

A photograph of a classroom scene. A female teacher with dark curly hair, wearing a light-colored sweater, is smiling and looking towards a group of students. Several students are raising their hands, indicating they want to answer a question or participate. The classroom has large windows in the background, and a calendar is visible on the wall. The overall atmosphere is positive and engaged.

**HELPING THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY
RECOVER FROM THE PANDEMIC:
SUPPORTING STAFF, MENTAL HEALTH, AND
FAMILIES TO ACCELERATE STUDENT LEARNING**

POLICY BRIEF



**NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR
PUBLIC
CHARTER
SCHOOLS**



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COVID-19 exacerbated concerns about student learning, especially for students who were already behind. Prior to the pandemic, public charter school students demonstrated academic growth often surpassing that of their traditional public school peers.¹ For example, Black and Hispanic students, students in poverty, and English learner students in charter schools all showed stronger growth than their traditional public school peers.² Despite that growth, though, not all students were meeting grade-level standards; on national assessments there remained persistent performance gaps, such as between white students and students of color.³

The needs of students grew substantially as they experienced nearly two years of disrupted learning due to the pandemic. Early in the pandemic, the vast majority of schools closed for the 2019-20 school year,⁴ and 77% of public schools eventually shifted to some form of remote learning.⁵ When the 2020-21 school year started, a study of 900 public school districts found that nearly half (49%) began the school year fully remote and 27% used hybrid learning, in which they participated in remote instruction on certain days and in-person instruction on other days.⁶ During that year, public charter schools gained enrollment while traditional public schools experienced sharp enrollment declines, as families were looking for other options.⁷ By the end of the 2020-21 school year, only a slight majority of districts (54%) offered all grade levels the option for full-time, in-person instruction.⁸

Once most students returned to in-person instruction in the 2021-22 school year, students continued to experience disruptions in their schooling due, in part, to experiences such as quarantine policies.⁹ Many schools did not return to “normal” schooling until the end of the 2022-23 school year, and even that was not without its challenges.¹⁰

The amount of lost learning time has greatly impacted student achievement, as measured through the National Assessment of Educational Progress — which indicated an increase in the percentages of students scoring in the “below basic” category for math and reading compared to 2019¹¹ — as well as through district-administered assessments.¹² One estimate by NWEA, which produces nationally administered interim assessments, is that two years after the school closures, it could take students an extra four to five months of additional schooling to catch up to pre-pandemic reading and math levels.¹³ This is a reduction from the one to five years NWEA previously estimated for students to





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get back on track¹⁴ but still represents a substantial amount of lost learning.

To accelerate student learning, schools need to address how the pandemic has impacted more than academics, and, instead, think about how it has impacted the whole school community. In our visits with 10 public charter schools from January through June 2023 and interviews with charter associations and authorizers, as well as members of the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition, charter school leaders identified challenges from the pandemic in the areas of:

1. Academics
2. Staffing
3. Mental Health
4. Family support and engagement

In this report, we discuss (1) the challenges that schools have faced in each of the four areas; (2) how each of these areas is related to student learning; (3) how the schools we visited leveraged charter autonomy, flexibility, and adaptability to adopt strategies to address these problems; and (4) how schools are measuring what is working.

Academics

Many of the schools we visited experienced challenges with students academically behind due to COVID. School leaders discussed the challenges of serving students remotely, particularly for students with disabilities who have unique academic needs that are often best served in person. The leaders also expressed concern about trying to catch students up while continuing to provide on-grade-level content.

Strategies

The public charter schools we visited used their autonomy and flexibility to adopt some of the following strategies to address the challenges of lost learning and meet students' needs.

Strategy	Examples
Embedding prerequisite skills while teaching grade-level curriculum	School teaches grade-level standards while identifying prerequisite skills to address gaps and “spiral in” lessons as they go.
Tailoring interventions and supports	School holds “workshops” to address student learning loss. School offers accelerated tracks for students performing well.



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Strategy	Examples
Tutoring	School provides additional individual or group instruction, either during or after school hours.
Increasing use of data to inform instruction	School uses screening assessments to help identify gaps and inform instruction.

Tutoring

Burnham Wood Charter Schools in El Paso, Texas serves 89% Hispanic students — 54% of students are in the bilingual/English as a Second Language program¹⁵ — with many recently arrived from across the Mexico border. The school received an “A” on the 2021-22 Texas Accountability Rating.¹⁶

Burnham Wood implements a tutoring program in which students can receive one-on-one tutoring before school, during lunch, after school, or during the weekends for up to 45 minutes a session. Tutoring may also take place online, but the school prefers in person.

Although any student may participate with parental consent, the school encourages students who were not classified as proficient on the state assessment to participate in the tutoring program. The school reaches out individually to students and families to promote participation in the tutoring program.

Tutors are primarily college students who are interested in becoming teachers, and often also are Burnham Wood alumni who are interested in giving back to their community. Because of the individualized nature of the tutoring groups, tutors are encouraged to form relationships with the students, getting to know their interests to help motivate them to learn. Tutors are assigned to the same students throughout the course of the tutoring program. The tutors track which Texas state standards in reading, math, social studies, and science the student is working on each session and the student’s progress toward meeting the standards.



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As part of teacher contracts, teachers also provide separate tutoring twice a week after school.

Besides the academic benefits of the tutoring program to students, the school has also found that the program has become a recruitment and training pipeline for new teachers.

How schools are measuring if it works

The schools are relying on assessments to gauge whether or not the academic strategies are successful. Authorizers and charter schools are continuing to use proficiency rates from state assessments. These assessments continue to be important measures of how students are performing according to grade-level content.

Because some students may be far behind grade level, authorizers and charter school leaders also acknowledge that the state assessments may not sufficiently measure student learning where the student is still approaching on-grade-level content.¹⁷ Charter schools are increasingly using nationally normed assessment data from interim assessments administered throughout the school year to identify students who need support. These assessments allow educators to monitor student growth within a year and, depending on the assessment, include at least some off-grade-level information to support instruction.

Staffing

Particularly since the pandemic, schools — public charter schools and traditional public schools — are struggling with staffing challenges.

Schools have experienced high teacher vacancy rates,¹⁸ and there have been shortages of support staff, including roles like bus drivers, which are necessary for the operations of a school.¹⁹ Part of the challenge is that demand for both teachers and support staff has increased during the pandemic,²⁰ particularly since districts had Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding to hire new roles.²¹

These challenges of recruitment are compounded because teacher turnover has increased since the pandemic, with higher turnover rates in urban districts, high-poverty districts, and districts serving predominately students of color.²²



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In our survey of heads of charter schools in the spring of 2023, public charter school leaders identified staffing challenges as a barrier to implementing new programs or practices to help with pandemic recovery. The schools we visited struggled with increased turnover and fewer interested applicants. The staffing problems were particularly compounded in more rural schools where there was not a robust pool of qualified teachers.

Having a high-quality teacher is critical for student learning.²³ Low-quality instruction can set students back the equivalent of over a grade level.²⁴ Teaching quality is also associated with important long-term outcomes like attending college and higher wages.²⁵ Likewise, turnover has an impact on student learning, since teacher turnover is associated with lower test scores.²⁶

Recruitment and retention strategies

The public charter schools we spoke with were able to leverage their staffing autonomy and adopt multiple strategies to strengthen recruitment and retention.

Strategy	Examples
Changing the school day to make teaching more attractive	School adopted a four-day school week where Friday is a professional development day for teachers. School designates days where teachers can leave at the same time as students.

Austin Achieve has “Sustainability Fridays” where once a month, teachers end their day at the same time as students. School leaders schedule the Sustainability Fridays to line up with holidays or other long weekends.

Prioritizing instructional time	School adopts practices to allow teachers to focus on instruction instead of noninstructional activities like administrative duties or supervising students in noninstructional contexts. ²⁷
Offering teacher training and professional development	School provides professional development in response to teacher-identified needs. School provides professional development in response to schoolwide needs.



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Strategy	Examples
Expanding access to mental health supports to teachers	<p>Social workers train teachers on responding and dealing with their own traumas related to the pandemic.</p> <p>School reimburses teachers for purchases related to their own mental health needs.</p> <p>School staff, such as administrators or instructional coaches, check on teacher mental health.</p> <p>School offers opt-in monthly wellness programming.</p>
Changing benefits packages	<p>School provides additional PTO.</p> <p>School offers transportation funding.</p> <p>School adjusted salaries for increased cost of living.</p> <p>School provides access to telehealth.</p>
Implementing teacher appreciation efforts	<p>School leaders tell teachers they are valued.</p> <p>School sends teachers care packages, flowers.</p> <p>School offers schoolwide team building.</p> <p>School installing shout-out boards.</p>
Implementing Grow Your Own initiatives	<p>School administrators encourage paraprofessional or early childhood staff within the school to become certified teachers as well as encourage career growth for certified teachers.</p> <p>School offering programs to support local community members to become staff or teachers.</p>

“Local recruitment is a lot of word of mouth from families. Our families are great, and they help us recruit. Community connections mean that someone will know what’s happening, and we’ll be able to provide support effectively and quickly. This helps the school figure out how to give people what they need. It also helps with our enrollment. The school grew during COVID, in great part because of those connections.

It also helps with teacher retention. We had 90+% teacher retention during COVID. It helps us do things more sustainably. While others are understaffed, we were fully staffed.”

– Clarksdale Collegiate Public Charter School administrator



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School leadership is also incredibly important in staff retention.

In our survey of public charter school teachers, 63% reported they would prioritize a school with more supportive school leaders over salary when looking for a new teaching position. Supportive leadership was the only proposed retention initiative that was more compelling than a higher salary.

In talking with staff at Burnham Wood Charter Schools, we heard multiple staff members credit the school's success to its leader, Dr. Joe Gonzales or "Dr. G.," as he's known to staff and students. Dr. G. is incredibly active within the school community and has fostered a culture of high academic success that is grounded in creating relationships with students so that they're motivated to learn.

Dr. G., a former migrant worker, and shares his story with students, who are largely recent arrivals from Mexico. He holds a leadership club for students where they learn valuable skills such as public speaking and how to prepare themselves for leadership roles. He also is visible on campus and attends school events, including an all-night school lock-in.

During the staff interview process, Dr. G. asks candidates about their hobbies and interests, encouraging them to offer after-school activities in those areas. As a result, the staff members described a variety of athletic and nonathletic extracurricular activities, highlighting that there is something for every student, from mariachi to robotics to wrestling. Similarly, Dr. G. trains tutors to identify student interests to help motivate learning.

The staff also said Dr. G. has a specific vision for the tutoring program. Because Dr. G. requires the continuous collection of data to evaluate if a student has met particular standards, the tutoring program is much more targeted to student needs. The school previously had Saturday tutoring before the state assessment, but the tutoring was general and not specific to a student. Now the instructors are much more aware of the needs of the students and can tailor instruction.

Burnham Wood staff are very student-focused and attribute their effectiveness to Dr. G.'s leadership. Through cabinet meetings, all leaders within the district understand the district's vision and roles. There is also an open-door policy, so teachers feel comfortable raising concerns and feel like their concerns will be addressed.



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How schools are measuring what works

Schools are often informally monitoring, through regular check-ins between teachers and administrators, to see if the recruitment and retention strategies are working.

Some schools have also adopted annual staff surveys and use the data to adjust programs as needed.

Although not explicitly highlighted by the site visit schools, schools may also use turnover and vacancy rates as a lagging indicator of the successfulness of the recruitment and retention programs.

Supporting student and staff mental health

Students were uniquely impacted by the pandemic, as school closures and lockdowns occurred at a time that is vital for a child's social and emotional development.²⁸ The social isolation and disruptions of the pandemic were associated with increases in anxiety and depression, which had been fairly steady in the years prior to the pandemic with approximately 15% and 16% of parents reporting their adolescents were living with anxiety or depression in 2019 and 2020, respectively.²⁹ By 2022, however, 60% of surveyed parents reported that the pandemic had negative impacts on their child's mental health.³⁰

Students have also reported that the pandemic had negative effects on their mental health. In 2021, over one-third of high school students reported experiencing poor mental health during COVID, and even more — 44% — reported experiencing “persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness” in the past year.³¹

Public schools have seen a rising need for mental health services, with 76% reporting an increase in staff concern about student mental health.³² In our conversations with school leaders, they mentioned that students returning from the pandemic didn't know how to interact with one another in healthy ways, leading to more aggression and fighting, drug use, and vaping. Leaders also reported greater levels of anxiety among students and more incidents of self-harm. For younger students, schools have reported students entering school without the typical level of social skills, like the ability to make eye contact. They have also seen more problems with student behavior and ability to regulate emotions at younger grades than they had seen prior to the pandemic.

The pandemic has also negatively impacted staff mental health. During the 2020-21 school year, teachers reported experiencing greater levels of anxiety compared to workers in other professions, including health care workers.³³ Similarly, K-12 employees,



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including teachers, were more likely to report experiencing stress and burnout than other government employees,³⁴ and teachers who taught remotely were more likely to report feelings of isolation and symptoms of depression than those who taught in person.³⁵

Although pandemic conditions have improved since the 2020-21 school year, teachers continue to feel burned out at higher rates than employees in other occupations.³⁶ In fact, according to a poll of over 12,000 full-time U.S. employees in February 2022, 44% of K-12 workers and 52% of K-12 teachers reported feeling “Always” or “Very Often” burned out at work, compared to 30% of all other workers.³⁷

School administrators have noticed the impact on staff mental health. In a spring 2023 survey we conducted of charter heads of schools, 45% began offering wellness and mental health supports for staff during the pandemic in response to increased mental health challenges.³⁸ Administrators at Austin Achieve noted that they felt like staff were dealing with increased mental health challenges. Administrators felt stressed and teachers were “wound tight,” responding to behavioral challenges with less grace than would be ideal. Similarly, at Uplift Education, administrators were finding that staff were increasingly burned out due to the stresses of the pandemic and addressing more challenging student behaviors.

The pandemic’s impacts on student and teacher mental health are important to address, and both have an effect on student learning. As noted above, there is a long history of research documenting that high-quality staff have a large impact on student outcomes. When teachers experience burnout, it is related to lower student academic achievement and “lower quality student motivation.”³⁹ Similarly, for students, there is an association between mental health and academic performance⁴⁰ and staying in school.⁴¹

Strategies

Flexibility, autonomy, and adaptability have been instrumental in how public charter schools responded to their student and staff mental health. Student mental health strategies included:

Strategy	Examples
Increasing supports from school counselors and social workers	Schools hiring additional counselors or social workers.
Implementing teacher training	School leaders provide professional development specific to social skills and mental health. Counselors train their teachers to identify gaps in students’ mental health and socializing abilities.



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Strategy	Examples
Embedding nonacademic skills into the school day	<p>Schools embed nonacademic skills into curriculum and instruction to encourage positive nonacademic behaviors.</p> <p>Schools offer stand-alone, nonacademic skill classes or extracurricular activities.</p> <p>Schools schedule advisory or morning meetings to discuss student well-being.</p>
Creating alternative disciplinary methods	Schools adopt restorative practices as an alternative to suspending or expelling students, and students may participate in a disciplinary program that focuses on reflection. The programs may include peer-to-peer mentoring and community service.
Creating physical spaces for students	<p>Traveling wellness buses offer yoga and mindfulness activities to students to the 19 campuses within a charter network.</p> <p>Schools designate separate locations within the building for students and staff to go when they need wellness breaks during the day.</p>
Expanding data collection	<p>Schools expanded and made better use of data to get a picture of the whole child.</p> <p>Schools collect school climate and safety data.</p>
Offering wraparound services	Students and families can contact a designated administrator who is responsible for pairing the student or family with the resources they need, such as health care, rental assistance, or food insecurity.

Schools also adopted the following strategies to support staff mental health:

Strategy	Examples
Changing school policy	<p>Schools expand paid time off to allow for teachers to attend to their mental health needs.</p> <p>Schools reimburse teachers for personal mental health expenses.</p> <p>Schools provide free school lunches to staff.</p>

Providing free lunches for staff was popular because it was “one less thing for teachers to worry about.” The initiative was also low-cost for the school, which estimated it to cost approximately \$32,000 a year, according to a Diverse Charter Schools Coalition member.



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Strategy	Examples
Promoting use of existing employee benefits	School provides staff with additional information about how to use the Employee Assistance Program or other available mental health resources.
Offering a physical space for teachers to use	School offers a quiet wellness room within the school building that staff can use when needed.

Uplift specifically checks on counselor well-being. Given the unique stress of their work, the counselors “carry a lot of weight.” To help counselors avoid burnout, Uplift creates intentional time for counselors to debrief and talk about the struggles of being a campus counselor. This includes creating time during monthly department and region meetings for counselors to raise issues as well as having twice-monthly manager meetings to talk through issues individually. Uplift also adopts a guiding word each year. Last year’s word was “rooted” and helped to build a culture of community among the counselors.

– Uplift Education counselor

Checking in on staff well-being	Instructional coaches check in on staff needs, including well-being needs. School makes intentional efforts to check in on principal and administrator well-being.
Being more intentional about building connections among staff	School holds celebrations with staff. For schools with multiple campuses, having all participate in certain Zoom calls so there are more opportunities for connectedness.

How schools are measuring what works

Many charter schools are administering school climate surveys asking students, families, and staff to provide feedback on how the school is doing in areas such as school safety and feeling welcomed within the school community.

Some schools are explicitly teaching nonacademic behaviors and measuring how well students have learned the concepts using pre- and post-test measures as part of a purchased curriculum. Alternatively, schools may administer measures like the Washoe County School District Social and Emotional Competency Assessment, which is a free tool for students in grades 5-12 measuring domains such as self-management of emotions, goals, and schoolwork.⁴²



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Another source of information about staff mental health initiatives is staff turnover and retention rates. Like with hiring and retention, these can serve as lagging indicators of program effectiveness.

Family support and engagement

In the early days of the pandemic, families struggled with the stress of the pandemic while also trying to supervise their children who were no longer physically at school.⁴³ It was particularly challenging for vulnerable populations, such as families in poverty and families whose native language is something other than English.⁴⁴

For the schools providing remote instruction, families became partners in delivering the curriculum, doing everything from ensuring their children understood how to log into their classes and submit assignments to providing supplemental instruction when needed. The reliance on families was particularly challenging because not all families were in a position to supervise instruction.

Many charter schools provided families with needed technology devices, and the schools we spoke with noted needing to provide families with resources to properly use their devices or to aid in instruction. As described by one Diverse Charter Schools Coalition focus group participant, “Parents are partners and an asset that we don’t maximize and utilize. They are capable of assisting kids when they know what’s going on.”

Another challenge we learned from schools was that they simply lost connection with families during that period and that (re)building those connections required intentional efforts in the aftermath of COVID.

In response to the pandemic, charter schools we visited are providing greater support to families, since supporting families helps with student learning. It is difficult for students to learn if their basic needs aren’t met. For instance, food insecurity⁴⁵ and housing insecurity⁴⁶ are both associated with poorer educational outcomes.

Valuing families in the school setting is crucial for developing strong relationships among teachers, students, and families. There is a positive relationship between family engagement and student educational outcomes, including student achievement, attendance, and student behavior.⁴⁷

Strategies

The charter schools we spoke with leveraged their flexibility and autonomy to create programs and initiatives to support families. Some of the strategies they used on the next page.



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Strategy	Examples
Improving communication with families	<p>School opens its campuses up to parents and the wider community to ensure that families feel connected and involved with school operations.</p> <p>School uses the school library to cultivate community by extending hours, opening to parents to check out books, and providing literacy workshops.</p>

In the aftermath of the pandemic, Rocketship Mosaic adopted a practice that the school’s principal referred to as “breaking down the fortress.” The school reaches out to families and the community at large by facilitating a series of family and community engagement events like fairs, parties, and festivals to open the school up to the community as a whole. The school uses these festivals to celebrate the cultural diversity of their school community. For example, because of the community’s large Vietnamese population, the school celebrates holidays important in the Vietnamese community like the Lunar New Year. The school also uses these events as a way to support families by hiring parents with small businesses to serve during these events. This helps further the all-important community feel of these events, according to a Rocketship Mosaic administrator.

Cultivating parents as partners	<p>School trains parents to be involved in observing student needs and behavior at home and recording the data to help inform instruction.</p> <p>School sends newsletters to keep parents informed.</p> <p>School administers easily accessible, online parent surveys to help adapt programming.</p>
Making parent participation in activities more accessible	<p>School increases access to services, like the school library, to extend hours for both students and parents.</p> <p>Schools use online meetings so that parents can attend virtually.</p>
Providing direct and in-kind donations to help families address basic needs	<p>School provides grocery store gift cards to food-insecure families.</p> <p>School offers no-cost uniforms for low-income families.</p> <p>School allows laundry machine access for families to use free of charge.</p>
Connecting families to services	<p>School offers formal programs to connect vulnerable student groups and families with out-of-school support and social services.⁴⁸</p> <p>School offers programs to connect students aging out of school-based services to other governmental services.⁴⁹</p>



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How schools are measuring if it works

To monitor whether their initiatives are successful, charter schools we visited have adopted family surveys. They also collect metrics, such as monitoring and tracking actual service provision for parents and families in need of support and connection to social services, or examining the percentage of families who stay enrolled at the school during the year and return the following year.

Schools could also monitor effectiveness by collecting additional data, such as tracking attendance at family events or monitoring email open rates for newsletters to see if families are engaging with the materials.

Looking ahead

“Charters often have this nimbleness and creativeness. I think what surprised me in some ways was truly how far they would go, in terms of responding to needs, just over and over and over again.”

NORTHEAST CHARTER SCHOOLS NETWORK, ANNA HALL

The schools we spoke with offer examples of how public charter schools can harness their inherent flexibility, autonomy, and adaptability to create or improve upon strategies to address pandemic recovery.

When delving into the programs that public charter school leaders aspired to implement or expand, a recurring and familiar theme emerged: Both current and future staffing and financial constraints were barriers to implementation. Given that funding challenges will be exacerbated with the upcoming ESSER fiscal cliff, we recommend that public charter schools monitor program effectiveness to facilitate reallocation of funds from less effective strategies to those yielding more promising results.

To ensure sustained funding for effective programs, charter schools should consider exploring additional federal or state funding streams, such as whether mental health supports may be reimbursable by Medicaid, and also consider forming or strengthening partnerships with other organizations. In some areas, public charter schools are already pursuing partnerships. For instance, approximately 67% of public charter school leaders surveyed reported partnerships with community mental health organizations, and 83% reported partnerships with community organizations to help families meet basic needs.



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These partnerships can extend beyond mental health and meeting families' basic needs. For example, Austin Achieve has partnered with a literacy nonprofit as well as Teach For America and AmeriCorps to bolster their tutoring resources. Similarly, Uplift Education described how valuable partnerships can be in extending capacity and services in areas such as tutoring and staffing in addition to mental health.

“The way to turn tides is more and more connections between schools and community partners. Schools can’t do everything within the walls of the school buildings. Everyone wants to go all the way in serving kids and families well and untapped opportunities. Partnerships in the last few years have brought the most value: On Your Mark (tutoring), Opportunity Culture (staffing), Path to Purpose (mental health).”

UPLIFT EDUCATION PRINCIPAL

By leveraging their inherent flexibility, cultivating partnerships, and seeking alternative funding sources, public charter schools can seek to address these multifaceted post-pandemic challenges and lay a foundation for a more adaptive and robust system of student support.

¹ Margaret E. Raymond, James L. Woodworth, Won Fy Lee, and Sally Bachofer, As a Matter of Fact: The National Charter School Study III 2023, Center for Research on Education Outcomes, June 2023, <https://ncss3.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Credo-NCSS3-Report.pdf>; “NAEP Reading: National Student Group Scores and Score Gaps,” The Nation’s Report Card, accessed August 9, 2023, <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reading/nation/groups/?grade=4>; “NAEP Mathematics: National Student Group Scores and Score Gaps,” The Nation’s Report Card, accessed August 9, 2023, <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/mathematics/nation/groups/?grade=4>.

² Raymond, Woodworth, Lee, and Bachofer, “As a Matter of Fact: The National Charter School Study III 2023”; “NAEP Reading: National Student Group Scores and Score Gaps”; “NAEP Mathematics: National Student Group Scores and Score Gaps.”

³ Raymond, Woodworth, Lee, and Bachofer, As a Matter of Fact; “NAEP Reading: National Student Group Scores and Score Gaps”; “NAEP Mathematics: National Student Group Scores and Score Gaps.”

⁴ “The Coronavirus Spring: The Historic Closing of U.S. Schools (A Timeline),” Education Week, July 1, 2020, <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/the-coronavirus-spring-the-historic-closing-of-u-s-schools-a-timeline/2020/07>.



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⁵ National Center for Education Statistics, “U.S. Education in the Time of COVID,” accessed August 9, 2023, <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/annualreports/pdf/Education-Covid-time.pdf>.

⁶ “School Districts’ Reopening Plans: A Snapshot,” Education Week, July 15, 2020, <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/school-districts-reopening-plans-a-snapshot/2020/07>.

⁷ Debbie Veney and Drew Jacobs, “Voting With Their Feet: A State-Level Analysis of Public Charter School and District Public School Trends,” National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, September 2021, <https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/resource/voting-their-feet-state-level-analysis-public-charter-school-and-district-public-school-0>.

⁸ Jessica Schurz, “Return to Learn Tracker,” AEI Return to Learn Tracker, accessed August 9, 2023, https://www.returntolearnteacher.net/instructional_status/.

⁹ John Bailey, “Quarantines, Not School Closures, Led to Devastating Losses in Math and Reading,” The 74, January 4, 2023, <https://www.the74million.org/article/quarantines-not-school-closures-led-to-devastating-losses-in-math-and-reading/>.

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