



Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

February 2024

West Branch Local launches industrial maintenance program

West Branch Local's (Mahoning) West Branch High School launched an industrial maintenance program that provides training in manufacturing operations, welding, pneumatics and hydraulics. The program, a partnership with regional companies, is meant to equip students with valuable workforce skills. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU921>. (Press Get the News arrow at bottom of advertisement screen.)

Students solve cold case in sociology project

Students at Elizabethton High School in Tennessee tackled a decades-old cold case involving a potential serial killer as part of a sociology class assignment. The iHeartRadio true crime podcast series "Murder 101," showcases the students' efforts and the benefits of project-based learning and community partnerships. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU922>.

Teachers' yoga practice pays off

Superintendent **Barbara Malkas** of North Adams Public Schools in Massachusetts implemented a unique approach to enhance student behavior by encouraging teachers to practice yoga. The Breathe for Change program, focusing on yoga and social-emotional learning, resulted in reduced discipline referrals and improved teacher well-being. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU923>.

Alternatives suggested to classroom cellphone bans

Edtech executive and author **Jason McKenna** emphasizes the importance of addressing boredom and improving student mental health as an alternative to banning cellphones. McKenna suggests giving students more autonomy, partnering with them on assessment processes and fostering a mindset that embraces technology as a tool for creativity and learning. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU924>.

Building literacy through conversations

Elementary school teacher and author **Jennifer Orr** believes that if we want students to think critically across disciplines, they need to be given more time to talk in class. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU925>.

Schools opt for snow days over remote learning

Despite predictions that remote learning would replace school snow days, recent winter weather disruptions have demonstrated schools are maintaining the traditional snow day. Educators and parents, facing logistical challenges and state laws, report that districts are opting for full snow days, emphasizing the importance of play and family time during inclement weather. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU926>.

Student achievement in-depth

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

Study of anonymous tip system finds reports about guns in schools

Schools in 23 states have established an anonymous tip line serving more than 5 million students in grades six through 12, according to the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System (SS-ARS), started by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation. Such tip lines are used to report unusual behaviors or potential acts of gun violence by other students.

A new study, recently published in the journal *Pediatrics*, evaluated the tip line as used by one state and its effectiveness at catching firearm-related threats. Researchers found there were more than 18,000 tips submitted to SS-ARS during the four years studied, from 2019 to 2023.

According to **Elyse Thulin**, assistant professor at the Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention at the University of Michigan and the lead author of the study, 10% of the tips contained a reference to a firearm. Thirty-eight percent of those reports were about potential school shootings, and nearly a quarter were about seeing or knowing of a weapon. Gun-related tips also included concerns about bullying, interpersonal conflicts and suicide.

According to a separate analysis of the data by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation, the tips and interventions that followed anonymous reporting prevented six planned school shootings, 38 instances of school violence and more than 100 planned suicides. Additionally, there were more than 1,000 mental health interventions during this period.

Thulin explained that the system is more than just a phone line. It begins with training a school community, including students and staff, to identify signs of potential violence and self harm. Students can then anonymously report a potential threat through an app, phone number or website. Gun violence has been the leading cause of death of children and teens in the U.S. since 2020, when it surpassed car accidents.

For more information on this research, the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System and the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation, please visit, <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU927>.

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