



# Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

November 2020

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## Leaders consider how to assess students this year

During a recent Council of Chief State School Officers webinar, state education leaders and national testing experts agreed that student assessments are important during the pandemic but acknowledged challenges and a need to make adjustments. Some possibilities for modifications discussed included using a sampling of students and separating assessments from accountability systems.

<http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU664>.

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## Students learn about finances on an obstacle course

Students in Charleston, W.Va, negotiated physical obstacles as they learned about money and budgeting in a financial literacy obstacle course. The course, located in a local park, was designed to mimic real life, with rewards for students who stayed within their budget and penalties for those going over budget, says **Mavery Davis**, an accountant who brings financial abstract concepts to life with the obstacle course.

For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU665>.

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## Building dual-enrollment programs that work for all students

Nine community colleges in Ohio, Washington and Florida have strategies that help more students of color enroll in dual-enrollment programs and improve outcomes for those students, according to a report from The Aspen Institute and the Community College Research Center. The report finds the dual-enrollment programs consider how to close equity gaps and target communities of color for enrollment.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU666>.

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## Critical thinking is necessary across school subjects

Students need academic skills that they can apply to real-world situations, including strategies for engaging in civics through respectful debate and finding solutions to problems, says **Pablo Wolfe**, founder of the Coalition of Civically Engaged Educators. Wolfe emphasized that critical-thinking skills are important across all subjects.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU667>.

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## Discipline becomes murky with remote learning

School officials in some districts are considering how to apply rules and discipline while students are learning remotely, including dress codes and the presence of toy guns and other items visible in students' homes. Along with other experts, **Miranda Johnson**, director of the Education Law and Policy Institute at Loyola University, urges caution and suggests teachers address disruptive behavior in a way that avoids exclusionary consequences.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU668>.

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## Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

### Teachers turn to social media for training

Many California school districts offered a wide variety of training over the summer to prepare teachers for remote learning in the fall. But some struggled to offer enough to meet the needs of all teachers, leaving many to find training on their own.

School districts offered courses taught by local teachers or hired teaching consultants. But in many instances, training focused only on teleconferencing tools like Zoom and educational platforms like Google Classroom. In other districts, teachers were largely on their own to convert lessons from in person to virtual, according to a recent EdSource survey.

**Lorraine Angel**, a chemistry teacher at Calaveras High School, turned to webinars provided by the California Teachers Association, California Department of Education and others after she couldn't find the training she needed through her school district.

Information on using educational platforms like Zoom and Google Classroom as well as training on how to teach specific student groups and subjects online can be found by searching the internet, YouTube channels like Going The Distance and Facebook teacher groups like Teaching during Coronavirus.

With the training and skills teachers learned from their experiences in the spring and summer, the quality of instruction has increased in many places, said Dr. **Linda Darling-Hammond**, president of the California State Board of Education and president of the Learning Policy Institute, a nonprofit education policy research organization. To meet the demands of remote learning, a greater focus has been placed on lesson planning, she said. Teachers have not only received instruction on using Zoom and online video platforms effectively, they've also learned to organize instruction and curriculum in ways that are constructive, she said.

The teachers who are effectively teaching this fall semester have adjusted their teaching methods to distance learning, rather than using old teaching methods in an online format, said Darling-Hammond, who recently co-authored the report *Restarting and Reinventing School: Learning in the Time of COVID and Beyond*.

For more resources on remote instruction and a link to the study, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU669>.

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