Success

Ohio School Boards Association — Helping Kids Succeed!

Timely tips to improve student achievement — **September 2022**

Trumbull County students enroll in carpentry pathway program	**Trumbull County ESC** is preparing to bring back some career and technical education programs through the Education Extension Pre-Apprenticeship Program following building renovations. Dozens of students will enroll in a carpentry program this fall. For more go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU804**.
Theater classes teach performance, social skills	Students with disabilities in Brooklyn, N.Y., gain performance skills and the opportunity to express their creative side onstage through theater classes taught by **Michael Pantone**. Pantone's theater classes help students socialize and offer students options to best suit students' communication preferences. For more, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU805.**
U.S. teens ditch Facebook for YouTube, TikTok	The percentage of American teens who use Facebook today has dropped from 71% to 32%, according to Pew Research Center's Teens, Social Media and Technology 2022 report. YouTube (95%) and TikTok (67%) are the teens' top social platforms, followed by Snapchat and Instagram, which have similar usage of around 60%. For more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU806.**
Students head to college academically malnourished	Incoming college freshmen have spent more than half of their high school years dealing with the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, including building closures, online learning and other disruptions. **Allison Wagner**, executive director of the scholarship program All-In Milwaukee, says this has left many students academically malnourished. For more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU807**.
Keep PE engaging with tech, project-based learning	Integrating project-based learning and technology, such as wearable fitness trackers, into physical education (PE) lessons keeps students engaged and active, writes PE teacher **Ismail Karon**. Keep classroom time as a period of active engagement to make the most of the time together, Karon states. For more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU808.**
Public schools fail to reach pre-pandemic enrollment	About 49.5 million students were enrolled in public schools last fall, according to preliminary data from the U.S. Department of Education — up slightly from 2020 but lower than pre-pandemic enrollment. However, prekindergarten and kindergarten enrollment increased by 14% and 5% respectively. For more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU809.**

Student achievement in-depth

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

How an SEL buddy program can help students, younger peers

Pairing young learners with older elementary and middle school students can boost social and emotional learning skills for both groups, writes assistant principal and professional development specialist **Gina Robles**. Since the return to in-person learning, teachers have been faced with students who lack social skills and the ability to regulate their emotions. A lack of exposure to peers during critical learning periods has positioned many early childhood teachers in the situation of having to teach social and emotional skills before they can teach academics.

A buddy program — pairing upper elementary or middle school students with students in pre-K through first grade — is a way for teachers to accelerate learning crucial social and emotional skills. **Laurie Kramer**, a professor of applied family studies, noted that children employ the social behaviors they learn early to develop a positive relationship with a sibling. She called siblings "agents of socialization." While sibling relationships are complicated, studies have found a link between positive sibling interactions and a carryover with positive peer interactions as children grow.

Buddy programs are an effective way to help encourage a positive, sibling-like relationship between students which instills social and emotional learning. With adequate planning and supervision, teachers and school leaders can ensure that the buddy relationships remain constructive and foster those crucial socialization skills that early childhood students may lack. While it may be tempting to think that the younger buddies benefit the most from this program, older students can show remarkable growth through the experience. Middle school teacher **David Plumer** recounted one example of a student who had a particularly chaotic home life and struggled with impulse control and attention-seeking behaviors. This student showed immense interest and involvement in the buddy program and excelled at being a mentor to the younger student. That relationship motivated the student to improve his own behavior. Older students felt like they were creating a community through their buddy program when they previously had felt separate from their elementary schoolmates.

Plummer stated, "Some of the best teaching moments come when a 12-year-old struggles with a 5-year-old who is having a poor-behavior moment, and the older student is forced to think critically about what to do. This, in turn, leads to a discussion the teacher can have with the group about how difficult it can be to create a learning environment in the midst of behavior issues. In this way, there's a connection made not only between students but also between students and teachers by way of a shared experience." To read the studies about sibling interactions and peer relationships and to learn how to start a social-emotional learning (SEL) buddy program, please visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU810.**