

National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.

THE KRINON Changing Dynamics

**A New View of
Education**





NATIONAL SORORITY OF PHI DELTA KAPPA, INC.

About Us

The Sorority was founded in 1923 in Jersey City, New Jersey. Its purpose is:

- To stimulate professional growth among teachers;
- To foster a true spirit of sisterhood;
- To promote the highest ideals of the teaching profession; and
- To encourage the development of the potential of our youth.

There are over one hundred chapters across the United States.

Our Philosophy

The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. is a professional organization of teachers dedicated to the task of educating youth of America. We believe education to be a potent factor in maintaining and perpetuating democracy as the most ideal form of life. To remain in this position, modern education must provide youth with abilities for developing an integrated personality, assuming a successful place in a group and adjusting to the ever changing problems of society.

Through day by day instruction in the classroom and multiple contacts in the community, the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. seeks to inform all citizenry of the ever changing problems of our society and to equip them with the necessary social and academic skills to solve these problems according to a true democratic process. In addition, we are committed to celebrating success of individuals and groups and to honoring the legacy of those who have gone on before us. The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. shall continue to take its rightful place among those who point the way in establishing, maintaining and sustaining avenues of communication between and among all people and in fostering the pursuit of excellence in education.

Purpose

The Krinon is the official journal of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. It is published for the purposes of:

- Providing current, relevant facts regarding emerging initiatives, trends and issues which impact education, family, school, and community; and
- Promoting and advancing the interests of the members.

Publication Date

The magazine is published annually.

How to Reach The Krinon Staff

Correspondence, which includes your name, title, email or home address, and telephone number may be sent to the current Chief Editor at nspdkchiefkrinon@gmail.com.

Subscription

Please contact National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Headquarters at the address listed below or call the NSPK Headquarters at 773.783.7379.

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National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.

THE KRINON

Changing Dynamics

**A New View of
Education**



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Front Row L-R:

- Gladys Cannon Nunery
- Julia Asbury Barnes
- Gladys Merritt Ross (Mother founder)
- Florence Steel Hunt

Second Row L-R:

- Ella Wells Butler, Marguerite Gross
- Mildred Morris Williams
- Not Pictured
- Edna McConnell

SUPREME BASILEUS' GREETING



“To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often”, But, “Any Change, even a change for the better, is always accompanied by discomforts” ~Winston Churchill and Arnold Bennett

We have experienced so many changes in the last two years living in fear of COVID.

COVID turned our lives upside down. Its dictation of fear, death, change, frustration, uncertainty, confusion and isolation became our new normal.

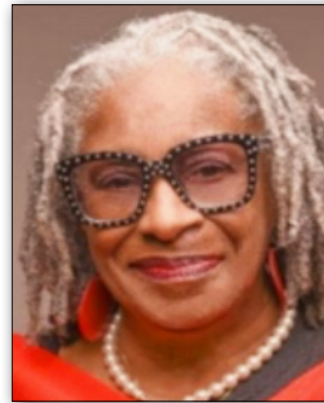
We, the **teachers**, became the **students** as we learned how to embrace this new normal. Our pedagogical skills were re-designed. Our entire way of living was assassinated. But through it all, we learned to trust in the Almighty to get us through.

The Krinon is a tool that provides our members an avenue to share their knowledge, views, creativity and talents with each other. I am proud to give a special shout out to Soror Joyce Williams (Krinon Chief Editor 2017-2021) for **Providing Avenues of Visibility** for our **Educational Sorority** (PAVES) by sharing the Krinon with the HBCU's, BWA, NCNW, and NAACP.

I am excited about this Krinon's theme: “Changing Dynamics: A New View of Education”. When I think of dynamics, I think of the four main dynamics in music. **Pianissimo**, a very mild, soft change; **Mezzo pianissimo**, a gentle change; **Mezzo Forte**, a moderate change; and **Forte**, a loud and big change. Each of these changes are necessary to implement a wholistic approach to the different levels of learning. Each reader should reflect on her own experiences and needs and utilize this information in their educational arena.

This Krinon is very dear to me because it is the first edition to accompany me on my journey as the 27th Supreme Basileus. The production of this Krinon edition reflects the dedicated and hard work of many of you. A very special thank you to our Chief Editor, Soror Esther “Pixie” Phillips, and the Editorial Committees.

Margarette Galloway
27th Supreme Basileus, 2022 - 2026



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The National Sorority
Welcomes Supreme

Margarette Galloway



into the Circle of
Sisterhood

*The circle of women around
carry us when we're weak a*

of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc.
e Basileus



*and us weave invisible nets of love that
and sing with us when we are strong.
~ Sark*

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NATIONAL YES PROGRAM



Y

YOUTH GUIDANCE
XINOS (HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS)
KUDOS (HIGH SCHOOL BOYS)
COLLEGE GUIDANCE
KAPPA OMICRON TAU (KOT)

Youth



E

SCHOLARSHIP
READING POWER
AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY
COMPUTER LITERACY
MATHEMATICS
TEACH-A-RAMA

LEADERSHIP TRAINING
PUBLIC RELATIONS
ACADEMIC ISSUES
CURRENT TRENDS
COMMISSION ON CIVIL
RIGHTS

Education



S

INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS
NATIONAL PROJECTS
LOCAL PROJECTS
NUTRITION, HEALTH & HYPERTENSION
ASSAULT ON ILLITERACY
CHILDREN & ADULT BENEFITS
EARLY CHILDHOOD

TOUCH-A-CHILD
SECOND CAREERS
RETIRED SORORS
VOLUNTEERS
FOUNDERS DAY
EDUCATION
HUMAN RIGHTS

Service

CHIEF EDITOR'S MESSAGE



Welcome to “The Krinon” 2022

In this digital age of technology in education, we ask ourselves, “Where do we go from here?” The changing dynamics have us looking at the new view of education through The 1619 Project - Critical Race Theory and wondering about the books placed on the banned book list.

Then we consider, ‘Do Our Voices Matter?’ What is our role as innovative educators in addressing technology-infused classrooms in a digital economy? It is only because of serendipity that we don’t waste time with numerous micro time wasters.

However, what if it is your desire to be positive, but your negatives get in the way because of the impact COVID-19 has had on one’s emotional, mental, and spiritual health. We have believed that the pandemic would be over and what we believed to be the “new normal,” we would be living it ... not dealing with the next variant! Thus, we support and uplift our youth and ourselves. We challenge ourselves to be mindful of the ways our Zoom-weary, fatigued students can be renewed in spirit as they come back from remote learning to a new normal in all our lives. Mindfulness is the key to reviving depression, anxiety, physical illnesses, and off-task behaviors.

Things are changing in education. “What can we do?” Pray that educators remain in the classroom saying, “I can, I will, I must!” It’s the only way forward as we turn away from the voices heard to use the lessons learned. Reflections of self-care and healthy habits will see us safely through.

We can choose to live in a “Pandemic of Hope” by building a world marked by equality, diversity, justice, and love. Our educators on every level are all right to serve and carry on the work of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated, encouraging each other as we meet the daily challenges of changing dynamics in our world today.

“Intelligent people are always ready to learn. Their ears are open for knowledge.” ~ Proverbs 18:15 (NLT)

Esther “Pixie” Phillips
Chief Editor, 2022 - 2026



ASSOCIATE EDITORS



Take a close look at the young lady on this year's cover. In my mind's eye, she's a graduating senior – and one of our Xinos. Once upon a time, that young lady was you. "Back in the day" you would have dared anyone to tell you what you couldn't accomplish. The curtains of your mind opened upon great possibilities: college (maybe at an HBCU), an exciting career, your own business, and most definitely your own place to live. And quite possibly, there were times when you were excited to the point where you couldn't sleep (and it didn't bother you)!

While it's all too easy to look back and tell yourself that "those were the days" (and they're gone), I've got good news just for you: These are the days, and they just arrived. And guess what else: there are more days where our "todays" come from. How do I know that? Because [these are] the days that the Lord has made, and we WILL rejoice and be glad in them.



This year's theme embraces a term that could be easily overlooked: Dynamics. One definition of dynamics is "the motivating or driving forces, physical or moral, in any field." When I apply that definition, then our theme expands to "What is it that PAVES the way for us to change the way we learn?" "What drives our educational system to move in a different direction?" One of my mentors taught me that "no one changes the way they do things or think about things until that way no longer serves them." As the challenges that face us change, so must the way we approach these challenges. Back in 1968, you could take a math class in Slide Rule, but I doubt that you can even find one today. On the other hand, the desktop computers and cell phones that weren't even imagined back then strongly impact our ability to survive in today's educational landscape.



Now I want you to imagine that in another room of this house, our Xinos has a younger brother, a high school freshman. We'll say that he's one of our Kudos. Now let's take this one step further and see that he's knee-deep into virtual reality (VR) – with all the bells and whistles.

Although I might guess that his older Xinos Sister has a more mature (i.e., less virtual) outlook on her future than he does, his world is as "real" to him as hers is to her. Only the source of that reality differs.

Both virtual reality and tactile reality are here to stay.

Two questions we could ponder are (1) How does the virtual become real? (2) How does potential actualize? However, my journey led me to other observations worth noting. Namely, there has been ongoing research regarding the impact of VR devices on both the brain and the mind. These studies addressed such questions as "what is the potential impact on BOTH the brain and the mind?" While we know that they are not the same, they are nonetheless used interchangeably. The short answer is that extended use of VR devices could have a negative impact on both, not the least of which is a crippled ability of an individual to discern the difference between the real world and the virtual world.



I discovered that the greater audience for such devices is males (in general) and youth (in particular). And it seems to me that the vast majority of the content for such devices is violence (hence, "virtual violence"). Whereas in the virtual world, our Kudos can win against violence with enough play time ("skill building"), his chances of winning out against tactile ("real") violence is another matter altogether.

My concern, within the context of virtual games, is that we want to be certain that we are not teaching our boys to build bigger, better air castles and then move into them earlier! We know that digital addiction is an all-too-pervasive reality among our children. Will these devices merely prove to be a step up in the addiction process? An exchange, if you will, of one addiction for another? How can we help our children move forward to their potential while at the same time keeping them grounded in the reality of the world in which they live? We've all heard that a picture is worth a thousand words. But we need to be ever mindful that in order to replace a picture, you must use a different picture – not just words or platitudes.

Equally important, from the perspective of his older sister, we must not allow our vigilance to dissipate when it comes to the "future cradle rockers of the world." Mothers matter because mothers are the first molders.

This brings us back to you, our NSPDK Family. Whether you are the parent, the grandparent, the teacher/ instructor, or the sibling of these two protégés, you are the "red and gold" link to their future. During the challenging times they will face in their future, our sisterhood must mean more than a group of us calling each other friends.

As we stand back together and look proudly upon these children as they move on into the next phase of their lives, we realize that our sisterhood will need to include not only a keen sense of belonging to each other, but also that level of authenticity that motivates us to empower them to avoid becoming merely our impostors. While we want them to succeed, we must insist that they find their own way, which may go in a direction that is painfully different from what we would choose. Our challenge, and we hope it is yours also, is to reach beyond the inner circle of our local chapter to the big (sometimes scary) world we call the future.

Should you decide to accept this assignment, you will be fulfilled beyond your wildest dreams because you will be offering a hand up to both your present (Sorors) as well as your future (protégés). Both of these groups possess a stunning intellect, incredible optimism, and formidable personality.

All three of us acknowledge every Soror who PAVES the way to welcome us into the National SorORITY of Phi Delta Kappa with open arms, and in turn we welcome those who are yet to become our Sorors, our Xinos, our Kudos, our KOTs, and our Anthropos. Why? Because we need you, you need us, and we are all a part of God's Family.

Sincerely,

Linda D. Lewis, Alpha Beta Chapter, Nashville, TN
 Novella M. Page, Alpha Beta Chapter, Nashville, TN
 Sharon Washington, Alpha Rho Chapter, Dallas, TX





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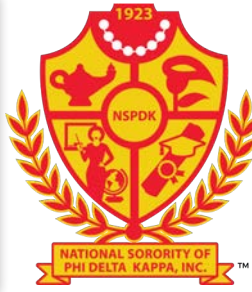
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PERPETUAL SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

The Perpetual Scholarship Foundation, Incorporated was established as a non-profit educational tax-exempt 501(C)(3) foundation, which exists as a subsidiary under the umbrella of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. It is managed by a 24-member Board of Directors. The PURPOSE of the Foundation, according to its Articles of Incorporation, is to provide financial support to the scholarship program of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Annually, the Foundation donates funds to the Sorority's general treasury earmarked specifically for educational scholarships for high school girls and boys; and female college students aspiring to become teachers. The Perpetual Foundation also offers scholarships to members of the Sorority who are pursuing a doctoral degree.



Front Row: L-R: Left to Right: Tillie Colter, Dr. Cynthia Warren, Lisa Frieson, Betty Glover, Yvonne W. Ben.
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Not Pictured: Shelia Evans, Florence O. King, Kathleen T. Thomas, Opal J. Hampton (Incorporator), Mary Langford, Mary Jane McCoy.

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NATIONAL ANTHROPOS



The National Anthropolos, an affiliate of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. was founded in 1979. It was the successor to the Sorority's "Men In Our Lives" which was formed in 1949. The intent of the National Anthropolos is to take part in, assist, and support the activities of the Sorority in the areas of education, youth development, social interaction, and other areas. Their allegiance is first and foremost to the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. resulting from the very special relationship of its men to the ladies of the Sorority. Anthropolos membership is open to any male friend of sorority members in good standing, including spouse, relative, or friend. The Anthropolos welcome young men who have been a Kudos member and has shown interest in continued affiliation and who is sponsored by a sorority member. The primary focus of the National Anthropolos is Recruitment, Retention, and Communication. The National Anthropolos are dependent on the sorority for new Anthropolos. We are committed to developing compelling programs to keep Anthropolos engage throughout the year. The National Anthropolos are dedicated, committed and supportive of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Visit their website at www.nationalanthropolos.com.



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EASTERN REGION



Patsy O. Squire, Ed.D.
Eastern Region
Director

Greetings,

We're twenty-one years into the 21st Century and the world of Education is quickly experiencing transformation. Along with us immersed in the midst of a worldwide Pandemic, there are certainly "Changing Dynamics: A New View of Education." After two years of disruption and difficult working conditions, the education profession is in the midst of a crisis of morale, leading to growing concerns about burnout and attrition among both teachers and school leaders. Schools are reporting teachers are overwhelmed with district management, lack of respect for educators as well as negative student behavior. Teacher morale is at an all-time low. We must explore the critical question of how this dire trajectory can be reversed. What viable steps can school communities, education leaders, and policymakers take to improve educators' working conditions, job satisfaction, and professional status?

Many schools were forced to implement remote and hybrid learning, provide electronic devices and hotspot connections, and offer professional development activity to support the 21st Century Teacher and Learner. The Teacher in the 21st Century Classroom facilitates by directing students to rich learning sources and asking students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. 21st Century Skills include Effective Communication Skills, Learning and Innovation Skills, Information Media and Technology Skills and Life and Career Skills. The 21st Century Educator must have characteristics to include: the Adaptor, The Communicator, The Learner, The Visionary, The Leader, The Model, The Collaborator and The Risktaker.

I'm excited, this is where the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated continues to thrive. As professional Educators, we pool our resources to accelerate teacher and student learning. We are collaborators in the reimagining of schools and classrooms. As we begin to celebrate our 100th Centennial Anniversary Celebration, our organization continues to offer a platform and a voice to support our members to move forward in the transformation and the Changing Dynamics: A New View of Education.



SOUTHEAST REGION



Greetings,

It is a privilege to greet each of you on behalf of the Southeast Region and give my view on “Changing Dynamics: A New View of Education”. It is a responsibility of each of us to accept there will be changes in the education management system used to present education to our students and communities. Not only accept there will be changes in the system but recognize we must be a part of that change. As educators, we have to meet the demands that are bringing rapid changes to the approaches of our teaching and learning.

There has been an awareness of a need for changes to improve the way we prepare our students in their skill set for the future. However, the past two years have shown us rapid changes in the way we present education and the need for many divergent approaches to meet the needs of all that we educate. As educators, we must prepare students for productive functioning in the future as well as today. There are many factors that affect the education system, such as leadership styles, learning styles, ability levels, personality patterns, as well as cultural backgrounds to name a few.

As a substitute teacher, I have realized that I need more preparation with divergent teaching to adjust to the individual differences of the students in order to follow the lesson plans of the classroom teacher and effectively continue the learning opportunity of the student. There is the need for those who substitute and carry out a classroom lesson, especially on the elementary levels, to step up to changes needed for them to be effective substitutes such as learning to operate new technology. Greater use of technological platforms are used in the classroom since our experiences with COVID-19, and I think this strategy will not go away but expand as it meets differential needs of students.

The increasing use of laptops, tablets, I-pads, and smart phones in the classroom as well as out of the classroom, has been one of the fastest growing trends on all levels of education. No longer are these mobile devices used as a substitute in education but has become a driver of educational deliveries. Student learning has become more virtual, and this technology supports learning beyond the classroom. Inclusion of technology in a lesson is the norm now and not a substitute. Technology is here to stay as we move toward worldwide learning.

During these changing dynamics of education, the strong educational women of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. had a vision and established the e-Learning Academy. This has been a viable tool during this technological age of learning. The establishment of the e-Learning Academy is a great example of following trends which is essential to properly preparing students and engaging them in the educational process. Technology can become the “wings” that will allow the educational world to fly farther and faster than ever before – if we will allow it. (Jenny Arledge) George Couros said, “Technology will never replace great teachers, but in the hands of great teachers, it’s transformational”. Let’s continue to be the great teachers and transform great students in a changing world of education as we educate with the technological changes.



Rose Anderson
Southeast Region
Director



MIDWEST REGION



Tiffany M. Pritchett
Midwest Regional
Director

Greetings from the “Magnificent Mighty Midwest” Region!

“In Case No One Told You Today, You’re a GREAT Teacher” ~ Anonymous

Education is an ongoing process. We must ask questions as we navigate this ever-changing process. How do we improve literacy rates across the country? How must we change our teaching methods to match students’ needs? How can we lead students toward a better future? How has technology changed how students learn? How can we help students be more engaged in school? These are just a few questions to get our minds thinking in the new direction of “Changing Dynamics: A New View of Education.”

As we know this National Pandemic has made us pivot in a new direction of teaching, using technology, and learning how to self-care. Teaching in the classroom has changed drastically. We’re not just teaching what they need to know currently, but we must address the main area of learning loss from the last two years. Not all students were able to keep up with the pace of virtually learning. Some students checked out mentally dealing with depression and family home issues they must deal with on a regular, due to them being at home more regularly. Before the pandemic, technology was infused in the classroom. Students had capability of using chrome books and doing lessons on Google classroom.

Now they are being challenged with the daily use of assignment completion, email updates, and submission of forms, etc. This generation is no longer paper and pencil, but digital. As educators we must meet them at their needs and move them forward. Yes, they are learning and using technology every day on social media, but we must find a way to understand their learning and keep them engaged. As educators, we must find the students’ passion and keep them excited about coming to school every day. We must not only meet the students’ needs but the parents as well. Parents need mini workshops to keep them abreast of the updated technology changes in the classroom and parent portals for them to keep up with their students’ academic progress.

Public and private education learning institutions have to bridge the gap of their learning population needs. There is a learning loss gap to be fulfilled and this will happen over time. Educators at the state and local level must keep in mind the socioeconomic levels of parents and how we can meet their needs to give them the proper technology-based learning tools for better growth amongst our students. The economy took a hard hit, and children took an even harder hit with their learning and socio-emotional status.

Education isn’t just about teaching students English, math, and arithmetic. We must tend to the whole student before they can learn. We teach one to reach one every day. We must inspire our youth to press forward and go the extra mile to extend their learning and attend cultural events to extend their learning and appreciation of life. We have to reach beyond the walls of the classroom to educate our youngsters. We must let them know they need to be believers and achievers to go to the next level. We must strengthen our core values and lead students to a brighter future.

The National SorORITY of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. has built a legacy of educators throughout this nation that have dedicated their time to teaching and learning. Our “Great Eight Founders” would be proud of how we have built on their foundation, and we continue to build their legacy in the field of education. This organization’s mission is “To Foster a Spirit of Sisterhood Among Teachers and to Promote the Highest Ideals of the Teaching Profession.” As educators we continue to promote the highest ideals of the teaching profession every day in the classroom. We not only challenge our students, but we challenge ourselves to be nothing but the best: Supreme and Exemplary in all that we do. Education is an ongoing learning process; we change with the change. Sorors do not get weary in well doing, but Keep On, Keeping On!

“Every Soror Participate - Through Extraordinary Service in Education”



SOUTHWEST REGION



Greetings,

It is with extreme immense pleasure that I would like to extend a warm cordial greeting on behalf of the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc. Southwest Region. I am very honored to have the opportunity as the Southwest Regional Director to highlight some key points on the Krinon Topic for 2022, "Changing Dynamics: A New View of Education".

As I reflect on the theme for this year, it brings to my mind how over the last two years we have experienced many educational challenges. The challenges have caused schools from grade school to college/university to adapt new processes to provide quality education. We have been put in a position where we have witnessed important inventions and practices be birthed at a faster tempo than we have ever seen. Historically change in the operations of education has been a slow and gradual process. This quick shift in pace redefined how our education systems operate for years to come.

A dynamic learning environment is characterized by change, activity, and progress. It is intentionally designed to meet the needs of all students while challenging them to enhance existing skills, interest, understandings, as well as meaningfully building new ones. This very idea has been at the forefront throughout the pandemic.

For generations schools have relied upon high stakes test to evaluate student understanding and learning. During the pandemic, many students and educators have been experiencing record elevated levels of anxiety as it relates to the high stakes test. The pandemic allowed us to hone in on how to mitigate stress for students and educators.

The summative isn't to eliminate testing however, educators and administrators are becoming more open to alternatives to assessments. Some schools are moving towards testing students more frequently rather than waiting long periods between tests. The use of interim, formative assessments is designed to identify learning gaps quickly. The gaps can be bridged quickly to ensure that students have the best opportunity to improve their learning through changing the dynamics of education. The Southwest Educators throughout the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas are determined to enhance and embrace new innovative views to help support and teach our youth.

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the one's we've been waiting for. We are the change that we see." -- Barack Obama



Anita O'Neal
Southwest Regional
Director



FAR WEST REGION



Dr. Elcendia Nord
Far West Regional
Director

COVID 19 has changed education for learners of all ages, from pre-school to the university students. COVID 19 shuttered schools and disrupted learning across the globe, creating an urgent need to revisit education. Schools and universities had to make the unexpected move to remote learning in 2020. Education leaders, facilities, and teachers from all over the world have been innovating and adapting to ensure quality learning for students. As hybrid and remote learning continues into this school year, educators are applying lessons from the recent past to navigate the ongoing transition, while updating approaches and processes to respond to the demands of society.

It would be a vast understatement to say that “the world has changed” since 2020. In education, we have a new normal and a series of completely new dynamics. Where does it begin? For starters, the coronavirus has shattered the paradigm of the traditional brick and mortar school.

With the quarantine caused by the virus, thousands of teachers from grade school through university were suddenly forced to instruct their students online. For many instructors, this closure has proven a serious hardship, bringing frustration and adjustment in thinking. At best, the distance learning allowed students to complete their year; but the results have been unsatisfactory.

Indeed, the assumption that teachers “can just go online” and “do class” does a major disservice to learning and the idea of education. Whether by paper, online video, or a combination of the two, distance education takes a great deal of forethought and planning. The dynamic of teaching at a distance is certainly different from that of a conventional classroom.

The sudden push to go online in education, however, has been a definitive nod to the legitimacy of homeschooling and the concept of learning at home. While traditional in-school learning came to a halt, homeschooling continued to survive. Now many municipalities, districts, and schools instinctively defaulted to the paradigm of distance learning – even if it was not well-conducted – demonstrating that there is now a widespread recognition that learning does not always have to be done at the schoolhouse.

Technology is no doubt disrupting traditional education, and academicians need to realize that we need to adapt to these changes and adopt new practices and competencies to stay relevant in the years to come.

The lesson of the learning crisis is clear: business as usual is not improving learning outcomes. A new, more radical approach that focuses on enhancing learning is long overdue.

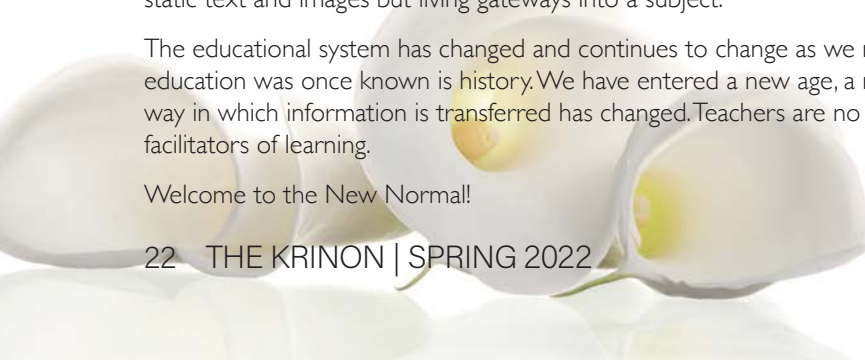
Remote and hybrid learning has revolutionized the way teachers and students interact. Higher education students can now choose subjects and courses from around the world and virtually attend lectures by top professors and experts. Peer-to-peer learning, flipped classrooms, virtual worlds are the keywords today.

Are we seeing the death of the traditional classroom? No! While the debate rages on about the pros and cons of e-learning vs face-to-face learning, the classroom is changing its design and purpose irrevocably. Students are now increasingly able to learn from leading faculty beyond the four walls of their classrooms. Professors are collaborating across universities to collectively create and distribute for-credit curriculum for an online semester. Hundreds of thousands of students now pursue degrees entirely online. Even students at traditional colleges and universities make use of this digital platform and materials to supplement classroom lectures.

Students no longer carry heavy backpacks loaded with many books. They carry computers, iPads, laptops, and telephones to access the needed information. The book becomes clickable. Enriched with interactivity, video, and more -eBooks are no longer static text and images but living gateways into a subject.

The educational system has changed and continues to change as we move forward to the new normal! The way in which education was once known is history. We have entered a new age, a new normal. The requirements have changed and the way in which information is transferred has changed. Teachers are no longer the giver of information, but now they serve as facilitators of learning.

Welcome to the New Normal!



Feature Article

Mindfulness Education: Minding Me

“Mindfulness is a toolkit to help students face both behavioral and academic challenges by reducing anxiety and giving them a new way to identify their feelings and emotions, and practice selfcare.”



The Pandemic has impacted how we deliver instruction and how students receive instruction, and importantly, student's mental health. Now, more than ever, students are experiencing anxiety, stress, frustration, depression, isolation and Zoom fatigue. Not knowing from one day to the next if they will be learning in-person or returning to a remote learning environment, it is challenging. With the school culture (remote and hybrid learning, assignment workload) and the absence of physical socialization with peers, to transitioning from home to the classroom setting, the social emotional support and consistency derived from daily school rituals, are vitally important.

Because students are under more stress, they need support by giving them a toolkit with which to use to help them manage the changes and uncertainties in their lives. Prolonged and/or intense stress can take a toll on students' mental health by causing anxiety, depression, off-task behaviors, physical illness, and learning difficulty—good reasons to mitigate stress early using a variety of forms of coping strategies. Mindfulness is a toolkit to help students face both behavioral and academic

challenges by reducing anxiety and giving them a new way to identify their feelings and emotions, and practice selfcare.

Mindfulness means paying full attention and slowing down to notice what you are feeling, thinking, and doing. Being mindful is the opposite of rushing or multitasking. When you are mindful, you are taking your time. You are focusing in a relaxed, effortless way (listening to music, writing, drawing, coloring, painting, breathing, exercising, and eating, etc.). When you practice mindfulness, your thoughts tune into what we are sensing in the present moment. You are taking a mind break to take care of yourselves.

In the classroom, mindfulness instruction can reduce students' sense of stress and lengthen attention spans. According to research on mindfulness with adults and youth, mindfulness improves immune function (fewer illnesses), increases concentration, improves self-acceptance and self-esteem, strengthens resilience, helps to control anger, hyperactivity, and decrease stress and anxiety. Mindfulness creates resilience because it promotes an understanding of one's emotions, the ability to control emotions, and a deeper sense

of knowing what we are fully capable of.

What can mindfulness do for students?

- Reduced Stress: Improved ability to manage stress
- Increased Focus: Improved ability to pay attention, focus and concentrate
- Improved Emotion Regulation: Reduced impulsiveness
- Increased Emotional Intelligence: Improved conflict resolution skills
- Increased Empathy and Respect: Increased empathy and understanding of others
- Increased Resilience: Increased capacity to overcome challenges
- Improved Physical Well-being: Increased engagement in physical activity
- Improved Creativity and Collaboration: Improved expression of creative arts

Mindfulness education and social emotional learning are linked and crucial in helping students adapt, cope, and feel comfortable and safe throughout the school year. Mindfulness techniques and strategies can be taught in small groups or individually and adapted for all ages to support

social emotional learning. These activities can help students identify and manage deep and difficult feelings as they build relationships with teachers and peers, whether in-person, virtually, or at a distance.

Students need to be able to practice and use mindfulness strategies in their everyday lives. They need daily opportunities for rest, mind-breaks and rejuvenation. Taking some time, at their own pace, to practice mindfulness is not a reward for achieving goals—it is an acknowledgment of students’ personal value. It is also a way to cultivate resilience and independence in students as they become more self-aware; and use their mindfulness toolkits to manage their thoughts and emotions in school, at home, and in the community.

Mindfulness Selfcare Tools

- **Planner:** Helps you to plan mind-breaks and goals; and organize your assignment schedule.
- **Ink Pen:** Helps you to write effortlessly and achieve a more unique writing style by adapting your choice of hold, and angle of the pen.

Mindful Journal Reflection Questions

- What strengths am I using this week? Write, draw, or choose a household item that shows or represents a strength you are using to take care of yourself.
- How am I feeling today? Write, draw, or choose a household item that shows how you are feeling this week.
- What am I grateful for this week? Write, draw, or choose a household item that shows why you are grateful.

For other suggestions, read Soror Gray’s entire article at <https://bit.ly/3037-18>

- Mindfulness Practice for Wearing a Mask
- Strategies for Practicing Mindful Eating
- Mindfulness Apps

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THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION



In October 2021, in my capacity as the former Assistant District Superintendent of the Ford Heights School District #169 in Illinois, an educator/administrator with more than 49 years in the field — inclusive of classroom instructor, school administration — elementary and higher education — and entrepreneur (co-owner of Belegant Fashions), I was asked by the president of the Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL) to be one of two speakers during its general virtual meeting on the topic of “The Impact of COVID-19 on Education”. This organization is comprised primarily of African American leaders; educators, across the spectrum; entrepreneurs; and statesmen.

During this virtual meeting I shared my source of information that was gleaned from personal conversations held with educators maintaining membership in the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Incorporated (NSPDK), the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), and the South Suburban Chapter of

the Top Ladies of Distinction (TLOD), which enabled me to garner a limited, but somewhat more national view of the topic from front-line personnel as well as other educators in Georgia, Texas and North Carolina to name a few.

Of course, my interviews began with Muites who are employed as elementary level self-contained classrooms teachers, as subject-matter specialists, and/or as special education specialists. These teachers explained the immediate difficulties associated with on-line instruction during the height of COVID-19. E-learning was greatly hampered because some families were handicapped due to the lack of internet access, be it connectivity or equipment challenges. In many cases schools could not distribute technology on a loaner basis quickly enough. On the other hand, students had access to the computer equipment, but their homes and/or the communities in which they lived were lacking the required infrastructure that

could carry the Internet access greatly needed. Some of my sorors expressed concerns for their special education students who needed personal contact with the teacher. The sorors discussed students who suffered academically when necessary positive reinforcement or immediate correction was lacking. Keep in mind the necessary Educational Support Personnel (teacher assistants – TA’s) were not in the classroom monitoring students’



instructional experiences.

During the year 2020, isolation from family and friends was becoming a common factor impacting the lives of adults and children as COVID-19 claimed the lives of thousands weekly. In addition, political unrest, police brutality, and the resulting assertive activism by people in general throughout the country appeared to help increase the level of hostility displayed towards one another, followed by inappropriate types of anger-release being witnessed on nationwide TV. These acts of hostility were televised regularly by media sources such as local and national networks such as CNN and MSNBC. Homebound viewers of all ages – could possibly witness daily news reports of violence throughout the year.

My research-based personal interviews continued as I dialogued with several administrators in Chicago and Atlanta. We discussed the fact that parents, as well as students, needed social services. Interviewees divulged that several of their school districts were having their departments of education to divert funds from other sources to provide additional funding to pupil and social services. A school administrator in the state of Georgia

indicated the county in which their school was located was redirecting funds from other budget lines exclusively to enhance social services - inclusive of counseling, psychological services, combating hunger, providing school supplies and clothing, in addition to housing — for parents and students requiring those resources.

The tentacles of COVID-19 in many cases impacted employment, resulting with loss of income, insufficient nutrition, potential homelessness, and reliance on the government for monetary subsidies and the good nature of neighbors and communities, which contributed valuable resources and food for the survival of the populace. Interviews with educators resulted in discussions about “Acts of Kindness”, which focused on the good some members of the community did for one another, even when the contributing members needed help themselves. One example that demonstrated this positive action, aka ‘Acts of Kindness,’ was several restaurant owners in New York and Chicago, which were losing business because of the national and/or state mandates designed to minimize the spread of COVID-19, began providing food to people in need. Another example of community support, aka ‘Acts of Kindness’ was reported by local and national media sources when one community where Mother Nature indiscriminately

destroyed homes, neighbors came together to assist each other in rebuilding their residences. These Acts of Kindness provided some positivity, socialization, and hope where the negativity of COVID-19 and Mother Nature was still prevalent.

Reference to interviews included in this article provide just a few examples of how COVID-19 impacted the educational system in 2020-21. I did not even mention the scenarios of vaccine choices (Pfizer-BioMTech, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson) personal protective equipment (PPE), and how educators’ lives were thrown into turmoil due to vaccine and PPE availability or unavailability in their respective communities. Vaccine hesitancy was and remains a hot topic too. According to stats published on <https://usafacts.org>, 212,130,684 people or 65% of the U.S. population have been fully vaccinated. Vaccine hesitancy remains a discussion topic for managing our world-wide pandemic. Not to mention those educators and students with compromised immune systems yet unable to even consider coronavirus vaccinations. If you think all of this changed the dynamics of education, wait to read Part II in the next edition of the Krinon.

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CRITICAL RACE THEORY THE 1619 PROJECT IN

How often have you watched a historical re-enactment in the movies or on the television that explicitly showed Black people being murdered, lynched, raped, beaten, stomped, maimed, starved, castrated, kidnapped, brutalized, or sodomized? Think a little bit deeper now. How often have you seen images of our ancestors on marine vessels steeped in their fecal matter, urine, saliva, and bodily fluids as barbarians 'transported' them from Africa to America during 'the middle passage'? If you are honest, your recollection of seeing these images is numerous. It seems American society has not pondered the trauma such images have inflicted on our children and on us. Historically, American society has been gratified in displaying the inhumanness it has imposed onto our ancestors, almost

with a prideful pretension. The American "majority" has had no hesitation depicting Black people as victims because imperialists have traditionally written the record and controlled the narrative. Actually, Black scholars have always produced scholarship which has examined our history, our plight, and our contributions to humanity. Moreover, Black scholarship on the effects of racism is nothing new; however, today, we see censorship attempts and unending attacks on two education paradigms: the intellectual property of Black people: *Critical Race Theory* and *The 1619 Project*.

Crafted in the 1970s and 1980s by scholars and legal analysts, *Critical Race Theory* (CRT) is an intellectual framework for understanding institutional racism and how it is interwoven in American

society. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2001), one of the main assumptions of *Critical Race Theory* is that racism in the United States is normal and that it is not aberrational. Instead, *Critical Race Theory* postulates that racism is common and an ordinary experience of people of color. Although *Critical Race Theory* has not been taught to children in primary and secondary school, state lawmakers have enacted legislation to ban the teaching of the theory's principles, although many legislators have no actual knowledge of the theory's propositions. In May 2021, House Republicans issued a two-part bill forbidding public schools from using *Critical Race Theory*. During that same month, the governor of Oklahoma banned *Critical Race Theory* from all public-school curricula within the state (Murphy, 2021). In

& EDUCATION

In addition, the governor of Idaho, Brad Little, signed bill H 377, which restricts the use of *Critical Race Theory* in public schools. At the time of this writing, seven states, including Tennessee and North Carolina, introduced legislation to ban *Critical Race Theory* in schools (Impelli, 2021). Thus, it is feasible to believe that more states will attempt more dictatorial censorship. Not only has *Critical Race Theory* been attacked on the state level, but also the federal government has tried to stop scholarly engagement with *Critical Race Theory*. An American president banned the mere mention of *Critical Race Theory* in national initiatives. While President Joseph Biden reversed this presidential executive order, the attacks on *Critical Race Theory* continued.

Another way that we have examined our history in recent

times is through *The 1619 Project*, crafted by journalist and activist Nikole Hannah-Jones. According to *The 1619 Project*, racism is endemic to the founding of America. Hannah-Jones centered American history when the first enslaved persons were brought to Virginia in 1619. Even more specifically, *The 1619 Project* challenges the assertion that America was founded on principles of freedom and bravery alone. Instead, Hannah-Jones presents a more accurate, holistic picture of the country by acknowledging that the 'founding forefathers' of this country sanctioned, participated in, and promoted an inhumanly exploitative system of stealing free labor from African descendants. Lastly, Hannah-Jones contends that the exploitation of slavery contributed to the wealth of

American society. Unfortunately, state lawmakers have forbidden school districts to discuss *The 1619 Project* as some American legislative bodies desire to keep a deceptive, false narrative. As Black educators, we must write the narrative and continue to challenge the racist one-sided perspectives of American history.

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EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY



During the pandemic, students attended school online. It was disheartening to see teachers unsuccessfully trying to control an uncontrollable situation due to the lack of independent thinking and teaching in their classrooms before this time. Educators do not understand how to empower their students. Both groups struggled to learn every day, but learning should not be a task. It should be an adventure.

Educators who once believed that “all children can learn” now have an attitude that says, “I will teach those who are willing to listen and forget about the rest.” What happened? They forgot and reverted to the era before educational enlightenment. The classroom became a one-room schoolhouse with learners of different ethnicities, learning styles, and mindsets clumped together learning the same thing at the same pace

— innovation thrown out of the window for professional peace of mind. Pendoley (2019) describes learning as a social process. A lack of emotional and intellectual support blocks the connection barriers that limit learning.

Teaching strategies regressed to the time before the era of educational enlightenment. According to Gusacov (2018), educational enlightenment teaches no

TECHNOLOGY IN A DIGITAL AGE



boundaries in rational thinking when looking at the ever-increasing knowledge gained by modern achievements. Teachers no longer accept that they possess the only truth and final answer to the problem but encourage diversity of thought. These educational practitioners create an environment of rich cultural assets surrounded by cultural breadth, yet it does not cancel individual and traditional customs. It

embodies sovereignty and resists indoctrination into truth as defined by agencies but still does not judge. Students should question and engage in discussions on the subject matter, including disagreeing with ideas in the printed text.

Integrating the computer as an educational tool is still a priority, and teaching strategies should not regress. Moreover, educators should incorporate collaboration and critical thinking on every grade level, including higher education. (Go to <https://bit.ly/2053-12> for more information). Educators, please do not return to enhancing learning by substituting the computer for pen and paper activities. Martin (2019) states that educational technology determines delivering, designing, training, and evaluating instruction. The process begins by knowing the types of technology available, whether there are enough devices to serve every learner, and if device training is necessary and available during instruction.

Technology integration does not mean that hardware, software, and audio-visual projectors, are thrown in the lesson without attachment to

the goal. Instead, technology at a specific time and place in the lesson allows students to connect to the goal. The Florida Center of Instructional Technology (2021) presents five interdependent characteristics that define the movement of technology integration's learning environment. They are (1) active, (2) collaborative, (3) constructive, (4) authentic, and (5) goal directed. The five levels of technology integration are (1) entry, (2) adoption, (3) adaptation, (4) infusion, and (5) transformation (Research TIM for more information).

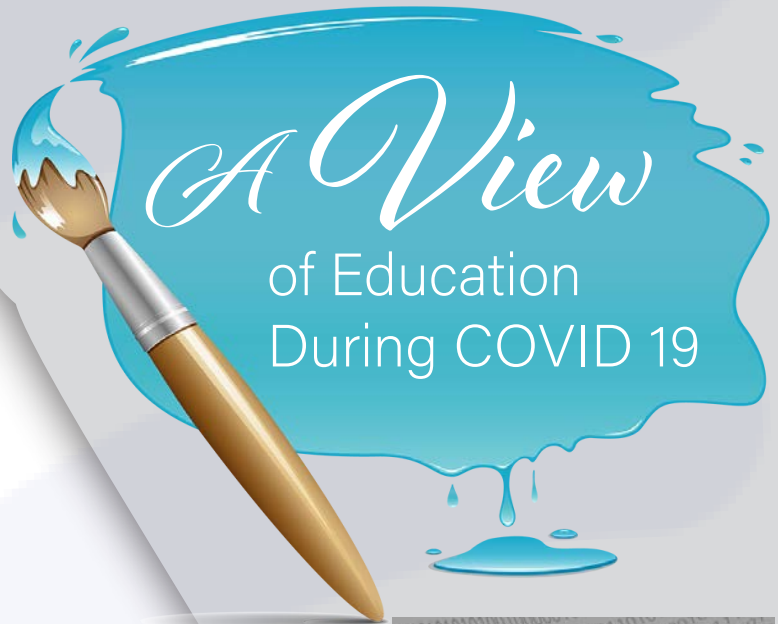
The Technology Integration Matrix (TIM) provides data on the relationship between interdependent characteristics and levels of technology; here is the first pair and an example of implementation. Active integration at the entry-level — students use technology as a tool, but the teacher controls the class explaining hardware and software. The teacher's elaboration curtails students' enthusiasm on terminology while explaining the parts of the computer, the Internet, and the dangers of the Internet. Students are passive, and learning is void.

The second level combines collaboration and adoption. At this point, the teacher continues to use a comfortable teaching method. Students are working together and beginning to adjust to the new learning. They discuss the problem; however, movement and technology use in the classroom is limited.

The third TIM level is constructive learning and adoption. Constructive learning blends the old with the new while encouraging movement when exploring and independently using technology. Instructors and pupils adjust to a new teaching strategy to connect to the lesson, and learners apply prior knowledge to utilize technology as a tool.

The fourth level of the TIM is authentic learning and infusion. The teacher supplies students with several real-world problems, and students choose the technology tool they will utilize to solve the problem. They are working independently and given some freedom to choose their resources.

The fifth TIM level is goal-directed learning and goal-directed transformation. Students choose the technology tools they want to use. They also choose a topic to explore based on the subject matter, plan their action steps, check their progress, and weigh their outcomes. They use critical thinking skills,



performing a sharper directive technology to strategize and scrutinize their projects. At this level, students are responsible for learning and operating independently. It is a choice that each person must value because the student reaps the benefits (Pendoley, 2019).

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The Role of Educators as Innovators

Have you ever walked out of the house, locked the door behind you? You walk up to your car in the driveway, and it hits you. The keys are on the kitchen counter, behind the locked door. Essentially, being human means that we sometimes forget the little things.

As educators, we understand the value of education — empowering future generations. Ensuring students have the skills, resources, and capacity to be successful. Furthermore, we have been teaching the golden rule for centuries, “Treat others as you would like them to treat you,” better known as empathy — the ability to put yourself in someone else’s shoes (Wikipedia Contributors, 2019).

Knowing the meaning of empathy and the value of education does not solve the issue that there is still a gap in *Empathy in Education*. Like most things, this gap exists because we sometimes forget the little things. For example, how do our students define success? What skills, resources, and capacity are employers looking for our students to hold?

Empathy in education is listening with intent, showing humility, and acting with urgency; it is about collaboration and innovation. This article is about creating a balance between human error through collaboration innovation to enhance student preparedness to enter the digital-global workforce.

Listen With Intent

Understanding the shifting needs of the populations we serve requires asking the pressing questions: What

will it take for students to be prepared to pivot to find professional work in this remote and digital economy? How do educators better connect with the workforce to prepare our students? How do we focus on skills and competency development? The impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic magnified the disparities in education and the workforce. In just two months of March and April 2020, more than 36 million Americans lost their jobs, reversing ten years of job gains (Klaus Schwab & Thierry Malleret, 2020). These fundamental issues forged at the intersection of economics, society, and technology have critical implications and are what educators must consider as we prepare our students to enter the workforce.

Consequently, COVID-19 has served as an amplifier, forcing us to recognize and acknowledge the severity of the problems relating to inequality, formerly brushed aside by too many for too long (Klaus Schwab & Thierry Malleret, 2020). The pandemic has triggered an urgency that pushes us to re-imagine formal education focusing on an innovation ecosystem.

Show Humility

Globalization, whose main characteristics are the growing interconnections and integration

between economies, nations, companies, and societies, influences the context in which most people live and work, undoubtedly impacts teaching and learning. Globalization’s root is communication technologies such as unique interest websites, social media, messaging applications, videos, and conferencing systems perpetuating information sharing.

The reality is informal variables found outside the school environment impact teaching and learning within the parameters of formalized schooling. The political climate, industry needs, environmental issues, civil unrest, and community actions all play a role on a school’s campus and classroom. Therefore, educators must reconcile that we cannot prepare our students for success in this heavily technologically reliant and global context alone.

Now more than ever, we must collaborate with our external stakeholders to address the dynamic definition of student success. The formation of public-private partnerships calls for educators to guide the process to solicit workforce needs by partnering with high-industry employers. When we learn directly from future employers what they are looking for in their employees, we can ensure that

the curriculum addresses these needs.

Engaging industry partners in the education process facilitates the curation of authentic relationships. They further empower our students with the competencies and skills to respond to employers' needs - ensuring all stakeholders know that their best interests are met.

Act With Urgency

The solution, of course, cannot be half-baked. What is the point of asking pertinent questions, demonstrating one's collaborative disposition, and after that, doing nothing?

The goal is to align curricula with industry needs

based on the implications of technology and globalization. Education must mirror the real world — students must have the opportunity to enhance skills and deal with real-life situations. Most importantly, educators must have the training, resources, and capacity to facilitate these developments and practical application of schooling to real-life situations and address global challenges.

Jaime Saavedra maintained, "Given the essential role they play, addressing the learning crisis requires supporting teachers, who are the single most important driver of how much students learn in school"

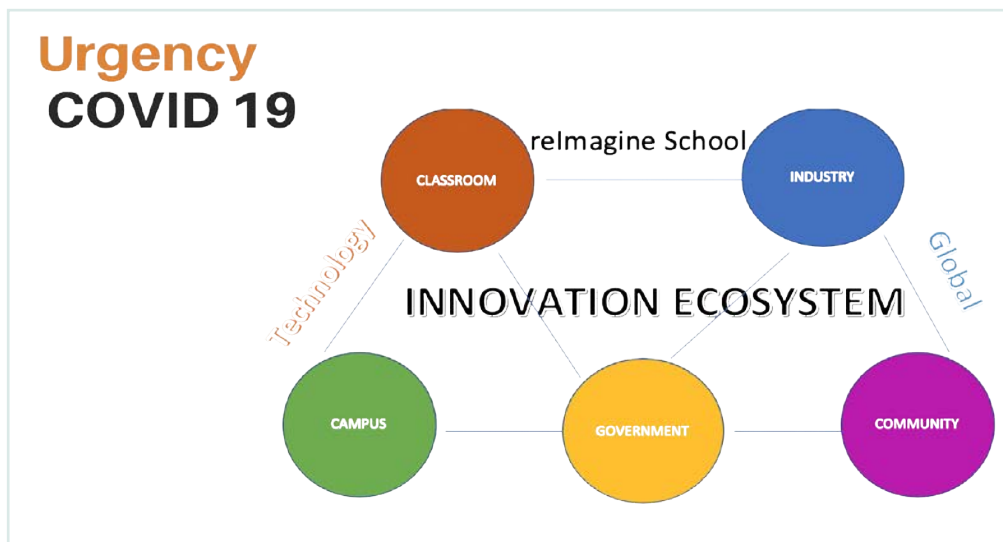
(The World Bank, 2019).

The call for such radical approaches to education requires collaboration and innovation. It is about survival; therefore, things cannot stay the same. There needs to be Empathy in Education to bridge the education disparities and workforce skills gap.

Empathy to listen, especially to our students and industry partners.

Empathy to show humility; to let go of our preconceived beliefs and seek understanding.

Empathy to act with urgency, re-imagine education around an innovation ecosystem and empower educators to act.



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please Keep My Teacher

A prayer for a teacher with a new view of how education has changed under the cloud of COVID from a child who sees a changing dynamic. The one who used to be encouraged by the teacher is now the one who must do the encouraging to keep her teacher from resigning.

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray my teacher You will keep.

Her job is hard, and this is true,
Sometimes I don't know what to do.

To help her keep her happy smile,
that lets me feel like I'm her favorite child.

She tries to make our lessons fun.
In front of a screen — for PE — I can't run.

Inside my house or jump or play,
my daddy is feeling kinda sick today.

And mommy is worried she's getting it too.
The sickness they say that is like the flu.

When it made grandma sick, and she went to heaven,
right on my birthday, (I just turned 7).

So now it's time to read my schoolbook.
It's about a girl just like me who loves to cook.

Helping my mom in the kitchen was fun.
Before the sickness had its run.

I wonder can my teacher see,
the fear I have inside of me.

Please help my teacher Lord, don't let her quit.
Without her there's so much that I will forget.

Does she really know how she can fill up my day?
I feel better just knowing that she is ok.

I wish I could tell her just how much I care.
And my parents are grateful she's there.

Dear Lord please protect her mind, body and soul.
I heard my mom say, 'cause it's taking its toll.

On teachers, they're leaving the jobs that they love.
Because of the stress and the masks and the gloves.

This sickness they call COVID has changed everything.
I pray we're in person by this early Spring.

I want us to all be together again,
hugging and laughing, just me and my friends.

Until then I know I will just have to pray.
For my strong, pretty teacher who's not with me today.

And even if learning is only online,
I still feel her love, it is one of a kind.

I will be a big girl and do all that I can.
And be the best student in all the land.

That will make her job better and then she won't
ask why are we fighting about gloves and a mask?

So, Angels work hard, to see my teacher through.
And I'll keep on praying teacher-especially for you.





Teaching Career Ready Students in a College Readiness Environment

During the pandemic, students were taken from teacher-led instruction to self-paced learning environments including Zoom links, digital learning platforms, and other independent skill enhancing tools. Self-paced learning environments closely resemble postsecondary educational environments in comparison to more traditional primary/secondary learning environments. The pandemic required school districts and educational agencies to implement emergency procedures, policies, and digital technology that had yet to be evaluated.

Massive changes in educational doctrine cause anxiety among school districts leaders, administrators, teachers, and students shifting ideologically and wavering the foundation of the U.S. educational system. Pandemic situations created opportunities to incorporate technological skills and online-based learning environments. Students gained access to computer skills needed to be competitive in a global economy. College and career success initiatives often led by school counselors became secondary to addressing basic and social-emotional needs of students caused by personal illness or the sudden loss of family.

To guide educational organizations during the pandemic, on January 21, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. issued Executive Order 14000, *Supporting the Reopening and Continuing Operation of Schools and Early Childhood Education Providers*, “to ensure that students receive a high-quality education during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to support the safe reopening and continued operation of schools, child care providers, Head Start programs, and institutions of higher education.”

The impact of the pandemic on K–12 student learning was significant, leaving students on average five months behind in mathematics and four months behind in reading by the end of the school year. The pandemic widened preexisting opportunity and achievement gaps, hitting historically disadvantaged students hardest. In math, students in majority Black schools ended the year with six months of unfinished learning, students in low-income schools with seven. High schoolers have become more likely to drop out of school, and high school seniors, especially those from low-income families, are less likely to go on to postsecondary education (Dorn, Hancock, Sarakatsannis, & Viruleg, 2021).

Successful implementation of self-paced learning on a large scale for K-12 learning will require school districts to change from traditional classroom teacher-led instruction to shifting teachers from lecturers to facilitators of content and knowledge. Self-paced learning requires students to own their learning as well as identifying their level of college readiness; this change should be recognized as one of the most historic shifts in the U.S. educational system in the past one hundred years.

School districts across the country sought to accommodate their most vulnerable students by introducing self-paced assignments to fulfill academic requirements. These changes to student learning and teacher instruction presented many challenges to educational organizations and their administrators at every level. There should be consideration for reimagining how K-12 organizations approach preparing their students for postsecondary educational options beyond college readiness. K-12 organizations should consider what changes are necessary for their students to be both career- and college-ready regardless of whether pandemic conditions continue to exist.

Reimagining career readiness within college-ready educational environments

Historically, college-ready environments have supported self-paced learning programs, digital platforms, and instructional support structures designed to assist students with cognitive differences, to mitigate reverse learning classrooms, and to introduce complex content.

Research suggests low postsecondary graduation rates among high school students seeking to complete career readiness graduation

plans. High school graduates who seek to complete college readiness graduation plans often remain unprepared academically for the rigors of postsecondary education. The pandemic affected students who were caregivers, enrolled in dual credit programs, and male students of color; all who statistically dropped sharply with regards to high school graduation rates and college admissions acceptances.

For students, home life during the pandemic was more of a necessity than attending class virtually and completing the needed assignments to obtain high school diplomas. A more hybrid-type of classroom is needed to ensure continued support for career and college readiness environments, which are necessary for students to become globally competitive.

As school districts and campuses begin to reevaluate

For many students, COVID-19 has raised new barriers to getting a degree and made old barriers that much harder to overcome. For those already pursuing a degree, COVID-19 has also taken a heavy toll – financially, academically, and emotionally. Yet early evidence also shows disparities in these impacts for students who faced the greatest hurdles to entering and staying in school before the pandemic, especially those students from historically underserved, marginalized groups.

how the data-informed decision making during the recent shutdowns impacted return to in-person learning, the influx of technology should be further integrated into classrooms bringing higher chances for successfully preparing all students for postsecondary options regardless of socioeconomic status or demographic background.

Research suggests multiple deficiencies exist in the academic growth of K-12 students which have been exacerbated among students

of color, English language learners, and students living in low-income communities. The pandemic has caused additional barriers to college access among these groups of students including declining enrollment rates at postsecondary institutions.

As K-12 organizations continue to be under-resourced and under-staffed with respect to implementing college readiness initiatives, implementing career-ready instruction within post-pandemic environments

continues to be challenging for administrators.

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Moving Forward: From Voices Heard & Lessons Learned

READY, SET, GO!

COVID-19 disproportionately and negatively impacted rural communities and children from low-income, minority families (Cohen, 2021). Preparing to change dynamics and move forward in education, we must embrace the lessons learned and not wait for “business as usual.” Listening and learning from leaders, teachers, and scholars is needed to discover best practices and stakeholder concerns moving forward. Members in the NSPDK Southwest region were invited to participate in a survey to ascertain perspectives and considerations on moving forward. Seventeen members chose to participate. Of those participating, eight were currently teaching or in approved positions; two represented active administrators; one represented retired and substituting in a school district assignment; two represented retired educators currently working as professors in higher education; and four represented non-working, retired

educators.

From survey responses, an analysis is provided in connection with strategies learned from current literature.

Question: When schools shut down at the beginning of COVID 19, there were lessons that all had to learn about technology in the hands of all students. Educators were trained to teach online. How did that change your teaching?

Fifty-three percent said they quickly adapted and had no problems, while 40% had to be trained on the use of technology. ...

Question: To ensure improved student achievement in the months and years to come, I believe parents and students should take what measures?

Parents seeking a ‘seat at the table’ must communicate and collaborate with all administrators and teachers to have their voice, perspectives and expectations represented in the learning process. ... **Acknowledging the assistance has been offered and offering no**

excuses is key in the relationship. ... The parent should **visit the campus** when activities are scheduled, **attend parent conferences**, and **teach the child how to set academic goals**. ...

Question: To ensure improved student achievement in the months and years to come, I believe teachers and administrators should take what measures?

The survey indicated teachers and administrators should **first prioritize and implement actions from lessons learned during the pandemic**. ... **Assessing the learning gaps and providing immediate interventions and research-based strategies** to help teachers improve their instructional strategies. Helping teachers improve might require extra training, which could include requesting **funding for professional development and online pedagogy**. ... Concern further exists to **ensure immediate, corrective discipline and the implementation of consequences**. ... Providing a stable environment and creating programs instill self-worth achievable through the **implementation of SEL (social,**

emotional learning) and SEE (social emotional educating), (Ross & Hardway 2021), which aides in meeting the needs of the whole child.

It is important for **administrators to set expectations that all employees positively and actively communicate** with ALL parents/guardians, and students. **Forming listening groups is helpful in the communication processes.** ... Participants also believed administrators should create opportunities/sessions to **teach parents different topics, via zoom, podcasts, or in person so they can better assist their child** at home.

Summary

Efficiency For All: Planning, pivoting, and persevering are key to moving forward as we change dynamics to impact the future in leading and living through a pandemic. The pandemic taught us to continue adjusting and customizing (Cohen, 2021) how we provide necessary education to our scholars. Educational systems must invest in tools that provides streamlined coursework, options to access teachers, advisors, and counselors in a more robust style. From the survey, a common theme was efficiency for all, which meant as some stated, relevant lessons for students and user-friendly management systems. Reduction of paperwork to reduce stress and repetitive reports were also cited as topics to explore for efficiency. Moreover, it is wise to establish best practices for

communication with internal and external audiences.

Improvement of preparedness: The task is recovering from disruptions caused by the pandemic by supporting COVID illnesses/absences and designing systems of flexibility in scheduling with the ability to continue education without prolonging teaching which causes gaps (Wolf, 2021). Literature suggests more sophisticated digital delivery of education, fast and secure digital remote, digital access, and the education of all stakeholders on cybersecurity (Wolf, 2021). Preparing students to move forward has been difficult while administrators and teachers seek strategies to increase student achievement and somehow 'catch them up' from falling behind due to numerous school closings during the pandemic. Students are encouraged to be involved in the arts and leadership roles, set goals, increase their amount of time studying outside of class, and take responsibility for their learning. Learning organizational skills and communicating their desire to be successful improves academic achievement. Further, students should be persistent about getting better and use all resources available for learning.

Antifragile leaders, teachers, and students - Building a culture of resiliency: Weekly news reports include the number of administrators and teachers leaving the classrooms before the end of the semester or school year. To improve retention of educators, social, emotional, and instructional classroom needs

must be addressed, and solutions implemented. Key repetitive themes are flexibility, patience, collaboration, motivation, and consistency. One respondent wrote, 'resiliency' in response to the question of lessons learned in moving forward. As schools, parents, and communities work together to move forward, there must be a focus on hiring antifragile leaders (Taleb, 2014), those proven as resilient leaders who bounce back, disrupt the norm, invite innovative thinking, and create risk-taking environments to combat status quo, mediocrity, and failure. Building a culture of resiliency is further enhanced by building strong relationships between school and home, intentionally ensuring all classrooms transform, changing into safe, inclusive spaces. Education is everchanging and change is inevitable; therefore, educators must be adaptive learners, utilizing new, innovative strategies and technology tools. Moving forward, public Pre-K-12 schools thriving, and surviving will make informed changes to policies and practices, re-evaluate teaching and learning, and restructure operations such as grading, school hours, and essential standards.

Editor's Note: For Dr. Ross' full article, go to bit.ly/Krinon22-4117.

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The Pursuit of Excellence – Challenges to Fulfill: Finding Normalcy During Abnormal Times

The pandemic years, beginning March 2020, have been one for the records and have changed the dynamics of education! Students, teachers, and parents across the United States and the world are seeking ways to find some sense of normalcy or stability two years into a global pandemic; all are in pursuit of excellence in education. Our challenge, as educators, is to fulfill needs that will go beyond these pandemic years.

The dynamics of education have changed with the pandemic. Classroom teaching was once the only acceptable model for education. The pandemic years have proven that our classrooms are outside the four walls of any building. Classrooms are found in cars with kids searching for WIFI and

at home along with traditional brick and mortar classroom education. The years have brought with it a new normal with more challenges going forward. Students are in pursuit of excellence, adjusting to a new normal amid the chaos, "From vaccination and mask mandates to mental health and curriculum protests, students in America are seeking a new normal amid the ongoing chaos created by the pandemic."

So normal has changed as has the dynamics, the changing aspects of education. And we are embracing the changing dynamics — making students' school experiences as normal as possible.

Even though no one was ready for the pandemic years, the pursuit of excellence in education did not stop for a

raging global pandemic that has had an adverse effect on kids and their families. Many students and their families have had to deal with loss of jobs, businesses, and homes. A record number of families have been impacted by hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19 or complications. To add to the confusion and challenges, the pandemic has brought out bickering about what should and should not be taught in school, low educator moral, and a host of unforeseen challenges.

The challenge that we must fulfill as educators is to help students feel normal and understand and embrace the changes of the times. We have to help them understand why social distancing — give me 6 feet — is important; teach them why COVID protocols

are in place, explain COVID testing, and comfort them when they bring letters home about COVID exposure. Educators must also face the challenge (pro and con) of multiple debates about the merits of mask mandates for schools!

What we once considered normal no longer exists, but we must continue to ensure excellence for students. The one great thing about the pandemic years is that it has proven the resilience of educators and students. It shows the resilience of our youth, our educators, and the desire to excel in learners of all ages. Normal is now teachers teaching two classes in one setting because a colleague is out ill. Is it challenging? Yes! Just imagine having to teach 60 kids in classrooms designed for 30! Teachers make it happen!

To fulfill that pursuit of excellence, we now meet via video chats/Zoom meetings. Is it less effective? No, it is a way to meet our new challenges and ensure excellence. Many parents have chosen to homeschool their children due to these years of uncertainty. Teachers are making sure those learners get the best education possible despite no face-to-face contact.

The thing that was most striking to me, as a retired educator, is how my grandchildren (and kids all over the world) made lemonade out of the lemons these past years have given them. When

my grandkids were exposed to COVID following their Christmas Break this year (2021), their schools stepped up to make sure they had online access to all their course work. That is an example of the pursuit of excellence; the school made sure that no child is left behind due to things out of their power to control. They can control their grades, they can stay on top of their assignments, they cannot control who they encounter that may have COVID. I salute the teachers and administrators and all who have the tasks, in all educational capacities, to make learning and the love of learning normal for students.

Unfortunately, the new normal, with its challenges, also includes voices of dissent: teachers being called glorified babysitters! To those people we say, as Eric Stinton, "On top of everything else, schools happen to provide childcare that teaches kids how to read, write, do math and understand the world around them." The importance difference between being a babysitter and childcare, according to Stinton, is that schools actually provide care for our students, even in these abnormal, challenging times. In our school district, our superintendent and school board, teachers, and administrators, and all in contact with students, try to make sure that kids are well fed, engaged

in learning, and that their emotional needs are met.

Another challenge for teachers during this global pandemic, is "teachers across the country reported feeling demoralized and emotionally depleted." Educators are attentive to the needs of students, but they also need to take care of their own emotional and physical needs. The new normal, the new challenge, brings new needs and added stress to educators, as well as parents and students.

Despite all the stress of these years of global pandemic, we are managing to make what would be considered abnormal, normal. Educators will continue, even when our profession is considered less than, to pursue excellence for students of all ages! We thank God for the resiliency to stand strong through the challenges of these abnormal years.

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WASTING TIME WITH MICRO TIMEWASTERS

Very early in school, we learned how to tell time using a clock. But how many of us are taught to recognize things that waste our time? While we notice how and when we waste time on a large scale, especially when we've spent an hour on social media or watching TV for three hours, these aren't the only ways we waste time. We waste time in dozens of ways each day, and many of these time wasters aren't always obvious. Nevertheless, the time can really add up over the course of a day, a week, or a decade.

Don't let your time just be frittered away! Imagine how much you could accomplish in that time! What could you do that really matters to you?

Today's Challenge: Guard your time from the Micro Timewasters with These Strategies:

1. **Have a phone charger with you.** How many times in a week do you need a phone charger and have to go into the other room to fetch it? Have multiple chargers and keep them handy in the locations you spend the most time. It's not just the time it takes to get the charger, it's the disruption to your thoughts and workflow. Plus, once you leave the room to locate your charger, who knows what else will grab your attention along the way!
2. **Internet speed.** How much time do you spend waiting for a webpage to load? Or a movie to stream? You might not think you're waiting for very long, but it all adds up. If your internet is noticeably slow, your time is being wasted.

3. **Checking e-mail.** It just takes 10 seconds to check email, right? Hardly. That quick look alters your concentration, and there's no telling how far down the rabbit hole you're going to go. You might open three emails, respond to one of them, and then remember that you have another email to answer. What if the email is a link to a video of a cat chasing a dog? There's no telling when you'll get back on track.
4. **Looking for "lost" things.** This could be your keys, purse, wallet, a pen, your shoes, jacket, umbrella, or anything else you've temporarily misplaced. Keep the essentials in a particular place. For example, never put your car keys anywhere but in the decorative bowl by the front door. Your pen should be on your desk. Your shoes should be where your shoes belong if they're not on your feet.

After you've eliminated the big wasters of time in your life, start looking at the tiny wasters of time. **You'll quickly realize that the impact on your life isn't so tiny.**

Every disruption has a greater impact than just the amount of time the disruption robs from you. Consider the loss of focus and momentum. It takes time to get back on track mentally after you've scoured the house or your workplace for a pencil.

Guard your time with your life — the life you really desire!

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Technology Infused Classrooms

Photo by Thomas Park on Unsplash



With the sudden closing of brick-and-mortar schools due to the rampant spread of COVID-19, virtual learning challenged educators to be innovative instantaneously. Teachers began re-evaluating the teaching practices that were previously unquestioned, experimenting with innovative technologies, and learning how to engage students in a virtual setting.

With the reopening of schools, a year and a half later, educators reflected on the impact of technology integration. Should technology infused classrooms become a thing of the past? While some may focus on the standards students have not yet mastered during their virtual learning experience, this author highlights the learning and positive impact of a technology infused classroom.

The pandemic forced teachers to use technology, more than some had ever thought to use, to deliver instruction and engage students. Educators began to re-examine pedagogy and best practices in a now virtual setting. They simplified communication and gauged understanding using interactive technologies, such as Pear Deck and Nearpod. In addition, education technology provided a way for educators to provide constant and differentiated instruction and mastery-based assessment. As a result, students' engagement and ownership of their learning increased.

These free web-based tools will help you engage students and support technology integration in your classroom.

Mote (justmote.me)

This Chrome extension is a two-way communication system that enables teachers to give audio feedback. The extension can be used from any Google-enabled device by downloading the application.

Dotstorming.com This online collection of tools encourages collaborative brainstorming, planning and decision making.

Videoant (ant.umn.edu) This web-based video annotation tool, created by the University of Minnesota College of Education and Human Development, allows students to comment on videos as they watch.

Blooket.com This compilation of trivia and review games is sure to be a class favorite. Blooket allows teachers to create review games or use ones that are preloaded.

Classkick.com This web-based program allows students and teachers to markup PDFs with text, audio, stickers, and more. The program allows teachers to see students' screens and provide immediate feedback.

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Where Do We Go From Here?



Educators must stand
provide meaningful e
authentic opportuniti
their knowledge in ne
that they grow up to
real-world problems
community.



and resolute in the quest to
experiences by creating
es for all students to apply
non-traditional ways so
be adults who can solve
for themselves and their

As a nation, we must take a reflective look at all that has been exposed since 2020. 2020 ripped the bandages from the racially inflicted wounds that have grown infected by the actions that have plagued America for centuries. We continue to navigate through the unrest that communities are facing across our nation due to the profound injustice that continues to stifle the Black community. The reluctance to directly address race-related issues has resulted in a lack of connection, loss of progress, diminished potential, and trust. Systematic racism, police brutality, educational inequities and the financial hardships that have been exposed by a global pandemic have served to be more than our country could deny. Black people across this nation laid their pain bare for the world to see and now demand change as they protest and question politicians about their commitment to Black America.

Through our collective work, we must demand change for children in our continued fight for justice. The remote and hybrid learning models that schools were thrust into has shown how unequipped schools are to teach in our technologically based world. The lack of access to modern technology and unstable Wi-Fi has been an anchor weighing down many children in urban areas. Educators will have to shift their thinking as we work to ensure that students are receiving a quality education. Whether children are learning in-person or in a virtual environment they must have access to technology that allows for them to soar to new academic heights and compete successfully and with confidence on the global stage. They must also have teachers who are able to create learning objectives that meet the needs of every student and monitor their progress so that they are not left behind because of academic chaos.

In education, the inequities in Black communities have historically proven to be astounding. The country has been exposed to the true meaning of digital divide, and the academic gap between the haves and the have-nots has grown even wider and is more prominent in Black communities. This is all happening while a new Secretary of Education adjusts to leading the charge for equitable change on a national level. Decades ago, Shor and Freire (1987) stated that education is political in nature regardless of whether or not the teacher and student are aware.

In our current state of affairs, it seems as though everyone has become cognizant of the political nature of education, and our Black children pay the price for poor leadership. We must move from being culturally responsive to culturally conscious in schools to ensure that equity lives in the forefront of our minds. We must shift the decision-making process from who does this benefit to who will this decision leave out or leave behind. Educators must stand resolute in the quest to provide meaningful experiences by creating authentic opportunities for all students to apply their knowledge in non-traditional ways so that they grow up to be adults who can solve real-world problems for themselves and their community.

To say the least, measuring academic outcomes during this time has proven challenging. There must be a shift in how educators confirm that students are learning and can apply new concepts and think critically. Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) will need to shift to being more individualized and focus on the outcome of the student and not the inputs of the teacher to identify true academic success and ensure that learning opportunities are not rote in nature. An individualized SLO can promote the opportunity for teachers to

create a roadmap for learning with each student and can serve as a self-governing process with accountability tied into the monitoring of student progress and an equitable transformation around student achievement. This individualized process can set the student up for success by identifying the end goal up front and sharing how together the teacher and student will meet academic objectives. In this manner, the teacher serves as the tour guide and facilitator for the engaging learning journey that is to take place. By way of the curriculum, the final destination is reached by the mastery of a specific standard as demonstrated through the creative application of new knowledge.

A more individualized focus on each student, a firm commitment to technology and advocating for equitable practices can move the needle for black students in academic settings as early as Pre-K. The state of Black America is depending on our collective ability to advocate for change through policy development that impacts the education of our youth as they are our future. This pandemic has pressed on education at all sides. Educators, parents and students have all been placed in a stressful situation as they try to provide some level of social emotional care, normalcy and

education to children.

Therefore, this is no time to play small. We have the ability to support communities and impact countless lives: 2022 requires moving from words to action in a strategic manner that solidifies our commitment and unwavering stance on the issues that affect Black children. Through the design and use of outcomes driven logic models, we can drive this work on a national level to amplify the need to dismantle racism and fight injustice in schools. We must be the "bridge over troubled waters" for our youth so they are afforded opportunities for upward mobility.

So where do we go from here? We go farther than we ever have before, and we go together in solidarity.

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Guiding Parents Through the Mazy Labyrinth of ADHD

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, commonly known as ADHD, is something that is genuinely concerning to many parents. Allen & Cowdery (2015) state that ADHD is difficult to define but it is characterized by a short attention span accompanied by excessive activity (p.175). The purpose in writing this article is two-fold. First, to provide parents with

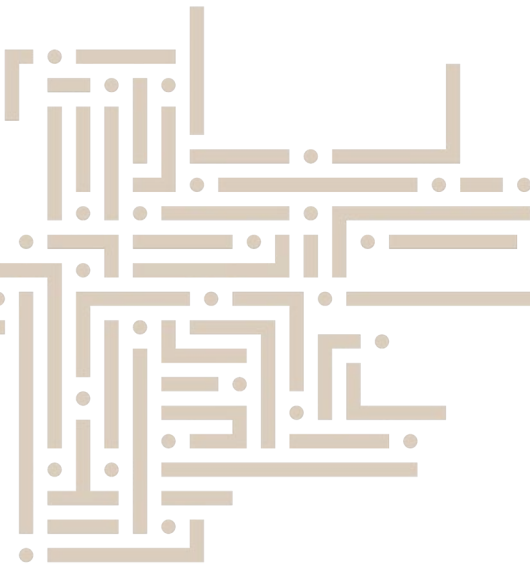
support in entering the world of special education through information on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Second, to assist parents in appropriating early intervention resources in improving the chances of success of their at-risk child.

Risk Factors for ADHD

Risk factors for ADHD may include blood relatives, such as a parent or sibling, with ADHD or

another mental health disorder, which makes life difficult for children who often struggle in the classroom with academic failure and poor self-esteem (Mayo, n.d.). These problems sometimes persist throughout their educational experience and beyond.

The Center for Disease Control Prevention, (n.a.), using data from parent surveys and healthcare claims, has estimated



the number of children ever diagnosed with ADHD is 6.1 million (9.4%) in 2016. This number includes 388,000 children aged 2-5 years; 2.4 million children aged 6-11 years; and 3.3 million children aged 12-17 years. Boys are more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than girls (12.9 compared to 5.6%). These are staggering numbers at best.

Behaviors Associated with Children with ADHD

Children with ADHD display atypical types of behavior, such as social and emotional, which may include impulsivity. In literacy, they may have difficulty with the formation of grammatical forms and sounds. In the cognitive domain, they may have problems following three-part commands and problems with abstract thoughts. In physical development and health, they

may have poor balance and faulty spatial orientation (Allen & Cowdery, 2015, pp. 181, 184 & 186). Every child with ADHD does not exhibit the same behaviors; therefore, it is imperative that parents seek professional help for their children with atypical behaviors in these domains.

Strategies for Parents to Academically Assist their Children with ADHD

The first step for parents who suspect their child of having ADHD should start with a professional evaluation and diagnosis. Once ADHD is confirmed, these parents need to secure an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from the child's school that includes school services and specific accommodations for their child's needs. Miller (2021) states that an IEP is given to children with ADHD if their condition, or additional conditions, impact their ability to learn. She also advocates that parents of children with ADHD should prepare their child for this IEP transition. Miller's website in the reference section offers some of the best tips and resources possible for parents as they work with their children who have ADHD.

Conclusion

While parents face great challenges in working with a

child with ADHD, they have significant help as there are resources available to assist them in this effort. One of the most valuable resources in the mitigation of ADHD is the Individualized Education Plan. Children's ADHD's educational path may be different from their non-ADHD classmates' paths in attaining their goals; however, this does not mean that their goals are unattainable. Parents must be vigilant and seek every opportunity to motivate and inspire their children for academic success.

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Things are Changing in Education.

What Can We Do?



When I was a young teacher
If we had chalk, an eraser, and a chalk board,
We felt blessed.

Things have changed. What can we do?

Today, classes are filled with smart boards and computers.

Students are using smart phones, I-phones, Facebook and the Internet to get longed for information.

Things are changing; what can we do?

Emphasis is on STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

First graders can explain the eco-system.

They are learning more math in first grade than some people have in a lifetime.

Things are changing; what can we do?

Since the pandemic, students have a choice of face-to-face learning or learning virtually.

If they don't want to go to school, they can opt out, stay home and let the computer teach them.

Since the pandemic, people are afraid to sub because of underlying health conditions.

So, they stay home and long for the time that they can see students face-to-face again.

Things are changing; what can we do?

We tune in to YouTube and Meta (Facebook) to see what students are doing.

We don't know how to get on TikTok and become a part of the challenges that are issued all of the time.

We watch the news, and we see parents fighting school boards because they don't want their children to wear masks.

They don't want their children to be vaccinated – which the CDC says will protect them from the virus.

We have learned two new Greek terms: Delta and Omicron.

Never did we think that they would be associated with life or death.

Things are changing; what can we do?

Finally, everyone is hoping for the virus to die instead of killing us.

We long for the days when Johnny would show up late for school--- at least he was there in person.

We long for the days when parents were more concerned about their children's grades rather what they are wearing on their faces.

Yes, things are changing. What can we do?

We can encourage our teachers to hang in there because things are going to get better.

The polio virus during the 1950s and early 1960s was controlled and eventually COVID 19 will be too.

Things are changing, and we can still do?

Louise Smith, Beta Alpha,
Southwest Region, Shreveport, LA



2 Questions Give You All the Perspective You Need

It is easy to get bogged down with all the available self-help information. You might be surprised at how much you can benefit from asking yourself just a couple of questions! Your answers will help you determine if you are on track to reaching your goals and enable you to make an action plan that will get you there in record time. Ask yourself these two questions:

1

“If an invisible person followed you around all day, what would they see? Would they see you wasting a lot of time? Would they see you working at your goals? Would they see someone that is just going through the motions?”

- Our lives are the result of the actions that we take each day. Are you taking actions that move you forward to the future you desire or are you engaged in time-wasting, worthless activity?
- What would that invisible person logically conclude about you, your life, and your future?

2

“If you lived that average day, every day, for the next 5 years, what is the logical outcome? If you kept living your average day over and over, where is your life likely to end up?”

Now compare that logical conclusion with the life you would like to have. How close are they?

- Are you likely to end up where you want to be financially? Are you currently taking consistent action to have the financial life you desire?
- Are you likely to have the body that you want? Are you eating nutritiously and exercising regularly? Or are you waiting to start tomorrow, or Monday, or the first of the month, or the first of the year? Sculpting your ideal body will take a certain number of days, so you might as well start today.
- Are you likely to be enjoying the type of relationships you desire? If you want to meet your soulmate, what have you done to acquaint yourself with new people in the last week?
- Are you likely to be advancing in the career you seek? For example, based on your performance over the last year, do you think it is probable that you will get that plant manager position anytime soon? Are you any closer to having that small business running profitably?
- Now you can make some reasonable plans and create some good habits. What do you need to do on a consistent basis to achieve the life you hope for? If you want to lose ten inches off your waist and weigh 75 lbs less, then your daily actions need to reflect that.

People fail to end up where they wish to be for two reasons:

1. They have no idea where they are going. You cannot get there if you do not know the destination. If you do not have a plan, you must live by default, sitting around until something goes wrong and then spending your energy fixing the issue. Alternatively, if you spend your energy driving towards something, you will eventually get there.

2. They do not do the things each day that will create the life they want. Despite what the gurus seem to claim, you cannot wish your way to success. Success is the result of making positive decisions and taking actions that reflect those decisions.

Ask yourself the two questions above. You might be shocked when you really look at your average day and realize where you are likely to end up because of doing those same things every day. It does not take a lot of action to be highly successful, but it does take consistent action.

For instance, imagine if you did one pushup every day this week and added one pushup a week. In 5 years, you would be doing 250 pushups a day and you would never struggle for a minute.

In the same way, establishing daily habits that move you forward toward achieving your goals will result in your success. So which habit will you start today?

Every Day Matters!

*Linda D. Lewis
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Affirmation: My Mind Is Nourished By What I Feed My Body

My state of mind, spiritually and physically, is directly correlated to the state of my body. I am careful to feed my body the proper nutrition in order to enjoy a healthy mind.

Food is my source of nourishment; therefore, I eat foods that are loaded with vitamins and nutrients. I limit my intake of foods that, although delicious, have no value to my health. *My diet is rich in fruits and vegetables that provide long-term benefits.*

I enjoy high levels of energy because I eat foods that are packed with power. I can stay awake and think on my toes because of the choices I make in my diet. My eating habits set me up for success.

I am careful with what I feed my spirit through my eyes and ears. I avoid negative conversations at all costs. My ears are inclined to conversations of substance and value. I only participate in discussions that build me up.

I feed my eyes the beauty of nature to enhance my inner sense of peace. I turn my eyes away from violence and wrongdoing to preserve my spirit. I have the strength to turn off the television or walk away from a negative situation.

What I allow into my body makes its way to my mind and heart and transforms my actions. *I only lend my eyes and ears to things that align with what I want to become.*

Today, I evaluate the input of my diet and habits. I choose to make the necessary changes that place me on the path to success.

Self-Reflection Questions:

1. How can I improve my diet?
2. What am I feeding my spirit?
3. Do the things I participate in align with my values?

Christella Cain
Delta Beta Chapter,
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The Art of Healing Ourselves: A Mental Health School Social Worker's Perspective

When I started writing this article, I had lost two brothers to death within six months. My oldest brother to cancer and my middle brother to cardiac arrest while sitting in his car. Little did I know two months later I would lose my precious 94-year-old mother, whom I cared for in my home for eight years. Three major losses within eight months seems unbearable. I wanted to write this article because so many have lost loved ones over the past two years during this COVID-19 Pandemic. The death toll alone from COVID-19 is estimated to be around 930,811 (CDC, 2022).

Due to the pandemic, many loved ones were buried in non-traditional ceremonies. Funerals were held at graveside or funeral homes. We missed the spirit-filled churches that are part of our cultural and extended families to help in the grieving process. For many have not been able to gather in homes and embraced the human touch of consolation or to fellowship through a repast. This has interrupted the grief and bereavement process for many of us.

I wanted to include grief and bereavement because both encompass a range of feelings from deep sadness to anger. Grief is defined as a reaction to any form of loss. Bereavement is a type of grief involving the death of a loved one. The process of adapting to a significant loss can vary significantly from one person to another, depending on the individual's background, beliefs, and relationship to what was lost (Good Therapy, 2022).

Grief is not limited to feelings of sadness, it can also involve guilt, yearning, anger, and or regret. Emotions can be confusing often making them surprising in their level of intensity. One person may find themselves grieving a painful relationship while another may mourn a loved one who died from cancer and yet feel relief that the person is no longer suffering.

As educators, we often ponder if we should share with our students that we have experienced a loss or death. Many of our students think of us as "Superheroes." Do we want to continue to wear that mask and superficial costume?

The focus for several years has been to teach our students about Social Emotional Learning skills (SEL). One of the components of SEL is teaching empathy. Empathy is defined as having the ability to understand and sense other people's emotions. It is the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling. Sharing with students about your loss or grief at an age-appropriate level, while being careful not to go into detail or complicated explanations, can help children develop empathy.

Researchers and Psychologists have outlined various models of grief. In 1969, psychiatrist Elisabeth Kubler-Ross introduced what became known as the "Five Stages of Grief." The stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. This model was originally developed to illustrate the process of bereavement. However, Kubler-Ross adapted the model to account for any type of grief. If you are experiencing any of these emotions following a loss, it may be helpful to understand that your reaction is natural and that hopefully you will heal in time.

It is important to know that not everyone who grieves goes through all these stages, and that is okay. Contrary to popular belief, you do not have to go through each stage to heal. In fact, some people resolve their grief without going through any of these stages. If you do go through these stages of grief, you may not experience them in a neat, sequential order; so, don't worry about what you "should" be feeling or which stage you supposed to be experiencing. When you are grieving, it is more important than ever to take care of yourself. The stress of a major loss can quickly deplete your energy and emotional reserves. Looking after your physical and emotional needs will help you get through this challenging time.

Taking Care of Yourself as You Grieve

1. Draw comfort from your faith. If you follow a religious tradition, embrace the comfort its mourning ritual can provide. If you are questioning your faith, talk to your clergy

2. Face your feelings. You can try to suppress your grief, but you cannot avoid it forever. To heal, you must acknowledge the pain. Unresolved grief can lead to complications such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and health problems.

3. Express your feelings in a tangible, creative way. If you are not able to talk about your loss with others, it helps to write in a journal or create a scrapbook.

4. Try to maintain your hobbies and interests. There is comfort in routine and getting back to the activities that bring you joy and connect you to others who can help you come to terms with your loss and aid in the healing process.

5. Do not let anyone tell you how to feel, and do not tell yourself how to feel. Your grief is your own, and no one can tell you when it is time to "move on" or "get over it." Let yourself feel without embarrassment or judgement. It is okay to be angry, to cry out, or not. It is also okay to laugh, to find moments of joy, and to let go when you are ready.

6. Look after your physical health. The mind and body are connected. When you feel healthy physically, you will be better able to cope emotionally.

7. Seek a therapist or grief counselor if your grief feels like too much to bear. Find a mental health professional with experience in grief counseling

8. Beware of the use of social media. Social media can be useful in letting others know about your loss and reaching

out for support. However, it can attract internet trolls who post inappropriate, insensitive, or even abusive messages. Limit your social media to closed groups rather than public postings that can be commented on by anyone.

*Resources: Center for disease Control and Prevention, COVID Data Tracker. Atlanta, GA US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2022, February 20. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covic-data-tracker>; Good Therapy (2022). Retrieved from: <https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/issues/grief>; Kubler-Ross, E.: *On death and dying*. Macmillan Publishing Company Inc., 1969; Kubler-Ross, E, Kessler D, 2005: *On grief and grieving: Finding the meaning of grief through the five stages of loss*; Worden, J. W., 2009. *Grief counseling and grief therapy: A handbook for the mental health practitioner, Fourth Edition*, Springer, N.Y.)*

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WHAT IF YOU WANT TO BE POSITIVE BUT YOUR NEGATIVES GET IN THE WAY?

COVID-19, like the hurricanes that struck at the same time, left in its path a whirlwind of emotional destruction. Illness, death, loss of a job, housing, or isolation have left many people feeling depressed or anxious. Do not despair. There are natural strategies for coping that should be a part of everybody's self-care toolkit for basic healthy living. Seek counseling when the levels of sensitivity and severity reach unreasonable proportions and the duration of your negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors advance to the point that your daily ability to function is impaired (Amwell, 2022). Short talk therapy sessions can be productive while a call to the suicide prevention hotline (1-800-273-TALK) can be lifesaving. Make the calls if you must, but also examine the natural strategies. Help yourself and those within your socio-emotional sphere by rewiring your brain with patterns of thinking that will improve your mood and the mood of those around you (Amwell, 2022). The beginning of any self-initiated change is taking stock of where you are on the self-care spectrum. Determine your strengths, weaknesses, and sources of stress. Is it poor health, too



Self-Care Toolkit	
1	Take stock of where you are
2	Set goals
3	Look for coping solutions; include your support group
4	Eat a proper diet
5	Exercise
6	Rest
7	Find relaxing “go to” activities
8	Keep a positive narrative using sayings, lyrics, scriptures
9	Develop your spiritual self: prayer, meditation, mindfulness the arts, writings, nature
10	Be grateful

many responsibilities, isolation, finances, your dealings with others, or a lack of time for yourself? Acknowledge how you are feeling (Levine, 2004). Keep a journal, and it will help you identify patterns of things that trigger you. Then consider some solutions. You can turn another “... *Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*” (Vorst, 1987) into a day in which you calmly cope.

Next, seek out positive people or groups from among your family, friends, social workers, financial advisors, health-care professionals, religious leaders, and sorors. Others can provide you with needed support, help relieve your feelings of isolation and help you find solutions. If you are not already overwhelmed, you may also find joy in helping others find solutions (Levine, 2004).

Continue your perusal through your self-care toolkit. Look at your diet. Is it life enhancing or life upending? A 2012 study reported in the *Journal of Public Health* indicated that teens on a junk food diet were 51% more likely to suffer from depression after eating a diet of junk food than their peers who did not. Junk food has more unhealthy fats that cause inflammation and more additives and enticing flavors that cause addictions. Your mind and body can only be as healthy as the food you feed them. Eat balanced meals that improve your mind and mood. Proteins produce dopamine and norepinephrine that improve motivation and concentration. Salmon, halibut, chicken, turkey and grass-fed beef, yogurt, and eggs supply protein. Complex carbohydrates such as sweet

potatoes, rolled oats, beans, and quinoa increase serotonin, the “happy hormone”. Dark leafy vegetables, peppers, and citrus fruit supply Vitamin C and antioxidants that support the nervous system and brain health. A lack of potassium will cause fatigue and decreased brain function; apricots and sun-dried tomatoes are high in potassium and so are bananas. A lack of magnesium will cause fatigue and nervousness; try some Swiss Chard, almonds, sunflower seeds, or raisins. A lack of Vitamin D may cause Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), which aggravates depression in the fall and winter (Guo Q, Sun P, & Li L, 2018). The first remedy is the source, natural sunlight; just do not overdo it with too many ultraviolet rays. Avoid flour-based and processed food; or

sugar-based beverages. Flush yourself daily with 6-8 glasses of water and avoid abusive substances.

There are other natural ways to improve your mood. Many people use prayer. Consider also that brain scans show that meditation breaks the connection between the two regions of the brain that cause anxiety and stress. Mindfulness is a kind of meditation that encourages you to focus on the present moment and your breathing. It takes the focus away from your problems and encourages you to ruminate less. Help yourself avoid the “fight or flight” response by slowly inhaling a few times. Take twice as long to exhale allowing your serotonin to increase. Likewise, include exercise – especially yoga. Exercise will release serotonin and improve your mood as well as your body.

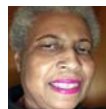
Another way to help yourself is to get proper rest. However, during your waking hours, according to UCLA psychiatrist, Kristen Thompson, you should find relaxing activities that you can go to and express your interests, uniqueness, and imagination. Savor each sip of hot coffee, play with a pet, listen to music, write a poem, or go for a walk. Decide how many pleasurable simple things you want to find during the day for which you can be grateful. Use your five

senses. Acknowledge a beautiful smile or a wonderful scent from the garden. If you missed your bus, do not overlook the fact that it was great catching up with a former friend whom you would have missed had you caught the bus. Look up and see the rainbow. You owe it to yourself to challenge negative thoughts and break the negative grip. Ask yourself, what benefit will come from the time I spend on detrimental thoughts? What is another way I can look at this (Theses, 2021)? You can think yourself into a drama or a comedy. Flip the script and change the narrative. Find “go to” maxims, lyrics, or scriptures that you can post or access that will quickly address each of your triggers.

Self-check yourself not only for proper nutrition, exercise, and rest, but also for spirituality. Keep a prayer life, meditation-mindfulness, the arts, writings, or nature. Move naturally away from storms and negativity to a higher plane of life — and be grateful that you can “Live in the Sunshine”.

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“A ‘Second Wave’ of mental health devastation due to COVID-19 is imminent” according to experts from New York University’s Grossman School of Medicine. A report from CNN detailed that “There are a projected 2 million bereaved individuals in the U.S. and thus, the effects of COVID-19 deaths on mental health will be profound.” The U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports Americans are experiencing more coronavirus-related mental health issues than people in other countries. Students living in poverty have more stress because of lost access to services offered by their schools. Not only are we dealing with the traumatic impacts of COVID-19, but trauma from highly publicized acts of racism and terrorism as well.

Dena Simmons, assistant



director at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence explained in ASCD's Education Update Newsletter that "2019 began with reports of a white man attacking a black motorist, repeatedly striking him in the head with a U-lock, because of his hatred for Black people. American youth are consuming these narratives of hate with too few opportunities to digest what is happening or to recognize their agency in creating meaningful change." This shows that it is more important than ever that teachers figure out how they are going to help students recover and stay on track during this turbulent school year, knowing that the students' lives are going to continue to be disrupted by the pandemic and potential race-related uprisings.

Instruction has been uneven during the pandemic and only

some students have been able to participate fully in online learning. Others have faced obstacles such as:

- Lack of internet access
- Lack of understanding how to use technology
- No strong support system at home
- Difficulty finding a quiet work space
- Lack of food
- Family concerns
- And much more

A study conducted by JAMA Pediatrics found that schools are "the de facto mental health system for many children and adolescents," providing mental health services to 57% of adolescents who need care. Authors of this study stated, "The COVID-19 pandemic may worsen existing mental health problems and lead to more cases among children and adolescents because of the unique combination of the public health crisis, social isolation, and economic recession."

In order to meet the needs of all students and even out instruction, teachers should provide relationship building activities each day. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) reflects the critical role of positive relationships and emotional connections in the learning process, and helps students develop a range of skills they need for school and life. SEL skills include the ability

to:

- Set and achieve positive goals
- Feel and show empathy for others
- Establish and maintain positive relationships
- Make responsible decisions
- Understand and manage emotions

All of these skills are necessary - both for educators and students - to function well in the classroom, in community, and throughout college and careers. Simmons put it simply by stating, "SEL has tremendous potential to create the conditions for youth agency and civic engagement and ultimately, social change. We owe our students an education that centers on their lives and explicitly addresses the sociopolitical context."

"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." Aristotle

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Jill Reed, Beta Phi,
Far West Region



Back before COVID, high school was said to be a wild but fun ride; now we all go around fearing for our lives because of COVID-19. As a high school student in Texas, I know for a fact that it has changed us. As teachers and people of authority pile on more and more work, life for a student gets harder. It's bad enough that we worry about bullies, self-image, and what others think of us.

We all have different lives and circumstances. For some, their personal lives can take over their life as a scholar. With the loss of loved ones comes the extra responsibility of keeping up financially, mentally, spirituality, and emotionally. Because of our parents working harder, more household and parental tasks like caring for younger siblings are being taken on by the student. According to TIME magazine, studies have shown that teens with too much responsibility are less understanding of the needs of their future kids. Although responsibility is an important lesson that all kids need, too much can be very overwhelming.

Life as a in CO



Student DAVID



Now more than ever, students need healthy ways to cope with today's stressors. It can be as easy as talking to understanding friends and adults to help take some of the weight off. I personally talk to my parents and my close inner-circle of friends just to vent or gain advice. When talking to people you trust, it's easier to vent and ask for help, and it has been said to lower stress. Even though talking to someone can help, some of us bottle up what we feel in an effort to look strong. The thing they don't realize is that all problems have solutions, some are just easier to find than others. Sometimes even knowing all of that, vulnerability is what scares us the most. It is the fear of being exposed, but also much more than that. It can also be the fear of being taken advantage of, too.

In conclusion, COVID has changed us in many ways. I don't know if it's permanent or just temporary, but there are lots of lessons we all can learn from it. It's very crucial that we monitor students' mental health. After all, they are the future.

Tia Cummings, 9th Grade Student at Kline Forest High School, Alpha Rho Chapter



Reflections on Self-Care and Well-Being from an Educator and Therapist



Wellness ist



This article explores the principles of self-care during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to education. Specifically, the article explores expanding the parameters of self-care and wellness on college campuses, university support systems, and maintaining lessons on self-care once the pandemic has become endemic. Self-care is defined as “the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one’s own health” (Oxford Dictionary, 2022). In this definition, it is implied that self-care is not a passive thought or idea, but a planned and calculated routine to keep us functioning optimally on all accords. Specifically tied to self-care is the concept of wellness. Pfizer (2022) defines wellness as “the act of practicing healthy habits on a daily basis to attain better physical and mental health outcomes, so that instead of just surviving, you’re thriving...”. To achieve optimal self-care and wellness, there is an intrinsic intentionality that must be present on the part of the individual. Wellness is deemed holistic in that it encompasses our physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional selves. Myers & Sweeney (2004) presented a model

for exploring the interrelatedness of holistic wellness



called the Indivisible Self Model. This model is an evidenced based model and is supported by the proposition that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Included in the Indivisible Self Model are five second order factors, the Essential Self, the Creative Self, the Coping Self, the Social Self, and the Physical Self. Subsets of those five second order factors include spirituality, cultural identity, positive humor, work (or purposefulness), stress management, leisure, friendship and love, and exercise and nutrition. The Indivisible Self Model allows us to explore the whole person and address the needs and parts that solidify our wholeness.

As we ponder self-care and holistic wellness, we must explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on college students and access to services. On college campuses, students typically have access to healthy dining options, a fitness and recreation center, and counseling services. While these options are accessible to students, the pandemic has drawn our attention to the need for additional university support services and extending the dialogue on self-care. Cases of anxiety and depression were magnified by the isolation and uncertainty of the pandemic. According to Panchal, Kamal, Cox, and Garfield (2021), a

recent survey showed “... a large share of young adults (ages 18-24) has reported symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder – 56% as of December 2020 – compared to older adults”. With a collective amplification of these disorders, enrollment management teams in institutions are also seeing increases in students choosing not to return to school and student institutional withdrawals. Additionally, many students have experienced disruptions in their academic performance due to contracting the COVID-19 virus, being exposed to someone with a positive case and having to quarantine, and/or class meeting interruptions due to an instructor contracting the virus/exposure.

To combat these challenges, many institutions taking a more holistic approach. Institutions are now increasing staffing in their counseling services department to meet the increasing demand for student mental health services. Professors and instructors are being intentional in their efforts to check in with students after class meetings, during advising, and during office hours. Administrators are offering professional development opportunities to faculty on student responsiveness during the pandemic, remote work options to support work-life balance for faculty, as well as innovative

techniques in online pedagogy. Lastly, many institutions are increasing overall awareness about the need for self-care in the campus community through lecture series, speakers, and other mechanisms.

As the COVID-19 virus cycles through various mutations, submutations, and moves from pandemic to endemic, we are forced to reckon with what is important in our lives and in the lives of the students we serve. The pandemic has taught us flexibility, the need to slow down, the need to nurture our relationships, the need to feel safe, and figuring out where we belong/fit. Maslow (1943) illustrates in his “hierarchy of needs” the concept of belonging and acceptance. The pandemic continues to highlight how much we have evolved as humans, but simultaneously points to the need for a continued growth process. One of my professors in my doctoral program would always ask us two questions, “Who am I?” and “Who am I with others?” These questions speak to both our independence and interdependence on others. They speak to the self and our relationships. They speak to our connectedness with others and the world around us. The pandemic has peeled away at the complex layers of humanity. It has propelled us collectively

into dealing with loss, grief, and unpredictability. The pandemic has also created an opportunity to explore individual wellness. Self-care and recognizing the need for self-care allows us to begin the building back process. It allows us to hold space for self-exploration and introspection. It allows us to begin to feel whole.

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Dr. Latoya Pierce, Epsilon Rho, Southwest Region, Minden, LA

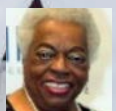


16

Healthy Habits to Form Before Your Next Birthday

Habits to Enhance Your Mental Health

Habits to Enhance Your Physical Health



You can have more to show for your birthday than cake crumbs and burnt candles. Let each annual celebration serve as a trigger to develop habits that contribute to a longer and healthier life. Look at these suggestions to help you begin.

Habits to Enhance Your Mental Health

1. **Meditate and pray.** Take care of your spiritual side. Follow your faith tradition or invent rituals that are meaningful for you.
2. **Give generously.** Focusing on others brings more happiness into your life. Share your time, expertise, and possessions.
3. **Practice forgiveness.** Relax your mind by giving up any grudges or resentments. Wish others well even when you disagree with their actions. Show compassion for yourself as well.
4. **Let go of expectations.** While many events may be beyond your control, you can decide how to respond to them. Welcome whatever comes your way and use your experiences to learn and grow.
5. **Develop a hobby.** Put your leisure time to effective use. Learn how to play a musical instrument, speak a foreign language, or play duplicate bridge.
6. **Communicate directly.** Express your true thoughts openly and tactfully. Offer constructive feedback. Ask for what you want and need. Your courage will help others to do the same.
7. **Deepen your relationships.** Concentrate on the quality of your relationships. Be available for family dinners and meaningful conversations with old friends. Pick one acquaintance you want to know better and invite them to lunch.
8. **Look on the bright side.** List the things you are grateful for and start each day by giving thanks for your blessings. When you are feeling challenged, think of what you have to gain. Keep a Gratitude Journal.

Habits to Enhance Your Physical Health

1. **Move around.** Build more physical activity into common tasks. Stand up when you talk on the phone. Climb the stairs instead of riding the elevator.

2. **Sit up straight.** Good posture requires no extra time out of your busy schedule. Straighten your back, lift your head, and lower your shoulders. You will instantly feel more alert and protect yourself from back pain.
3. **Exercise regularly.** Keep your body strong and limber. Aim to work out for at least a half hour three days a week. Find a variety of activities you enjoy so you will stay motivated.
4. **Sleep well.** Your body needs superior quality sleep and rest to keep running efficiently. Go to bed and wake up on a consistent schedule.
5. **Eat a balanced diet.** Stock up on nourishing whole foods. Fill your plate with fresh vegetables and fruits, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Cut back on processed foods that are full of sugar and empty calories.
6. **Apply sunscreen.** Put on your sunscreen year-round instead of saving it just for summer. Reapply it if you have been sweating or swimming. According to the American Academy of Dermatology, everyone, including those with dark skin needs to wear sunscreen every day.
7. **See your doctor.** Ask your physician what lifestyle changes would help you most in your quest to quit smoking, lose weight, manage your diabetes, or reduce your risk for osteoporosis.
8. **Manage stress.** Stress affects our bodies as well as our emotions. Chronic stress can lead to inflammation, which is associated with many conditions, from headaches to heart disease. Find effective ways to relax, like listening to classical or gospel music or playing with your dog.

Look forward to growing older. Stop counting your grey hairs and start counting how many positive changes you can make to your daily routines. Turn each birthday into an opportunity to enhance your mental and physical wellbeing.

Recommended Reading:

Moyer, E. (2016, March 30). *Six Biblical Methods for Handling Stress*. <https://Tifwe.Org/>. Retrieved February 20, 2022, from <https://bit.ly/35BTdYS>; Rodney, I. J. (2019, November 7). *Should Black People Wear Sunscreen?* <https://Eternaldermatology.Com/>. Retrieved February 20, 2022, from <https://bit.ly/3hbA1go>; Newsom, R., & Rehman, A. (2020, December 4). *Diet and exercise and sleep*. <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/>. Retrieved February 20, 2022, from <https://bit.ly/35HjXHf>

I can! I MUST! I will!



What can an affirmation do for you? Speaking from my personal experience, affirmations can change your life and your students' lives to successful goal achievement. In 1993, I was hired to teach reading skills to at-risk high school students in an alternative public-school setting. It proved to be an exceedingly challenging task, because the students refused to work – i.e., to do their best work. So, I went to workshops and bookstores in search of a system to change my students' mindset from the "I can't" or "I won't" attitude to the "I can" or "I will" attitude.

One day, I found the book *Positive Self-Talk for Children* by Douglass Block. The book provides research, theory, and examples of positive self-talk strategies to use with students.

I implemented the positive self-talk every morning with myself, and I formalized usage of the strategies daily in my classroom. I guided students with writing their own personal affirmations and employed four steps to hopefully reverse the failure attitude; they were as follows:

1. I explained to the students that failing a test is not the same as being a failure. I guided them in creating their self-esteem affirmations to say, for example, "I like myself," "I am okay," and "I am smart."

2. Students created affirmations that said they can do well on tests. For example, "I CAN learn to take a test." (3) Test-taking skills and relaxation techniques were routinely taught. (4) The students took practice timed tests before the real one.

Affirmation strategies worked for student success. The Spring of 1993, only 30% of the 10th graders passed the Reading test. After using the affirmations, the next Spring 1994, 50% passed; then the following Spring 1995, 80%; the next Spring 1996, 100% — Super Excellence. Success continued in the classroom and within the entire school.

I Can. I Will. I Must. My success building positive affirmation.

*Bessie L. Butler-Evans,
Delta Beta Chapter,
Southwest Region*





To the Xinos and Kudos of the Midwest Region of NSPDK, Inc.

You are teens now preparing to be Kings and Queens now,
Not the royal kind but because of your daily grind of the academic kind.
You will be held to the highest pedestal simply because of how you use your mind.

You have it harder than most, because of the social media posts,
People trying to bring you down.
They want to wipe that smile off your face and replace it with a frown.

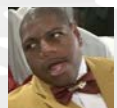
Don't let them get you down just adapt and grow
with everything you know, get to know and even need to know.
Let the knowledge flow, from the source to you, to others in
everything you say and do.

Preparation requires participating, agitation, precipitation, sometimes
frustration and even migration.

Be willing to take the steps you need to take not just to flatter,
but the ones that are ordered by the one that matters.

When you stay focused and have the drive to do what is good and what is right,
then and only then will you be able to rise to the highest heights.

*Anthropos "King" Reggie Calhoun Jr.
Tau Chapter, Indianapolis, IN*





Soror Geneva Moore: A Legacy to Cherish

Missionary Miss Geneva Moore was born in Newellton, Louisiana on August 15, 1915. She graduated and received her high school diploma from Central Colored High School in Shreveport, Louisiana, her Bachelor of Science degree in education from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and her master's degree from Howard University in Washington DC.

Miss Moore was initiated into The National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa Inc. Beta Alpha Chapter in 1952 and has been a member sixty-nine years.

During her long and productive lifetime, she has demonstrated in countless ways her dedication to the welfare of others and has earned the respect and affection of people from all walks of life and all ages, and she has been active in civic, national, and local organizations, including the 13th District Missionary Baptist Association, the National Baptist State Convention, and the National Association of University Women.

She has lived during the most eventful century of this world's history; and in

her quiet way has been a force for good and stabilizing influence on those around, including visiting and ministering to the sick and elderly in nursing homes and hospitals and tutoring young people during those tumultuous years.

Since her birth on August 15, 1915, she has seen the following: the continuation of World War I, the establishment of the U.S. Coast Guard, the crowing of the Red Sox as the 1915 World Series Champions, the election of 20 United States Presidents, the Martin Luther King Movement, the Black Lives Matter Movement, and the historical election of the first black president, Barack Obama, in 2008.

She is a strong woman of faith and has had a productive impact on her community, friends, family, and Sorors. At the age of 106, she still lives in her own home with assistance.

Soror Geneva Moore is a rare and true blessing to the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa Inc. Beta Alpha Chapter.

*Phyllis Garner, Beta Alpha,
Shreveport, LA*



Because of *Serendipity*

My heart is overwhelmed when I think of you, my **sister**.
There is much more in "us", side by side we are better not bitter.

Searching for the pursuit of excellence, while realizing together we're **enough**,
gave us the strength to press on even when circumstances were tough.

Over time, we were reminded of our cooperative **resilience**.
The journey was accessible as we were made to rely on our collective brilliance.

By nature, we have learned ways to **encourage**.
Thank GOD our friendships were enhanced and are now far above average.

United by love, we learned ways to **navigate**.
Who would imagine such a bright future we'd create?

It is true that our sisterly connection was enhanced when we were left to **deliberate**.
The bond that we now have is exact and we do not have to exaggerate.

We focus on youth, education, and service. Y.E.S. we are **intelligent!**
Our dedication does not stop despite the changes in our workforce management.

As we navigate this time, let us renew our professional **possibility**.
We are committed to not getting stuck in the world's mediocrity, laced in negativity.

Our challenge now is to change the perception of educational dynamics with **intentionality**
We are responsible for fostering behaviors that promote equity, and professional ability.

Together we are talented, this is **true**.
Let us collaborate and express self-value! There is now a better person ready for this challenge.

Guess who? Because of **SERENDIPITY...**
Yes, me and **YOU!**

*Dr. Kimberly Crawford,
Epsilon Chi, Eastern Region
Spring Valley (New York)*





There is a plethora of approaches to know our students well; we use numerous forms of engagement, rigor, voice and choice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism to honor all our students. Educators encourage song, music, foods, clothing style, geography, flags, and even worship recognition to partly have our students

express their particular place in society. We should also include educational strategies where our students incorporate their deep reflective contributions, and analytical concerns with participatory resolutions at the local, national, and global levels; which is one example educators can use to hook our students into knowing they belong in our learning milieu and our world at large.

How can we discover a way to incorporate the rightful presence of our entire student body? Consider integrating a Six Word Story method into your educational practices. The **Six Word Story** technique suggests supportive ways for each of our students to fully belong. Let's journey together to either review a Six Word Story you may have written in high school and/or college yourself or hop

on board to become familiar with this impactful and all-encompassing process.

The Six Word Story can be geared toward a mini memoir, if you will. The writer will choose six words to tell a story about him or herself; these well-selected six words will disclose a significant aspect of who the writer is. The Six Word Story can be quick and pleasurable; it is a full narrative told in six words. MasterClass.com (August 2021) documents how the Six Word Story is as memorable with emotional themes as extended stories—from humorous to dramatic, blue to frightening—and give the reader a sense of what’s happened.

A way to spark student interest in crafting their own Six Word Story is to model using notable stories. A moving Six Word Story made popular by author Ernest Hemingway is “For sale: baby shoes. Never worn.” (Many speculate if the debatable Hemingway story tells that the baby has no parents.) Some connected Hemingway subject matter to a student issue that could perhaps be still waiting for adoption, fighting immigration laws, left in a cage in Tijuana, abandoned at Rio Grande, survivor of a fire, etc.

Further illustrations of the Hemingway Six Word Story student links could be

the portrayal of the rising Oscar winning actress born in impoverished circumstances like actress Hattie McDaniel, or 77 years later, Viola Davis, and even Halle Berry’s tumultuous beginnings. There are other possible, imaginative, hopeful Hemingway Six Word Story associations that students can make, such as: pretending to be the son of an enslaved mother who becomes the writer, physician, abolitionist, and women’s rights activist, Dr. James McCune Smith. The many scenarios can show our students how they can say something profound about themselves in a reaction to a topic. Educators can bring excitement by getting students to create their own Six Word Story; our students will leap from marginalization to a sense of empowerment.

Award winning associate professor, Dr. Gholdy Muhammad (author of *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy* [January 2020]) recommends four pursuits in her text and lectures; Six Word Story is one entry aspect Dr. Muhammad offered while holding teaching and learning chats at the NYCDOE District 19 Fall 2021 Conference. Dr. Muhammad shared the Six Word Story approach as a way to embrace all our students in the learning process with the identity

development pursuit; here, Muhammad described how our students can learn to value themselves and others.

It is possible to have a world where educators recognize all our students’ deep thoughts, contributions, and their very capable talents. Some activities that we can use Six Word Story for are writing prompts, introductions, reflections, notetaking, data collection, building capacity and projects. We can have students place their Six Word Story in a journal, on response sheets or sticky notes, and digitally on Padlet, Dotstorming, Lino, Wakelet, Scrumblr, Pinside, and Flipgrid.

We educators will support our students with opportunities to thrive in, with dignified lives, and to create a better world for all of humankind. The Six Word Story is a continuation to help gain honest articulation where self-identification and meaningful actions can be embedded across the curriculum.

*References: MasterClass staff. August 2021. <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-write-an-unforgettable-six-word-story>; Muhammad, Gholdy. *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy*. Scholastic Teaching Resources, 2020.*

Yvette Grant, Theta,
Eastern Region,
Brooklyn NY



PANDEMIC *of Hope*

How has the COVID-19 Pandemic affected education and learning for students, teachers/educators, principals, superintendents, school boards and parents?

There is no shortage of the loss of friendships felt in this climate of social unemployment. Politics in schools divided city and state and government hate languished in religious lament.

And this became the season of sickness that tested the commitment to classroom fitness!

There are moments now when every parent and employer in America suddenly realized how deeply their lives and livelihoods depended upon educational institutions.

COVID has infected learning and neutralized nutrition almost without notice and made it where adults and children find themselves in the middle of a massive national transition.

We were forced to find new ways of teaching and reaching.

New responsibilities between home, school and work required a new flexibility.

And here we are!

The pandemic has unleashed a wave of innovation in education that has accelerated change and prompted a blue-sky approach throughout this system.

School districts are developing permanent virtual options in the expectation that after the pandemic, some families will stick with remote learning. Yearning for the burning that was once fueled by higher learning.

Life skills have become lost in the social distancing of our community.

Too many stories of hungry children who have melted away from school in a community where they do homework in parking lots at fast food restaurants just to pick up a Wi-Fi signal.

COVID-exposed inequity shows how much it's shaped the experiences and outcomes of America's low-income students.

And now we are virtual as we zoom in rooms full of isolation in anticipation of a higher education. Our social skills lack connection. Our mandated breath was masked in protection.

It was literally life vs. death on a campus canvassed in low expectation.

Now thousands of educators across the country, from preschool to college, are finding new ways to fuel knowledge and spark their students' creativity, through technology so that they get the services they need to succeed.

Now we dare contemplate the arrival of some futuristic, high-tech utopia, where millions of students will be supported to catch up academically and process trauma.

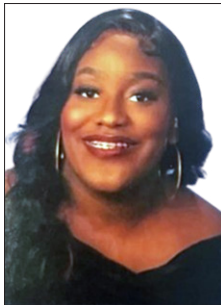
And this became the season of sickness that tested the commitment to classroom fitness!



*Anthropos Michael Guinn
Alpha Rho, Dallas Texas
Southwest Region*



SCHOLARSHIP



Layota Harper
- Beta
Eastern Region
Female Winner



Antwaan Speights – Xi
Eastern Region
Male Winner



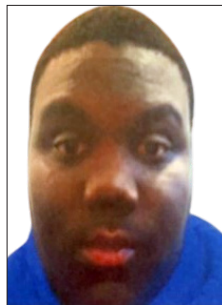
Fedmean Dydgelie Charles – Xi
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Kappa Omicron Tau
Winner



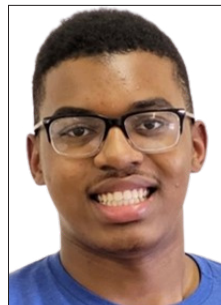
Regina Rowland Perry – Xi
Eastern Region
Doctoral Scholarship
Winner



Dallas Narcisse
- Alpha Theta
Southeast Region
Female Winner



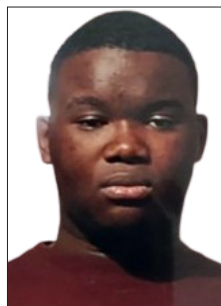
Evan Joseph Queen - Nu
Southeast Region
Male Winner



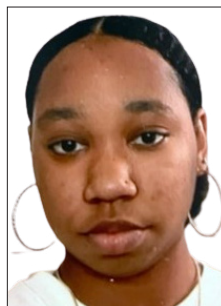
Arthur Lee Bargainer IV
- Alpha Xi
Midwest Region
Male Winner



Alexa Ibanex –
Delta Beta
Southwest Region
Female Winner



Semaj Johnson –
Epsilon Beta
Southwest Region
Male Winner



Brooklyn Samuels
- Delta Xi
Far West Female
Region Winner



Bryce Fisher
Beta Phi
Far West Region
Male Winner

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Gamma Rho	Shaker Heights, OH
Epsilon Xi	Forest Park, OH
Zeta Gamma	Maywood, IL

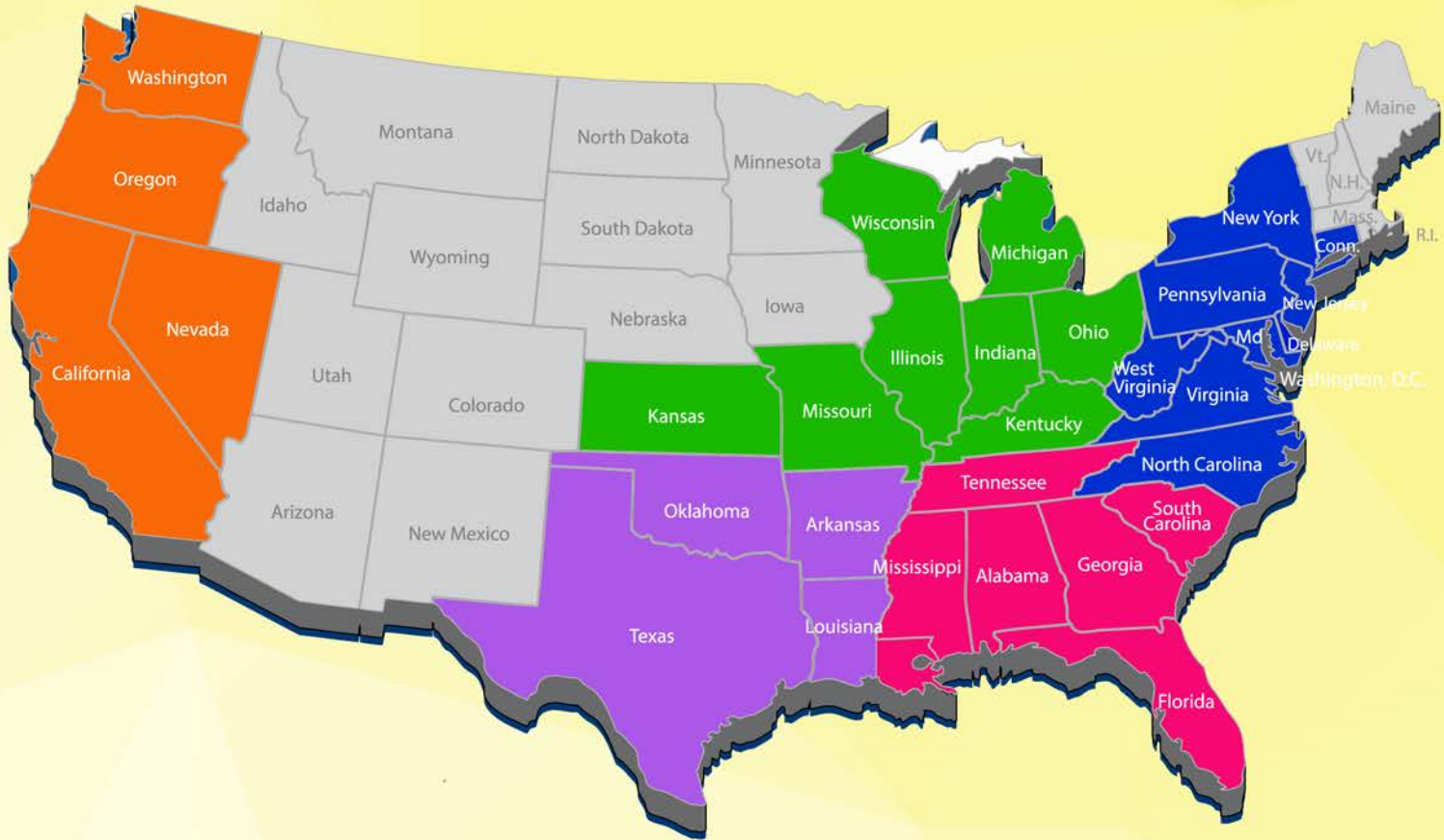
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Beta Rho	Texarkana, TX
Gamma Epsilon	Oklahoma City, OK
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Delta Epsilon	Dallas, TX
Delta Omicron	Muskogee, OK
Delta Chi	Houston, TX
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Epsilon Gamma	Plano, TX
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Epsilon Iota	Galveston, TX
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Zeta Alpha	Mesquite, TX
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Delta Xi	Long Beach/Carson, CA
Delta Rho	San Bernardino, CA
Delta Upsilon	San Diego, CA
Epsilon Nu	Moreno Valley, CA
Epsilon Omicron	Spokane, WA

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