



March 18, 2021 | CISI E-Bulletin

California Institute for School Improvement: partnering with California school districts since 1984.

- **UC Davis School of Education Programs Continue to Serve Administrators Virtually During Pandemic**
- **American Rescue Plan (ARP) Provides almost \$220 billion for Education**
- **How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research**
- **“We Shake Hands at the Door”: How a Focus on Relationships Is Driving Improvement in Chula Vista**
- **Pathways to Equitable Math Instruction**
- **(EdTrust West)**
- **What’s the Least Risky Hybrid Model to Bring Students Back to School?**
- **Building a Community for Black Male Teachers**
- **EdReport’s Application of Scarborough’s Rope**
- **The Partnerships for Social and Emotional Learning Podcast**
- **Most Popular items from last month’s California Institute for School Improvement (CISI) E-bulletin**
- **Want more on a particular educational topic? Let us know!**

UC Davis School of Education Programs Continue to Serve Administrators Virtually During Pandemic

through the Center for Applied Policy in Education.

Superintendents' Executive Leadership Forum (SELF) & the California Superintendents' Collaborative Network

Serving 48 California superintendents statewide. Focused on systems for instructional improvement and effective leadership for equitable learning outcomes in K-12 schools; a collegial support network focused on the real work of districts.

Superintendent Feedback

"Even though we have such different districts, we have universal leadership challenges. Thanks for supporting us in this way. The work is deeply meaningful."

"Your facilitators are excellent."

"The remarkable power of collegiality and support between superintendents in leading amidst this COVID pandemic."

California Principals' Support Network (CAPS)

Serving 100 principals, and teacher teams, statewide. Focused on building effective instructional teams, collaboration, common formative assessment and high leverage practices for school leaders.

Principal Feedback

"As always, I leave this training with a both a sense of concrete steps I can take, and a sense of urgency to actually implement these with my staff in order to effectively do what can be done to support my students' learning."

"I appreciate this rewarding experience that we are having. It helps give guidance to us during this difficult time of distance learning."

"I really loved the focus on best practices and discussing insights with others and thinking forward about collaborating with my team."

Access more on these programs [HERE](#).

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Provides almost \$220 billion for Education

(American Association of School Administrators)

On March 11, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) into law. This nearly \$2 trillion federal emergency supplemental appropriation is the sixth emergency package in response to the enduring COVID-19 pandemic.

OVERVIEW: The bill signed into law bears a striking resemblance to President Biden's initial

care, and education-related programs, plus \$362 billion for local and state fiscal relief, much of which could ultimately support education. The total for the Department of Education is more than twice the fiscal year 2021 regular funding total of \$73 billion.

Timeline for Funds: ARP allows for district allocations to remain available through September 23, 2023.

This is expected to be interpreted to allow LEAs to spend these allocations through the end of the 2023-24 school year.

Some Allowable uses for ARP funds:

Conducting activities to address the needs of students from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth;

- Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity as well as assistive technology or adaptive equipment);
- Summer learning, and supplemental after-school programs;
- Providing meals to eligible students;
- Mental health services;
- Addressing learning loss;
- School facility repairs to reduce risk of virus transmission and support student health; and
- Implementing public health protocols including policies in line with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for school-reopening
- Implementing activities to maintain the operation and continuity of services and to employ existing staff.

Learning Loss Set Aside: LEAs must use at least 20% of their ARP funds to address learning loss via evidence-based interventions that focus on students' academic, social and emotional needs. Note: we are not clear on how evidence-based interventions will be interpreted by ED, but they will likely have to issue some guidance.

Access the full document [HERE](#).

How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research

(Vanderbilt University)

In this February 2021 report, supported by the Wallace Foundation, the authors state, "The findings of this new review, *How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research*, are striking." Excerpts follow:

Chapel Hill concludes that, based on research since 2000, the impact of an effective principal has likely been understated, with impacts being both greater and broader than previously believed: greater in the impact on student achievement and broader in affecting other important outcomes, including teacher satisfaction and retention (especially among high-performing teachers), student attendance, and reductions in exclusionary discipline.

The report makes other contributions, as well. Synthesizing quantitative and qualitative studies, the researchers identify four principal practices that are linked to effective outcomes, as well as three foundational skills.

The four practices, which together provide a rounded portrait of principal activities, are

- 1) high-leverage instructional activities,
- 2) building a productive culture and climate,
- 3) facilitating collaboration and learning communities, and
- 4) the strategic management of personnel and resources.

Engaging in instructionally focused interactions with teachers. Forms of engagement with teachers that center on instructional practice, such as teacher evaluation, instructional coaching, and the establishment of a data-driven, school-wide instructional program to facilitate such interactions.

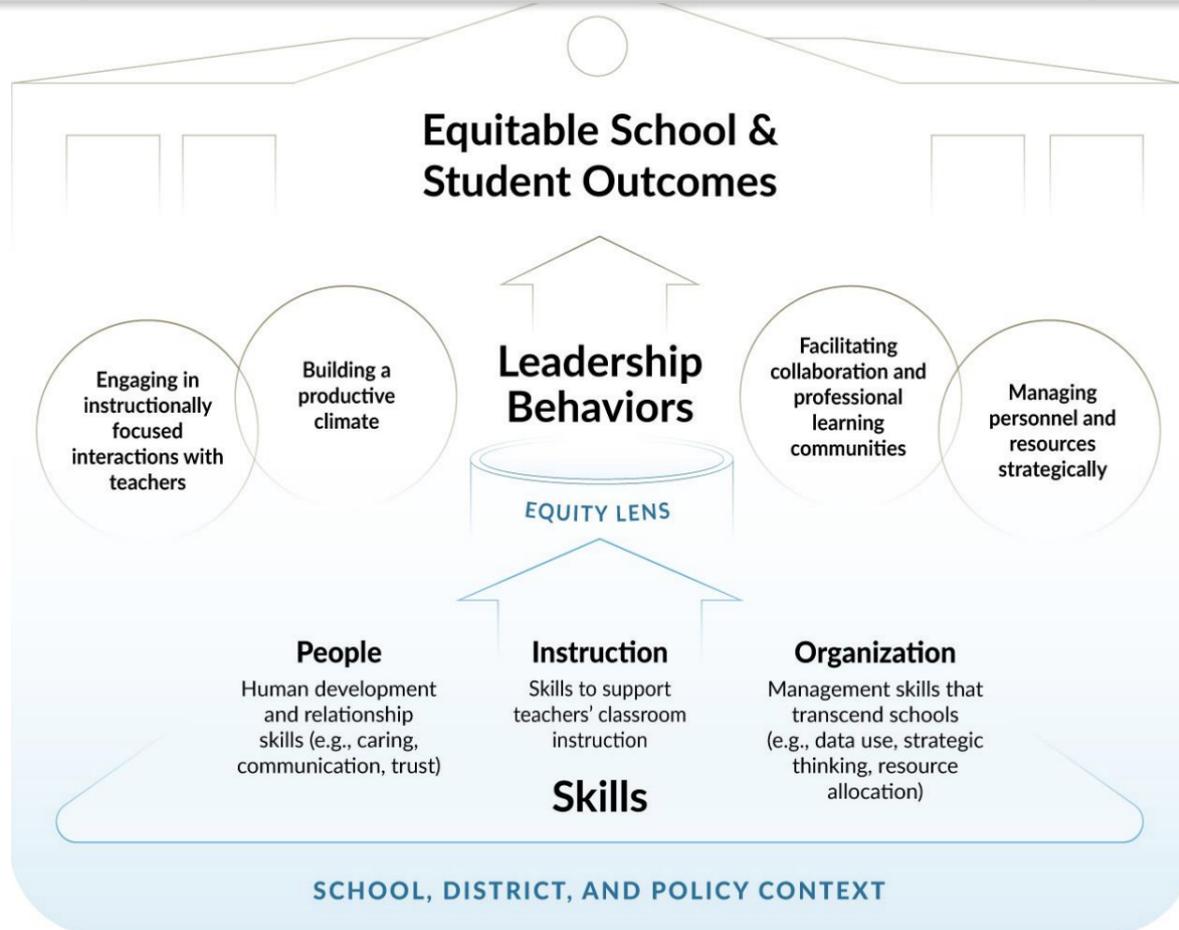
■ **Building a productive school climate.** Practices that encourage a school environment marked by trust, efficacy, teamwork, engagement with data, organizational learning, and continuous improvement.

■ **Facilitating productive collaboration and professional learning communities.** Strategies that promote teachers working together authentically with systems of support to improve their practice and enhance student learning.

■ **Managing personnel and resources strategically.** Processes around strategic staffing and allocation of other resources.

Identifying these practices and skills was important, as they allow us to not only better specify the *impact* of an effective principal but to know what he or she *does* to be effective. These insights can, in turn, help make efforts to strengthen leader preparation, training, and support more feasible and effective.

In fact, the importance of school principals may not have been stated strongly enough in prior work, particularly from the perspective of state and district leaders and policymakers seeking to move the needle on student achievement. Indeed, it is difficult to envision an investment in K–12 education with a higher ceiling on its potential return than improving school leadership.



The report's synthesis of the literature identifies four interrelated domains of behaviors and practices that integrate instruction, people, and organizational skills to produce school outcomes.

1. *Engaging in instructionally focused interactions with teachers,*
2. *Building a productive climate,*
3. *Facilitating collaboration and professional learning communities, and*
4. *Managing personnel and resources strategically.*

1. Effective principals are at least as important for student achievement as previous reports have concluded—and in fact, their importance may not have been stated strongly enough.
2. Principals have substantively important effects that extend beyond student achievement.
3. Effective principals orient their practice toward instructionally focused interactions with teachers, building a productive school climate, facilitating collaboration and professional learning communities, and strategic personnel and resource management processes.
4. Principals must develop an equity lens, particularly as they are called on to meet the needs of growing numbers of marginalized students.
5. Effective principals are not equitably distributed across schools.
6. Principals are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, but representation gaps with students are growing, which is concerning, given the payoffs to principal diversity.

Access the full report [HERE](#).

“We Shake Hands at the Door”: How a Focus on Relationships Is Driving Improvement in Chula Vista

(*WestEd*)

Led by superintendent Francisco Escobedo, a member of the [California Superintendents Collaborative Network](#) in partnership with the UC Davis School of Education and the UC San Diego Department of Educational Studies, San Diego's Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) has shown consistently strong student achievement and has received recognition as a California Exemplary District. The largest K6 district in California serves a student body that is two thirds Latino/Latina, over half come from low-income homes, and more than a third are English learner (EL) students.

The WestEd report looks at the key strategies that CVESD is using to make maintain such high performance.

Strategies include:

- Taking a collaborative approach to improvement, with educators and community stakeholders included...
- Adopting a “loose-tight” leadership approach that mixes district-driven standardized approaches with school-level flexibility...
- Using student outcome data to identify language development as a specific instructional focus for the district...
- Creating specific processes and structures intended to engender districtwide coherence, including having a number of its cabinet members each provide support to a cohort of up to six schools...

Access the report [HERE](#).

Access the website [HERE](#).

A Pathway to Equitable Math Instruction Fostering Deep Understanding

Methods for deepening student conceptual understanding through orchestrated math discussions that build on and connect multiple strategies.

STRIDE

2



Pathways to Equitable Math Instruction

(EdTrust West)

Fostering Deep Understanding (15pp) – Planning checklists, equitable math discussions activity template, and additional resources. Access the resource [HERE](#).

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STUDENT	Gains equitable access to meaningful and engaging grade-level content.	Represent <i>all</i> levels of student thought: initial thoughts, misconceptions, alternative solutions, connections.
	Gains agency and uses their voice.	Center content understanding around <i>student</i> questions, diverse thinking, misconceptions, and alternative strategies.
	Builds deep content knowledge.	Facilitate active sharing, discussion, and connections between different students' thinking.
TEACHER	Builds deep content knowledge.	Intentional anticipating and sequencing potential student thinking to reach learning goals.
	Gains flexibility when confronted with diverse or unexpected thinking.	Explore diverse student thinking through class discussion and questioning.
	Practices continuous improvement.	Reflect before, during, and after the lesson to grapple with your own development needed for the content.

Access the webinar here: [Equitable Math webinar series “Fostering Deep Understanding Webinar” \(51 min\)](#)

What’s the Least Risky Hybrid Model to Bring Students Back to School?

(Education Week)

As of February, 43 percent of students had returned to full-time in-person learning and another 26 percent were using a hybrid remote schedule, according to a new **analysis** by a coalition including the COVID Collaborative and the Evidence Project at the Center on Reinventing Public Education. The report echoes evidence in the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines that suggests schools can operate safely with at least partial in-person instruction during the pandemic, provided they use mitigation measures such as sanitation, mask-wearing, and quarantining of students and staff who become infected with the coronavirus, which causes the potentially deadly respiratory illness COVID-19.

In general, districts have opted for one of a handful of different models for hybrid in-person schedules, including:

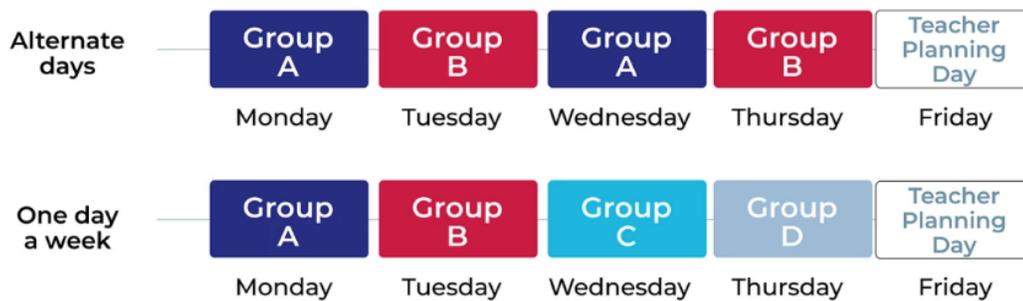
- *Split days*, in which half of students attend in-person classes in the morning while the other half learn remotely. The groups switch during the lunch period, when classes are cleaned and disinfected.

- *Teacher shifting*, particularly in secondary schools where students previously would have switched classes, in which cohorts of students remain in a single class while teachers switch classrooms to provide instruction in core subject areas like math or reading. In these models, any electives become remote-only.

Hybrid Scheduling Options

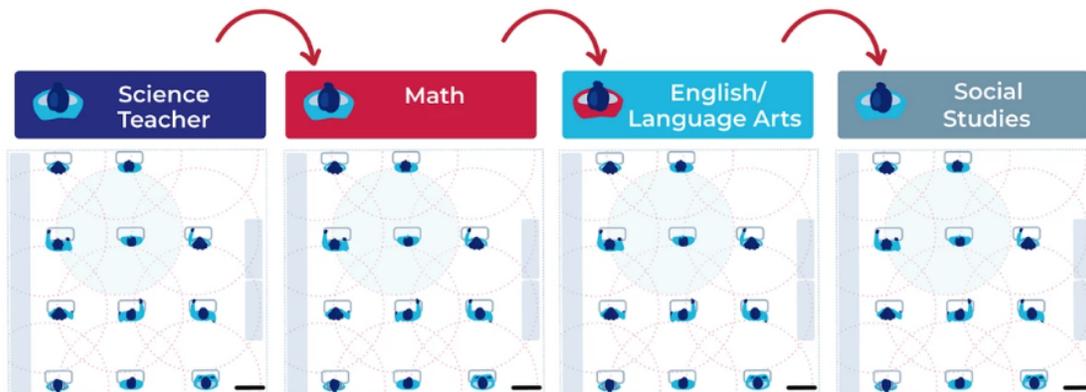


SHIFT SCHEDULING



CORE SUBJECTS ARE FOCUS FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

Students remain in one room for the day, as core teachers shift rooms. Electives are left for remote learning.



Note: Foreign languages may be considered core subjects in some states.
SOURCE: Education Week reporting

“The overwhelming evidence suggests that schools can provide in-person education safely even in communities with high transmission rates,” said Ibukun Akinboyo, the medical director for pediatric infection prevention at Duke University Hospital and co-author of a study of COVID-19 transmission in North Carolina schools.

Access the full article [HERE](#).

Building a Community for Black Male Teachers

(Education Week)

Baron R. Davis, superintendent of the Richland Two School District in suburban Columbia, South Carolina (one of the largest and fastest-growing districts in the state, has established an initiative that aims to bring more Black men into the classroom. Only about 2% of our nation's educators are Black men, and Davis has determined to hire 100 more men of color in his district by 2024 with measurable goals related to recruitment and retention.

The initiative, "Premier 100", began its first recruiting effort in the fall of 2019. Even with the pandemic disruptions, the district has been able to keep on pace and has hired 24 Black men as teachers so far.

A growing body of research indicates that same-race teachers impact academic achievement, college attendance, and a reduction in the drop-out rate, particularly for Black boys. Studies show that Black students are benefitting from Black teachers who engage as positive role-models and use culturally relevant instructional practices.

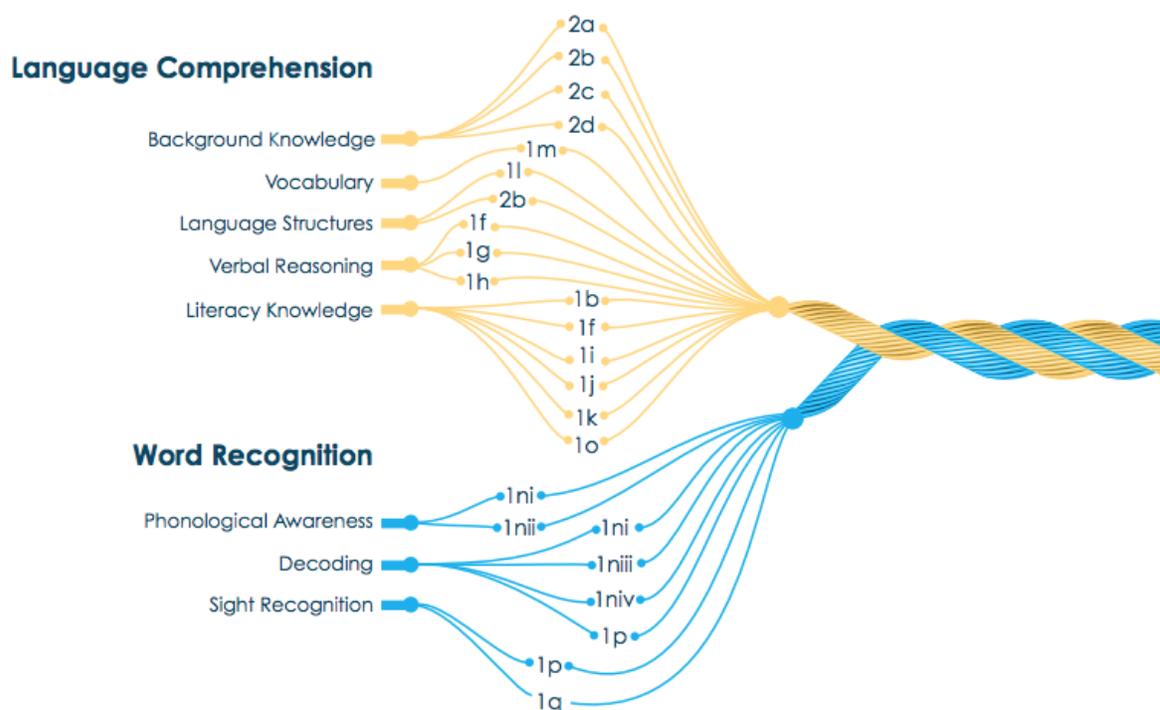
Read the full article [HERE](#).

Read the "Pathway to Premier 2017-2020 Strategic Plan" [HERE](#).

EdReport's Application of Scarborough's Rope

edreports.org

EdReports uses the Scarborough's Reading Rope in their review of K-5 ELA instructional materials in order to provide educators with high-quality reading instruction content. The overlap illustrates the complex components of reading acquisition and how the components work together.



Created by Dr. Hollis Scarborough in 2001, the Reading Rope unravels the complexities involved in learning to read proficiently. Approaching reading as strands of a rope, the lower and upper strands include the word-recognition strands (phonological awareness, decoding, and sight recognition of familiar words). The strands work together as the learner gains accuracy and fluency, and reading becomes more automatic with repetition and practice.

Access the resource [HERE](#).

The Partnerships for Social and Emotional Learning Podcast

Practitioners in schools and out-of-school programs share their experiences working together to help children develop SEL skills in this five-episode series

(Wallace Foundation)

The five-episode podcast series on social and emotional learning is linked below. Visit the [Wallace Foundation website](#) for additional resources related to school leadership, the arts, learning and enrichment, and other issues.

The Partnerships for Social and Emotional Learning Initiative

Episode 1: Explains the importance of social and emotional learning and the initiative's design

Developing Adults' Capacity to Promote Social and Emotional Learning

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Building Effective Partnerships for Social and Emotional Learning

Episode 3: What it takes for schools and districts, and afterschool programs and out-of-school time intermediary organizations, to work together

The Role of Coaches in Promoting Social and Emotional Learning

Episode 4: Helping schools and OST programs adopt SEL instruction and providing feedback

Social and Emotional Learning In and Out of School

Episode 5: Steps to integrating SEL across settings and what to look for

Access the entire podcast series [HERE](#).

Most Popular items from last month's California Institute for School Improvement (CISI) E-bulletin

Based on analytics from the most recent E-bulletin, the following articles & resources received the most clicks from CISI Members.

- [2019 NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR QUALITY ONLINE TEACHING](#)
- [Evidence Summary: TK-6 Schools and COVID-19 Transmission](#)
- [How To Stop The Coming Dropout Time Bomb](#)

Want more on a particular educational topic? Let us know!

Interested in seeing more on a particular topic? We're here to support your work in connecting research to practice. Please follow this link to let us know your thoughts and requests for specific topics [HERE](#).

Also, follow CISI on the [CISI Twitter Page!](#)

We look forward to hearing from you!

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