



Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

October 2020

More students eye gap year amid pandemic

A growing number of students are considering a gap year during the coronavirus pandemic, according to **Ethan Knight**, executive director of The Gap Year Association. That includes **Haley Schmidt**, a graduate of **Gahanna City**, Gahanna Lincoln High School, who was set to attend Ohio University this fall. Deterred by the lack of in-person learning, she is spending her gap year taking community-college courses and working two jobs. For more, go <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU658>.

Why deaf students need access to ASL stories during distance learning

About 73% of deaf and hard of hearing children live in homes where family members do not regularly sign, according to a 2014 national survey by Gallaudet University. Deaf students need support learning with American Sign Language (ASL) during distance learning. That's why educators and app creators have made resources available for free during distance learning.

For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU659>.

Oregon City's culinary students get virtual lessons about food trucks

Andrea Lawrence, a culinary arts teacher at **Oregon City's** Clay High School, is partnering with area food trucks to organize virtual field trips for students. **Jeff McIntyre**, who owns Manny's Munchies, is preparing a video to show culinary students some of the behind-the-scenes work it takes to operate the food truck.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU660>.

Factors may combine to worsen shortage of teachers

Mass teacher shortages are an impending threat facing education as more teachers choose to quit, retire or are laid off because of the health and economic crises caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Further, a change to worker visas could add to the shortfall, as educators from other countries may no longer be eligible to staff positions in the U.S.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU661>.

Rubric evaluates remote learning effectiveness

Twenty education associations and education technology companies have partnered to develop a rubric to help school districts identify improvements needed for effective remote instruction. The guide helps districts evaluate 29 areas, including goals, governance and schedules.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU662>.

Student achievement in-depth

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

Want to learn more effectively? Take more breaks, research suggests

John Sweller, professor emeritus at the University of New South Wales at Sydney, is an influential learning science researcher best known for his cognitive load theory, which suggests that educators should present information without extraneous details. Otherwise, the students' brains can literally overload with what amounts to intellectual clutter.

Sweller's latest line of research offers a new insight: the human brain may need regular breaks when learning to help it refresh its working memory capacity.

At the heart of both lines of research is that the human brain has a pretty limited ability to hold thoughts in working memory. The working memory capacity is really just a few items of information – that's all we can deal with at any given time.

Taking regular breaks may help to support learning, said Sweller. The brain's ability to retain information in working memory is limited, and if students are having trouble understanding something, that may translate to their working memory is overwhelmed, he said. The secret is to match that limited working memory with the vast storage space in long-term memory, which he said has no known limit.

"In order to preserve the contents [in] long-term memory, only very limited amounts of novel information can be processed at any given time," he and his colleagues wrote in a recent research paper.

Sweller and other researchers have long assumed that the power of working memory is constant – that it works equally well all the time. In his latest series of experiments, though, Sweller and his colleagues found that working memory can suffer from what he calls resource depletion. In other words, our working memories may get worn out from excessive use.

For more information and links to the aforementioned studies, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU663>.

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