



## **HOTLINKS!** In this edition of YOUnionnews

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**ABCFT Representative Council Notes**

[Representative Council Minutes March 8, 2021](#)

[Representative Council Minutes February 4, 2021](#)



[Link to ABCFT  
Master Contract](#)

**HOTLINKS-** Contact ABCFT at ABC Federation of Teachers [abcft@abcusd.us](mailto:abcft@abcusd.us)

- For confidential emails - use your non-work email to write to us at: [abcft2317@gmail.com](mailto:abcft2317@gmail.com)
- Join us on **Twitter** @ #ABCTeachernews
- **Facebook** @ <https://www.facebook.com/Local2317/>
- [ABCFT 2020-2023 Strategic Plan Summary](#)
- [ABCFT 2020-2023 Strategic Plan Details](#)

## KEEPING YOU INFORMED - Negotiations Update By Ruben Mancillas



Your first round of additional compensation checks should have been distributed this week. A neo-Luddite like myself still gets a hard copy in the mail but I understand that direct deposits have already been delivered. The cycle for these additional checks are as follows: 4/24-5/23 is to be issued on June 4 and 5/24-6/10 to be issued on July 2. Here is a link for [“how to read your pay stub”](#) to help with questions about how to keep track of these funds.

The negotiating team is still in the process of bargaining for a calendar. Everyone understandably wants to know just what it will look like but the possibility of additional compensation makes this a more involved negotiation than one focused primarily on start and end dates only. Thanks again to everyone who provided valuable input on our last calendar survey. ABCFT is committed to keeping you informed as soon as we have anything new to share.

Regarding schedules, each site still maintains full autonomy to vote for its respective schedule for next year. I am aware that there has been some talk of pressure on secondary sites to adopt a block schedule similar to the one used this year. But the 2020-2021 schedule was not precedent-setting and expires this June. You should not in any way feel compelled to adopt a schedule that doesn't meet the needs of your site. The argument that “you need to vote for a given block schedule in order to be eligible for additional services” is not accurate. There are a number of state and federal funds available to provide additional support but they should not be conditional based solely on a particular site's given schedule. Ideally, the administration would come to a staff far in advance and have a meaningful dialogue about what would work best in terms of any potential changes. After months of transparent deliberation, a vote could then be held. But to hurriedly present only one option as “my way or the highway” with an implication that a vote for a traditional schedule will somehow deny site opportunities for students and staff is not appropriate. A “no” vote does not remove options but may actually help send a powerful message as to how the process should work in the future regarding any possible adjustments to the schedule. And please note that the contract does not specify when secondary staff meetings need to be held, so voting “no” on a proposed block schedule does not automatically mean that staff meetings must occur at a given time.

**KEEPING  
YOU  
INFORMED**

I apologize for shouting but I want to restate all of this one more time for clarity and emphasis: DO NOT FEEL PRESSURED TO VOTE FOR ANY SCHEDULE THAT DOES NOT FIT YOUR SITE'S NEEDS. THE PROMISE OF

ADDITIONAL SERVICES SHOULD NOT BE USED AS AN INCENTIVE JUST AS THE SUPPOSED LOSS OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES SHOULD NOT BE USED AS AN IMPLIED THREAT. A “NO” VOTE DOES NOT LIMIT FUNDING BUT SIMPLY DEFAULTS YOU TO A TRADITIONAL SCHEDULE.

Lastly, I hope you all enjoyed our Professional Learning this past Wednesday because it was your last one of the year. One component of a recent side letter ABCFT negotiated was to eliminate the next two weeks of PL while a previous agreement stated that the last three weeks of the year would be free of PL as well. Thank you to the hard work of our TOSA's throughout this entire year. It was such a positive to have so many PL sessions that were responsive to teacher needs and led by our fellow ABCFT members. Let me close by wishing everyone a happy Teacher Appreciation Week. You deserve it!

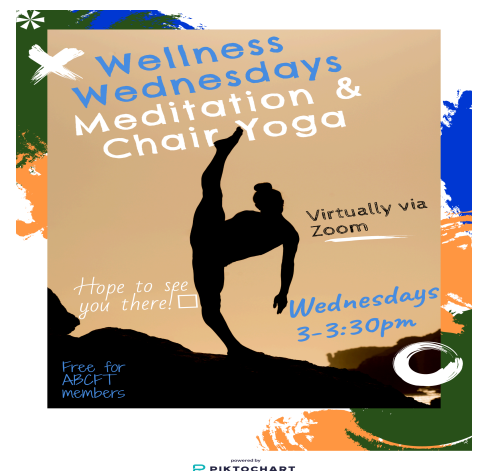
In Unity,

## MEMBER BENEFITS - WELLNESS WEDNESDAYS

Maintaining our mental health and well-being is important for all of us. ABCFT will be offering **Wellness Wednesdays from 3:00 to 3:30 pm** members will have an opportunity to virtually participate in **Guided Meditation and Chair Yoga**. These weekly sessions will give members a chance to practice self-care. In partnership with Kaiser Permanente, you can also access [mindfulness resources](#) for all ABCFT members. For Kaiser members, you have free access to the app Calm and myStrength which offers personalized self-care programs based on the cognitive behavioral therapy model. Please be kind to yourself and find time in your busy schedule to take care of yourself.

**This week**, Donna focuses on breath, specifically intentions. With the practice of setting good intentions on what you want to do or achieve. By creating a writing down and envisions your intentions it will help you work toward achieving them because they become more concrete. Participants practice holding onto intentions by using the following yoga movements, child's pose, tree pose, warrior 2, frog pose, and boat pose.

The session closes with a quote from author Fabieen Fredrickson,  
**“When you have clarity of intention the universe conspires with you to make it happen.”**



[Click here to view the recording of the Guided Meditation and Chair Yoga for this week and weekly archives](#)

## ABCFT TEACHER LEADERS PROGRAM By Tanya Golden

**You are invited to celebrate ABCFT Teacher Leaders as they present their final Action Research projects.**

# 4th Annual Teacher Leaders Showcase

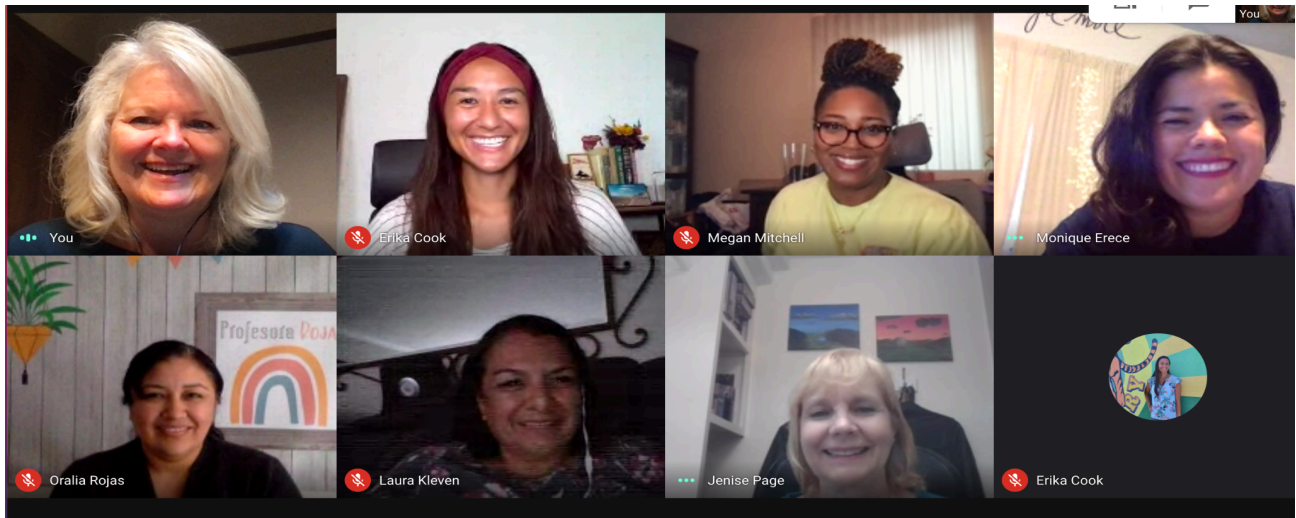
Wednesday, May 12th, 4:00 - 5:30 pm

[Click here to register](#)

## Teacher Leaders

## Action Research Question

<b>Monique Erece</b> Willow Elementary	<i>AVID in a Transitional Kindergarten Classroom: How does AVID support College and Career "Exploration" to be future-ready in an elementary setting?</i>
<b>Megan Mitchell</b> Cerritos Elementary	<i>To what extent do culturally inclusive classrooms positively influence academic performance and student self-efficacy?</i>
<b>Jenise Page</b> Speech and Language Pathologist	<i>How do Speech and Language Pathologists collaborate with general education elementary teachers? What variables affect this collaboration?</i>
<b>Oralia Rojas</b> Ferguson Elementary	<i>What do Dual Language Immersion teachers need from their site in order to maintain and implement a successful program model?</i>
<b>Edith Corrales</b> Ferguson Elementary	<i>What do Dual Language Immersion teachers need from their district in order to maintain successful programs?</i>
<b>Laura Kleven</b> Head Start - Kennedy Elementary	<i>How do discriminatory practices in compensation and professional equitability persist within Child Development programs?</i>



## TEACHER LEADERS PROGRAM APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

ABCFT is seeking teachers, nurses and SLPs to join the 2021-22 Teacher Leaders program. Have you ever seen a news report or talk show discuss issues around education, social and emotional issues, equity, or learning and thought to yourself or said to your colleagues, "Why don't they just ask a real educator about (you fill in the blank)?"

The AFT Teacher Leaders Program is a union-sponsored program designed to help prepare **YOU** to be that classroom teacher, nurse, or speech and language pathologist facilitating discussion of the issues that affect our profession both here in ABC Federation of Teachers and nationally.

ABCFT is seeking teachers and nurses interested in collaborating with colleagues across the city/district and nation on:

- ❖ Increasing an understanding of the major challenges facing the education profession
- ❖ Improving leadership skills
- ❖ Representing our profession as spokespersons
- ❖ Becoming members of an influential and supportive network of educators

This program will take place monthly, from October 2021 to May 2022. A modest stipends will be offered. We are looking forward to you joining us in this exciting, rewarding program. Here are the [Teacher Leaders Guidelines](#). For more information, contact co-facilitators, Erika Cook at [Erika.Cook@abcusd.us](mailto:Erika.Cook@abcusd.us) or [Tanya.Golden@abcusd.us](mailto:Tanya.Golden@abcusd.us)

[Click here to Apply for the ABCFT Teacher Leaders Program](#)

## MEMBER ONLY RESOURCES



### COLLECTION

## Mother's Day | Lessons & Activities

From fun activities to heartfelt stories and inclusive resources, this preK-12 collection recognizing Mother's Day has something for everyone.

[LEARN MORE](#)



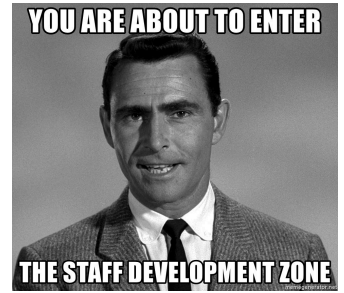
## Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage

Try these engaging preK-12 lessons to celebrate the journeys, cultures, histories and contributions of the AAPI community.

[LEARN MORE](#)

# MAY ACADEMIC SERVICES UPDATE

This month's academic service update is vital for all teachers. We hope that you will take a moment to look at this monthly report which discusses changes in academic services. This document provides the union with a means of giving the District feedback on the many programs or changes they are proposing at any one time. Without your feedback or questions on these changes, it is harder for ABCFT to slow down and modify the district's neverending roll out of new projects. Please submit your comments and questions to the appropriate ABCFT liaison.



*For Elementary curricular issues please email Kelley at [Kelley.Forsythe@abcusd.us](mailto:Kelley.Forsythe@abcusd.us) if you have any questions or concerns.*  
*For Secondary curricular issues please email Rich at [Richard.Saldana@abcusd.us](mailto:Richard.Saldana@abcusd.us) if you have any questions or concerns.*  
*For Special Education issues please email Stefani at [Stefani.Palutzke@abcusd.us](mailto:Stefani.Palutzke@abcusd.us) if you have any questions or concerns.*  
*For Nurse issues please contact Theresa at [Theresa.Petersen@abcusd.us](mailto:Theresa.Petersen@abcusd.us) if you have any questions or concerns.*

**[Click Here For This Month's Full Report](#)**

## ABCFT PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Ray Gaer



*Communication is a union's most important tool for advocating for its members at the bargaining table. Every conversation with the membership is focused on the end result of negotiating for the future prosperity and wellbeing of ABCFT members. This weekly report aims to keep the membership informed about issues that impact their working/learning conditions and their mental well-being. Together we make the YOUunion.*

As we enter the closing weeks of school I like to begin to think retrospectively about the efforts of the school year. During the month of May, the ABC Federation of Teachers historically has a menu of local governance and site representative elections in preparation for the coming year. Therefore, before we see the results of those site representative elections I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the ABCFT site representatives for their unbelievable and extraordinary efforts this year. At many sites, the ABCFT site representatives are the glue that keeps the parts together and helps to provide teacher input in local issues as well as a trusted mediation process that allows for meaningful conversations grounded in data and the collective good. ABCFT site representatives are the lifeblood of the union and are instrumental in keeping the President and the Executive Board informed about what is happening globally in our schools. My hope is that you too will recognize their critical role in making ABC a good place to work. Thank you ABCFT Site Representatives for your year of service!



Congratulations to Tanya Golden who was re-elected as the Secretary for the CFT Early Childhood/K-12 Division Council. Tanya has served on this division council for the past four years and has been a guiding voice and decision-maker in issues that impact ECK12 locals and their members. Tanya is tireless in her efforts to provide a voice for teachers in the bureaucracy of state politics. Thank you Tanya for your continued invaluable work on behalf of the teachers, nurses, SLPs, and students of ABC and the state of California.

On a personal note, I was recently re-elected as a Vice President for the California Federation of Teachers. It has been an honor to represent ABCFT and other EC/TK-12 Districts in California over the last ten years and I look forward to continuing this work to maintain and improve the working conditions for ABCFT members and CFT members throughout the State. At the national level, I was also recently reappointed to the American Federation of Teachers Policy and Programs Committee (PPC) which is made up of approximately seventy local presidents from across the country. I have served on this committee for the past ten years as the ABCFT representative as part of a California delegation. The PPC serves as a think tank for the AFT leadership and works in conjunction with the AFT Executive Board to provide the AFT President Randi Weingarten with the guidance and input necessary for her to lead the American Federation of Teachers. I am thankful for the opportunity to represent educators at the local, state, and national levels.

I hope that you have a great Mother's Day and that you are able to see your families safely in person. For many, just the ability to again hug our mothers has never been such a valuable experience. For those mothers who have passed, I hope that we are able to take a moment to honor their neverending presence in our lives. For those of you who are moms, I want to thank you for all you do and wish you a wonderful Mother's Day.

In Unity,

Ray Gaer  
President, ABCFT

Happy belated Cinco de Mayo!



# CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

The latest CFT articles and news stories can be found here on the PreK12 news feed on the CFT.org website.

[View current issues here](#)



## AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Follow AFT President Randi Weingarten: <http://twitter.com/rweingarten>

### ----- NEWS STORY HIGHLIGHT-----

#### **School nurses provide link between student health and academic gains**

As schools address lost instructional time during a global health crisis, educators should consider analyzing school medical data along with academic metrics to better target resources and intervene earlier when a student struggles with learning, argues Addie Angelov, founder and executive director of the Paramount Health Data Project. By correlating information about student visits to the school nurse with academic data, schools can also use that information to advocate for more funds for school health programs; form partnerships with nonprofits; increase efforts toward equitable practices; and better identify students in need of Section 504 services, she says. The Paramount Health Data Project works with schools to analyze various student demographic data with health and academic data to determine certain metrics, such as how many visits to the school nurse would students have before their math and English language achievement declines, and what types of ailments reviewed by the school nurse predict lower academic growth. Although the research methodology used by Paramount Health Data Project is patent pending by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Angelov said the approach could be a national standard. The Indiana Department of Education has approved the Paramount Health Data Project as an Every Student Succeeds Act Level 4 evidence-based practice.

K-12 Dive

### ----- MASKS and VACCINATIONS -----

#### **To mask or not to mask: school officials struggle to maintain harmony**

Several states, including Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, and Texas have rolled back their masking requirements, forcing superintendents and school boards to question whether they should hold fast to their own masking protocols in schools. In Arizona, Gov. Doug Ducey has just rescinded an executive order requiring all K-12 schools to require masks for anyone above the age of five. The announcement came with little warning just a month before the end of the school year, leaving district leaders scrambling to decide whether to maintain, roll back, add, or alter their own directives. "Arizona is a very ideologically diverse place, and there will be some

rural districts in more conservative areas of the state that are like, it's not worth it to keep masking policies. They're so tired of fighting about this," noted Chris Kotterman, the director of government relations for the Arizona School Boards Association. "The use of a mask here among people of a certain ideological stripe has come to signify more than infection control; it's a political thing." District leaders in several other states have already found out the hard way that, as with school reopening plans, there is no answer that will please everyone. In the Bentonville, Arkansas district, which voted to maintain masking requirements for staff and students through the end of the school year, the critique cut both ways, expressed in more than 700 e-mails from parents to school board members: from those who wanted masks dropped immediately, and those who want masking extended indefinitely. "It's one of those times as a school board member where you don't make anyone happy," said Eric White, the president of the school board. "Nobody said, 'Great job, board!'"

Education Week

### **FDA Expected To Authorize Pfizer Vaccine For Children Aged 12 To 15 By Next Week**

The [AP](#) (5/4) reports the FDA is expected to authorize the Pfizer vaccine for ages 12 to 15 by next week, according to a government official and a person familiar with the process. The announcement could "set up shots for many students before the beginning of the next school year." The FDA action will then "be followed by a meeting of a federal vaccine advisory committee to discuss whether to recommend the shot for 12- to 15-year-olds. Shots could begin after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention adopts the committee's recommendation. Those steps could be completed in a matter of days."

*Parents, Educators Eager For Children To Get Vaccinated.* The [AP](#) (5/4, Hollingsworth, Richmond) reports that parents and educators are "welcoming the news that the Food and Drug Administration is expected to authorize Pfizer's vaccine by next week for children ages 12 to 15." Educators have already "embraced vaccines for students 16 and up, with some scheduling vaccine clinics during school hours and dangling prize drawings and other incentives." Officials hope that "that extending vaccinations to children will drive down the nation's caseload even further and allow schools to reopen with minimal disruption this fall." Dan Domenech, executive director of AASA, The School Superintendents Association, "said the anticipated authorization to vaccinate younger students would help make parents feel more comfortable to send their children back to classrooms and ease concerns among some teachers."

*Pfizer To Seek Emergency Authorization From FDA For Use Of COVID-19 Vaccine In Children Ages 2 To 11.* The [New York Times](#) (5/4, Anthes) reports, "Pfizer expects to apply to the Food and Drug Administration in September for emergency authorization to administer its coronavirus vaccine to children between the ages of 2 and 11." Pfizer "said it also plans to apply this month for full approval of the vaccine for use in people from ages 16 to 85."

*Study Launched In Texas To Evaluate COVID-19 Vaccine In Children Younger Than Two Years Old.* The [Houston Chronicle](#) (5/4, Wu) reports Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital are running a study to evaluate the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in children younger than two years old. The trial will evaluate "COVID-19 vaccines in children who are 6 months to 2 years old, and another group of children 2 to 11 years old, examining dosage size and adverse reactions."

## **----- NATIONAL NEWS -----**

### **Biden: Education spending will boost America's global standing**

President Joe Biden traveled Monday to coastal Virginia to promote his plans to increase spending on education and children, part of his \$1.8 trillion families proposal announced last week. In a visit to Tidewater Community College with First Lady Jill Biden, the president discussed his \$109 billion proposal to provide Americans with two years of tuition-free community college. He's also seeking over \$80 billion for Pell Grants

to help college affordability and \$62 billion for programs that could improve completion rates at community colleges and institutions that predominantly serve disadvantaged students. "When America made 12 years of public education universal in America in the early 1900s, it made us the best educated nation in the world," he said. "The rest of the world has caught up to us. They're not waiting. And 12 years is no longer enough to compete with the world in the 21st century and lead the 21st century." Meanwhile, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said he expects every school to offer in-person instruction this fall, and that while there is a place for online learning, not every student requires a virtual learning option. "I want all students to have the opportunity to learn in person in the spring, but I expect it in the fall," Cardona told reporters on Monday. "What I don't want to see, to be very candid with you, is a system where students who were under-served in the past, select remote learning because they don't feel that that school is welcoming or safe for them."

*Chalkbeat Education Week*

## **Cardona's first budget hearing becomes forum on in-person learning**

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona testified publicly to Congress yesterday for the first time since he was confirmed by the Senate on March 1st, touching on subjects including President Joe Biden's spending proposal for education, the importance of having students return to classroom instruction, and the direction of history and civics education. He stressed to House lawmakers that he doesn't want districts to slow-walk efforts to bring students back to classes on a full-time basis. "The best equity lever we have is in-person learning, now. Not the fall - now," Mr. Cardona told lawmakers during the hearing, which was held to consider President Joe Biden's fiscal 2022 budget request. The proposal provides around \$103bn to the Education Department, and includes \$36bn to the Title I program intended to serve K-12 students from low-income households, more than double its current funding. Mr. Cardona also said that Biden's funding proposal, which would provide an unprecedented increase to funding programs serving disadvantaged students, was a way to help schools and teachers assist students in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The hearing also saw discussions about the role of diversity, equity, and inclusion in classrooms and curriculum, and what children should be taught about "divisive concepts" related to racism, sexism, bias, and policy discrimination. The Biden administration's proposed priorities for \$5.3m in grants reference the 1619 Project, a New York Times Magazine package putting slavery and its legacy at the foundation of American society, as well as anti-racism author and scholar Ibram X. Kendi. Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), the ranking member of the House subcommittee where Mr. Cardona testified, said he was concerned that the administration was creating an unnecessary and unhelpful controversy. He added that the proposal has created "an impression that the administration cannot be trusted to promote civics education" in a collaborative way. "Students should always see themselves in curriculum," Mr. Cardona replied.

*Education Week*

## **Education Dept. urged to resist 'activist indoctrination' in curriculum**

Dozens of Senate Republicans called on the Biden administration on Friday to withdraw what they say is a "divisive" education proposal that would place greater emphasis on slavery and the contributions of Black Americans in history and civics lessons taught in U.S. schools. "Young Americans deserve a rigorous understanding of civics and American history. They need to understand both our successes and our failures," Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and 36 of his colleagues wrote in a letter to Education Secretary Miguel Cardona dated April 29th. The letter was released on Friday. "Americans do not need or want their tax dollars diverted from promoting the principles that unite our nation toward promoting radical ideologies meant to divide us." Advocates for a reimagined teaching of U.S. history, one that aims to help students understand why inequities persist in health care, housing, education and more, argue that embracing the

more challenging aspects of the nation's story will better equip students to strive for the ideals of democracy on which the country was founded.

Reuters US News and World Report

## **Education Department Survey: White Students Outpace Students Of Color In Returning To Full-Time In-Person Learning**

Axios (5/6, Allassan) reports that a survey released Thursday by the Education Department suggests President Biden "has met his goal of having 'most' elementary and middle open for full-time in-person learning by the end of his first 100 days in office. 54% of schools up to the high school level are offering full-time classroom instruction, up from 46% in January. Nearly 40% are still holding all classes remotely, while 2 in 10 are using a hybrid model."

Education Week (5/6) reports the National Center for Education Statistics survey found that a year into the pandemic, "a majority of 4th and 8th graders had made it back into the classroom at least part-time. But students of color still were more likely than white students to rely entirely on remote learning."

Reuters (5/6) reports that according to the Education Department, "24% of white students were enrolled in hybrid learning...compared with 19% of Black students, 18% of Hispanics and 21% of Asians. While 58% of white students were enrolled in full-time, in-person learning in March, only 36% of Black students, 35% of Hispanics and 18% of Asians were enrolled, National Assessment of Educational Progress data shows. Among students with disabilities, 20 percent were enrolled in hybrid learning and 49 percent were in full-time, in-person settings."

The Washington Times (5/6, Murakami) reports Education Secretary Miguel Cardona has "acknowledged Black and Hispanic students returned to school at lower rates than their White classmates." He said, "At the national and local level, we must act with urgency and bring every resource to bear to get more schools reopened full-time this spring and address the inequities that continue to persist in our classrooms and communities."

## **Cardona: Minority children lag whites in full-time classroom learning**

A much lower percentage of Black, Hispanic and Asian secondary school students are enrolled in full-time, in-person learning in the United States than their white peers, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said on Thursday. "Even when offered in-person options, many Black, Hispanic, and Asian students, as well as multilingual learners and students with disabilities, are still learning fully remote," Cardona said in a statement. He said urgent action must be taken at the national and local level to get more kindergarten-through-12th-grade schools reopened full-time this spring and address the inequities that persist as the coronavirus pandemic abates. According to the Department of Education, 24% of white students were enrolled in hybrid learning - a mix of remote and in-person education - compared with 19% of Black students, 18% of Hispanics and 21% of Asians. While 58% of white students were enrolled in full-time, in-person learning in March, only 36% of Black students, 35% of Hispanics and 18% of Asians were enrolled, National Assessment of Educational Progress data shows. Among students with disabilities, 20% were enrolled in hybrid learning and 49% were in full-time, in-person settings.

Education Week

## **Biden plan provides free school lunches over summer**

The latest economic recovery plan from President Joe Biden significantly expands school lunch programs for children. The \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan includes \$45 billion to enlarge certain nutrition programs that assist families with children, many of whom have struggled with food insecurity amid the coronavirus pandemic. The bulk of that money, some \$25 billion, is to be allocated to making summer electronic benefit

transfers, or EBT, a permanent program. During Covid, the pandemic-EBT program sent money to families of students receiving free or reduced-price school lunch when school was not in session, including summer vacations. It will also invest \$17 billion in the Community Eligibility Provision, a program which allows schools in high-poverty areas to give students free lunch. The bill would lower the threshold to apply for the benefit. Of the additional 9.3 million children who would get free meals from the expansion, 70% would be in elementary school. It would also relax eligibility rules for SNAP.

CNBC

## ----- STATE NEWS -----

### **California set to adopt 'student growth model' to measure test scores**

At their meeting on May 12th, members of the State Board of Education are expected to finally adopt what other states have adopted and what's been under study for years in California: a way to include individual students' progress on state standardized tests as part of the state's school accountability system. There are several ways to measure students' growth, and the state board chose what's called a "residual gain" model. It calculates differences between students' predicted test scores and actual test scores, using previous English language arts and math scores, as well as the scores of all other students in the same grade. The new growth model will be applied to English language arts and math test scores in grades 4 to 8.

EdSource

### **Over half of California public school students remain in distance learning**

Although 87% of California's traditional public schools have reopened for some form of in-person instruction, fewer than half of students have returned either full time or part time in a hybrid model. A total of 55% of all public school students, including those in charter schools, were at home, in distance learning, as of April 30th, according to an *EdSource* analysis of new data released by the state. The study found that two-thirds of students in district schools with the largest proportions of low-income families were in distance learning, compared with only 43% of students in schools with the fewest low-income families. Higher COVID rates in poor communities contributed to the disparity. Parents in highly infected areas have been reluctant to send their children back to school, and teachers in those areas resisted returning. Parents in low transmission areas, meanwhile, pressured school boards to reopen. "The data shows complex connections to a variety of issues that ultimately disadvantage poor kids," said Kevin Gordon, president of Capitol Advisors Group, a school consulting firm. "Even though the state has made an effort to send more dollars to poor schools, poverty has determined who has had more educational opportunity than not."

EdSource

### **New state bill would examine lottery money given to schools**

A new bill introduced by state Sen. Bill Dodd (D- Napa) would examine lottery prize amounts to ensure the largest possible share for education. Senate Bill 818 requires lottery officials to conduct a study by August 1st 2022 to determine the optimal prize payout rate to maximize the amount of money allocated to public education. Also, it requires the lottery director to recalculate the rate at least once every five years while mandating the lottery commission use the optimal payout rate to set its budget. It has passed the Senate 36-0, and now awaits a vote in the state Assembly. The California State Lottery has given more than \$37bn to public education since it began in 1985.

Daily Democrat The Times-Herald

## ----- DISTRICTS -----

### **San Bernardino to continue with virtual learning**

**San Bernardino City USD** is to continue with virtual learning for at least another month. The district of roughly 53,000 students serves a predominantly Latino and Black population. Roughly 10% of the student population is homeless according to available state data, 90% of the student body is socioeconomically disadvantaged and a large portion of the student body are immigrants who do not have easy access to health care. Given the district's demographic makeup, officials were wary of rising infections and deaths. Latinos between the ages of 20 to 54 years are 2.3 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than non-Latinos in California, according to a recent study from **Keck School of Medicine of USC**.

*CNS*

### **LAUSD abandons two-week school year extension plan**

**Los Angeles USD** officials have scrapped a plan to extend the 2021-22 school year by as much as two weeks, citing a lack of support among teachers, administrators and other stakeholders. Plans initially called for adding one week to the instructional calendar in August, and another in January. Superintendent Austin Beutner said the weeks would be split "between time for teachers and school staff to plan and participate in additional training and time for students to process the trauma and anxiety they've experienced the past year and work on learning fundamentals." According to the staff report, two proposals were eventually developed. One would add six additional student instructional days, along with four professional development days for teachers. The other would have three additional instructional days, and two optional professional development days. Both proposals, however, were rejected by the stakeholder groups.

*The Patch Los Angeles Daily News*

### **Long Beach board approves raise for teachers, administrators**

The **Long Beach USD** Board of Education has unanimously approved a 2% raise for teachers, along with a retroactive raise to the beginning of last year that will be paid in one lump sum. The new contracts have already been approved by the Teachers Association of Long Beach, the union that represents instructors. Steven Rockenbach, the district's director of employee relations, said the district's administrative and management teams will receive a commensurate package as well. "Traditionally when we approve our compensation package for TALB is when we offer the same package to our non-represented and management teams," he said. "They'll be receiving a similar compensation package."

*Long Beach Post*

## ----- CLASSROOM -----

### **Research claims Common Core failed disadvantaged students**

The early phase of the Common Core State Standards gave a boost to well-off students, but didn't provide significant help to disadvantaged students' scores on a national test, according to new research. A study by Josh Bleiberg, a postdoctoral research associate at Brown University, found that students who have sufficient resources to succeed are best prepared to take advantage of high standards. Based on scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, it also found that students in states that were relatively early common-core implementers fared better than their slower-moving peers. Bleiberg found, among other things, that the standards' positive effects were larger for economically advantaged white and Black students than the effect for their disadvantaged peers on the NAEP math test, for whom the standards had "no detectable initial effect." Academically vulnerable students who had access to robust "economic capital," meanwhile, saw

benefits from the common core. Yet for their peers without access to such capital, the standards “backfired,” the study says. “Higher expectations provide the greatest benefit to students when students also have the resources needed to succeed,” Bleiberg said. He explained that there’s an important relationship between things that may seem quite different, like standards-based education reform and infrastructure improvements.

Education Week

## **Study finds four-day week school schedules lead to learning loss**

K-12 schools that cut instructional time by switching to a four-day week see meaningful reductions in student learning, according to recently published research. The trend toward closing schools for one day each week, or replacing academic programming during a fifth day with enrichment, field trips, or professional development for teachers, was spreading quickly since before the arrival of COVID-19, but the pandemic’s impact, including significant drops in test scores, also point to the damage wrought by lost hours in the classroom. A study by Paul Thompson, an economist at Oregon State University, looked at the academic outcomes of nearly 700,000 Oregon students between the 2004-05 and 2018-19 school years. The total number of schools in the state using a four-day week fluctuated from a low of 108 to a high of 156 during that period, with a large surge in adoption during the budget crunch that followed the Great Recession. Even though schools tend to expand the remaining school days by roughly 50 minutes to compensate for the missed day, that still leads to students losing out on three to four hours of learning each week. By studying districts that switched to a four-day week during the period under study and comparing them with other districts that did not, Mr Thompson found that the reduction in teaching resulted in lower test performance for both math and reading. “The important piece here is that if you’re losing instructional time year-over-year, that learning loss is growing over time,” Mr Thompson said. “For schools that continually have reduced instructional time year over year...relative to what they would have had if they’d gone back to the five-day schedule, they see this compounding negative effect.”

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## **----- OPERATIONS -----**

## **More schools reopen, though students of color still learning remotely**

Nearly 90% of schools offered some type of in-person learning in March, half were fully reopened, and the percentage of schools offering only virtual instruction was cut in half, according to the latest data from the Education Department. However, the increases in reopenings are accompanied by a racial gap in which more than half of students of color are still receiving remote-only education compared to less than a quarter of their white peers. “We are seeing higher percentages of students enrolled in full-time, in-person learning, though there are still gaps,” James “Lynn” Woodworth, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) commissioner, said. “While the number of students learning only through remote instruction is dropping overall, most Black, Hispanic and Asian students are still not attending school in person at all.” According to data collected by the NCES and the Institute of Education Science on how students in fourth and eighth grades received education during March, 88% of schools surveyed with a grade four and 89% of schools surveyed with a grade eight offered some type of in-person learning, with more than half offering in-person full-time instruction five days a week to all students. Thirty-one percent of Black students, 30% of Hispanic students and 15% of Asian students received full-time, in-person instruction compared to 51% of white students. And 49% of Black students, 50% of Hispanic students and 67% of Asian students received remote-only instruction compared to 21% of white students.

US News and World Report

## **School districts could struggle to meet maintenance of effort edict**

Factors including demographic shifts have driven states to increase their spending on special education by more than \$2 billion over the last decade. Though advocates and parents have long argued that spending is still not enough, districts and states rarely struggle to meet a maintenance of effort clause in the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which requires schools to spend at least the same amount on special education as it did during the previous year. However, there are concerns that this could change in the year ahead. Schools faced unprecedented challenges delivering instruction and support to students with disabilities this year amid the worldwide pandemic, and the costs of providing those services evolved as well, leaving some districts at risk of violating the IDEA statutes. Failing to meet the maintenance of effort requirement could result in districts having to reimburse their state for the difference between last year's and this year's special education expenditures, and they won't be able to use federal relief funds to do so. Last May a coalition of education groups, including ASBO International, wrote to the U.S. Department of Education requesting a waiver to the maintenance of effort provision; however, a spokesperson for the agency said the law as currently written prohibits the agency from waiving the requirements.

Education Week

## **----- WORKFORCE -----**

### **Why teachers are leaving the profession, and how they might be retained**

After a pandemic school year that brought heightened stress and mounting responsibilities, the love of the work that keeps so many teachers in the classroom, despite the long hours and low pay, may be eroding. To understand more about why teachers consider leaving, or actually do make the jump, and the impact of the pandemic on their decisionmaking, the EdWeek Research Center surveyed about 700 teachers and 300 school leaders online in March 2021. Fifty-four percent of teachers say they are “somewhat” or “very likely” to leave the profession in the next two years, up from 34% in the fall of 2019. The most frequently-given answer when asked what could keep them in the classroom was increased salaries. Retirement benefits and reduced administrative burdens were also cited by many. It's unclear, though, exactly how much money makes the difference for teachers on the cusp of leaving. A 2013 evaluation report from the Institute of Education Sciences looked at high-performing teachers who were offered a \$20,000 bonus in instalments to transfer to schools with low average test scores. The bonus offerings filled most of the vacancies and kept teachers at their new schools while the money was being paid out. But after the last installment, retention rates dropped, and were similar to those for teachers who didn't get the bonus. Stress was cited as a reason to leave teaching, with 84% of teachers questioned in the March EdWeek survey stating that teaching is more stressful than it was before the pandemic. The difficulties of engaging with students, along with health fears make it “particularly important right now” to tend to teachers' mental health, said Jill Cook, the president of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). “Districts need to understand that and take action,” she said. In a joint report last summer, ASCA and the National Association of School Psychologists urged districts to provide “psychological triage” not just for students, but for staff, to address trauma and intense stress caused by the pandemic. Recommended measures to take include training staff to spot early signs of mental health struggles, creating ongoing systems of support such as virtual groups and call lines, and recognizing that some groups, including Black and LGBTQ employees, may need more support than others.

Education Week Education Week Education WWeek

## ----- HEALTH & WELLBEING -----

### **FDA To Soon Authorize Pfizer-BioNTech COVID Vaccine For Children Between The Ages Of 12 And 15, Sources Say**

On the [CBS Evening News](#) (5/3), Mola Lenghi reported that the US “could be just days away from an approval for children 12 years old and older to be vaccinated.” The [New York Times](#) (5/3, Weiland, LaFraniere, Mandavilli) reports the FDA “is preparing to authorize use of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine in adolescents 12 to 15 years old by early next week, according to federal officials familiar with the agency’s plans.” Pfizer already announced positive results from clinical trials in this age group, and vaccinating children remains “key to raising the level of immunity in the population and bringing down the numbers of hospitalizations and deaths.” Likewise, [Reuters](#) (5/3) reports approval “is highly anticipated after the drugmakers said in March that the vaccine was found to be safe, effective and produced robust antibody responses in 12- to 15-year-olds in a clinical trial.”

The [AP](#) (5/3, Miller, Lemire) reports a federal official “said the agency was expected to expand its emergency use authorization for Pfizer’s two-dose vaccine by early next week, and perhaps even sooner.” Another individual who is familiar with the process “confirmed the timeline and added that it is expected that the FDA will approve Pfizer’s use by even younger children sometime this fall.” However, the [Washington Post](#) (5/3, Johnson) reports a FDA spokeswoman “declined to comment on the timeline.”

**Former FDA Chief Says 10M Kids Could Get Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine By Fall If Jab Is Approved For Younger Population.** [Fox News](#) (5/3, Farber) reports Dr. Scott Gottlieb, former head of the FDA, “said over the weekend” in a CBS News’ “Face the Nation” interview “that some 10 million U.S. children could receive the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine before fall should the jab receive emergency use authorization for the nation’s younger population.” Gottlieb “estimated that some 5 million children between the ages of 12 and 15 would immediately receive the jab following approval, while another 5 to 7 million would likely be vaccinated before the beginning of the fall 2021 school year.” Gottlieb stated, “I’m hopeful that the FDA is going to authorize the Pfizer vaccine, the company I’m on the board of, [which] has applied for permission to start giving its vaccine to 12- to 15-year-olds.” His comments follow Pfizer’s announcement in March “that a Phase 3 trial involving its coronavirus vaccine in adolescents ages 12 to 15 was found to be safe and 100% effective.”

## ----- OTHER -----

### **New study examines three decades of Teacher Of The Year awards**

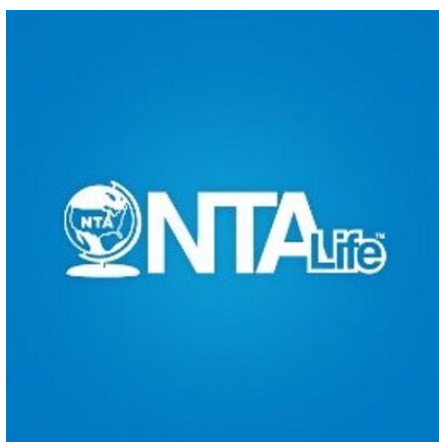
This year’s National Teacher of the Year program, bestowed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, sees finalists from Nevada, North Carolina, Utah and Washington, D.C. competing to win an award that dates back to 1952. A new study examines the characteristics of Teachers of the Year since 1988, finding that winners disproportionately teach in schools with lower-than-average numbers of low-income kids. Both at the state and national levels, underrepresented teachers include those working with special-needs students, those who teach in elementary and middle schools, and those employed by charter schools. Thirty percent of recent National Teachers of the Year have been English instructors, while 23% have taught social studies; those percentages are, respectively, three and four times greater than the share of those teachers in the American teaching ranks. No National Teachers of the Year have taught health, foreign languages, or career and technical education, and just one has been an early childhood educator. “What stands out the most is that it does really seem like teachers from high-poverty schools are less likely to be selected,” said lead study author Christopher Redding, a professor of educational leadership at the University of Florida. “If that shapes the issues that are

being [raised], it underrepresents the ones that might be of most concern to teachers working in high-poverty schools.”

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Please contact **Leann Blaisdell** at any time either by phone or email.

**562-822-5004**

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