



# Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

February 2021

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## North Royalton City students raise funds for people of northeastern Ohio

North Royalton City high school seniors **Savannah Skorepa** and **Nick Taylor** recently worked together to raise funds for the nonprofit group, The Friendship Room. This Ohio Valley group builds relationships, reaches out to the homeless, addresses issues such as addiction and provides food to those who are hungry. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU684>.

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## Pickerington Local teacher creates card game for math instruction

**Pickerington Local (Fairfield)** math teacher **Rodger Oakes** created a card game to help students learn about math offline. The rules of the game are inspired by the classic story of the three little pigs. Oakes developed the game with his children and took it to an illustrator to create a specialty deck of cards. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU685>.

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## Five ways to check yourself for subtle bias

Teachers committed to equity in their classrooms can still miss areas of bias in their own practice, writes **Jay Wamsted**, a middle school math teacher. Wamsted outlines five ways teachers can evaluate their pedagogy and classroom management tactics for signs of bias. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU686>.

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## New York City to alter gifted admissions

The New York City Department of Education will do away with a high-stakes exam for 4-year-olds to determine enrollment in gifted and talented programs after the exam is administered in April. Officials say they will spend the next year determining what type of future and more inclusive programming to offer. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU687>.

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## Six steps to help districts guard student data

Data privacy created by third-party applications is a danger to school districts, writes **Katie Fritchen**, who offers six best practices for administrators. Fritchen's final suggestion: Use automated tools to govern apps and avoid violations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU688>.

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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.

### How is COVID-19 changing school discipline?

Before March 2020, inequitable school discipline practices were a major concern for advocates and educators alike.

“There was a real discipline crisis” for students with disabilities and students of color, said **Wendy Tucker**, senior director of policy for the National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools and a former member of the Tennessee State Board of Education.

According to the U.S. Department of Education’s Civil Rights Data Collection, students with disabilities served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act make up 13% of the nation’s total enrolled student population, but they represented the majority of students who were physically restrained and secluded in 2017-18. While K-12 schools overall have decreased the use of out-of-school suspensions, Black learners and students with disabilities remained twice as likely as their peers to be suspended, according to Child Trends’ analysis of federal data from 2011-16.

But like many other areas of education, long-standing school discipline practices were impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. Remote settings have made traditional disciplinary measures more challenging while more punitive measures are being taken despite current remote or hybrid learning models.

Tucker said that disturbing discipline events have occurred. There was an incident in October when a 9-year-old Louisiana student was almost expelled after a teacher reported seeing a gun in the child’s bedroom. Likewise, there are reports of students who acted up during a Zoom session and were dismissed into a breakout room as a substitute for in-school suspension.

Teachers, Tucker said, are also muting microphones or turning off students’ cameras. “While that makes sense when you see a teacher struggling with 26 students on video, it remains a removal of that child from the educational environment and the data needs to be collected.”

Not everyone supports using these types of punitive approaches. Many educators say the pandemic and resulting social isolation, stress and other negative implications on mental health have led to an uptick in social-emotional awareness. Schools across the nation made a concerted effort to leverage their time and resources to check in with students, ensuring their physical and mental health needs were met.

For more information about social-emotional learning and relationship building as discipline prevention and for links to data citations, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU689>.

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**February 2021**

**Success** is published monthly as a member service by the Ohio School Boards Association, 8050 North High Street, Suite 100, Columbus, Ohio 43235-6481, (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA. Kim Miller-Smith, senior student achievement consultant, editor; Jeff Chambers, director of communication services, assistant editor. To download a PDF of this eNewsletter, go to <http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/Success>.