rose to 44% from 18%, U.S. researchers found. Scheduling classes a little later extended the sleeping time of students by 29 minutes on school nights, according to the study in the *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*. For the rest of the story, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU172>.

Video series offers innovative ideas for teaching math

Six videos — each under three minutes long — shine a spotlight on strategies to inspire math learning, California teacher Lily Jones writes. The videos, released by the Teaching Channel and produced with the American Federation of Teachers, demonstrate successful math teaching practices aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The videos describe seating arrangements conducive to work stations, note-taking strategies, using color to support mathematical thinking and more. Go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU173> to learn more.

Pennsylvania teacher uses video games instead of textbooks

Students already are playing video games at home, so why not turn their hobbies into teaching tools, says Jeff Mummert, teacher and head of the social studies department at Hershey High School in Pennsylvania. Students use games as discussion points and analyze stereotypes and settings in games such as World of Warcraft and Assassin's Creed III, which is set during the American Revolution. His full article is at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU174>.

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Ohio Education Research Center Teacher supply and demand study

Recently, the Ohio Education Research Center published findings from a study done to understand future supply and demand for K-12 teachers in Ohio. The findings uncovered some interesting trends worthy of continued observations.

In looking at the 2011-12 school year, approximately 1.72 million students were educated in Ohio's public and community elementary and secondary schools. This number indicates a continued downward trend, in fact a decline of about 1,500 students annually since 1995. What are the reasons for the decline? Primarily, it is due simply to a declining birth rate. After 2008, the recession caused this trend to accelerate. Throughout this time, Ohio has also seen a modest, but steady migration of students out of the state.

This points to a decreasing need for teachers statewide. If the numbers continue at the current rate, it translates to a decrease of nearly 700 teachers each year. However, a dramatic increase in community schools is off-setting that trend a bit. Between 1998 and 2011, the percentage of teachers hired by community schools increased from 0.6% to 5.9%.

At the moment, teachers coming out of colleges and universities and into the workforce are aided by an accelerated rate of retirement. Those with at least 35 years of service are expected to retire through June 2015 due to changes in the teacher retirement system. After 2015, the number of teachers and administrators leaving the workforce is expected to level off or decline.

It is estimated that Ohio colleges and universities annually grant about 12,500 education degrees, but of that number, only about 7,100 go on to get a valid teacher's license. For some time the numbers have favored language arts and social studies teachers over math and science. There also is more demand for middle school and high school teachers, with the smallest demand for K-three. The best opportunity for employment is special education. Overall, approximately 15% of those earning a first-time teacher's license recorded no pay from 2008 to 2011. Though overall numbers of hires have increased slightly, there still appears to be more supply than demand.

The greatest disparity in supply and demand is at the administrator level. There are approximately three people holding a license for every available principal position. For superintendents, five hold a license for every available position. Declining student enrollment doesn't bode well for those numbers in the future.

Public school teachers should take heart. There remains a premium for taking on the challenges of managing the public school classroom. Although, over the last decade, strains on schools' financial situations and the rate of inflation have not allowed teachers to see an appreciable increase in wages. However, on average, public school teachers earn as much as 30% more than their community and private school counterparts.

The full report is available at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU175>.

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Berea City science teacher shares his top five ed-tech tools for the classroom

Berea City science teacher **Scott Barber** revealed his top five list of the most effective ed-tech tools for the classroom. He suggests educators use Twitter, mobile phones and PBS LearningMedia. His other recommended tools include Remind101, a free, texting service that allows one-way communication to parents and students, and Moodle, an open-source virtual learning environment. Read his full article at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU176>.

Ohio among a growing number of states allowing blended learning on snow days

Districts nationwide are moving to a blended learning model when severe weather prevents students from coming to school. In response to expected storms, Ohio school districts can give out “blizzard bags,” which contain printed copies of educational materials in case students lack access to the Internet. Chicago recently took advantage of online course work during snow days, and in a New Hampshire district, a snow day counts as an instructional day if 80% of students and staff participate in online instruction. To learn more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU177>.

Heath City shifts schedules to increase time for math classes

Heath City students could soon be learning math for about 75 minutes each day, up from 44 minutes. The proposed change is part of an effort to boost math scores in middle and high school. “We’re finding that teachers just don’t have enough time to get through the units and lessons,” Superintendent **Trevor Thomas** said. For the rest of the story, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU178>.

Cleveland Municipal plans to open 20 school-based health centers

Cleveland Municipal Schools are being asked to meet a growing list of student needs, including diabetes, seizures and more. In response, the district has plans to open 20 school-based health centers. Log onto <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU179> to hear a radio interview about this innovative initiative.

Some California schools look to social skills to improve student achievement

Eight California districts are teaching social-emotional skills as part of their federal waiver from parts of the No Child Left Behind Act. Some schools have adopted Second Step, which covers grades K-eight with lessons ranging from listening to self-management. “These are teachable skills, and everybody can improve upon their skills,” said **Paul Goren**, senior vice president of the nonprofit Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning. Read more at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU180>.

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Study finds districts and colleges value, yet need to increase collaborative efforts

Only one in three school district administrators and college leaders say they are collaborating effectively, according to “The Collaboration Imperative,” an edBridge Partners report. The report details survey results gathered from public school superintendents, and public and private college and university chancellors, presidents and deans. Yet, the majority of this nation’s school superintendents and college leaders believe their ability to collaborate is crucial to the effort to increasing student achievement.

“Partnerships and collaboration throughout all levels of education need to become an institutional priority in order to maintain success in both the K-12 and higher education communities,” said **Daniel A. Domenech**, executive director of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. “This survey suggests much work is needed to improve working relationships in America’s education space. If we’re going to compete successfully in a global economy, we cannot afford to sit back and allow this lapse to continue.”

Key survey findings include:

- Ninety percent of school superintendents and 80% of college presidents, chancellors and deans agree that collaboration is extremely or very important.
- However, only 33% of school districts and 34% of college leaders say they are collaborating extremely or very effectively.
- Priorities for collaboration differ, with district leaders seeking improvements in teacher training, development and delivery of curricula, and alignment of curricula between K-12 and colleges. College leaders also value aligning curricula, but are seeking help easing students’ transition and reducing the need for remediation.
- In addition to more time and money, the key support for effective collaboration is having someone dedicated to sustaining momentum.
- Both groups doubt whether their counterparts value collaboration, but the survey shows these are false doubts by revealing the importance both groups place on effective collaboration.

According to edBridge Partners President and CEO **Christen Pollock**, next steps include creating edBridge action learning networks that specifically address issues requiring collaboration between K-12 and higher education and are focused on problem solving and action.

The full report is available at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU181>.

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Hilliard City and Worthington City reaching out to parents with webinars

Hilliard City and Worthington City school districts are connecting parents with educators and school administrators via webinars — also known as online chats. Officials say the webinars offer an alternative for parents who can't make it to in-person meetings at school but want to keep up with their children's education. The format includes the school principal and other educators discussing a particular topic. Parents can view the discussion and type in questions. Read the full article at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU182>.

Students using drones to learn high-tech jobs

Banking on the prospect of growing opportunities in the field of airborne drone management, Greenon Local's (Clark) Greenon High School is offering course work in operating the devices. The program includes simulations in how drones can monitor disaster situations or military crises and also is intended to stimulate interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers. To learn more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU183>.

Beachwood City among schools offering social media training to deter sexting

Some northeast Ohio middle and high school students are being taught about online safety and the dangerous side of social media through a state initiative. "When used inappropriately, bad things can happen, such as future job opportunities being lost, kicked out of clubs or associations, reputations being tarnished, etc.," said Doug Levin, Beachwood City director of marketing and development. For the rest of the story, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU184>.

Warren County Career Center reps tours local industry

Warren County Career Center (WCCC) representatives recently toured two Lebanon companies to learn more about careers in the manufacturing field. "WCCC wants to connect our partner districts, as well as our own district, with the businesses around them so they understand the ... needs of our business community and have the opportunity to partner to impact those needs in our schools," said WCCC Career Development Coordinator Yvonne Kaszubowski. Log onto <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU185> for more.

A guide to building and sustaining positive relationships with parents

Avoid going to battle with parents, and when it comes to emailing them, keep the messages timely but brief, Florida high school teacher David Cutler writes. Read eight tips to help fellow teachers build and sustain positive relationships with parents in his Edutopia article found at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU186>.

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Time on task: past and present

There is a perception that the more time a student spends on learning, the more he or she will learn. But, according to an [education.com](#) article written by **Ellie Martinez** and **Stephen Brock**, a better way to gauge learning success is to measure time spent on task. Their article analyzes time on task studies conducted over the past two decades by several notable researchers.

In 2002, researcher **Charles Greenwood** stated that excessive time off task “can lead to dysfunctional school behavior, which can ultimately culminate in some students leaving school entirely.”

With that in mind, the authors examined methods of measuring time spent in on-task behaviors. Are teachers taking the time to look at off task behaviors and what they are? Should teachers then study the off-task behaviors and formulate a plan to eliminate or at least minimize the occurrences?

Another strategy to measure time on task is to perform interval sampling. This strategy involves breaking up a 20-minute interval into equal time intervals (e.g., one-minute intervals). During this time, student activities are observed and documented by the teacher. When measuring engaged time, four coded categories are used: on task (O), passively off task (P), verbally off task (V) or actively off task (A). It must be noted here that students with special needs, such as attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder will most likely exhibit more serious challenges to interval sampling.

Transitioning from one activity to another also can impact time on task measurements by negatively affecting a student’s engagement in academics. Researcher **Robert Slavin** stated in 2003 that maintaining smoothness minimizes the normal distraction to a student of transitioning from one activity to another. This is very problematic when transitioning to recess or lunch. This is not an interruption as much as a complete disconnect from the academic activity. Transitions of this type requires a different strategy to get the learner quickly engaged with the work at hand.

To alleviate the negative effects of transitions, teachers should be knowledgeable of strategies to maintain on-task behaviors, such as:

- Establish a consistent routine and illustrate it via a visual daily schedule.
- Make lessons engaging and use materials that are interesting and motivating.
- Reinforce on-task behavior and work completion.
- Ensure that challenging lessons include relatively easy tasks.
- Provide students with reminders as transitions approach; reminders can become more frequent as the transition draws nearer.
- Avoid stopping instruction for longer than a minute to deal with missing papers, pencils or other mild off-task behaviors.
- To decrease the amount of total class time spent transitioning, ask students to make transitions as a group and not individually.

To read the rest of the article, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU187>.

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OSBA launches campaign to highlight the success of public education

OSBA recently launched a statewide campaign to highlight the success of public education. The campaign, Stand Up for Public Schools, seeks to raise awareness about the importance of public education and locally elected boards of education. The statewide effort was launched in coordination with a campaign by the National School Boards Association to advocate for public schools across the U.S. Find out how you can get involved at www.standupforOHpublicschools.org.

Hilliard City superintendent: All students are above average, but not in the same ways, according to Dr. John Marschhausen, Hilliard City Schools' superintendent. He writes that as a result of students' unique strengths and abilities, no one assessment will accurately evaluate the abilities of all students. "There is no one-size-fits-all test, fix or easy way to measure student academic performance," he writes. To read the full article, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU189>.

All students are above average, but not in the same ways, according to Dr. John Marschhausen, Hilliard City Schools' superintendent. He writes that as a result of students' unique strengths and abilities, no one assessment will accurately evaluate the abilities of all students. "There is no one-size-fits-all test, fix or easy way to measure student academic performance," he writes. To read the full article, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU189>.

Akron City's Cardboard Canoe Races inspire budding engineers

Akron City's Firestone High School science students took to the pool recently for the ninth annual Cardboard Canoe Races — an event that inspires innovation and challenges students to work together to construct makeshift boats from atypical materials. Firestone High School seniors in Project Lead the Way coordinated the event, which featured timed races among eighth-graders and between ninth- and 10th-graders from seven Akron schools. For the rest of the story, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU190>.

Avon Local (Lorain) enlists sixth-graders for peer-to-peer tutoring

Avon Local's (Lorain) Heritage North Elementary School sixth-graders are tutoring Heritage South Elementary third- and fourth-graders in math and reading as part of a pilot peer-to-peer tutoring program. The older students use their study halls, free periods and even after-school time twice a week to work with the younger students. "The sixth-graders have really risen to the challenge of the task," said guidance counselor Jessica Stringer, who designed the new program. Learn more at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU188>.

Ohio schools face increased need for counselors amid shortage

Data show that nationwide in 2011, one guidance counselor served an average of 471 students — nearly two times the 250-1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association. In Ohio, one guidance counselor served an average of 480 students. With many schools facing a shortage of counselors, officials say students need their services more than ever as they face new challenges, including mental-health issues and bullying. Go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU191> for more.

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Flipping a classroom is catching on

In a recent list of the six most important new technologies to impact teaching and learning, a flipped classroom was at the top. This relatively new model of teaching has gained popularity. A flipped classroom is where lectures and other types of instruction are recorded and viewed outside the classroom. Students and teachers can discuss the recorded material via online discussions. The time in the classroom is used to discuss the recorded material, with a focus given on more complex items (<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/16112>).

This type of teaching gives students more time for hands-on activities in the classroom. Instead of listening to lectures, students complete homework in the classroom. This allows the teacher to provide more personalized guidance and interaction.

Technology and professional development are critical in creating a flipped classroom. An infrastructure of recording and delivering content is needed. Whether the session is recorded as video or audio, teachers need training to record effective presentations. Students need 24/7 access to online presentations. This could be done in a variety of ways, including access to computer labs before or after school; on students' mobile devices or household computers; on hardware available at the school library; or on DVDs for students who do not have Internet access at home.

The impact of a flipped classroom is still being researched. Some preliminary nonscientific surveys suggest flipping the classroom may produce benefits. In one survey of 453 teachers who flipped their classrooms, 67% reported increased test scores, with particular benefits for students in advanced placement classes and students with special needs; 80% reported improved student attitudes; and 99% said they would flip their classrooms again next year (<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/80703>). In a specific instance, Clintondale High School in Clinton Township, Mich., saw the failure rate of its ninth-grade grade math students drop from 44 to 13% after adopting flipped classrooms (<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/30159>). Also, teachers are reporting increased job satisfaction and are feeling re-energized by their heightened interaction with students.

For more information on flipped classrooms, visit these websites: <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/71560> and <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/45369>.

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Toledo City seeks to curb summer learning loss

Toledo City has designed a summer program aimed at preventing learning loss and student hunger. Summer programs are offered by the school district and community organizations, which use school campuses for their programs. This year, about two dozen schools in the district will open their doors during summer break to students and community organizations. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU193>.

Bay Village City students challenge their bodies and minds biking to school

An average of 483 Bay Village City students rode their bikes to schools during the seventh annual Bike to School Challenge in May. Students collectively accumulated 20,124 miles and burned more than 800,000 calories, and 853 gallons of gasoline were saved, according to challenge coordinator Lawrence Kuh. Prizes were awarded and students learned about the positive environmental impact of their pedaling efforts. To read the full article, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU194>.

Three tips to help high-school teachers improve assessments

Liz Wolfe-Eberly, an assessment literacy specialist in southwest Ohio, offers several tips to help high school teachers improve assessments. Her tips include testing with purpose, analyzing results and collaborating with colleagues. More can be found at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU195>.

Using learning gardens to improve teaching, engagement

Spring is a great time to start learning gardens, writes Suzie Boss, a journalist and project-based learning advocate. Boss' suggestions include building buy-in for the program, being prepared to solve problems that arise, recruiting a garden coordinator and celebrating success in the garden. The work pays off, according to the nonprofit REAL School Gardens, which has found gardens increase teacher effectiveness and student engagement. Learn more at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU196>.

What teachers should know about copyrights, ownership of digital content

States and school districts need to define who owns teacher-created content, according to the State Educational Technology Directors Association. In a recent policy brief, the group noted the need for such policies is driven, in part, by the increasing use and tailoring of digital content in the classroom. "In the era of digital publishing, which includes teacher-created, -refined and -remixed materials, an important question has arisen: who owns this digital content?" the group wrote in the brief. To view a summary, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU197>.

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Understanding how diverse publics can affect public education success

It's not "the public"; it's *a variety of different* publics. It's important to understand how the diverse publics in your broader community can affect district success.

A new book, *Publics for Public Schools: Legitimacy, Democracy and Leadership*, authored by Dr. **Kathleen Knight Abowitz**, an associate professor at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, seeks to define the nature, behavior and power of the "public." The word's true meaning in the term "public schools," its relevance in terms of public school community engagement efforts and its potential influence on important decisions to the public school community serve as a foundation of Abowitz's research project.

In the first several chapters of the book, the author draws on the historical basis of public schools' formation as common schools, and builds a case for the need for public schools to impose their overall legitimacy within the greater public domain. Further, understanding the "bifocal vision" school leaders must maintain for success to understand, manage and work within the larger "nation-state public" and the smaller, more diverse publics they serve (each with their own main area of interest) is well developed.

The author discusses four spheres of influence in which public schools exist (public, state, civil and private), and how each of these spheres seeks to influence the public school agenda.

The book emphasizes the critical importance of public schools in a democratic society, and the mutually necessary and potentially beneficial relationship among public schools (in general and as local districts) and their overlapping, but distinctly different publics. The author helps the reader understand the function of community-based organizations (CBOs) to lay the groundwork for public school leaders to understand the potential power and influence their publics can have within communities, and to dispel traditional fears many have toward CBOs.

The book is currently the featured selection of the OSBA Book Club. For more information, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU192>.

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Indian Hill EV students use math to help local fire department

Students at Indian Hill EV's Indian Hill High School used their math skills to help the local fire department identify ways to maximize water flow during emergencies. One proposed solution could triple water flow, offering "a real world answer to a real world problem," said Madeira and Indian Hill Joint Fire District Chief Steve Ashbrock. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU199>.

Two Ohio nonprofits use cloud technology to improve IT efficiency

Cloud technology allows school districts to share infrastructure resources and more via a virtual environment, according to the Northwest Ohio Computer Association and Tri-Rivers Educational Computer Association. Leaders from the two nonprofits describe how their partnership and use of cloud-based technology has benefited Ohio schools at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU200>.

Access to food worse for some Ohio students during summer

Many of the one in four students in Ohio who live in food insecure homes are less likely to have access to nutritious meals over the summer, according to the "Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation" study by the Food Research and Action Center. Data show that only a fraction of eligible students in Ohio participate in summer meal programs. Read more about the study at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU201>.

Genoa Area Local teacher applies BYOD to music instruction

After watching bring-your-own-device (BYOD) programs succeed in other subjects, a teacher at Genoa Area Local's (Ottawa) Genoa Elementary School decided to use BYOD to help fourth- and fifth-grade students continue their music lessons over the summer. In the program, students use their own iPads, smartphones and other devices — or are assigned a device — to access mobile applications that help teach music. Read the full story at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU202>.

Study: Nonacademic Web surfing leads to lower test scores

Even top students can be distracted by Internet browsing during class, according to a Michigan State University study that finds students who spent the most time surfing the Internet during class had the lowest exam scores. Surfing includes visiting social media sites such as Facebook; online shopping; playing games and more. To read more about the study, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU203>.

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Recognizing nonacademic behaviors pays off in higher graduation rates

While there are strong pressures to increase the level of academic rigor in schools, there is growing awareness and understanding that other factors are critical to student success. Elementary and secondary educators always have recognized that student motivation and engagement, as well as a personal belief in one's ability to succeed, also are key ingredients in increasing school graduation and completion rates. The importance of student motivation and engagement is revealed in a recent survey on this issue. Teachers and school-based administrators were asked to rate the importance of a variety of factors to student achievement. Student engagement and motivation received an average score of 3.9 on a four-point scale, the highest among the eight categories examined. Eighty-seven percent of respondents considered student engagement and motivation to be "very important."

The intense focus on academic skills often means that schools have less time to build students' motivation and perseverance. However, there is renewed attention on the importance of character traits such as persistence and self-control in students. A 2013 analysis by the Center on Education Policy at George Washington University identified four academic mindsets that contribute to a student's motivation: belief in the student's own competence; ownership of his or her learning; interest in the subject, or at least an understanding of the value of learning it; and a feeling of social relatedness to the school and community. School districts around the country are taking steps to address the noncognitive aspects of learning:

- Educators at the Da Vinci Science High School in Los Angeles are emphasizing "productive failure" — the idea that students benefit from failing and then learning to recover as they work to master the concepts that eluded them.
- The New York City-based Posse Foundation Inc. forms peer groups to support urban, college-bound students as they make the transitions from high school to college to graduation.
- The promise of a college scholarship is offered as an incentive for students in many locations.
- San Ysidro High School in San Diego offers a curriculum that taps into local cultural resources and focuses on community services.

In addition, a new National Center for Education Statistics analysis finds that, for the first time in the nation's history, more than eight in 10 students are completing high school with a diploma. The national graduation rate rose to 81% in 2012, up from 78% two years earlier.

For more information on this topic, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU198>.

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Upper Arlington City students share lessons on kindness

Fifth-graders at Upper Arlington City's Barrington Elementary School created and shared "kindness kits" with younger students. Kits include a book about kindness and other tools and resources, such as a "talking stick" to help students take turns when speaking during class. To read the full story, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU204>.

STEM program takes Ohio middle schoolers onto Lake Erie

Middle school students from five Lake County school districts are participating in the science, technology, engineering and math-based program Summertunity to learn about the environmental challenges facing Lake Erie. The program — resulting from a partnership among local school districts, nonprofits and health organizations — involved students going out onto the lake to observe how pollution, contaminants and invasive species affect water quality. Students then were encouraged to determine how to address the issues. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU205>.

Five ways to help students motivate themselves

"We work hard to motivate our students, but how do we help them motivate themselves?" asks Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development EDge writer Ryan Thomas. In his recent article at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU206>, Thomas presents five strategies to help students develop their intrinsic motivation.

Access a free directory of online colleges and universities

Top colleges and universities are now offering online options as part of their curriculum. For students and teachers interested in exploring the wide range of online courses available, there is now a free, comprehensive guide that you can link to from the "Improving student achievement area" on OSBA's website. Go to www.ohioschoolboards.org/improving-student-achievement and scroll down to the "Directory of online colleges with universities" link to access the guide.

Report considers schools' use of Internet filters

Some schools' Internet-filtering policies may reach beyond the scope of the federal Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000, according to a recent report by the American Library Association. Report author Kristen Batch says schools should do more to teach students about appropriate online conduct instead of over-filtering the Internet. For a report summary, click to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU207>.

Student achievement research brief

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New research report says education spending works

Among districts that substantially increased education spending as the result of court orders, low-income children were significantly more likely to graduate from high school, earn livable wages and avoid poverty in adulthood, reports **Holly Yettick** for *Education Week*.

Yettick cites a working paper by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) as her source. NBER is a private, nonpartisan research organization headquartered in Cambridge, Mass.

Between 1971 and 2010, supreme courts in 28 states responded to large gaps between rich and poor districts by reforming school-finance systems. Although the changes had limited consequences for higher-income children, for low-income students who spent all 12 years of school in districts that increased spending by 20%. Graduation rates rose 23%.

Estimates are based on an analysis of 15,000 children born between 1955 and 1985, and account for a host of other potential explanations, such as desegregation, war on poverty programs and demographic changes.

The paper's analysis also found that low-income children who were exposed to a 20% spending increase for their entire school careers attained nearly a full year of additional education after high school. Between the ages of 25 and 45, these same children also were 20% less likely to fall into poverty during any given year.

Furthermore, according to the paper, low-income children exposed to a 20% spending increase their entire school careers earned individual wages 25% higher than they would have without the changes, and their family incomes were 52% higher.

Link to the article and working paper by logging onto <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU208>.

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Canton City among districts leading the way in STEAM education

Lessons involving STEAM — science, technology, engineering, arts and math — are catching on at schools nationwide, and **Canton City's** Hartford Middle School is on the forefront of this trend. The concept also has drawn support from businesses and government. To read the full story, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU209>.

Ohio high schools focus on graduating students with job skills

A new program at 15 central Ohio school districts will give students the opportunity to graduate from high school with certificates in careers such as health care and information technology. The state-funded Innovation Generation initiative is funded by the state and includes partnerships among schools, a local community college, businesses and other agencies. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU210>.

Ohio, Kentucky schools adjust to increased teacher retirements

On average, about 13% of the 3.4 million educators in U.S. public schools retire, change school districts or leave the profession every year, according to data from the Alliance for Excellent Education. Find out how increased teacher retirements are affecting schools in Ohio and Kentucky by visiting <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU211>.

Teachers harness the power of digital storytelling

A growing number of educators are implementing digital storytelling to engage students in lessons. This article offers examples and resources to help educators implement the technique in their classrooms, including having students interview senior citizens in person and follow up with recorded elements. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU212>.

Why Khan Academy is more than just videos

Teachers should forget everything they've heard about the Khan Academy and visit the site with fresh eyes, according to **Eric Patnoudes**, a former teacher and instructional technologist. Patnoudes writes that the Khan Academy goes beyond videos and offers valuable features that aid teachers in tracking student progress and personalizing instruction. To read his article, see <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU213>.

Student achievement research brief

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Which teacher characteristics affect student achievement?

RAND Corp. — a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization — examined the relationship between teacher quality and student achievement by analyzing five years of math and reading tests and other records from students in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

The results of the study were similar for elementary, middle and high schools, suggesting there was no direct connection between the traditionally assumed measures of teacher effectiveness and student achievement over time. While teacher effectiveness is typically measured by traditional teacher qualification standards such as experience, education and licensure examination scores, RAND Corp. researchers found no evidence that these standards have a substantial effect on student achievement in LAUSD.

While these findings pose problems for educators and policymakers seeking to enhance teacher quality, RAND Corp. researchers write that they also encourage them to develop other ways to improve teaching in low-performing urban areas.

Researchers selected LAUSD because it is the second-largest public school district in the United States — with K–12 enrollments reaching 730,000 students per year in more than 800 schools — and because the district's data linked individual students to their classroom teachers. This data link allowed researchers to examine student progress over several years and across classrooms led by different teachers.

Some of the brief's key points are:

- There is little evidence to suggest that teachers who can increase student achievement are concentrated in a few high-performing schools.
- Traditional teacher qualifications have little influence on classroom achievement.
- A five-year increase in teaching experience had little effect on student achievement.
- Student achievement is unaffected by teacher licensure scores.
- Policymakers should consider alternative measures to predict performance.
- Rewards and incentives like pay-for-performance might help motivate teachers in the classroom.

To read the full report, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU214>.

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Rocky River City expands co-teaching to elementary grades

After success with middle and high school pilot classes, Rocky River City is expanding its co-teaching model into elementary grades. The partnership places a learning specialist with a content specialist to support students with diverse needs in inclusive settings. To read the full story, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU214>.

Sheffield-Sheffield Lake City elementary shifts to structured recess

Sheffield-Sheffield Lake City's Tennyson Elementary School has adopted a structured recess program in which students are coached in traditional playground games such as Red Light-Green Light and Mother May I. Aiming to get students more active during recess, the program includes three 30-minute sessions of games that encourage problem-solving and teamwork. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU215>.

Push for coding education collides with teacher shortage

The push for schools in the U.S. and beyond to teach computer coding has prompted an increase in such programs. However, the change has resulted in a unique challenge: There are not enough trained educators to teach the subject. Some schools have responded by offering in-house training. Learn more at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU216>.

More teachers engage students with virtual field trips

In 2013, 25,000 teachers — a 30% increase over the previous year — joined Skype in the Classroom. The platform allows educators to bring virtual guest speakers into classrooms and take students on virtual field trips. The technology also offers opportunities for districts to find low-cost ways to engage students. More details on the platform can be found by clicking to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU217>.

Ideas to help students find their passion in learning

Research shows that helping students find their passion, or “spark,” keeps them engaged and helps them achieve in school, youth-development author Susan Ragsdale writes. She shares five activities to help students discover their passion, which will help build a classroom community and strengthen student-teacher relationships. To read her article, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU218>.

Student achievement research brief

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Studies show project-based learning (PBL) schools boost conceptual, applied knowledge and math scores

Project-based learning is a teaching method where students work in a collaborative environment in which projects and problems built around a main question are given to a team. In answering, students learn a variety of real-world skills such as refining questions, making predictions, designing plans and experiments, collecting and analyzing data and drawing conclusions.

The concept of project-based learning has been around for more than 100 years starting with John Dewey's "learning by doing." Students learn through collaboration and problem-solving instead of memorization. Business leaders believe this teaching method will prepare students for the 21st century job market.

PBL in the classroom has only been around for the last 25 years. Each year, districts are implementing PBL either at the classroom or building level. In 1996, the Napa Valley Unified School District in California opened a new technology high school that used the PBL method of instruction. Since then, more than 80 new tech high schools have opened across the country.

Research is finding PBL does impact student achievement. Students are more engaged and take an active role in learning. A 2011 report, "Investigating the Effects of Project-Based Learning on Students' Academic Achievement and Attitudes Towards English Lesson," found that PBL "students learn responsibility, provided them with motivation to learn, and enabled them to acquire knowledge by receiving different ideas and understanding the others' point of view in the lesson."

A multiyear study, "Learning from Teaching: Exploring the Relationship Between Reform Curriculum and Equity," found that "students in the project-based-learning school significantly outperformed the traditional school students in mathematics skills as well as conceptual and applied knowledge. In fact, in the project-based-learning school, three times as many students passed the national exam."

However, PBL can provide students the opportunity to hide in a group and not take part in the project. But there are ways to ensure that every student takes an active role in a team. Research has determined the key elements in a successful PBL model include a realistic project/problem, a structured group environment and multifaceted assessment. With these in place, along with continued professional development, PBL can be successful with all students.

You can find more information on PBL at some of the following websites:

<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU219>

<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU220>

<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU221>.

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Duncan spotlights Ohio school district collaborative

U.S. Secretary of Education **Arne Duncan** recently highlighted rural districts' challenges and successes during the Rural Education National Forum. In particular, he praised the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative, composed of 21 rural school districts, 74 schools, 2,066 teachers and 34,000 students. "The (collaborative) is further ahead than many places" in the nation, Duncan said. To read the full story, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU222>.

Co-teachers work to boost literacy skills at Springfield-Clark Career Technology Center

Two educators are working to improve the literacy skills of 11th- and 12th-grade students enrolled at **Springfield-Clark Career Technology Center** by co-teaching with tech-skills instructors. Teaching English with the lab teachers is intended to lead students to "more success in literacy and emphasize the real-world skills that they're learning in the program," English teacher **Christina Steffanni** said. For details, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU223>.

What's the best course for schools adopting computer coding?

A growing number of school districts are embracing computer coding amid suggestions from some educators and industry experts that such classes should be required learning. Read more about questions surrounding the type of coding education students are receiving and whether the lessons are addressing workforce shortages at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU224>.

Could changing senior year benefit all students?

Some school systems are experimenting with "13th grade," a year in which students stay in high school as they attend college. However, Vox media education reporter **Libby Nelson** writes all high schools could integrate more college and career preparation into the curriculum by allowing students to earn college credit in their last year of secondary school or setting up internships and job training. Read her article at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU225>.

How Mentor EV expanded blended learning

Mentor EV is one of 32 districts — out of more than 700 — in Ohio to advance blended-learning concepts. Find out how, with the help of a portion of a \$14 million state grant, the district has been able to work toward its goal of expanding blended learning to all schools. Go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU226> to learn more.

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The power of the Pygmalion Effect: Teachers' expectations strongly predict college completion

In education circles, the Pygmalion Effect is best summarized by the statement, "People do better when more is expected of them." A recent brief from the Center for American Progress (CAP) examines the Pygmalion Effect by analyzing the National Center for Education Statistics' Education Longitudinal Study (ELS), which followed a nationally representative sample of 10th-grade students from 2002 to 2012.

ELS allows researchers to link teacher expectations to individual student data collected up to 10 years later. Below are some of the key findings from the study:

- All else being equal, 10th-graders with teachers who had higher expectations were three times more likely to graduate from college than students of teachers with lower expectations.
- Secondary teachers predicted high-poverty students were 53% less likely to earn a college diploma than affluent peers.
- Secondary teachers predicted African-American students were 47% less likely to graduate from college than white peers; and Hispanic students 42% less likely.
- High school students who enroll in college-preparation programs are more likely to graduate from college.

Teachers also say high expectations are important for student achievement. According to a 2009 MetLife survey with a nationally representative sample of more than 1,000 K-12 teachers, 86% said that there was a strong relationship between having "high expectations for all students" and student learning.

But when it comes to actual expectations for students, only 36% of teachers who took the MetLife survey said that "all of their students" could achieve academic success. The survey also revealed that only 13% of teachers "believe that all of their students are motivated to succeed academically."

The CAP brief reviews a large body of research that indicates expectations have a long-term impact and are more predictive than student motivation and student effort. The brief concludes by saying expectations must be raised and that Common Core standards can do this. At the same time, the brief states that teacher instructional capacity must improve, and it's critical for teacher-preparation programs to communicate the importance of high expectations for all students, especially low-income students of color.

To download the full CAP brief, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU227>. To read The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU228>.

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New academy teaches parents concepts being taught in school

Newark City Schools has created the online “Parent Math Academy” to teach parents the concepts their children are learning in school, including new vocabulary words and an overview of any graphics or strategies the students might see. The district hopes the academy will bridge the gap between home and school as Newark implements its new Common Core-based curriculum. Visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU230> for more.

ACT report finds fewer students likely to seek jobs as STEM teachers

According to a new report issued by ACT, students enjoy STEM courses, but less than 4,500 of the 1.8 million students who took the test in 2014 indicated they want to become a math teacher, and only 1,115 students planned to be a science teacher. “The numbers we’re seeing are not likely to meet the expected demand for future STEM teachers,” ACT president **Jon Erickson** said. For details, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU229>.

Mayfield City spotlights STEM career paths with eighth-grade program

A pilot program to replace typical science classes with project-based science, technology, engineering, math and medical — or STEM2M — classes for eighth-graders is improving student engagement and learning at **Mayfield City’s** Mayfield Middle School, educators say. With the first cohort of eighth-graders, the district plans to expand STEM2M into high school, where students can specialize in medical or engineering sciences. Read more at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU231>.

Avoiding these 10 things can improve classroom management

Teachers may be doing several small things that unknowingly sabotage their classroom-management efforts, writes **Jennifer Gonzalez**, who has taught middle-school language arts. In this commentary, she shares 10 things to avoid, including smiling at the wrong times, speaking only in “don’ts” and making students choose between reading and listening. Read her article at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU232>.

Accelerated teacher growth: How one district is doing it with video

Recent research has started to point to the potential benefits of using classroom video in teacher observation and professional development. But one district in Georgia has already put it into practice. Read how Newton County Schools made it work and the remarkable results they’re already seeing at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU233>.

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The high cost of principal churn

A new report from the School Leaders Network indicates that schools, students and teachers bear significant, unnecessary costs from principal turnover, or “churn,” because little is done to offer principals reasonable support after their second year.

The report highlights critical education resources, disruptions to classrooms and weakened student-learning opportunities that occur because principals leave jobs at a rate higher than nearly all other white-collar professions.

According to the report, 25,000 (one quarter of the country’s principals) leave their schools each year, leaving millions of children’s lives adversely affected. Fifty percent of new principals quit during their third year and those that remain frequently do not stay at high-poverty schools, trading difficult-to-lead schools for less demanding leadership roles that serve more affluent populations.

The report further states that for many of these principals “the job is simply too complex, too poorly constructed, too isolating. School leaders lack the ongoing support and development required to maintain and foster sustained commitment.”

Research shows a minimal reduction in principal-turnover rates could save districts \$163 million annually. Keeping the same school leaders in place for years has positive effects on student achievement, particularly at high-poverty schools, since principals constitute 25% of total school influence affecting student outcomes.

The negative effects of high principal turnover are evident a year after a vacancy, and it can take the next principal up to three years to regain positive momentum in math and English language arts performance.

The report also states that it takes an average of five years to put a vision in place, improve teaching staff and fully implement policies and practices that positively impact a school’s performance. And, it calls upon decision-makers and funders to value and prioritize principal retention as much as principal pipeline development.

Click on <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU234> to download the full report.

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