



# The UPSTATE PDRC

Newsletter, August 2021 Issue 16

*A NYSED Funded Project for Access and Equity -  
Free of cost services through Title II, Part A and Title IV, Part A of ESSA*

## Reframing Learning Loss: Meeting Students Where they Are



**"YOU'VE GOT  
THIS:  
COVID is new but  
Intervention is  
NOT!"**

*Learning losses. Achievement gaps. Quarantine backslides. They're **real**. They're **ridiculous**.* The conversation about the return to in-person learning offers a wide range of perspectives on how educators should support students when they arrive in classrooms next month. There is no question that teachers will have to address some gaps though maybe not in the traditional sense of 'loss.' **What if**, rather than trying to backfill what students have missed during the pandemic, we begin the year by meeting students where they are and planning for how to move them forward from there? Below are

Assessment drives instruction, and data is the key to post-pandemic planning.

Learn how to meet your students where they are, identify gaps, stay focused on learning targets, and provide tiered intervention to meet the needs of all your students.

***Spoiler alert: You already have a lot of the necessary tools and skills!***

Watch your inbox for a video announcement with **MORE INFORMATION!**

Visit our website to check out PD resources and for information about our fall offerings

**"Reprioritize. This is the time to see if something can be different. To reset the system, we have to take a loss, but we can recoup the loss if we**

some suggestions from recent reports and polls that offer ways to take a whole-child approach that sets students on a course for success. We offer them as 'what ifs' to encourage conversations in school communities about how these ideas might guide planning and visioning for the 2021-22 school year. **What if we..**

- Recognize the direct link between mental health and academic performance to address social emotional needs to ensure students feel safe, engaged, and connected to their teachers and peers?
- Prioritize the content standards that students need to be successful in the next grade, providing extra supports and scaffolding as necessary, and focusing on engagement rather than seat time and remediation?
- Modify existing assessment and accountability systems to ensure that you get a comprehensive view of what students know and to address potential cumulative unknowns that lie below the surface?
- Do an equity audit or survey to ensure that all students have equal access to curriculum, technology, and necessary supports for success? Consider the ways that equity gaps have been compounded for some student groups during the pandemic.
- Invest in professional capacity building to support teachers as they develop skills, mindsets, and solutions to address post-covid student learning needs?

Please let us know how the Upstate PDRC can support your PD needs as you make your plans to welcome students back this fall.



Over 140 participants from approximately 90 different schools attended the 5 summer academies that were offered this summer by the Upstate PDRC. Of those who provided feedback across 4 of the sessions (\*),

**91%** indicated that they had learned new knowledge and skills to use in their practice;

actually get kids excited about education and create a more positive space for them to learn."

*Michelle Ampong,  
Atlanta parent and  
school volunteer*

and

**98%** indicated that they would definitely recommend the series to other teachers or school leaders.

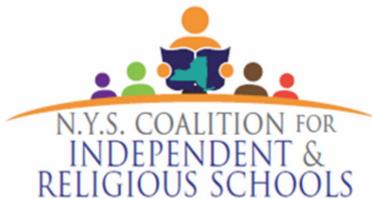
We send out a big **thank you** to all of the participants who attended each day, sharing their questions, experience, and enthusiasm. We hope to see you back for some of our fall offerings.

**ICYMI:** Watch **our website** for condensed asynchronous versions of our summer sessions coming soon.

**SAVE THE DATE**

(\* results from Aug 9-13 session not available)

**RISE 2021**  
**November 9–10**  
**Learn More Here**



## Spotlight on Students

### *In their Voices*

A recent New York Times Daily Student Opinion Forum asked [teenagers to share their perspectives](#) on the return to school this fall. The NYT summarized their responses: "Most students acknowledged that it takes extra effort to stay focused and motivated during online learning, yet many have adjusted to the new way of doing things. Others expressed worry that not all of their peers have the same opportunities. *But they also talked about what they have learned this year, including technology skills, global awareness and resilience.* As Taia from Chicago wrote, 'How can anything being taught in outdated

*textbooks ever compare to the real-world experiences we as students have gained in 2020-2021?"*

**We reached out to some students from religious and independent schools to gather their thoughts on the return to school for 2021-22. We asked questions similar to those in the NYT poll. Here is a sampling of the results of from our very unscientific but candid 'research':**

The students we heard from *didn't feel that they had lost learning, and most felt that they had learned a lot during remote/hybrid instruction.* Some students indicated that remote/hybrid learning was better for them. Wrote one HS student from a religious school, "My grades were much better during remote learning. I felt *less pressure...and it felt more like 1:1 interaction with my teachers*" Another student indicated that "the curriculum felt the same to me as when I was in person." Some students liked that on line instruction meant more interaction with tools like "Kahoot" and less "rushing." A high school student suggested that teachers shouldn't be "overly worried" and could "talk with their kids (students)" when planning for how to move forward. One of our younger respondents from an independent school wrote, "It (remote learning) was a little bit harder because you had to get everything together yourself and it's hard to work the computer sometimes," but when asked if he felt he had 'lost learning' or not learned everything he would have in face to face classroom, he noted "*I feel like I learned a lot of stuff still even though I was remote.* But I don't know what I would have learned in school so, I guess that's a funny question ." A consistent theme among each of the students who responded to our questions was that they were *looking forward to social activities, having fun, and seeing their friends and teachers.*

We send a big thank you to our "sample of convenience" for taking time to share their insights and their enthusiasm.

**RESOURCE ROUNDUP:  
Looking for More? Check out these Resources!**

## READ



**Alfie  
Kohn**

[Is Learning Lost When Kids Are Out of School?](#)

## WATCH

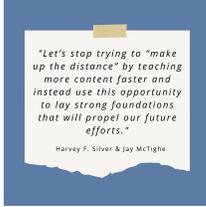


[Accelerating Learning After COVID-19: Peter Dewitt talks with Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey](#)

## LISTEN



[How Schools Can Help Kids Heal After a Year of Crisis and Uncertainty](#)



[Learning Loss: Are We Defining the Problem Correctly? Harvey Silver and Jay McTighe](#)



[Learning Loss Amid Pandemic is Misunderstood](#)



[Jennifer Gonzalez discusses what post-pandemic teaching can look like](#)

UPSTATE PDRC: SERVING ALL NYS REGIONS NORTH OF NYC  
[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

*This newsletter is solely intended to be a supplemental resource for NYS religious and independent schools. The Upstate PDRC does not adopt all views and opinions contained in the attached links or resources from other organizations, nor is it affiliated with these sources. The ideas presented here are intended to spark discussion and represent a range of perspectives.*