

Student Achievement Catches Up After Pandemic Setback

Read more about the new studies from Brown University, Stanford, and Harvard point to a turnaround in student achievement scores.

AUSTIN, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, August 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [K-12 Education](#) Achievement Levels Went South During the Pandemic

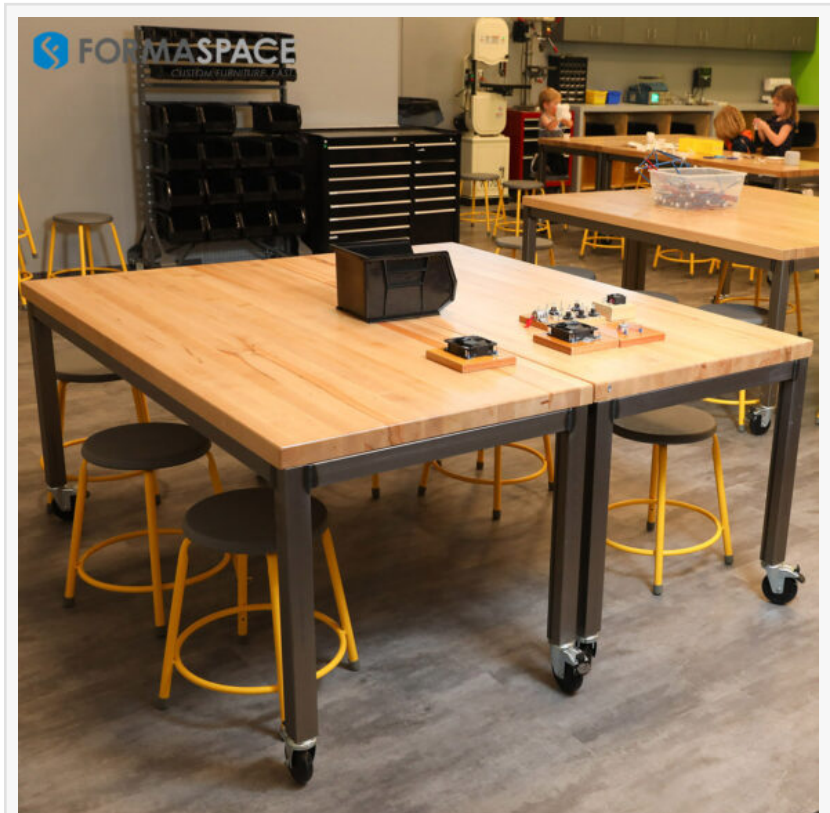
During the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, educators became worried about whether students could adapt to the many pedagogical changes undertaken to halt the spread of the virus, including the widespread adoption of distance and hybrid learning.

Their fears were borne out as subsequent national student academic achievement scores dropped significantly across most demographic groups, with student cohorts in economically disadvantaged areas and those for whom English is a second language (ESL) affected the most.

Where Did the Students Go During the Pandemic?

Another urgent problem that arose during the pandemic was the issue of “missing” students.

Across the country, many K-12 school districts saw dramatically lower student enrollment numbers.



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For a time, education researchers were unclear on the meaning of this drop in attendance: were students simply moving to other districts?

But in time, it became apparent that as many as 3 million students who were supposed to be enrolled in school, particularly those with online classes, simply dropped out of the system.

More Bad Academic Achievement News in 2022

2022 was another year of disappointment for many K-12 educators.

Despite the easing of Covid restrictions in the classroom, the achievement gap associated with the Covid pandemic continued to widen, with tests from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) revealing that 4th and 8th graders were falling behind in reading and mathematics scores.

The achievement drop was especially pronounced among students who were previously identified as members of lower achievement cohorts.

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In plain English, students who were not doing particularly well before the pandemic fell even further behind (relative to other students) during the period between 2020 and 2022.

New Signs that K-12 Student Achievement Might be Turning the Corner

There are new reports that the Covid pandemic achievement gap in K-12 education may be closing, at least

among better-performing student groups.



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The first insight comes from economist Emily Oster at Brown University who worked with fellow researchers to compile and analyze the student test results from millions of students taking part in over 20 different state tests.

Oster reports that, in mathematics, students are on the road to catching up, achieving scores closer to what would have been anticipated had the pandemic not happened. Oster is more concerned about English language studies; here, the results are more mixed, with some states making progress while others continue to fall further behind.

These insights correlate with new research from Harvard and Stanford universities. Thomas Kane, the faculty director at Harvard's Center for Education Policy Research and co-author of the report, says they are finally seeing some solid academic gains during the 2022-2023 school year after three consecutive years of falling achievement scores.

Unfortunately, the Stanford / Harvard report made clear that the achievement gap between higher-income and less well-off school districts remains a significant issue.

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