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CONTENTS

- 4** **Is SAMR Dead?** *By Dr. Kecia Ray*
- 8** **The American Rescue Plan Includes \$122 Billion for Education: How Can it Be Used?** *By Susan Gentz*
- 10** **How to Ensure You're Getting the Most from CARES Act Funds** *By Annie Galvin Teich*
- 12** **COVID Stimulus Package Offers Schools More Funding to Innovate** *By Susan Gentz*
- 14** **The Best Grants for Education for 2021 & Beyond** *By Gwen Solomon*
- 16** **What Grant Judges Look For in An Application** *By Gwen Solomon*
- 20** **7 Steps to Plan a Grant Proposal** *By Gwen Solomon*
- 22** **District-Owned Homeschooling: COVID-19 Spurs New Learning and Funding Models** *By Susan Gentz*
- 26** **SEL Takes Center Stage in Roadmap to Reopening** *By Erik Ofgang*
- 28** **Educators Moving Away from Seat Time for Mastery-Based Education** *By Erik Ofgang*
- 30** **Resources**

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MONEY

It's been a dark and stormy year for education, but things are looking up - and it all starts with some good funding news.

Thanks to new support from the feds, schools now have the funding they need to start turning the lessons they learned during the pandemic into actionable innovative programs. The American Rescue Plan will add a healthy \$122 billion into the funding pipeline, but it (surprise!) comes with a few strings attached.

Susan Gentz breaks down these requirements in her article on page 8, in which she details how this funding can be spent and offers tips to strategize your district planning to make the most of it. On page 10, Annie Galvin Teich takes a deep dive into the questions district leaders need to ask in order to maximize CARES Act dollars and breaks down the various funding streams available.

Additional funding tips come from Gwen Solomon, who shares the best grants for 2021 and beyond (page 14) and offers insight into what grant judges look for in a successful application. She also includes seven steps to planning a grant proposal on page 20.

Not surprisingly, social-emotional learning is at the heart of much of these funding offerings, as Erik Ofgang details in his article on page 26. It's unfortunate that it took a pandemic to push SEL to centerstage, but the U.S. Department of Education has finally recognized that SEL, mental health, and academic success can't be separated.

We hope the funding guidance offered in this issue can help your district create the sustainable, equitable infrastructure your school communities deserve.



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IS SAMR DEAD?

Potentially a casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic, the SAMR model is evolving to adapt to new learning environment

By Dr. Kecia Ray

An incredible tool to think about the integration of technology with instruction was developed in 2010 by Ruben Puentedera when he introduced what we now know as the SAMR model. The acronym stands for Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition, and the intention was to create a shared language across multiple disciplines so that teachers would be able to determine the best use of technology as an instructional tool.

Loui Lord Nelson and Andrew Churches inspired Kathy Schrock to create the image above of the model associating it with the levels of the new [Bloom's Digital Taxonomy](#).

Many teachers successfully adopted the SAMR model to help them determine the best way to introduce a technology and scaffold learning to the redefinition level. In fact, the [Technology Integration Matrix](#) gives a nod to the model in the technology integration levels of the rubric.

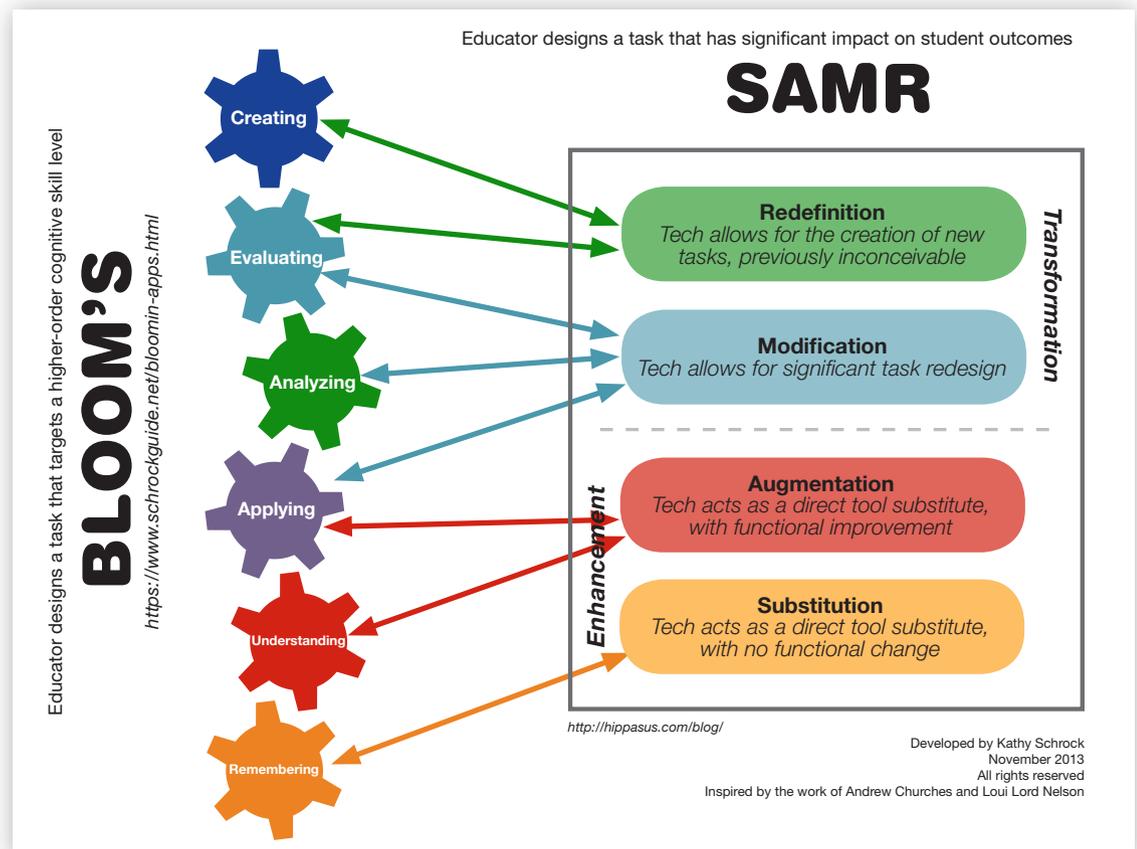
However, all that order and intention went out the window for many teachers when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and they were thrust into a technology-required environment with sometimes little professional development or training in the use of digital tools. Additionally, many had minimal knowledge of how to develop lessons for learners who were not physically present. That said, more than 89% adopted technologies and moved into technology-rich environments, according to the [Christensen Report Breaking the Mold](#).

So, it begs the question, "Is SAMR a fatality of COVID?" Have teachers successfully integrated technology to the degree that we can unanimously agree we have redefined learning?

Many teachers acknowledge they are not going to put away the technology they have now become accustomed to having in their classrooms, but they are also asking for more PD and resources. Districts are continuing to implement a wide-scale digital curriculum and the 1:1 distribution of devices. Some districts are even implementing 2:1, with students having a device at home and school. However, even though technology is more available than ever, and this is truly an edtech leader's dream come true, can we be confident that instruction has changed?

There are two aspects that should be considered before determining SAMR is no longer necessary.

First, let's think in terms of [Webb's Depth of Knowledge](#) when compared with SAMR. When applied this way, SAMR is not linear but rather a continuum. A learner can step into any level of SAMR depending on the



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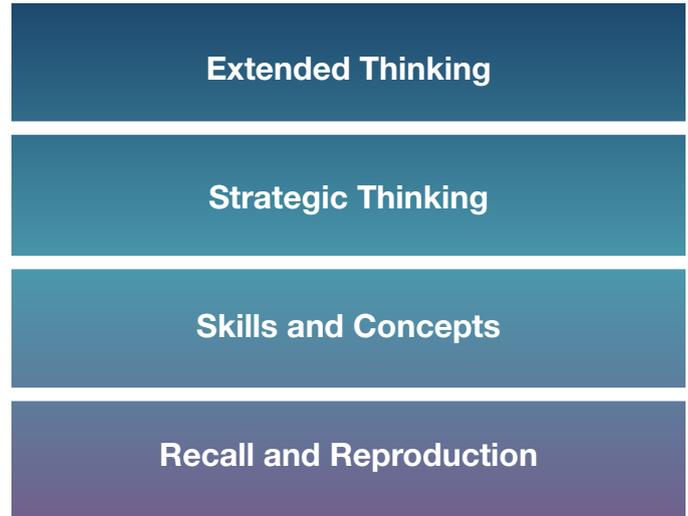
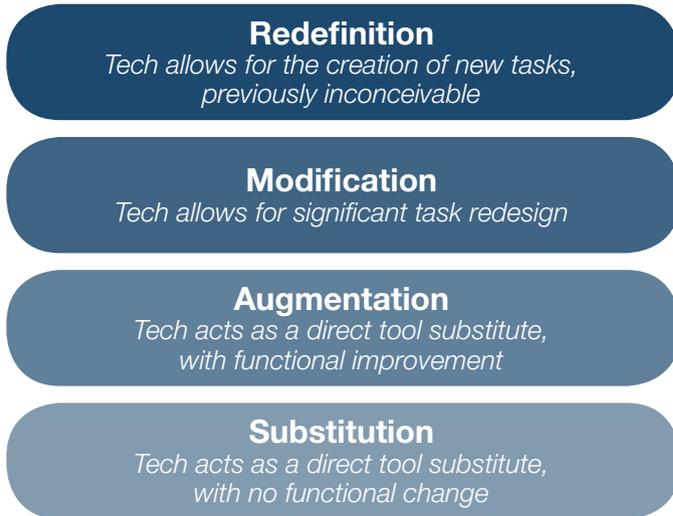
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IS SAMR DEAD?



activity and where the learner is in their own learning process. An activity may be developed for a learner to recall or reproduce information, or an activity within a lesson could level up to extended thinking. Learners enter at various levels and SAMR acknowledges that variance and suggests the use of technology should adapt to the learner's needs.

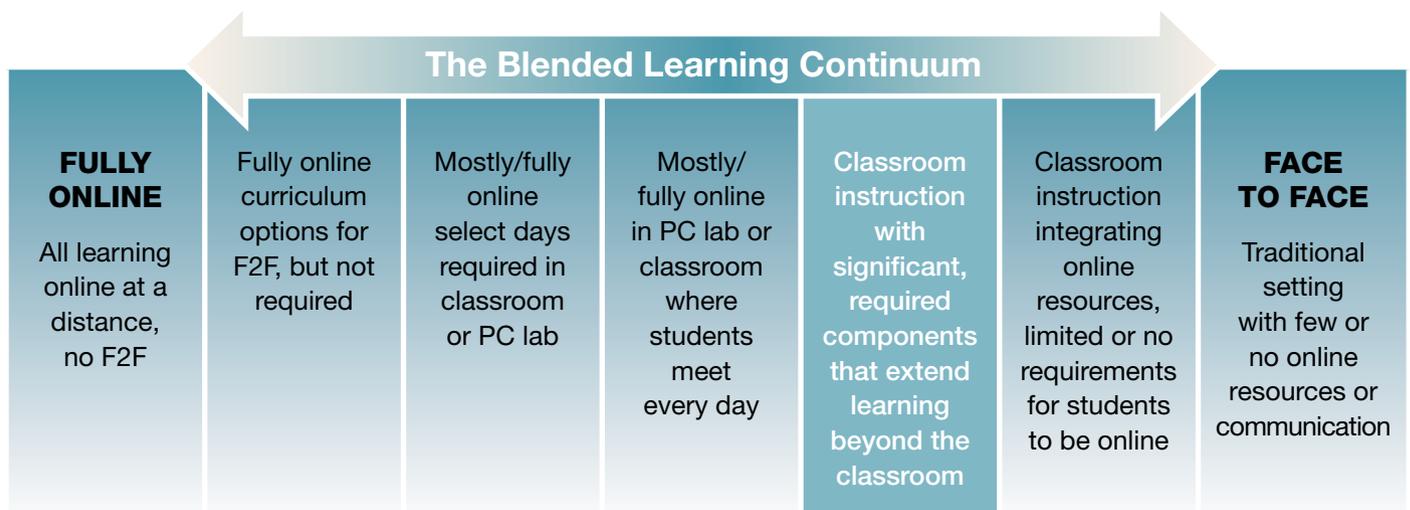
The second aspect to consider is the blended learning continuum, which may be the fastest way to get to the redefinition level of SAMR. Considering the agility of the model and the ability for learners and teachers to move from face-to-face to fully online enables the learning to be more dynamic and more intentional. Engagement increases when learners are exploring their own questions and using technology in a flexible manner to create and explore their own interests related to a particular standard. This certainly allows for a more personalized approach.

Adopting the blended learning continuum and developing lessons designed to expose learners to a continuous variety of activities while enabling them to explore many aspects of problems and approaches to complex problems is the essence of SAMR and it can improve student engagement with the content along the way!

So, SAMR is not dead but rather evolved. We once considered SAMR through the eyes of the teacher and how they used technology

for instruction and to develop student activities. This is still true today with the exception that teachers are applying it to redesign whole units of study that incorporate the various levels of SAMR throughout the lesson. However, the real evolution is how SAMR could apply to the role of the student enabling the combination of teacher and technology to facilitate a personal learning pathway. This allows the student to identify whether they are substituting, augmenting, modifying, or redefining their learning tasks through the use of technology. It also encourages the student to be more reflective about the tool being used and how it best applies to a learning task.

We probably aren't at a complete redefinition level within SAMR because of the lack of PD, training, and time to genuinely reflect on instruction with technology. Students do need to continue learning in digitally rich environments, albeit a balance of print materials and manipulatives is necessary as is the need to have time in teacher and student schedules to attend to basic social and emotional needs. Creating more flexible learning pathways that incorporate the levels of SAMR while embracing the continuum of blended learning will give students the flexibility and freedom they need to create at a new level and redefine their learning experiences!



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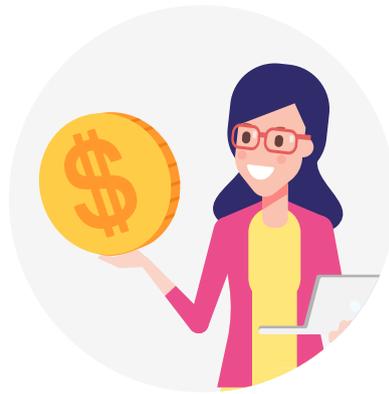


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THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN INCLUDES \$122 BILLION FOR EDUCATION: HOW CAN IT BE USED?

The American Rescue Plan provides more dollars for education than in the prior two rounds of funding, but there are also more requirements

By Susan Gentz

President Biden is making good on one of his first promises. The [American Rescue Plan](#) is now law, and the federal government is pumping \$1.9 trillion into the American economy. This leads to an increased role of the federal government involvement in not only state and local government but education as well.

HOW CAN AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN DOLLARS BE USED IN EDUCATION?

In the latest legislation, there are more dollars than in the prior two rounds of funding to states and districts, but there are also more requirements.

HERE'S A BREAKDOWN:

At least 20% of funds must be used to address learning loss through evidence-based interventions that respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs. The remaining funds can be used for any allowable use under the [Elementary and Secondary Education Act](#); [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#); [Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act](#); and [Adult Education and Family Literacy Act](#).

OTHER USES INCLUDE:

- Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity as well as assistive technology or adaptive equipment)
- Addressing learning loss
- School facility repairs to reduce risk of coronavirus transmission and support student health
- Summer learning and supplemental after-school programs
- Mental health services
- Conducting activities to address the needs of students from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and youth in foster care
- Coordinating with public health departments
- Implementing public health protocols including policies in line with guidance from the CDC for school-reopening
- Implementing activities to maintain the operation and continuity of services and to employ existing staff

THE ALLIANCE FOR EXCELLENT EDUCATION HAS A HELPFUL FACT SHEET [HERE](#).

The states also have a couple of stricter requirements for their uses as well. The state is required to allocate 87.5%, which means they are able to keep 12.5% of funds, up 2.5% from the prior two funding rounds. States are also required to spend their funds in the following ways:

- 5% to address learning loss
- 1% for evidence-based, comprehensive after school programs
- 1% for evidence-based summer enrichment
- 2.5% for educational technology

Connecting students is also still at the top of mind for educators, and after the \$3 million removed for the Federal Communications Commission's E-Rate program out of the last round of funding, the education community successfully advocated for \$7.2 billion to help both access and affordability for students and educators.

SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT

The first two rounds of stimulus funds to school had little-to-no requirements on how the money for education was spent. This meant that there were some states that chose to cut the exact amount of federal dollars received from the state budget. Congress added a provision this time that puts a few more parameters in place for how the dollars are intended to be spent. In fact, the bill requires that in order to receive funding, "states must provide at least as much funding for K-12 and higher education in fiscal years 2022 and 2023 as a proportion of the state's overall spending (averaged over fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019)."

However, this requirement can be waived by the Secretary of Education. In addition, states and districts must comply with new Maintenance of Equity requirements that prevent state and local funding cuts from disproportionately impacting high poverty districts and schools."

PLANNING

This is the first stimulus round to put certain percentage requirements on the uses of funds, which means that planning needs to be even more intentional on how funds are categorized and tracked. This could likely be a once-in-a-lifetime influx of federal funds, and it must be used to scale opportunities and access for every student. [If used properly, these one-time monies can go a long way.](#)



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HOW TO ENSURE YOU'RE GETTING THE MOST FROM CARES ACT FUNDS

Ask the right questions to get the most from CARES Act funds and stimulus grants

By Annie Galvin Teich

To assist schools with issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress passed the CARES Act, which earmarked \$30.7 billion for states, with additional funds requested but not yet approved. These funds for the upcoming year are not dependent on schools returning fully to on-campus learning, but can be used to support remote learning or a hybrid approach.

During a presentation at T&L's [Future Proofing Your District Plan](#), Susan Gentz, a public policy expert, shared information about the various funding streams available to K-12 schools through the CARES Act.

FUNDING STREAMS

The following funding programs are separate programs that are linked through the stimulus bill and are specifically intended for K-12 schools.

Elementary and Secondary Relief Fund (ESSER): \$13.5 billion has been awarded to the states as formula grants based on the same proportion that each state receives under ESSA Title I-A. There are no funding restrictions.

Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER): \$3 billion for governors to allocate according to funding formulas to support students who are struggling the most from the impact of the coronavirus. Districts are encouraged to change their education models.

Microgrants: \$180 million to Rethink K-12 School Models and Continue to Learn grants that are intended for families to help provide access to the technology required to advance student learning. These are competitive grants.

Student-Centered Funding Pilot: \$3 million is being made available by USDOE, authorized by ESSA, to allow up to 50 districts to pool their federal, state, and local dollars to focus aid on low-income or other disadvantaged students.

The other important factor in funding this year is that the cap on carryover funds leftover from Title I, Part A of ESSA has been waived. This means districts can carry over any unused funds and that can be bundled with CARES Act funding. However, Gentz cautions districts to use these carryover funds first so it's not lost.

QUESTIONS DISTRICT LEADERS NEED TO ASK TO MAXIMIZE FUNDING

Most districts will likely see a shortfall of regular funding due to the pandemic and economic downturn, so it's important to maximize these funding sources this year.

Here are some questions that district leaders should consider when planning to ensure they are getting the most out of these stimulus funds.

- By what date must our carryover funds be used?
- How are we planning to use the stimulus funds? Funds must be spent by September 2022.
- Is our state allowing us to retroactively pay for purchases we've already made? If so, how much of that money is already spent?
- How can we bundle carryover and stimulus funds?
- What are we doing with funding and waivers to prepare for a fall semester different from any other we've ever had?
- How can we reimagine professional learning and streamline opportunities for our educators?
- How are we ensuring access and equity for all students?
- Will we apply for microgrants?
- What process will we use to consider various diagnostic assessments to be used to understand each student's academic and social-emotional needs?

"Future federal funding depends to some degree on how well these initial stimulus funds are used," said Gentz. "So it's important to put these funds to good use."



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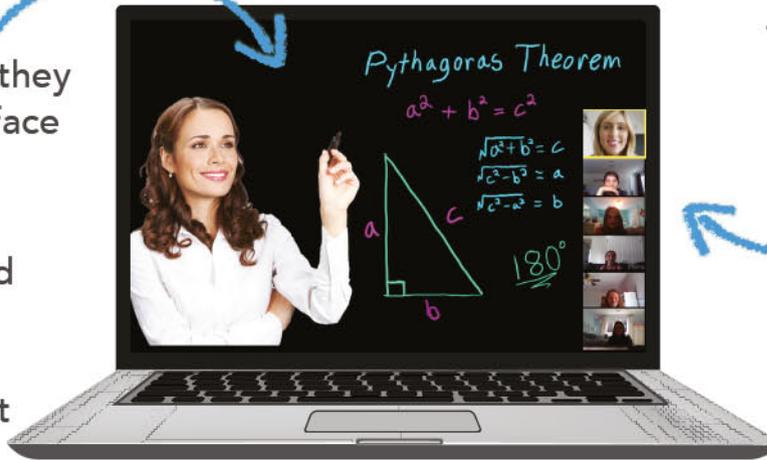
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COVID STIMULUS PACKAGE OFFERS SCHOOLS MORE FUNDING TO INNOVATE

How districts can use stimulus funds to address learning loss and drive innovation

By Susan Gentz

The \$900 Billion stimulus package with \$26 billion dollars allocated for K-12 education down to district and school levels, a new Department of Education Secretary, and an overall consensus that the old system on the whole was not prepared to adequately serve students anytime, anywhere--the environment for change gives a glimmer of hope for what could be for education.

STIMULUS FUNDS

The amount allocated for the education stabilization fund this time around is approximately four times the amount allocated under the CARES Act. Districts largely spent CARES Act funds on devices and connectivity to get students up and running even when they were off campus. Although these issues still remain a priority for many districts, there is now a chance to look deeper into the district's mission, vision, and operations.

The new funds will operate similarly to the CARES Act. Monies will first be allocated from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) down to state education agencies (SEA), and then down to the local education agencies (LEA), who will decide how to use the funds. An SEA may again keep up to 10% for administration and their own uses as they see fit.

The application is expected to also be largely the same, with a state having to submit a plan for how the funds will be used. Under the CARES Act, once an application was approved, the USDE was required to obligate funds within three days. This funding is available to be spent until September 2022.

The allowable uses also remain the same from the CARES act, and includes:

- Purchasing educational technology that aids in regular and substantive interaction between students and educators
- Planning and coordinating long-term closures, including providing technology for online learning
- Planning and implementing online learning
- Supporting provisions found in major education laws, including the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). [Title IV-A](#) of ESSA and [Part D](#) of IDEA permits federal funds toward professional learning in effective edtech use

NEW SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

[Miguel Cardona](#), the Secretary of Education, has long been an advocate for innovation and new learning models. Funding is absolutely critical for change, but so is flexibility and an administration that is willing to take chances for the sake of better student learning and outcomes.

The good news is that there has not been this much flexibility since the creation of the Department of Education in 1980, and especially since the era of No Child Left Behind. The CARES Act brought along countless waivers for emergency operations. On top of that, ESSA started the pendulum moving away from the accountability and assessment requirements seen under NCLB as well. There is a movement, arguably

COVID STIMULUS FUNDING

growing every day, that high stakes assessments and one-size-fits-all accountability requirements just don't cut it anymore. This will become especially apparent this year as almost all end-of-year assessments were waived last year. This means a year of no baseline data, and educators will need to get creative on what measures they plan to use to determine student learning and success.

For more than five years, ESSA has allowed flexibility; however, districts were slow to adapt new assessments and use multiple measures for accountability. In order for district leaders to take advantage of these opportunities, the USDE must create an environment that allows SEAs to submit bold plans and encourages districts to try new things without the fear of being penalized. This is certainly an area in which education could take guidance from the start-up world and realize that sometimes failing creates even better opportunities for customers. (Customers here being any education stakeholder.) Funds plus flexibility is crucial for any systemic change.

ADDRESSING LEARNING LOSS

Education leaders across the country are also aware of the growing issue of learning loss and students falling behind. The COVID relief bill really speaks to addressing this issue as a priority. Online learning has been a preferred method for remedial learning in the past, but the most successful

courses are high-quality. Providing high-quality remedial learning opportunities will take investing in professional development and this is the time to ready the next generation workforce to be prepared for anything. COVID learning loss will now require entire classes to have remedial courses, not just a select few students.

Addressing learning loss will demand an innovative approach that includes rethinking seat time the measurement of individual student growth, and mastery-based learning. Seat time, in particular, has long been the biggest barrier to innovation and personalizing learning. Addressing missed time plus trying to keep students on track for graduation will require new practices and an environment with competency-based education. Educators will need to find out what students have mastered and what they haven't, and then develop strategies to help them move forward.

SEE HOW THE STARS ALIGN?

It is a truly hopeful time that education could truly go from "pockets of innovation" to scaled up personalized, competency-based learning environments. The funding is there, the leadership is there, and the flexibility is there. Educators must use this time to examine how they will ensure this period of time will not inhibit students for years to come. Now is the time to take advantage, be bold, and provide opportunities for meaningful learning for every student.



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THE BEST GRANTS FOR EDUCATION FOR 2021 & BEYOND

As traditional sources of funding decrease, securing grants can supplement established funding

By Gwen Solomon

K-12 schools and districts face new budget shortfalls just as demand increases for hardware, software, and infrastructure. As traditional sources of funding decrease, securing grants is a potential supplement to established funding.

Our free [Grant Writing Guide](#) includes grant resources, step-by-step grant writing tips, proposal checklists, and strategies for grant writing success.

What follows is a list of grants available and deadlines for the rest of the year for K-12 schools and districts.

MAY 2021 GRANTS & DEADLINES

MAY 1

- [American Honda Foundation Grants](#)
- [Toshiba America Foundation Science and Math Grants For Grades 6 – 12](#)

MAY 4

- [National Council of Teachers of Mathematics \(multiple grants\)](#)

MAY 25

- [ASM Living in a Material World Grant](#)

JUNE 2021 GRANTS & DEADLINES

JUNE 1

- [Toshiba America Foundation Science and Math Grants For Grades 6 – 12](#)

JUNE 30

- [The Sharon Gewirtz Kids to Concerts Fund](#)

JULY 2021 GRANTS & DEADLINES

JULY 1

- [Educators of America MicroGrant Program for Educators & Teachers](#)
- [Mazda Foundation](#)

JULY 15

- [ecoSolutions](#)
- [ecoTech](#)

AUGUST 2021 GRANTS & DEADLINES

AUGUST 1

- [American Honda Foundation Grants](#)

AUGUST 8

- [Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers \(ITEST\)](#)

AUGUST 31

- [The National Science Foundation Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program](#)

SEPTEMBER 2021 GRANTS & DEADLINES

SEPTEMBER 1

- [Toshiba America Foundation Science and Math Grants For Grades 6 – 12](#)

SEPTEMBER 15

- [The National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Teachers \(RET\) in Engineering and Computer Science](#)

SEPTEMBER 30

- [Captain Planet Foundation Grants](#)
- [Foundation for Rural Service Annual Grant Program](#)

OCTOBER 2021 GRANTS & DEADLINES

OCTOBER 1

- [Association of American Educators Foundation Classroom Grant](#)
- [Educators of America MicroGrant Program for Educators & Teachers](#)
- [Toshiba America Foundation Grants For Grades K – 5](#)

OCTOBER 31

- [Lawrence Foundation Education Grants](#)

NOVEMBER 2021 GRANTS & DEADLINES

NOVEMBER 1

- [Toshiba America Foundation Science and Math Grants For Grades 6 – 12](#)

DECEMBER 2021 GRANTS & DEADLINES

DECEMBER 1

- [ITEEA Awards and Scholarships](#)
- [Toshiba America Foundation Science and Math Grants For Grades 6 – 12](#)

DECEMBER 13

- [Samsung Solve for Tomorrow](#)
- [Ongoing Grants](#)
- [After School Advantage Program](#)
- [Awesome Foundation](#)
- [Beckman Coulter Foundation](#)
- [Beyond Words](#)
- [Brown Rudnick Community Grants](#)
- [Corning Foundation](#)
- [Farrell Family Foundation Grants](#)
- [First LEGO League Scholarships](#)
- [Lockheed Martin STEM Grants](#)
- [Michael & Susan Dell Foundation Grants](#)
- [Naiku Innovative Educator Grants](#)
- [National Endowment for the Humanities](#)
- [Omron Foundation](#)
- [Reiman Foundation Grants](#)
- [SC Johnson](#)
- [Sony Corporation of America](#)
- [Verizon Foundation](#)
- [VWR Foundation](#)
- [Westinghouse Charitable Giving Program](#)

Three Key Considerations for Returning to the Classroom in Complex Times: A Guide for Educational Leaders

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, colleges and K-12 schools alike have had to act fast to fundamentally shift the way they operate by sending students home early, scaling back activities, and enabling a hybrid learning environment as well as remote learning.

They've also been dealing with fluctuating guidelines from federal (e.g. CDC), state, and local levels, making it difficult to determine how and when to bring staff, faculty, and students back and how and when to require quarantine periods or to send them back home.

Returning to in-person learning also involves an emotional component to consider. Students have been missing out on socialization and educational collaboration, parents are conflicted about sending students back to school, and educators are feeling the pressure.

In an effort to help bring clarity to the situation, the CDC has recently released new guidelines for reopening schools that focus on five key mitigation strategies:

- Universal and correct wearing of masks
- Physical distancing
- Washing hands
- Cleaning facilities and improving ventilation
- Contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine

What about vaccines?

According to the CDC, mitigation strategies will need to continue at least until we better understand potential for transmission among people who have received a COVID-19 vaccine and until there is more vaccination coverage in the community. Plus, currently there are no vaccines yet approved for children.

Clearly, schools will continue to need to take precautions for the foreseeable future, but most educational institutions aren't equipped to manage the complexities of contact tracing, health screenings, and rapid risk notification. They also lack automated systems that can help manage the privacy and security of the data collected for tracing and check-ins.

The professionals at [PwC](#) have put together this guide by outlining three key steps to consider as part of any effort to build the confidence of people returning to the classroom.

1. Prevent

The best way to protect people is to reduce their exposure to the virus. To do that, you need to manage the overall risk and make sure any return-to-class plans are executed efficiently, with complete compliance to the CDC, state, and local guidelines. You also need to avoid any overcrowding and keep potentially ill individuals away from other people.

But it doesn't stop there. You'll also need to be proactive about planning for tomorrow. Even with the welcome development of effective vaccines, most public health experts agree that this

is a marathon, not a sprint. That means you need the ability to forecast future states, identify key trends, and connect to other information systems with accuracy so you can continue to run your educational institution safely.

2. Trace

School healthcare professionals, faculty, and school administrators need to understand the protocols of quarantine and the process of contact tracing while also making investments in the mental health and wellness of students to improve their feelings about the safety of the campus.

It's a whole new world, and one that's difficult to navigate without the right tools and processes in place.

3. Respond

For many people, uncertainty is unbearable—especially when it comes to something as life-altering as a pandemic. The right message could land at the wrong time, causing more confusion than clarity. Plus, everyone is different, and they often require custom messages targeted to their role, location, and demographics. Has there been an outbreak in the community surrounding their campus? Is their school located in an area under shelter-in-place orders? These factors and many others will have an impact on messaging.

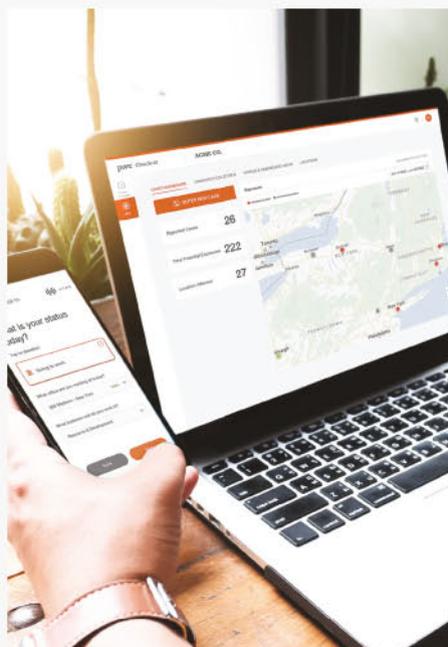
As the leader, it's up to you to close the information gap.

Conclusion: The Check-In Solution

It can be a complex challenge to return people to in-person learning in a way that keeps them safe, makes them feel secure, and reduces risk for your institution. The only way to accomplish all of this efficiently is to automate as much of the process as possible.

That's where PwC Check-In can help. Check-In is an automated, precise, privacy-first solution that gives you the information you need fast, so you can make critical decisions and quickly communicate changing conditions. Check-In makes it possible to tap into your own tools, policies, and systems for case management, alerts, and planning as you work to help build confidence and protect your people. You can close the information gap with data-driven dashboards and take actions to manage and mitigate illness-related risks to your students, staff, and educators alike.

When so much is at stake, you can't leave anything to chance. Take control of the return-to-campus journey with technology that makes an unprecedented situation easier to manage and maintain.



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WHAT GRANT JUDGES LOOK FOR IN AN APPLICATION

To impress grant judges, crafting a clear narrative that clearly state objectives, goals, budget, and processes is essential

By Gwen Solomon

You've picked the grant that you want to win. You've developed your ideas carefully. So what's next?

Remember that grants are very competitive, so think about what the judges expect to see before you submit your proposal. You can even work backward and address each item as you compose your narrative.

How do you know what they are looking for? To start with, read information about the organization itself to get a sense of what is important to them. Why are they supporting education? What difference do they want to make? Check previous grants they've funded to see how close your idea is to other proposals they've liked in the past. And look for any criteria or list of scoring rubrics that they use.

For the most part, the criteria will include these:

- First, most funders require that your plan meets the requirements they have for supporting schools and districts.

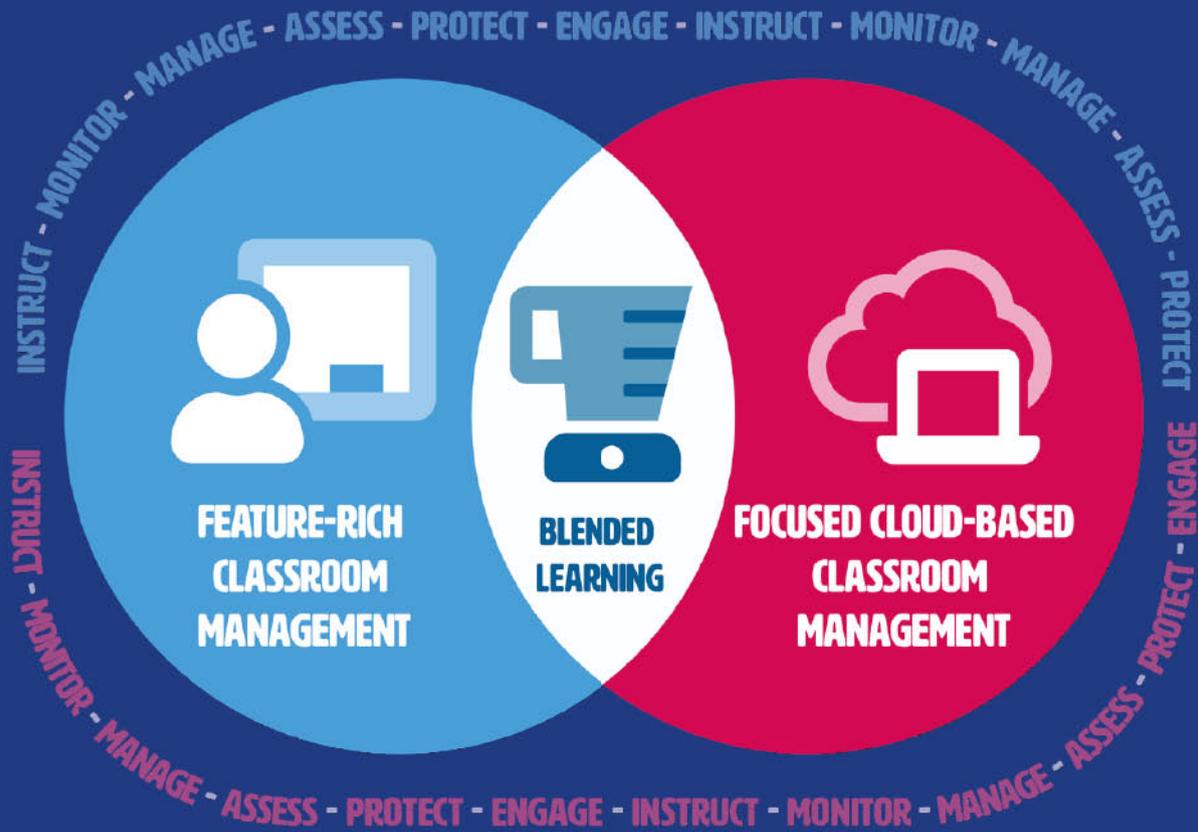
- Second, you must have an important goal for students and their learning.
- Third, you must have organized your proposal in a compelling manner so they can find whatever points they are looking for.
- Fourth, you must have written your narrative in a way that separates your plan from others and shows yours is a cut above the rest.
- And last, your proposal and budget must be honest and transparent so it's clear exactly what you will do with the money should they award you the grant.

SETTING GOALS

One of the most important aspects of your proposal is what you want to accomplish. Remember that judges are looking for meaningful goals. They want to know that you will use the funds to support a program that can make a real difference in your school or district.

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GRANT APPLICATION TIPS

Each goal you list should be supported by measurable objectives. Some of the most important goals that proposals can include are the following:

- Closing achievement gaps
- Closing opportunity gaps
- Making learning accessible to all students
- Improving mastery of academic skills
- Increasing family engagement
- Improving educator skills with professional development
- Developing skills to promote lifelong learning

The judges who review your grant proposal usually have a rubric or set of criteria to score a proposal so that it can be compared to other grant proposals. Usually, they rate each component on a scale that runs 1 to 5 from missing to weak, adequate, strong and excellent.

Below is what a simple rubric might look like with criteria and a description of what judges could look for. They would rate each component on the scale above.

In addition, judges look for secondary criteria and while these often do not have an official point value, they matter. One is the application presentation and format; be sure you are well organized and everything is in order. Another is supporting data; show the data that proves the need in your school or district. In addition, show



REMEMBER, JUDGES ARE HUMAN. THE ORGANIZATION THAT'S PROVIDING THE FUNDS HAS TASKED THEM WITH CHOOSING PROPOSALS THAT MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE FOR STUDENTS.

how you will leverage such things as existing professional development, technology support, and home-school connections. Be sure to include a detailed plan for program management and evaluation and describe your plans for sustainability. Grant givers want to be sure their money is well spent and that the improvements will continue well beyond the life of the grant.

There are also general criteria that apply to any proposal you write. You should follow instructions exactly, organize your thinking, and clearly state the need and benefits of your project for the short and long term. In addition, any proposal should be customized so you address the specific details the funder has outlined. This will improve your chances of making it to a final review.

Keeping grant criteria in mind as you write your proposal will help guide you to address everything and improve the likelihood of your proposal's success.

Remember that judges are human. The organization that's providing the funds has tasked them with choosing proposals that make a real difference for students. They will read your proposal to see if it is a compelling description of the way you will impact learning and achievement. Write your proposal so that it stands out above the others and gives judges a reason to pick yours as a winner.

Sample Rebric for Grant Judging

Criteria	Description
Organization	The plan is well thought out and communicated effectively, and the timeline is clear and more than adequate.
Technology	Requests for technology support a key purpose of the plan.
Assessment	There is a plan to evaluate achievement and get feedback for improvement.
Research	Outside research is cited as evidence that the plan will work as designed.
Staff Development	Support for teacher learning is included to support program implementation.
Narrative	The explanation provides the project's rationale and demonstrates program integrity.
Budget	Request for funds provides adequate details aligns with the grant narrative.

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7 STEPS TO PLAN A GRANT PROPOSAL

Following these steps can help guide your grant proposal to success

By Gwen Solomon

Writing a grant proposal means knowing what you want to do in detail. You started with a good idea; now it's time to focus on the specifics so that you sound as if you know what you're doing.

If you write down the information and add to it as you think of additional items, you'll be all set when you start working on the actual proposal. Enlist others to help flesh it out; those who will be overseeing the program being proposed for the grant if you get it are the best people to help you fill in the blanks.

The following are what you will need to outline and complete.

1. MISSION

Start with the mission. State in clear, simple, and convincing terms what your goal is and what your plan will achieve. What do you recognize as missing from your district? What do you think can solve it? This is the heart of your proposal: You want students to improve and you believe that they will if you can employ the component that is missing for them.

2. NEEDS

To identify the mission, be sure that you can clearly explain who the students are and what's lacking in their learning. These are the needs. Be careful not to focus on the technology you want to use but stress the academic or economic needs. Know the demographics, test results, and anecdotal evidence that prove your district, school, or class needs what you are asking for.

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals are general guidelines that explain what you want to achieve. These are your vision for what will be at the end of the program, the guiding principles or outcomes. Objectives are the deliverables that make the goals happen, the strategies and steps you will take to reach the goals. The objectives should clearly support the goals. Be sure that the goals and objectives are specific and measurable.

4. TIMELINE

Your project will have two timelines. The first is to get all the input that matters with enough time to get feedback and include it in the proposal by the submission deadline. The second is the project timeline itself, the plan to achieve your goals by the end of the program with a tentative but logical schedule for each stage of your project.

The project timeline includes a list of tasks or activities in chronological order so everyone involved can see the whole plan in one

place. You can create it on a spreadsheet or a bar chart, in which each task is given a name and a corresponding start and end date. You can also use project management software to keep track. When you create the timeline, leave room for adjustments. Things don't always work exactly as planned.

5. ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of gathering information from various sources in order to have a real understanding of what students know, understand, and can do as a result of your project.

You will want to know how well your idea worked so you'll measure progress on an ongoing basis. You should decide beforehand how you're going to do this. Will you give tests, observe students, or do other forms of evaluation? What standards or benchmarks will you use? Will what you learn be part of a feedback loop? With evaluations known as formative assessments, you use the results to inform ongoing work.

In addition, if this is a large-scale program, you should plan for an outside evaluator to determine how well you've achieved your goals. That type of evaluation is a determination of how well the program has succeeded.

6. MATERIALS

While materials often include school furniture, equipment, technology, curriculum materials, textbooks, and other resources such as financial and human resources, you can't make your proposal sound like a wish list. Identify the supplies and staff that are essential to make the project work and include all that.

Be sure to also disclose how you will leverage the resources you already have. This is particularly important in listing the expertise of teachers who will carry out the program.

7. COST

You should include a relatively comprehensive and complete budget that outlines what the needs will cost without overestimating what you are requesting. You will have to explain the total projected costs to complete your project over the timeframe of the grant. You should estimate what the costs will be for every phase. Include such things as personnel costs, materials, and operating costs.

Once you complete this list, it becomes the basis for the grant proposal you want now and a template for the next one. If you get this grant and the evaluation shows that you succeeded in achieving your goals, you'll be able to build your next idea on the results of this one.



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DISTRICT-OWNED HOMESCHOOLING:

COVID-19 SPURS NEW LEARNING AND FUNDING MODELS

District-owned homeschooling is an opportunity for districts and parents to partner for individualized learning

By Susan Gentz



Everyone is looking to understand all the implications a year of cancelled in-person learning will have on educators, students, and families. Data is starting to show some new trends when it comes to homeschooling students.

A recent [Household Pulse Survey](#) administered by the U.S. Census Bureau reported that by Fall 2020, 1.1% of households with school-age children reported homeschooling. That change represents a doubling of U.S. households that were homeschooling at the start of the

2020-21 school year compared to the prior year.

A big concern for dropping enrollments is, of course, less per-pupil funding coming into a district. COVID-19 got administrators thinking, and instead of completely losing the allotment of funds for the students who are now in a homeschool setting, some have begun exploring some creative approaches to partner, rather than compete, with their homeschool families.

Sheridan Public Schools in Montana, for example, now offers a “district-owned homeschooling option.” In this model, the district still receives

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DISTRICT-OWNED HOMESCHOOLING

funding for the student and the district then pays the provider of homeschool content.

Mike Wetherbee, Superintendent of [Sheridan Public Schools](#), spearheaded this new model. “If you have parents considering homeschooling, here is a model that has worked for us,” Weatherbee says. “It allowed us to keep students in the district, while giving parents an accredited homeschool option that we felt good about.” School counselors will play a large part in communicating to parents and students that this is an option for them.

WHAT IS “DISTRICT-OWNED HOMESCHOOLING?”

The new model of district-operated, family-administered education is called “District-owned homeschooling.”

In order for a district to create a partnership with families who want homeschooling, there has to be an intentional plan on how to provide all the help and tools families need. It is critical for districts to distinguish between homeschool curriculum and a full-service homeschool partner. Just as in the public schools, there are several curriculums to choose from. The most important part will be finding a true partner, which includes not only curriculum but parent support as they start a new journey for their student.

What district leaders should look for in a high-quality homeschool partner includes:

- Accreditation
- Tools for the parents
- Various program options that allow customization for both the district and families (Example: asynchronous, synchronous, online and textbook options.)
- No one specific publisher but include many curriculum options that allow for personalized learning
- Recognition in the homeschool community, which gains parent trust immediately
- A proven track record of students going on to college
- Various academic track options (i.e. honors, college prep, AP)
- Structure that allows district oversight by customizing programs to meet the needs of your district

Homeschooling works differently than public schools. There is no “per-pupil” funding. Instead, parents pay tuition over the course of the year. In the case for Sheridan Public Schools, that set price is lower than what the district receives per-pupil, which is how a portion of the funding stays in the district.

According to the [U.S Census Bureau](#) the national average per pupil in the 2018 school year was \$12,612. If a homeschooling provider’s tuition is \$5,000, that still leaves over \$7,000 in the district. There are also opportunities for bundling with a homeschool part for that price to come down if a district is bringing them multiple students.

With the number of families beginning a homeschool journey,



providing as much help and support as possible is critical. For some families, COVID-19 shutdowns showed them the flexibility and opportunities that come with learning from home, but it doesn’t necessarily mean they feel comfortable putting together their own curriculum and teaching. The option of the district coming in along beside them as a partner brings many peace of mind.

At this point, because it is such a new model, district leaders will need to seek out and find homeschool providers that are willing to work with districts. In the case of Sheridan Public Schools, Wetherbee picked a provider that was accredited and standards-aligned with a reputation for being a trusted partner.

HOW TO FUND DISTRICT-OWNED HOMESCHOOLING

This is an excellent time for districts to pursue district-owned homeschooling as Congress put a major emphasis on addressing learning loss and summer enrichment through the [American Rescue Plan Act](#). Although there is no current dedicated funding model for this learning option, there are funding streams right now that can be used for providing content and services for different types of content providers. These could specifically come through the allowable uses of addressing learning loss, providing summer enrichment opportunities, and providing online content for students.

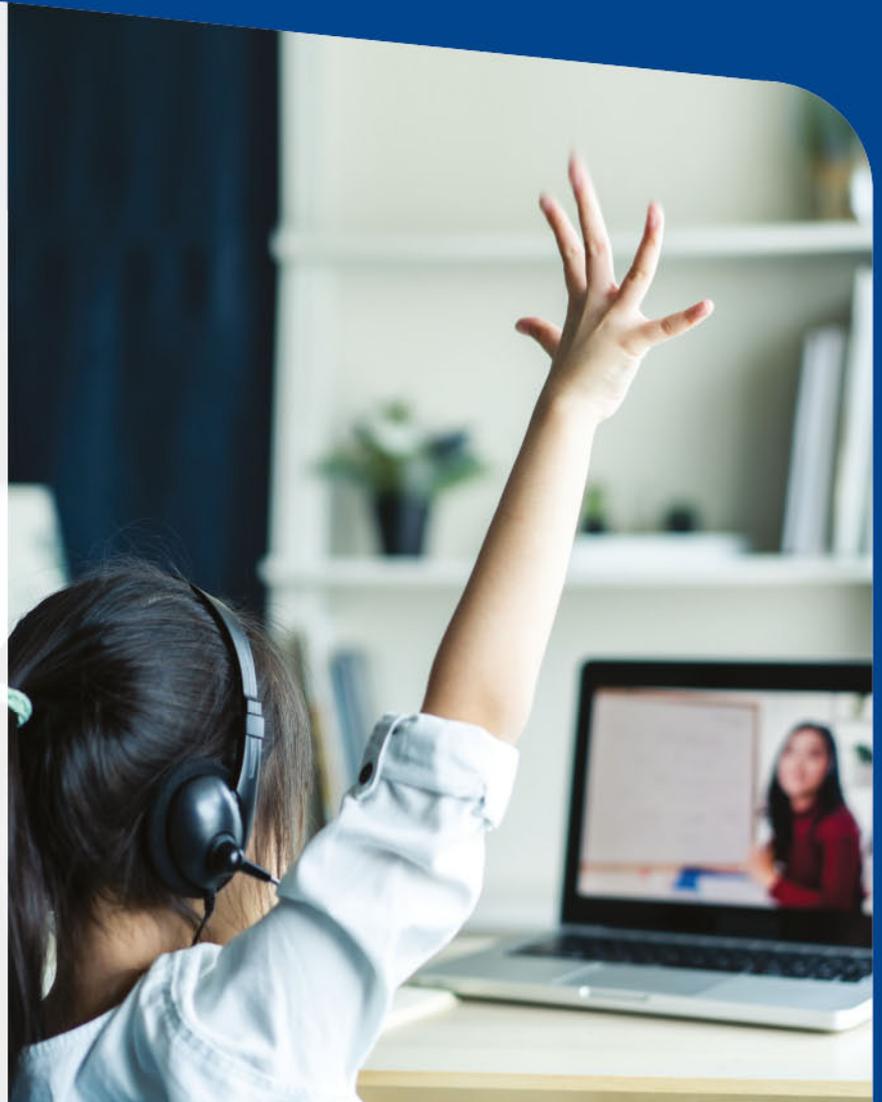


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This is only one new learning model for educators to consider. With all the challenges and changes COVID-19 brought the K-12 community, there are sure to be more popping up. One thing is for certain: families have now seen new options for learning, and they are excited to see how engaged students can be moving forward. As district leaders think through how to continue to support all of the students in their districts next year, the summer is a great time to put new learning models in place.

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SEL TAKES CENTER STAGE IN ROADMAP TO REOPENING

The recent guidance from the U.S. Department of Education recognizes that SEL, mental health, and academic success can't be separated

By Erik Ofgang

Social-emotional learning experts are applauding the U.S. Department of Education's decision to put SEL and the mental health of both educators and students at the heart of its recently released [COVID-19 Handbook, Volume 2: Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students' Needs](#).

"There's a lot to appreciate in the guidance, and I think they've done an incredibly thoughtful and thorough job," says Karen VanAusdal, senior director of Practice for [The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#). "Seeing SEL foregrounded in this way is really powerful, and not just for students and young people but for the adults as well."

She adds, "It makes a clear case that we can't separate SEL and academic learning, that these are two sides of a coin, and that if you want to accelerate academic learning, we have to attend to the social-emotional health of adults and young people, and vice versa."

SEL AND MENTAL HEALTH ARE PART OF READJUSTMENT TO SCHOOL

The COVID-19 Handbook, Volume 1 was subtitled "Strategies for Safely Reopening Elementary and Secondary Schools" and focused on how schools could implement CDC recommendations for COVID safety. Volume 2 puts the focus squarely on the mental health of students and educators.

"This is really talking about the overall well-being of all of the stakeholders who are connected to schools," VanAusdal says. "There are lots of resources, lots of good examples in there."

The 53-page guidance contains examples from various educators and school districts on how best to support students. In one example, the report details how Baltimore City Public Schools built upon existing SEL implementation efforts and developed SEL lesson plans aligned with grade groupings and weekly themes around compassion, connection, and courage.

The report notes that key evidence-based practices that maximize students' social, emotional, and academic benefits include:

- Creating a framework for meeting students' social, emotional, and academic needs

- Building strong and trusting relationships among students, families, and educators
- Establishing safe, positive, and stable environments
- Explicitly teaching critical social, emotional, and academic skills
- Actively engaging students in meaningful and culturally and linguistically relevant learning
- Experiences rooted in high academic expectations for all students
- Providing supportive and specific feedback to encourage skill growth across all domains
- Providing access to support from school counselors, psychologists, and trusted staff members
- Establishing building-level wellness teams to address the SEL needs of both students and staff

ADDITIONAL SEL TIPS

Beyond the guidance from the Department of Education there are many resources available, including an [SEL roadmap](#) that CASEL released at the beginning of the school year and updated in January.

Districts need to take time to respond to what students have experienced. "In schools, time is a huge currency," VanAusdal says. "Yes, we want to make sure that the academic learning is happening, but how do we make sure that we're creating the foundation for that by having some time at the beginning of the year to reacquaint our students with each other, with their teachers, with the school building itself, and to reflect on what we've all been through this last year, and build this into the curriculum?"

Educators can build SEL into any class.

"If I'm designing a science lesson, I would have a science objective, but I might also have an SEL objective," VanAusdal says. "I want students to know how to collaborate in a group to solve a problem, might be an SEL objective. I want students to persist through challenging thinking and challenging work. I do that in the design of my instruction. And then I also make that apparent to students and transparent to students that this is part of what we're learning here."

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10:15 AM *Introductions*

10:30 AM *Research Round Up:*

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11:00 AM *Topical Round Table:* Group

discussion about what is currently going on in their districts.

12:00 PM *Networking Lunch and Learn:*

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1:30 PM *Reflections and Next Steps:*

Reflective discussion around what has been discussed, including next steps for the participants.

2:15 PM *Closing*

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EDUCATORS MOVING AWAY FROM SEAT TIME FOR MASTERY-BASED EDUCATION

Some districts are replacing traditional views of seat time with mastery-based education

By Erik Ofgang

In many districts across the U.S., thinking around seat time has evolved as a result of COVID-19.

“The pandemic, although extremely difficult, has provided an amazing opportunity for us to think about education differently, specifically around items like seat time, or access to technology,” says Dr. Daniel Bittman superintendent of ISD 728 in Minnesota.

That means focusing more on mastery of learning objectives rather than on how long a student is synchronously in class, whether online or in-person.

Embracing this mindset has allowed the learners in Bittman’s district to be met wherever they’re at, and to really excel.

“Our students who have done extremely well are able to embrace that technology and to explore things that they may not have been able to do previously,” Bittman says. “Our students who have struggled have been given more opportunities and more time to do that with less distractions.”

Thanks to the pandemic, most states have relaxed policies requiring students to complete a certain amount of in-person school days to complete the school year. Many of these policies are temporary, though a growing number of educators believe it is time to permanently revisit how we think about seat time.

“COVID provided us with this clear evidence that time is an inappropriate measure for learning,” says Susan Patrick, president and chief executive officer of Aurora Institute, which advocates for competency based-learning. “States are grappling with how to determine attendance and award credit. And if we were determining attendance, and awarding credit, based on student engagement, students developing work products, by students showing us their learning, we would be in a much better place for teaching and learning.”

Seat time is often linked to school funding, which can be an obstacle to moving away from the practice in many states. Sixteen states use Average Daily Membership (ADM) as an alternative to seat time. “This means the policy for funding a school is based on the state department counting the students enrolled in a school or program and funding per student, not on seat time,” Patrick says.

The Aurora Institute released a guidance for determining seat time alternatives during the pandemic.

SEAT TIME ISSUES

In 1994, the National Education Commission on Time and Learning released *Prisoners of Time*, a report that called for U.S. educators to move away from a seat time-based learning model. The report noted, “For the past



150 years, American public schools have held time constant and let learning vary.”

More than two-and-a-half decades later, seat time remains a major component of education in most districts, however, some districts are starting to change.

“We estimate that 6 percent of public school districts in the U.S. are trying to shift from seat time and traditional forms of learning to more competency-based pathways that are personalized,” Patrick says. “It’s really time for our K through

12 educational system, and states and districts, to rethink how students earn credit. A measure of time does not translate into a measure of learning.”

When Patrick meets with educators from other parts of the world, they are consistently surprised by the important role seat time continues to play in U.S. education, she says.

HOW TO RETHINK SEAT TIME

The Kettle Moraine School District in Wisconsin began prioritizing personalized learning more than a decade ago. Currently, two of the district’s high schools are far along in their competency-based efforts and have waivers from the state’s seat time requirements.

Dr. Theresa Ewald, assistant superintendent of teaching and learning for the district, advises school leaders exploring making similar changes to get comfortable outside their comfort zones.

“If you’re uncomfortable, you’re doing the right work,” she says. “It’s finding that sweet spot of uncomfortable.”

Ewald’s children attended the district’s schools, which has given her the chance to experience the advantages of mastery-based education not just as an educator but as a parent.

“My daughter, who’s actually now a teacher, when she was in one of our high schools, she finished geometry in three or four months,” Ewald says. “Then she started her Algebra II credit and that took her 18 months.”

Ewald’s daughter was rewarded for her skill with geometry and was not penalized for taking longer to learn Algebra II on her transcript, but the importance of the experience went deeper than that, Ewald says. “It’s a culture of her understanding that that’s okay, like that’s how life is, some stuff’s easy and some stuff’s not. That’s a great lesson. If every high school kid leaves with that, that might be more important than Algebra II.”

Ewald adds, “The seat time requirement and traditional structure suggests kids come in as empty vessels. We know that’s not true, and so let’s honor what kids already know and not make them sit through the learning of something they already know. If you want to disengage a 15-year-old, that’ll do it.”

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HoverCam is an innovative technology leader in the education market. Our streamlined operations produce market-changing products to keep learning environments engaging and interactive. HoverCam has brought their innovative social learning interface Knotester to market along with the CenterStage interactive flat panel display, the Pilot digital podium, the 13-MegaPixel Solo 8Plus document camera, and the world's first Android-powered, high-performance digital document camera, the Nillo 100, to the market. With integration in more than 300,000 classrooms, HoverCam is focused on setting the standard for the 21st century classroom. Learn more at hovercam.com.

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Funds For Learning, LLC, is a compliance firm specializing in the federal E-rate funding program for schools and libraries. Funds For Learning supports E-rate stakeholders in all 50 states, helping them navigate the application process to receive support for internet access and Wi-Fi connectivity. To deliver applicant feedback to the Federal Communications Commission and Congress, Funds For Learning coordinates the annual E-Rate Trends Report. For more information, please visit www.fundsforlearning.com.



GAGGLE

Gaggle is the pioneer in helping K-12 districts manage student safety on school-provided technology.



Our mission is to help ensure the safety and well-being of all students, supporting school districts in proactively identifying those who are struggling. Everything we do is steeped in helping districts see the early warning signs so they can protect their students from harming themselves or others—before it's too late. We have helped hundreds of districts avoid tragedies and save lives.

MAXCASES

MAXCases Keeps Kids Learning with Protective Cases.



Let us take one worry off your plate. MAXCases helps educators keep broken iPads and Chromebooks from leading to breaks in learning. In fact, our #1 focus is supporting education with protective cases. We have options for all needs – from value to full-featured – all designed with rugged protection to prevent breakage and keep kids learning in any environment. With MAXCases you can protect devices, learning, and your budget. Learn more: www.maxcases.com.

NETSUPPORT

NetSupport has been helping schools and districts for more than 30 years with its award-



winning solutions! NetSupport School is the market-leading and most feature-rich classroom instruction and monitoring solution, delivering seamless multi-platform support within the classroom via its dedicated assessment, monitoring, collaboration, and control features. NetSupport DNA provides the complete toolkit for managing and maximizing technology across a school/district, while also creating a safe learning environment. Use NetSupport's solutions separately or integrated for a complete solution!

SMART

SMART is a world leader in education technology; a consistent innovator for more than 30 years, SMART is the inventor of the SMART Board® and the developer of SMART Notebook®, the world's most popular collaborative learning software and part of SMART



Learning Suite software. With their full range of interconnected displays, software, and accessories used by millions in education and business, SMART helps students, educators, and teams around the world connect in better ways.

SOUTH CAROLINA PIVOTCON

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE | JUNE 15

PRESENTED BY



TECH &
LEARNING

BE INSPIRED. LEARN TO LEAD.
PREPARE FOR SUCCESS.

#SCPIVOT

What is PivotCON?

SC PivotCON is a one-day virtual event that invites educators from across the state to come together as a community, celebrate our successes during the era of COVID, reimagine what school will look like in our future, and reconnect with colleagues.

SC PivotCON is a FREE, interactive experience with nationally recognized speakers, and multiple sessions throughout the day. Attendees may personalize their schedules to create an individualized program that meets their unique professional development needs. Can't join us on the 15th? Register and you will have access to all session recordings to watch when it is convenient for you! Although the conference is FREE, registration is required.

This experience will enable you to learn and share best practices, tools, and hot topics. Come with questions and leave inspired! Attendees will receive a verification document that may be submitted for CEU approval.

We want to hear your story!

For more information, visit us [here](#)

For additional questions, please contact:

Hope Dugan, hdugan@ed.sc.gov 704.231.7857

REGISTER TO ATTEND

Interested in developing your own custom event? Please contact allison.knapp@futurenet.com to find out more!

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



TECH &
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Agenda

Tuesday,
June 15, 2021

All times are ET

Vendor Hall Opens
09:00 - 09:30

Feature Speakers and
Opening Remarks
09:30 - 10:00

Virtual Exhibitor Hall
10:00 - 10:15

Workshop Session 1
10:15 - 11:00

Virtual Exhibitor Hall
11:00 - 11:15

Workshop Session 2
11:15 - 12:00

Lunch and Watch Party
12:00 - 12:30

Workshop Session 3
12:30 - 13:15

Virtual Exhibitor Hall
13:15 - 13:30

Workshop Session 4
13:30 - 14:15

Closing Ceremonies /
Prizes
14:15 - 14:30

TECH & LEARNING LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLES

— Online —

Tech & Learning invite all educators to attend our brand new Roundtable series, offering bite size sessions on hot topics in education right now. In this series, districts from across the U.S. share their strategic plans, the challenges they are facing, and the creative solutions they are using to support students and teachers. Whether it's remote or hybrid learning, student safety or data protection, we have it covered.

All attendees will receive a **'Certificate of Completion'** from Tech & Learning for each session they attend, which can be used towards one hour of **Professional Development**.

Take a look at our bite size sessions coming up and remember to keep an eye on the [website](#) for more!

Student Safety & Classroom Management: Building the Roadmap

May 12 3:30PM ET

Effective classroom management, especially when teaching remotely and in synchronous classrooms, is key to student success. Hear Dr. Kecia Ray talk with experts sharing their classroom management tips and best practices that keep their students engaged and on-track, as well as help the teacher more easily manage lesson delivery and assessment.

Brought to you by



REGISTER FREE NOW

Creating Engaging STEM Lessons

Wednesday, June 2, 3:30 PM ET

What are the latest tools and lesson plans that you can use to teach STEM and engage all of your students? In this Tech & Learning Roundtable, Dr. Kecia Ray talks with teachers on how they present STEM lessons that you can easily replicate in any learning environment.

Brought to you by

SAMSUNG



REGISTER FREE NOW

BRAND
NEW
SERIES

PLUS

Enjoy a coffee on us!

Attendees will receive a \$5 Starbucks coffee voucher once they've attended the event, as a thank you.*



**Gift cards will be distributed after the event via email. Registrants must attend the event to receive their gift card. No alternative available.*