Strategies and Solutions for Mitigating COVID-19 Learning Loss

Sponsored by ACT Learning
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EdResearch for Recovery taps top researchers to synthesize existing research and inform district recovery strategies.
Today, we’ll draw on the series of research briefs specifically focused on addressing learning loss.
As schools restart, predictions about student learning loss have taken on a dire tone.

**Research Shows Students Falling Months Behind During Virus Disruptions**

The abrupt switch to remote learning wiped out academic gains for many students in America, and widened racial and economic gaps. Catching up in the fall won’t be easy.

Homeschooling during the coronavirus will set back a generation of children
Long breaks are damaging. Virtual learning is erratic. The stakes are high.
Evidence suggests that most students will recover with the right mix of supports.

- **Relationships**: Supportive school environments and strong teacher-student relationships speed recovery from learning loss.

- **Targeted Intervention**: Intensive recovery needs will likely be concentrated in the early grades and among already struggling students.

- **Tutoring**: High-dosage tutoring that is directly tied to classroom content – helping students succeed in their coursework – can substantially accelerate learning in both math and reading for the most struggling students.

- **Extended learning time**: Weeklong acceleration academies staffed with highly effective teachers and some double dose math structures, show strong evidence of effectiveness.

- **Ongoing Monitoring**: Systems to identify early warning signs paired with strong norms and routines help students recover emotionally and engage academically.
Introducing the ACT Learning Division

Social and Emotional Learning  Blended Learning
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Learning Environments
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Relationships matter - both in person and online.

➢ Research on the stress of school closures and on the academic impact of Hurricane Katrina finds that while students initially experience some learning loss, the persistence of these losses depends on the receiving environment. Losses fade after a year or two when students return to stable schools. Losses tend to persist, especially in math, when students re-enter chaotic or hostile environments.

➢ Students taking part in remote learning need time to connect socially with each other in ways that build community and engagement. Teacher-student relationships are key to engaging students in learning.
For younger students, communication with families is particularly important.

- The vast majority of research about distance learning has been conducted on older students, suggesting that districts will need to tailor evidence-based approaches for younger students.

- Targeted support strategies for families, including take-home books, text messages, and family involvement programs, can effectively supplement in-school curriculum.

- A randomized study of a year’s worth of texts from the Tips-by-Text program for pre-kindergartners found significant improvements in the extent to which parents engaged in home literacy activities as well as gains in student literacy scores at kindergarten entrance.
Small-group tutoring has shown significant effects on achievement across subject areas.

- Boston’s Match Education developed a tutoring model – The Match Corps – that brought in recent college graduates for relatively low stipends to conduct daily one-to-two tutoring, four days per week, for early high school students. The program encouraged coherence with coursework that is often absent from other tutoring programs.

- Match Corps, which cost around $2,500 per student per year, led to gains of “one to two additional years of math in a single school year above and beyond what kids typically learn in a year.” Follow-up studies in Chicago and Houston have validated the approach.

- A randomized trial of daily four-on-one reading tutoring for middle school students at a cost of $2,200 per student per year found positive effects on attendance and ELA tests scores, especially for Black and Hispanic students.
Acceleration academies and double-dose classes can boost achievement, especially in math.

➢ **Acceleration academies** in Lawrence, MA “provided struggling students with targeted, small-group instruction in a single subject, delivered by select teachers over week-long vacation breaks,” leading to significant student gains.

➢ In Chicago, double-dose math classes in 9th grade where students received additional time for math in early high school showed significant positive effects on algebra test scores and long-run outcomes.

➢ This intervention was not simply about doubling instructional time. Teachers received professional development in using extra time to promote complex thinking through student-centered instructional practices. The extra time enabled teachers to feel like they could take risks with new modes of instruction.
Ongoing monitoring will matter more than ever.

- **Systems** that track attendance, assignment completion, and grades strengthen schools’ ability to individualize services and match specific interventions to the needs of different students so they don’t fall behind in their courses.

- Well-conducted **school-based SEL interventions** have the potential to positively impact the culture and climate of classrooms, student well-being, and improve academic outcomes in the long-run.
Some frequently discussed strategies are unlikely to make a difference.

➢ Compressed content, grade retention, and enhanced **Response to Intervention (RTI)** show less evidence that they substantially shift learning outcomes for struggling students, and some have potential adverse long-term consequences.

➢ **Remediation programs** that supplant regular instruction are likely to prevent students from learning new, grade-level content.

➢ **Large-scale, standardized testing** is unlikely to yield results quickly enough and/or at a grain size that teachers can use to plan instruction.

➢ Distance learning will likely be unsuccessful if teachers ask students to watch **expository instruction for multiple hours each day**.
An on-demand archive of this webinar will be available at www.edweek.org/go/webinar in less than 24 hrs.
Q&A
ACT Serves Education

ACT provides learning solutions to enable personalized insights for PreK-12 teachers and families that drives learner outcomes to succeed in college and career readiness.
Our Guiding Principles

Inclusive
We do everything we can to level the playing field for everyone, regardless of needs, backgrounds, or resources.

Holistic
We assess and appreciate each person’s unique traits and skills, to help navigate toward college and career success.

Transformational
We lead the industry through our research and technology, constantly evolving as an integral part of the learning process.
What if...

Each student received a personalized learning path based on individual needs?

The learning environment could be structured to allow for optimal growth of all students?

Performance data was available in real-time allowing you to make quick pivots to instruction?
How Learning Gets Redefined

**Knowledge Map**
Learning GPS providing knowledge progression at a concept level offering a bridge between prior knowledge and new knowledge.

**Content Scaffolding**
Scaffolding moves students progressively toward stronger (deeper) or weaker (prerequisite) content.

**Spiraling and Spacing**
Research shows that "spacing" and "spiraling" of curriculum leads to more robust encoding of information and better long-term retention.

**Depth Of Knowledge (DOK)**
Webb’s Depth Of Knowledge model offers a scale to measure rigor (e.g., complexity of thinking) required to master a concept.

**Technology Enhanced Items (TEI)**
Tech-enhanced items offer intuitive and interactive formats with psychometric properties that help more accurately measure student knowledge compared to traditional formats.
Learn More

**ScootPad**
Technology platform that delivers continuously personalized enrichment, tiered support and mastery to every student K-8.

**Icurio**
360,000 K-12 curated, vetted and maintained standards-aligned resources from the best OER providers and utilizing our 127-point resource certification process.

**MAWI Learning**
SEL Curriculum
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ACT Social and Emotional Learning supports SEL initiatives of schools and districts with evidence-based programs. Our easy-to-use, online and blended solution offers K-12 student curriculum, a suite of ELL options, educator professional development, and assessment that aligns with CASEL's 5 core competencies.

Learning and Professional Services helps educators use these resources for success.
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Suggested Reading From Education Week:

**Academically Speaking, the 'COVID Slide' Could Be a Lot Worse Than You Think**
New projections suggest learning loss related to these pandemic-related school closures would be worse than the typical academic backsliding students experience over the summer break.

**Teaching and Learning in the Pandemic**
A more deliberate approach to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and teacher professional development this fall could mean a better experience for students; the lack of one could turn equity gaps into chasms.

**COVID-19 & Remote Learning: How to Make It Work**
To avoid the frustrations and mistakes of last spring, see our tips, checklists, best practices, and expert advice on how to make teaching and learning at home engaging, productive, and equitable.
Recognized by The NonProfitTimes as one of the 2020 Best Nonprofits to Work For.

Education Week has been selected as one of the 2020 Best Nonprofits To Work For by The NonProfit Times, a leading national business publication for nonprofit managers.

“We are humbled and energized to be selected as one of the top fifty 2020 winners, particularly during these very challenging times,”
– Michele Givens, President and CEO, Education Week