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Source Entries

1.

“Nation Shows Mediocre Academic Performance as Pandemic Continues”

Lloyd, Sterling C., and Xinchun Chen. “Nation Shows Mediocre Academic Performance as Pandemic Continues.” *Education Week*, vol. 40, no. 3, Sept. 2020, pp. 12–15. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=145464209&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

This recent article talks about the academic performance nationwide during the pandemic for grades K-12. We’re down 0.2 points this year on the Achievement Index compared to last year. The Achievement Index is essentially a report card from the State Board of Education for the nation’s academic performance based on a different number of factors such as achievement, poverty-based disparities, graduation rates, and test scores. The Achievement Index for 2020 scores 72.8 on a 100-point scale. That is between a C and C- average for majority of the states and a D+ and lower for the remainder of the states. We learn from these analysis’ that the highest test score performing states (Massachusetts and New Jersey) rank low on poverty-based disparities and equity. It is apparent that the inaccessibility to basic online learning needs such as devices, internet service and instructional support leads to the major uneven and low academic performance of our country.

As if surviving in the middle of a pandemic wasn’t hard enough on its own, students now struggle to obtain and meet basic educational requirements. I

believe the claims made in this article are legitimate because I'm seeing it first-hand as a student myself. It is a struggle trying to keep up and maintain what is expected of you when you do not have the basic necessities you need in order to do so. Low-income and minority students are getting hit the hardest when it comes to this matter and that is quite blatantly obvious as reflected in the data shared in this article. I would like to know what the NAEP and DOE plan to do in order to bridge these gaps back together. What efforts are they making to effectively improve the nations educational system, instruction, and academic performance for all students especially the ones being affected the most by results of the pandemic?

The two quotes below from the article are the sad reality about what our educational system has succumb to during such trying times.

“Amid unequal access to the digital devices, internet service, and instructional support that enable remote learning, the nation's academic achievement remains stalled, with a baseline of uneven performance among both low- and high-achieving states.”

“The coronavirus pandemic has heightened concerns that such gaps in academic performance might expand further due to inequality in access to remote learning and technology.”

2.

“Academics, Achievement Gap, and Nutritional Health: The Impact of Coronavirus on Education.”

Anderson, Tameka C. “Academics, Achievement Gap, and Nutritional Health: The Impact of Coronavirus on Education.” *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, vol. 87, no. 1, May 2020, pp. 14–7. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=146313997&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

This article talks about the educational disparities for minorities that already existed but have worsened during the pandemic. The article states that 18

percent of students in low-income communities do not have a reliable or stable internet connection, therefore causing a predicament between these students being able to complete their assignments. The biggest problem schools are facing regarding minority students are inequalities and unequal technology resources. Schools have been making an effort to bridge this gap by providing and lending students technology devices and hotspot internet connections. However, due to the instability of the educational approaches for distance learning, this is still not enough for academic success within high poverty students. The article states that another leading factor in the academic regression for minorities is food insecurity. Parents who relied on their child's school to provide them with breakfast and lunch have found difficulties in providing a source of nutrition for their children now that they are learning from home. Schools and churches have set up food drives and pantries to try and combat this.

Although many schools are trying to distribute the necessary technological resources low income students need, this once again can become an issue when urban schools do not have enough resources themselves to provide students with the technical support they need. I agree with the statements and arguments made in this article and believe they are legitimate because the data and research speak for itself. It's no secret that there are educational disparities within the low income and high poverty community. It was happening way before the pandemic, and it is only getting worse.

Two quotes that highly reflect this article are

"This academic success varies and is based upon the students and the needs of their school and community."

"Students from "disadvantaged backgrounds will face multiple challenges, from the bottom of Maslow's hierarchy to the top: food and shelter, which schools helped to provide, connection to support children's learning, and a lack of financial buffers to carry a family through" (Anderson, 2020, p. 3)."

3.

"Closing COVID-19 Equity Gaps in Schools."

Samuels, Christina A. "Closing COVID-19 Equity Gaps in Schools." *Education Week*, vol. 40, no. 7, Sept. 2020, p. 5. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=146158577&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

This last article discusses data and surveys regarding my research question. In an Education Week survey, minority families were more likely to benefit the least by distance learning. Another survey from Education Week shows the amount of trust parents have with their child's school to protect and keep their children safe when returning to in person learning. White and Asian parents rank the highest with their trust in their child's school with 53 and 57 percent. Black and Latino parents ranked the lowest with 44 percent, respectively. While Black and Latino communities have been experiencing disparities, they are not the only minority group that have been affected immensely by the sudden shift in educational learning. Students with disabilities have also faced hardships with remote learning. Schools were not yet equipped to provide the resources disabled and English learning students need. It is believed by experts that these students should be prioritized and provided enough support to help them be successful in online learning, suggesting investing in assistive technology and preparing special educators to properly service these students.

This article states that school officials have learned from this past school year with remote learning and are preparing to better plan out online learning for the upcoming spring semester. They are spending more time training teachers and are trying to assist more students with their technological needs and overall support students. I believe with dedication and more change this is very much possible, but we need everyone to actively participate in bettering educational learning in the midst of a pandemic.

Notable quotes from this text:

"The economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic continues to have a profound effect on families, many of whom are facing job loss, evictions, and a general lack of financial stability—all of which affects how prepared students will be for learning. School districts are already an important source of connecting families with the support they need, and they'll need to continue that work even more aggressively for the coming school year."

“There’s no question that the shift to remote learning was a blow to many students who were already vulnerable before the pandemic even started—particularly students of color and low-income children and youths. Yet, educators and experts say that the new school year doesn’t have to be a repeat of the spring, if educators are committed to focused work in accelerating learning, reaching out to families, supporting technology needs, and revising and evolving plans when necessary.”