



Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

November 2021

Teacher's music boosts math, spelling engagement

Texas first-grade teacher **Darius Bailey** brings a keyboard to class to inject music in subjects throughout the day, noting that students have scored better in math and spelling since they started using lesson-based tunes. Bailey and the students wrote the music and lyrics for "Double Trouble," a song about adding a number to itself, that has been viewed over 8,000 times on social media.

For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU739>.

High school students on path to college, careers

Many schools are adopting early college programs aimed at helping students prepare for future careers, earn college credits and sometimes become eligible for a degree. In one Colorado district, students work 20 hours each week in elementary school classrooms through the Future Educator Pathway to prepare them for careers as classroom teachers.

For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU740>.

Elementary students research history of schools artifacts

Fourth- and fifth-grade social studies students at Schoolcraft Elementary in Michigan explored some of the school's sports artifacts and memorabilia, some of which dated back more than 100 years. **Taelor Wedel's** students spent weeks conducting research to locate and verify details, such as the spelling of names on trophies, before the items were transferred to the high school for display.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU741>.

How to create a StoryWalk for students

A StoryWalk can turn solitary reading into a dynamic activity by engaging students' minds and bodies, according to **Emily Crawford**, a teacher librarian in Washington state. Crawford offers tips for creating a StoryWalk, including selecting the right book, with picture books being ideal for the project.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU742>.

Stress and Short Tempers: Schools Struggle with Behavior as Students Return

Schools across the country say they're seeing an uptick in disruptive behaviors. Some are obvious and visible, but others are quieter calls for help, like students putting their head down and refusing to talk.

For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU743>.

Student achievement in-depth

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

Study examines pros, cons of 4-day weeks in schools

Four-day school weeks, which were adopted by more than 1,600 U.S. school districts as of 2019-20, are gaining favor among parents and students, according to a study for Rand Corp. Yet, researchers found that student growth in schools with four-day weeks fell over time, compared with those with five-day schedules.

The notion of four-day weeks boomed after the Great Recession, especially in small, far-flung districts looking to try to save cash and attract teachers. Now, the widest-reaching analysis of the practice to date paints a nuanced picture of the effects of the switch. It typically saves districts a small but not intangible amount of cash. And on their day out of school, students are typically working, doing errands or spending time with family, not running wild.

The trade-off for those benefits, though, shows in learning. Several years after adopting a four-day schedule, the researchers found that those districts saw slower rates of student progress than similarly situated districts that retained a five-day schedule.

In a sense, the findings underscore the mix of factors beyond test scores that district leaders and communities weigh when making decisions and point towards some of the more general tensions at the heart of K-12 schooling.

Is the point of schooling just to raise achievement? Are there other civic benefits that accrue from these arrangements, like helping to instill in students a sense of responsibility through jobs or other duties? Just how should these competing interests be weighed?

“When I think about ed[ucation] policy debates, I often assume that achievement will be the king of all the outcomes. And it was pretty clear that when we talked to people that they did have this ‘whole-child’ model guiding their thinking,” said **Rebecca Kilburn**, one of a half-dozen researchers who conducted the study for the RAND Corp., a research and analysis group. “And they really did talk about everything from sleep, to stress, to spending more time with their families.”

For more on this study and its results and for links to the study please visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU744>.

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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>.