

Lessons from California's \$2 Billion Settlement: Implementation of State Spending to Advance Equity

April 30, 2024



Panelists



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Panelists (Continued)



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Moderator



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Executive Fellow
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Findings from California COVID Research

Joseph Bishop, Ph.D., Executive Director & Co-Founder
UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools (CTS)

Campaign for Grade Level Reading Cayla Webinar
April 30, 2024



SCAN ME

When the Lights are Turned On: Documenting the Impact of COVID on California's Education Landscape



Tyrone Howard & Joseph Bishop
UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools



Summary

The shift to digital platforms between the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years highlighted and exacerbated pre-existing educational inequities.

- **In CA, there were an estimated 1.8 million students, most of which were Latinx and Black, without digital access at home** (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2020). The pandemic's impact extended beyond academics, affecting **social-emotional learning** and **mental health**.
- **Teachers had to navigate unfamiliar computer platforms** and faced difficulties with **student engagement**.
- **This brief suggests recommendations for strategic action** based on educator perspectives across CA who participated in interviews and online surveys.

KEY FINDING 1

Inequities in remote learning conditions were widespread.

“We have a number of students coming back this year that recognized that they didn’t learn much last year in subjects like math, which scaffolds on top of each other. They’re coming back and the fluency is not there for the next level. However, we put them in the next level because of the no-harm grading policy two years ago...”

-District Leader

KEY FINDING 2

Remediation, student learning acceleration and socialization are universal challenges after lost in-person instructional time.

“How am I supposed to teach this current standard when they (students) don’t even know the other standard and I’m having to teach that first before they can get to this, and now I’m behind. And so, the added stress of doing that is catching up to them.”

-High school Mathematics teacher

KEY FINDING 3

Pre-pandemic achievement patterns are accelerating for students of color.

“The student populations that we worked so hard to support—youth of color, our students in foster care, students living in transitional contexts like those experiencing homelessness, multilingual learners and students with disabilities—are most impacted by the outcomes of COVID and during COVID because I think those inequities existed before and they just have been highlighted with COVID.”

-District Leader

KEY FINDING 4

Social, emotional and mental health needs are far exceeding capacity.

“Our suicide rate numbers, assessment numbers are off the chart. They have increased 60-70%, and we’re only in December. I have never seen the number of suicide assessments come in at this rate with the level of support and need from DMH [Department of Mental Health].”

-District Leader

KEY FINDING 5

Little state guidance or support was/is being provided to schools to deal with an unprecedented education crisis.

*“When our students started losing their housing, we were doing their housing applications for renters’ relief. When their parents lost their jobs, we were applying for new jobs for them. **When family members passed away, we were trying to figure out how to help parents navigate through what it looked like to get a death certificate, to make arrangements and try and figure those things out and to get them started on a GoFundMe page.**”*

-Principal

KEY FINDING 6

Basic needs are more fundamental to student learning than ever before.

*“I went to do a home visit. And she [student] was holding this little nine-month-old. And the toddler’s pulling on her. And the nine-month-old is crying. I went to knock on her door to ask her why she hadn’t submitted her work. **At that point, the conversation changed. It was, ‘I’ll be back. I’m going to get you some diapers. I’m going to get you some food.’”***

-Principal

KEY FINDING 7

A weak pipeline of educators and staff and ongoing retention challenges is negatively affecting schools.

“There are no teachers in the teaching pools. You can barely get a sub if you ask for one. You have to really, really make real efforts to try and get a sub if someone is absent.”

-Teacher

KEY FINDING 8

An aggressive state policy response is needed to support racial justice and equity.

“We are hitting a windfall of money in education to fix a problem that isn’t just a one-time problem. These problems have been there for years and will continue to be here even into the next crisis or the next pandemic or whatever comes our way. COVID absolutely has exacerbated it for this one moment in time, but those problems don’t go anywhere.”

-School Counselor

Policy Recommendations

- 1. Establish a core body of state agencies, the State Board, Administration and Legislative members** to set goals, monitor progress and utilize integrated data systems around addressing the educational effects of the pandemic for the short and long-term.
- 2. Identify and analyze essential school level, school system and regional data points** to inform how the state moves forward to prioritize the education, health and wellbeing of young people, especially young people of color across the state.
- 3. Create a state roadmap for boosting enrollment and attendance in California's public schools** based on deeper insights from educators, students, caregivers, families, and community members.
- 4. Establish statewide capacity-building efforts** that prioritize race-centered approaches to systems of support.
- 5. Start collecting data in a more centralized fashion that captures digital equity indicators** (e.g., access to broadband, high speed internet, technology, educator technology infrastructure).

Rebuilding More Humane Schools Post-COVID-19

Prioritizing Student Engagement, Social-Emotional Learning and Well-Being



Lucrecia Santibañez
UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools



Student Socio-Emotional Learning And Well-Being

Students' socio-emotional learning (SEL) and well-being have suffered since the onset of the pandemic.

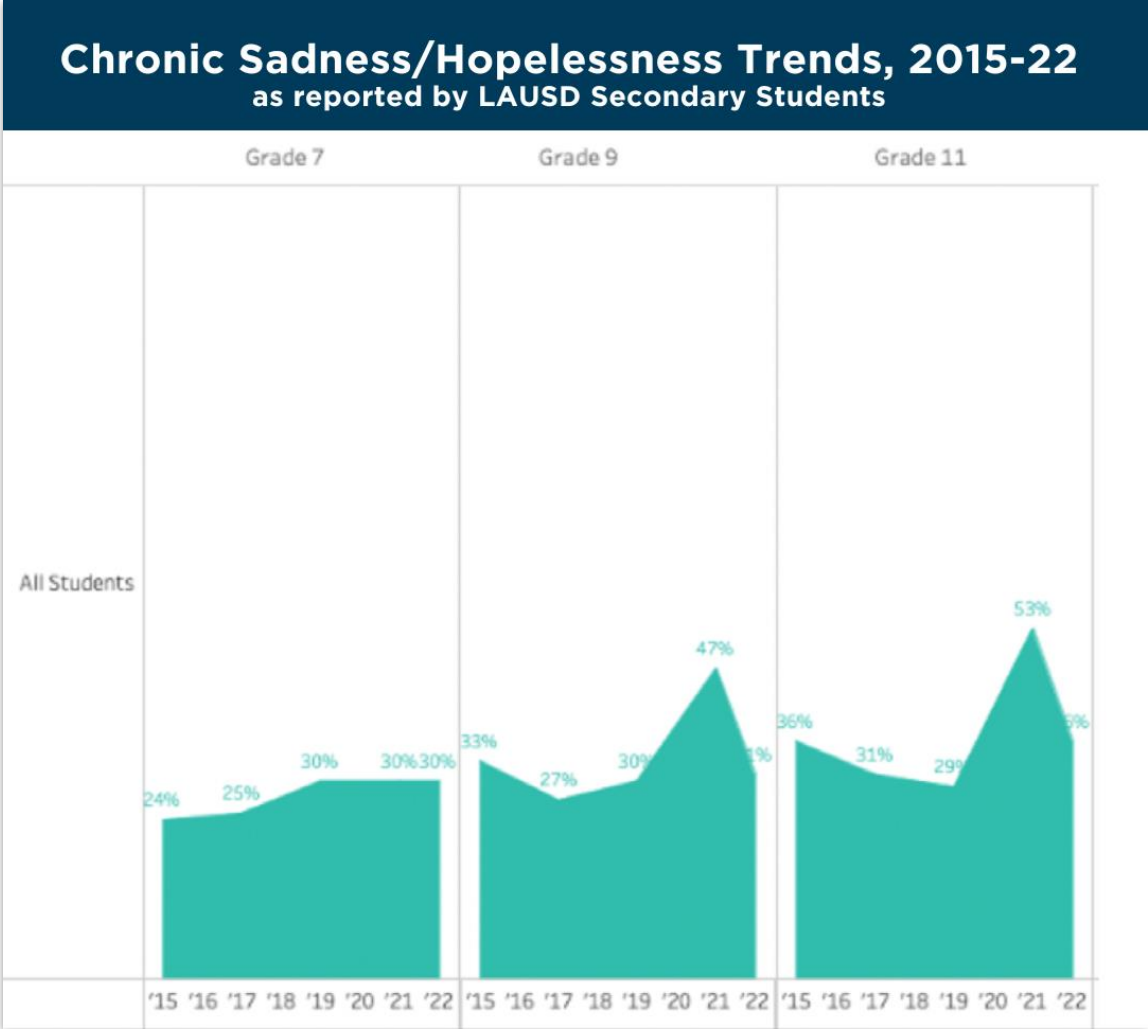
87%

of public schools reported the pandemic **negatively impacted student socio-emotional development** during the 2021–22 school year (National Center for Education Statistics Survey, May 2022).

84%

of public schools **agreed or strongly agreed that students' behavioral development has also been negatively impacted** (National Center for Education Statistics survey, May 2022).

Responses from LAUSD students in the graph demonstrate **the spike in students who experienced feelings of chronic sadness or hopelessness during 2020-21** and continue to experience them, especially in high school.



Policy Recommendations

1. **Address chronic absenteeism** as an urgent priority
2. **Increase school support staff** to student ratios
3. **Collect better data** for monitoring and accountability

Understanding the Pandemic Exodus from Public Schools

THOMAS S. DEE

Key results

- Declines in the school-age population (e.g., domestic migration) explained 26% of state-level public-school enrollment losses
- The growth in private-school enrollment explains 14% of the public-school enrollment decline
- Surprisingly large & sustained growth in *homeschool* enrollment—30%—into the 2021-22 school year when public schools were largely in person
- Nearly 2 additional kids in homeschool for every 1 in private school
- Homeschool growth explains 26% of public-school enrollment loss

Recommendations

- A critical need for better data systems to understand the multi-faceted challenges all kids face. That is, not just the older students who are in public schools (& available for academic-recovery efforts) but also:
 - › Young students who've delayed or skipped early years of schooling but haven't yet aged into most testing windows
 - › Truant and chronically absent learners
 - › Homeschooled students
- The need for a sustained sense of urgency in academic recovery & realizing the potential of children harmed by the pandemic
- For many districts, enrollment declines are likely to endure. Are our educational institutions prepared to support academic recovery after the 2024 "fiscal cliff"?

Thank you

Questions & Discussion

Upcoming GLR Learning Tuesdays Webinars

KINDERGARTEN MATTERS

Back to School: Reducing Barriers to a Successful Start in Kindergarten

Tuesday, May 7, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET/12:00-1:30 p.m. PT

LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

What's Working to Narrow Academic Achievement Gaps Post-Pandemic: Insights From School Districts

Tuesday, May 14, 3-4:30 p.m. ET/12-1:30 p.m. PT

FUNDER TO FUNDER CONVERSATION

Seeding Knowledge: Harnessing Philanthropy to Cultivate Learning in Everyday Spaces

Tuesday, May 21, 12:30-2:00 p.m. ET/9:30-11:00 a.m. PT

BIG BETS WORKING

Not Just Nice But Necessary: Family Engagement = A Big Bet That's Paying Off for Kids and Families

Tuesday, May 21, 3-4:30 p.m. ET/12-1:30 p.m. PT

