

DATA POINTS

87% OF TEACHERS IMPROVED WITH MENTORING

The National Summer School Initiative began in summer 2020 to improve virtual teaching and learning in schools with large percentages of low-income students of color. A key component was mentor teachers, who engaged teachers in professional learning and shared videos of themselves teaching model lessons.

About 80% of surveyed teachers believed the mentoring quality was strong and that they learned from their mentor; 87% believed they improved their practice. Mentors also believed their own practice improved.

However, many would have preferred to see more differentiation in the professional learning and wished mentors had conducted observations. Teachers, mentors, parents, and students all believed students improved academically, with 81% of students saying they grew as readers and learned strategies for solving math problems. at.virginia.edu/3bXV08M

6 OF 9 STUDIES FOUND TEACHER STUDY GROUPS IMPROVE PRACTICE

A literature synthesis reviewed 32 studies on teacher study groups — learning communities focused on a specific topic. Seven out of 10 studies found a positive link between teacher study groups and increases in teacher knowledge, and six out of nine found improvements in teacher practice. But only two out of seven studies documented positive outcomes for students.

The researchers also examined whether patterns of outcomes could be attributed to specific characteristics of the professional learning. Although no definitive pattern emerged, the studies that



met criteria for all five examined factors reported positive impacts, and the study that met criteria for the fewest factors had the weakest impacts.

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2/3 OF DISTRICT LEADERS REPORT SIGNIFICANT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

More than two-thirds of district leaders reported moderate or high levels of staff learning needs this year, according to a RAND Corporation survey of how districts are navigating the pandemic.

Top among the learning needs was addressing students' social and emotional well-being, followed by how to help English learners and students with unfinished learning.

One-third of leaders worried about teacher attrition, 56% worried about having enough qualified staff to cover all classes, and almost 70% worried about having adequate funding to cover staffing needs. More than half of leaders anticipated the need for more mental health services for teachers.

On the positive side, the most commonly selected approach for navigating the current year was

creating virtual learning communities for staff, with 48% of district leaders planning to implement them and an additional 16% saying they would if they had sufficient funding.

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1/4 OF PUBLIC PRE-K TEACHERS QUIT

A study of teacher turnover in pre-K and early childhood programs in Louisiana over a two-year period revealed that more than one-third of teachers left from one year to the next, and the majority did not move to another program, suggesting they left the field. Turnover was lower in school-based pre-K, perhaps because these teachers tend to have higher pay and benefits; only about one-fourth of teachers in school-based pre-K quit, compared to almost half of teachers in child care. For nearly all sectors and age groups, teachers who left had lower scores on a standard measure of interaction quality than teachers who stayed.

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1% FEWER PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

Public school enrollment was 3% higher in 2019 than in 2009, while the number of public school teachers was 1% lower, according to the latest Digest of Education Statistics from U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. The student-teacher ratio rose slightly in that time, from one teacher for every 15.4 students to one teacher for every 15.9 students. Discrepancies in the percentage of teachers and students of color persist, with 48% of students identifying as white but 79% of teachers. Also of note, the average salary for public school teachers decreased 1% in inflation-adjusted dollars in that 10-year span.

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