

# The Kindergarten Exodus: Why, Where, and What We Can Do Now

September 28, 2021



# Moderator



**Laura Bornfreund**

Director, Early & Elementary Education Policy  
New America

# Panelists



**Kyla Johnson-Trammel, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent  
Oakland Unified School District



**Mike Kuhrt**  
Superintendent  
Wichita Falls Independent School District

# Panelists



**Cheryl Logan, Ed.D**  
Superintendent  
Omaha Public Schools



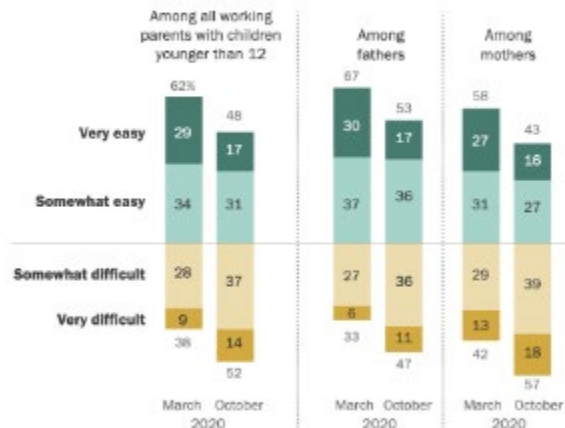
**Alena E. Zachary-Ross, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent  
Ypsilanti Community Schools

# What Do We Know About Children's Experiences in the Pandemic?

- A **survey of 100 school districts** conducted by NPR found that the average district saw a decline in kindergarten enrollment of 16 percent when official counts were taken for the 2020–21 school year last October.
- A **study** by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) found that participation in preschool programs declined from a pre-pandemic level of 71 percent of four-year-olds to just 54 percent of four-year-olds in the fall of 2020. In-person enrollment, according to NIEER, dipped most sharply for low-income children, as just 14 percent of children from the lowest-income families were enrolled in in-person pre-K compared to 64 percent pre-pandemic.
- There may be **significantly undercounted enrollment declines** of the past year, as researchers estimated that 400,000 fewer children and youth experiencing homelessness were identified by schools last year, even as housing instability and joblessness claims reached historic highs.
- Many are **predicting** a possible “**kindergarten bubble**” in the 2021-22 school year and now we are seeing districts planning for a **surge**.

## As the pandemic has gone on, more working parents say handling child care has been difficult

Among employed parents with children under 12 at home, % saying it has been \_\_\_ to handle child care responsibilities during the coronavirus outbreak



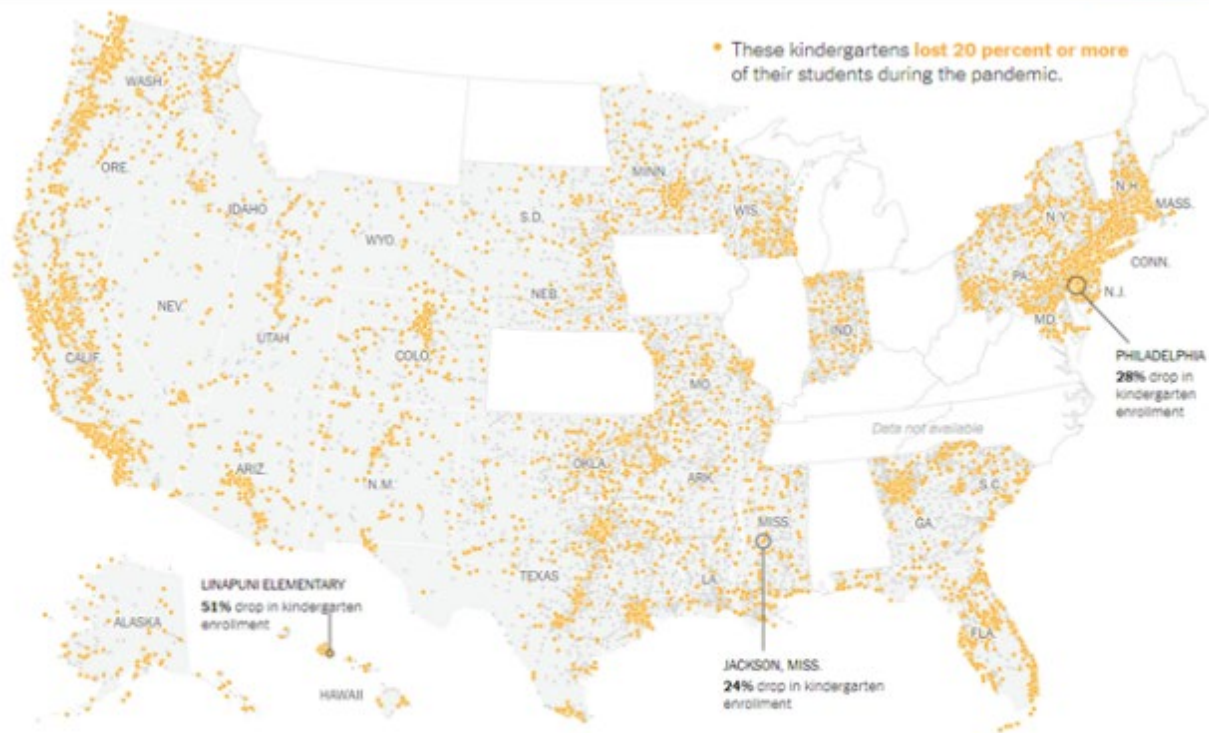
Note: Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown. Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding. March numbers based on employed adults; October numbers based on employed adults with one job or one of multiple jobs that they consider primary. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 13-19, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# Scenarios for Fall 2021 and Beyond

- There may be an **increased demand for pre-K** after many parents chose to keep their children out of formal pre-K programs last year. These parents may be interested in enrolling in pre-K instead of going straight into kindergarten. Also, more parents of three- and four-year-old children may be interested in the developmental and social benefits of pre-K after a year of turmoil.
- Drops in pre-K and kindergarten enrollment last year suggest that there may be an **influx of kindergarteners** in fall 2021. This kindergarten class may have greater variation in skills because of children's divergent experiences in the past year. There will also be more variation in age based on state policies and whether parents chose to wait a year to enroll their children in school.
- Teachers may have **first graders with limited or no kindergarten experience**. Based on what we know about young children's learning, it is likely that children who attended virtual or hybrid kindergarten classes will not come to first grade as prepared as those in prior years. In states or districts where kindergarten attendance is not required, children may end up skipping kindergarten altogether and enter first grade with no formal school experience.





## *The Kindergarten Exodus*

As the pandemic took hold, more than 1 million children did not enroll in local schools. Many of them were the most vulnerable:



## Guiding Framework: How Policy Can Help Meet the Needs of Young Learners





# Funding Recommendations

## Increased Number of Children Experiencing Trauma

Potential State Solutions	Potential Local Solutions	Funding Streams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide funding for PD on trauma-informed practices and other areas based on local needs</li> <li>• Provide funding for mental health consultants to work with local districts and schools</li> <li>• Expand Medicaid</li> <li>• Fund developmental assessments and universal screeners</li> <li>• Create/expand/continue/make permanent a statewide task force focused on childhood trauma including all government agencies that work for children (health, child care, nutrition, etc.)</li> <li>• Ban suspensions and expulsions in ECE and elementary education</li> <li>• Provide guidance on using children's attendance data to identify challenges for student populations or students living in a particular neighborhood and working with families to develop solutions that best meet their needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with local mental health providers and use data to ensure equity</li> <li>• Build relationships with public schools and family support services/community health centers and providers</li> <li>• Implement developmental assessments (e.g. adopt Help Me Grow models)</li> <li>• Expand ChildFind</li> <li>• Create/expand/continue/make permanent a community task force focused on childhood trauma including all government agencies that work for children (health, child care, nutrition, serving immigrant families, etc.)</li> <li>• Establish a series of ongoing PD sessions on positive discipline</li> <li>• Hire additional teachers and paraprofessionals to enable teachers to collaborate and reflect with colleagues</li> <li>• Establish community of practice for educators across the district</li> <li>• Ensure data systems can monitor and alert school staff when a child has missed 10 percent of school days and develop a family outreach plan to understand the barriers to attendance and identify solutions with the family to increase the child's attendance</li> </ul>	<p>Medicaid MIECHV ESSA, Title II</p>

Source: New America and EducationCounsel • [Get the data](#) • [Download image](#)

NEW AMERICA

## Adults in Classrooms without Early Education Expertise

Potential State Solutions	Potential Local Solutions	Funding Streams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish clearinghouse of PD materials and/or training videos on child development, early childhood instruction, etc. (see Oklahoma example)</li> <li>• Establish clear communication with State Service Commissions about the availability of PD resources in ECE</li> <li>• Use Title II ESSA funds for joint professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide ongoing PD on ECE and preK-third grade alignment for principals, classroom teachers, and paraprofessionals</li> <li>• Hire more teachers and paraprofessionals with ECE knowledge and expertise</li> <li>• Provide supplemental pay for peer coaches</li> <li>• Develop MOU/MOA with Head Start and other community-based ECE programs to support joint professional development and ensure parent-teacher interactions</li> </ul>	<p>ESSA ESSER CCDBG IDEA</p>

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**For more  
information:**

[www.newamerica.org/earlyed](http://www.newamerica.org/earlyed)  
[@newamericaed](https://twitter.com/newamericaed)

 NEW  
AMERICA

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July 2021

## **A Toolkit for Effective and Supportive Transitions for Children, Families, and Educators in Fall 2021 and Beyond**

# Wichita Falls ISD



Early Childhood Matters Most!

Get everyone to the same starting line!



# Wichita Falls, Texas and the WFISD

Regional City of 104,000 residents serving a 12 county area of North Texas with medical, social, and governmental services.

- 13,600 students enrolled
- 67% economically disadvantaged
- 9% English language learners
- 11.7% students with disabilities



# Early Childhood Programs in WFISD

- **Parents as Teachers** – An in-home program where educators conduct regular home visits to educate the parent and the child participating in the program. Serving children from 0 to 5 years of age. (via Google Meet)
- **ECSE (Early Childhood Special Education)**-An in-home and at school program for 3 year olds. (in person and remote)
- **Head Start** – A full day academic program serving 3 year olds and 4 year olds. (in person and remote)
- **Pre-kindergarten** - A full day academic program serving 4 year olds who meet specific eligibility criteria (in person and remote)
- **Waterford's Upstart**-An online in-home program for 4 year olds that do not attend Head Start or Pre-K. (remote)
- **Kindergarten**-Full day in school program for 5 year olds. (in person and remote)



63% on campus 8/20/20

88% on campus 5/1/21

92% attendance rate

2020-2021

Asynchronous PK to 5th grade

- Daily opportunities for live interaction via Google Meet
- Recorded lessons posted in Google Classroom
- Weekly well checks for parents and students via Google Meet for remote learners
- District provided Chromebooks and Verizon Mifis
- December required unsuccessful students to return to campus
- 2021-2022
- All students required to be on campus
  - Mandatory minimum 30 mins of intervention a week for the school year for all unsuccessful students on STAAR
  - NWEA's Map Growth BOY and EOY
  - Waterford Reading Academy and Waterford Upstart with WACS 'BOY and EOY



# WFISD Contacts

Mike Kuhrt – WFISD Superintendent

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#AASAEarlyEd

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# YCS Plan For Success- Timeline

## March-May

- Listen and Learns
- Compassion Resilience Circles
- Create a Foot**print** in community
- [YCS/Rotary Art Banner Project in the city of Ypsilanti](#)
- Billboards
- Connect Parents and Partners
- Development of PL plans

## June-August

- Boots on the Ground Phase II - Door to Door Canvassing
- Jazz in the Parking Lot
- Ice Cream Socials
- Personalized Learning Plans

## May-June

- Boots on the Ground Phase I
- Ann Arbor Summer Festival Tiny Top Sponsor
- GLC planning /training
- Professional Learning
- Purchased a Diverse Literacy Library for every school
- Focus: *Learning Just Is*

## September

- Back to School Bash
- Boots on the Ground Phase III
- Executive Cabinet Community Canvassing
- Acceleration for Excellence for All
- Leading with Equity in Front

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE  
*Collaboration for Change*  
YPSILANTI COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



*Presents...*

# In-Person LEARNING LABS



- ACADEMIC SUPPORT
- BREAKFAST & LUNCH
- HOMEWORK HELP
- ACCESS TO INTERNET

**EMAIL**  
[LEARNINGLABS@YCSCHOOLS.US](mailto:LEARNINGLABS@YCSCHOOLS.US)  
FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO  
REGISTER

### (3) Modes of Selected Instruction

1. Remote to In Person
2. In Person
3. Online all year

**Learning Labs- Online and In Person- (Hamilton Crossing\*, Parkridge, uniteSTEM)**

Tuesday & Thursdays

1:00pm - 3:00pm

All Grades

Capacity: 12

\*Residents only

YPSILANTI COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

**BOOTS**

**on *the* ground**



# Connecting with Parents and Partners

## Community Outreach

- The Ann Arbor Summer Festival Tiny Top concerts in the 48197 & 48198 area are designed to go into communities and provide musical concerts.
- **3 site locations (Fireman's Park, Ford Lake and Willow Park)**
- Summer feeding program
- WMBK Movie (Drive-thru)
- Door to Door campaigning
  - Team promotion of reading and literacy through library cards and materials.
  - Enrollment information about YCS
- YCS Team Leader plus volunteers/partners

## Collaboration for Change

- Jazz in the Parking Lot
- Partner with organizations like the YDL, Growing Hope, WMBK, Black Men Read, Rotary, etc. to do team flyering and door to door marketing about both organizations with cool goodie bags for students plus enrollment packets.

## Activities/ Action

- Compassion Resilience Circles for parents and students
- iPads, headphones
- "At Home" School supplies
- EL In Home services and small groups
- High Dosage Tutoring
- High Scope Curriculum
- Professional Learning aligned to Literacy Essentials- Into English
- High Rigor/High Support-Town Hall

# Grizzly

Learning  
Camp



# *ACTIVE Participation*

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35 DAYS =

140 HOURS =

8,400 MINUTES =

**Experiential Project Based Learning,  
Standards Focused, FUN!**





# AMAZING Student Participation

<i>Preschool</i>	81	students
<i>Kindergarten &amp; 1st</i>	237	students
<i>2nd-5th Grades</i>	369	students



## *Plans for this year*

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- Re-engage our model - Principal, Instructional Coach, Climate and Culture Coach
- Grizzly Learning Enrichment- after school, EMU Bright Futures
- Increase site-based, job embedded professional learning
- High Dosage Tutoring- Michigan Educator Corp, Foster Grandparents, etc.
- Computer based supports- Imagine Reading, Imagine Math
- Continue to engage parents- F.A.C.E. conference, compassion resilience circles



# From School Focused to Community Focused

Parents, Partners and Professionals - We ARE "Stronger Together"!



# Questions & Discussion

# Upcoming GLR Learning Tuesdays Webinars:

## FUNDER TO FUNDER CONVERSATION

Pandemics, Fires, Floods & More: Philanthropy Responds to Disasters Amidst Disasters  
Tuesday, October 5, 12:30 p.m. ET/9:30 a.m. PT

## LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

Trauma-Informed Practices & the Construction of The Deep Reading Brain  
Tuesday, October 5, 3 p.m. ET/12 p.m. PT (60 minute session)

\*\* Co-sponsored with Education Week and the Rollins Center for Language and Literacy \*\*

## CRUCIBLE OF PRACTICE

Reading Success by 4<sup>th</sup> Grade in Springfield, Massachusetts  
Tuesday, October 12, 12:30 p.m. ET/9:30 a.m. PT

## LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

Learning at Home and at School: Public Media Education Partnerships  
Tuesday, October 5, 3 p.m. ET/12 p.m. PT (60 minute session)

Please Join Us!

[gradelevelreading.net](http://gradelevelreading.net) @readingby3rd #GLReading #LearningTuesdays #GLRKeepers

