

DATA POINTS

61% OF DISTRICTS PLANNED TO USE ARP FUNDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

In July 2021, the School Superintendents Association surveyed hundreds of U.S. district leaders about their plans for American Rescue Plan (ARP) and other federal COVID-19 relief funding to address pandemic-related student learning recovery. More than half (61%) planned to invest in professional development, especially in urban and rural districts, and nearly a quarter planned to build a “diverse teacher preparation pathway” to address teacher shortages. Other ways districts planned to build staff capacity included hiring more specialized support staff and improve data systems and data literacy among educators.

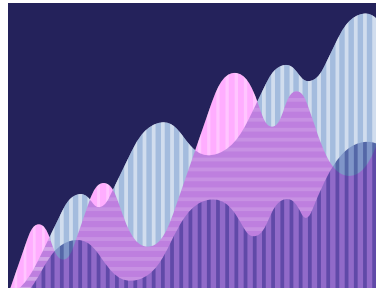
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25% OF DISTRICTS RELIED ON TEACHER-DEVELOPED CURRICULUM MATERIALS DURING THE PANDEMIC

According to a survey of more than 2,000 administrators and teachers, most districts constructed their curricula during the COVID-19 pandemic from multiple sources. More than 85% of districts said teachers developed some of their own material, and 25% reported such materials to be their main source of curriculum.

A slightly higher percentage of districts (37%) relied primarily on commercial curricula, while only 4% relied on curricula designed for online teaching and 2% relied on open educational resources. Although 70% of teachers engaged in professional learning about online or remote teaching during the year, only 51% participated in learning directly related to their curricular materials.

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2 LEADERSHIP FACTORS PREDICT TEACHER WELL-BEING DURING COVID

In a spring 2020 study of 325 Australian teachers, researchers examined the impact of different types of school leadership on teachers’ well-being and adjustment during COVID-19. When teachers reported that principals engaged in autonomy-supportive leadership (e.g. inviting their input and listening to their opinions), teachers were less likely to feel stressed, experience physical manifestations of that stress, and experience emotional exhaustion. Those relationships were partly explained by an increase in teachers’ “workplace buoyancy” (a concept similar to resilience that is specific to a workplace context). In contrast, autonomy-thwarting leadership was associated with more emotional exhaustion.

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74% OF PARENTS BELIEVE TEACHERS ARE PREPARED TO HELP KIDS CATCH UP

According to PDK’s latest annual Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, most parents approve of how their children’s schools and teachers have handled learning during the pandemic. Sixty-three percent of parents say they would give their children’s teachers an A or B rating for their pandemic response last year. Looking ahead, 74% believe their children’s schools are prepared to help students catch

up on academics they missed last year, and 69% believe they are prepared to help students cope with the social and emotional impact of the pandemic school year.

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2.2 PERCENTAGE POINT INCREASE IN TEACHER RETENTION THANKS TO MENTORING

In a Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest study of district supports for improving teacher retention, teachers were significantly more likely to remain in their positions in districts with: new-teacher mentoring programs (92% of teachers with mentoring versus 90% without); regular, supportive communication from school leaders (92% versus 90%); a school orientation program (92% versus 90%); and opportunities for teachers to set goals in their evaluations (92% versus 87%). The availability of these supports varied across type of support and school and district characteristics, with such supports more available in more advantaged communities.

bit.ly/2YbFepj

2 PERCENTAGE POINT INCREASE IN TEACHERS OF COLOR

A study by Brendan Bartanen and Jason A. Grissom published in the *Journal of Human Resources* found that the race of the school principal predicts the racial composition of the school’s teachers. Using data from Tennessee and Missouri, the researchers found that principals increase the proportion of same-race teachers in the school by 1.9-2.3 percentage points. This effect appears to be attributable to both hiring patterns and retention rates of same-race teachers.

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