

COVID-19 Impacts on Child Development

Madeira City Schools Planning Commission
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Dave Bergen, Resource
Jennifer Bracken
Eric Guerre
Kasey O'Reilly, Chairperson
Eric Peters
Stacy Radu

OBJECTIVE

This study seeks to understand the possible impacts of the COVID-19 school experience from both an academic and emotional health perspective. While Madeira fared well in making sure students attended school to the greatest extent possible, the actual school experience of both in-person and at-home learning, safety protocols, quarantining, social distancing, and masking was very different with different outcomes for students and families. What are the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in schools across the country as well as within Madeira? What does emerging research say about the growth and development of students K-12 as a result of living and attending school during the COVID-19 pandemic? Are there significant areas of academic growth and personal development that have impacted our students that schools should be mindful of as we work toward their success?

METHODOLOGY

1. Research: Reviewed current literature on the impacts of COVID-19 on the student population globally, including academic, social-emotional impacts
2. Interviewed administrators from neighboring districts (Indian Hill, Sycamore, Mariemont, and Wyoming)
3. Distributed a survey to all Madeira City Schools staff
4. In-depth interviews with teachers representing each building
5. Reviewed district testing data
6. Gathered information from district administrators (Dave Bergen, Nicole Huelsman, Gretchen Bloomstrom, Chandley Bacher)

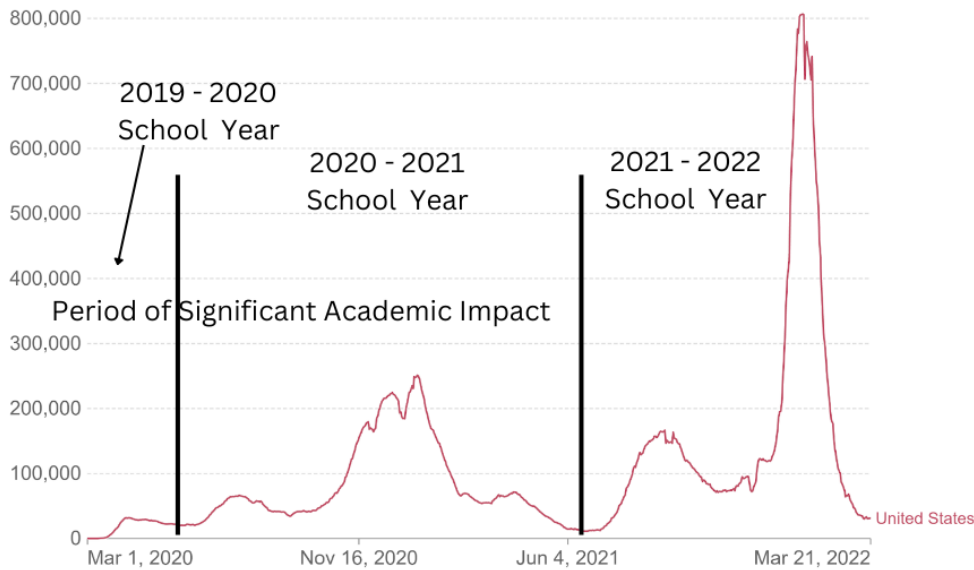
BACKGROUND RESEARCH

After nearly three years since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, findings are just starting to emerge about the actual impacts of the pandemic on K-12 student life. In the 2021-2022 school, there were preliminary insights in the literature and many predictions about how student performance might evolve. As another academic year has unfolded with more test scores to compare and, while there is still more to learn about the impact on students, it is clear the consequences of the pandemic were universal but the degree and types of impact vary among districts and communities. These impacts not only affected academic performance and learning development but research shows that there have been other impacts on student mental health, absenteeism, and social development. In general terms, there is evidence to suggest that the “rate of academic achievement fell by as much as half during the pandemic” (Domina et al., 2022, 1).

When seeking to understand the impacts, it is helpful to align academic years to the progression of the pandemic. The chart below (United States: Coronavirus Pandemic Country Profile, n.d.) shows the number of daily cases in the United States along with the academic year.

Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases

7-day rolling average. Due to limited testing, the number of confirmed cases is lower than the true number of infections.



Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSE COVID-19 Data

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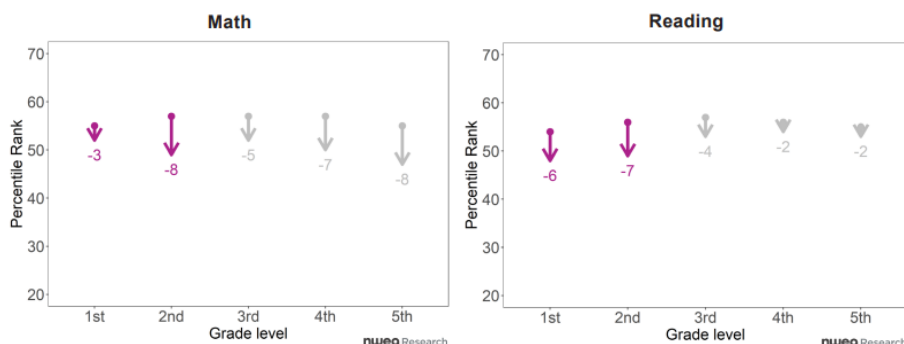
Nationally test scores were significantly lower than typical across all grades in mathematics and reading, but the relative declines were largest in mathematics and in the earlier elementary grades. Relative declines were also disproportionately large for students in high-poverty schools and for students of color. Students in fall 2021 scored 9-11 percentile points lower in mathematics and 3-7 percentile points lower in reading compared to pre-pandemic years, on average (Curriculum Associates, 2021; EPIC, 2021; Lewis & Kuhfeld, 2021).

Generally, the K-12 impact was significant; on average, students were “five months behind in mathematics & four months behind in reading” (Dorn et al., 2021). This was a result, in part, of the “unfinished learning” - the reality that students were not given the opportunity to complete all the learning they would have in a typical year.

In fact, a research study from the Annenberg Institute (Brown University) reported significant declines in average math scores, for grades 3-8, when comparing fall 2021 to same-grade peers in fall 2019. When considering the significance of the drop in scores - “the math drops are significantly larger than estimated impacts from other large-scale school disruptions, such as after Hurricane Katrina.” (Dworkin et al., 2022)

While the evidence shows there were documented impacts in several grades, notably grades 3-8, “less known about pre k or k when pandemic started - meaning those in 1st or 2nd during the 2021-2022 school year (Kuhfeld et al., 2022, 1-6).

Relative to pre-pandemic growth trends, students in first grade in the 2021-2022 academic year grew less than a typical year by 6-7%. Furthermore, reading and math achievement in first and second grade remains substantially lower in spring 2022 relative to historical data (Kuhfeld & Lewis, 2022, 2-7). This is demonstrated in the percentile declines highlighted in the charts below. This is significant because while all grades showed a decline, grades 2-5 showed decreased performance but improvements thereafter, first and second grades declined in their test scores and appeared to fall further behind (Kuhfeld et al., 2022, 6-7). (More on Madeira-specific test scores in the section below.)



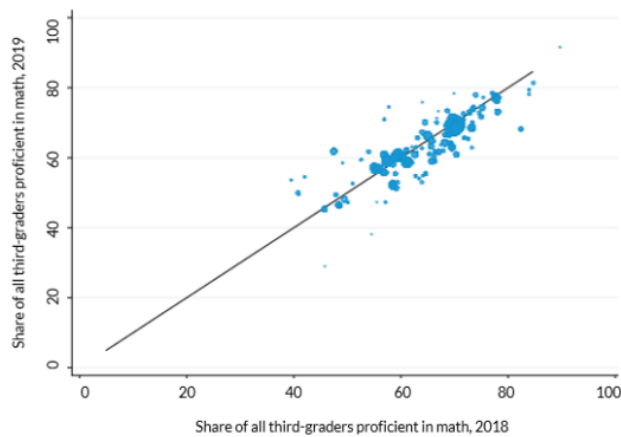
A report by the consulting company McKinsey reported that first and second-graders ended the 2021 school year “two or more grade levels below expectations than in any previous year. Given the major strides children at this age typically make in mastering reading, and the critical importance of early reading for later academic success, this is of particular concern.” (Dorn et al., 2021)

Beyond the impacts that are seen in grades K-8, the impact of the pandemic was also seen in high school students as evidenced by standardized test scores. In a report released by the organization that creates the ACT test, ACT scores from 2022 high school graduates hit their lowest point in more than 30 years” (ACT Test Scores Drop to Their Lowest in 30 Years in a Pandemic Slide, 2022). The report noted that “average ACT composite score was 19.8 out of 36, marking the first time since 1991 that the average score was below 20” (ACT Test Scores Drop to Their Lowest in 30 Years in a Pandemic Slide, 2022). Maybe more concerning is the data that shows “an increasing number of high school students failed to meet any of the subject-area benchmarks set by the ACT — showing a decline in preparedness for college-level coursework” (ACT Test Scores Drop to Their Lowest in 30 Years in a Pandemic Slide, 2022).

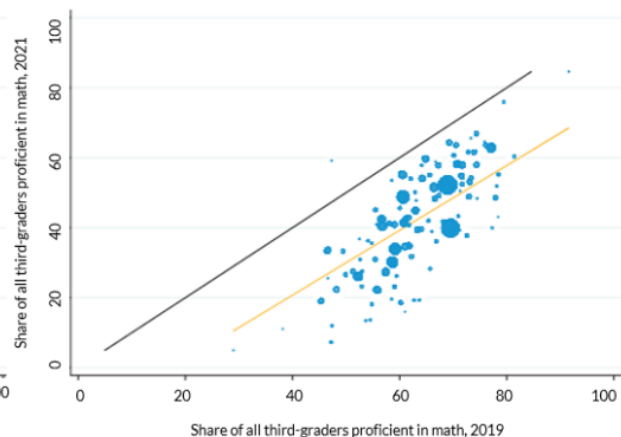
There are no universal conclusions to explain the variability of impact across communities but ‘learning lag’ was negatively associated in communities with a higher proportion of economically disadvantaged students, higher unemployment rates, and higher case rates. An example of this variability is displayed through the two graphs of the third-grade math proficiency test in North Carolina. When looking at the pandemic impact in the graph on the right, scores are lower than in prior comparison periods and there is more variability between districts (i.e. the dots are below the black line and are more scattered). (Domina et al., 2022, 5-7)

Prior-Year Third-Grade Math Proficiency Rate Predictiveness on Third-Grade Math Proficiency Rates

2018 versus 2019



2019 versus 2021



There has been some question about whether remote learning contributed to the declines in test scores. When looking at “instructional modality and standardized test scores across 12 states,” data suggested “that there were considerable declines in test scores overall during the 2020-21 school year, and these declines were larger in school districts with less in-person instruction” (Halloran et al., 2021, 12). In a related study in North Carolina by the Urban Institute, they noted that “remote-only districts experienced more learning lag than mostly in-person districts” (Domina et al., 2022, 8). Even so, there was significant variability in the degree of impact of “remote-only districts” due to a number of other factors including the effectiveness of implementing remote learning solutions, the prevalence of COVID-19 in a community, and the challenges and resources of the broader community in which a district resides.

Research into the academic impacts globally of the pandemic is ongoing with more information and statistics to come as these studies continue.

INFORMATION FROM NEIGHBORING DISTRICTS

Interviews with neighboring districts proved to be very similar to the data in Madeira. The grade levels that have seen the most academic decline are kindergarten and first grades. Districts reported their initial reading and math assessments in the fall of 2022 showed scores that were below their typical fall scores. All districts reported less emotional maturity in their youngest learners, is this due to the COVID-19 pandemic? We do not know and this data is very difficult to measure.

Most districts have added additional intervention specialists and have extended their summer school programs to accommodate those struggling learners. Additional school therapists have been added to aid with mental health concerns across districts and robust PBIS programs have been implemented.

Sycamore:

Implemented free summer school
More decline in math scores than reading scores
Stamina decreased and behaviors increased
Implemented robust PBIS

Mariemont:

Increased behaviors and mental health needs
Providing more mental health support

Wyoming:

Extend Kindergarten during covid
Huge focus on K-2 decoding skills with deliberate tier 1 interventions
Hired instructional coach
Decline in reading skills, especially noted K-2
More behaviors and discipline - stamina impacted

Indian Hill

Extended summer learning for outgoing K-2
Staff Wellness
Added counselors because of mental health and behavior concerns'
Hired Dean of Students K-12
Large decline in reading and math Kindergarten and First Grades
Teachers fatigued

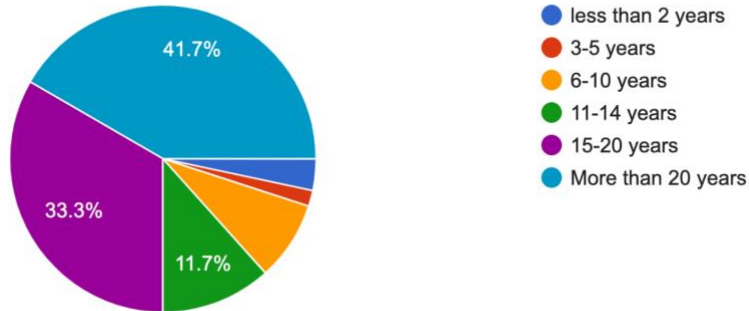
SURVEY RESULTS

The planning commission wanted to gain a better understanding of how COVID-19 has impacted education and socialization of students at Madeira so a survey was developed and sent to staff across the school district. Sixty staff members took this survey and staff members from each school as well as staff members who service all three buildings were given input on the impacts of COVID-19 at Madeira. 83% of the staff who took the survey have been teaching at Madeira since before the pandemic which provides a good perspective on what education looked like both before and after the pandemic. 95% of the staff members who took the survey have six or more years of teaching experience and 75% of the staff members had over 15 years of teaching experience.

SURVEY - How long have you been teaching?

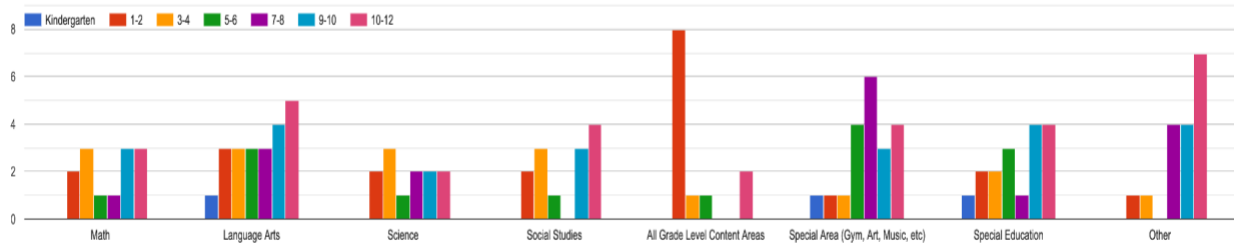
How long have you been teaching?

60 responses



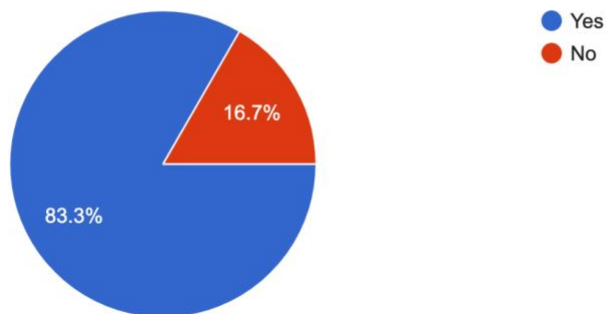
What do you teach?

Tell us about what you teach



Have you taught at Madeira since 2018?

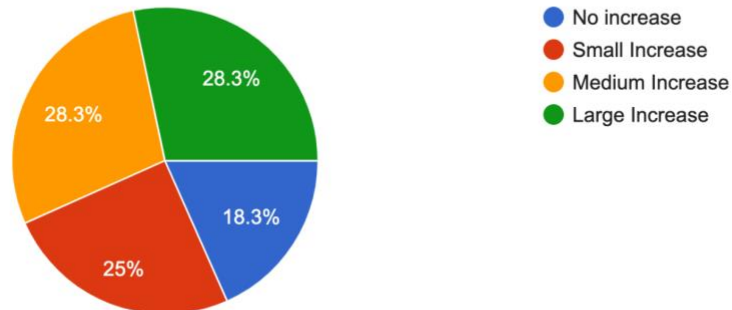
60 responses



Are you seeing an increase in Classroom disruptions currently vs. pre-covid?

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60 responses



*****81% of staff have reported some increase (ranging from small to large) of classroom disruptions**

Have you noticed any declines in the following academic areas?

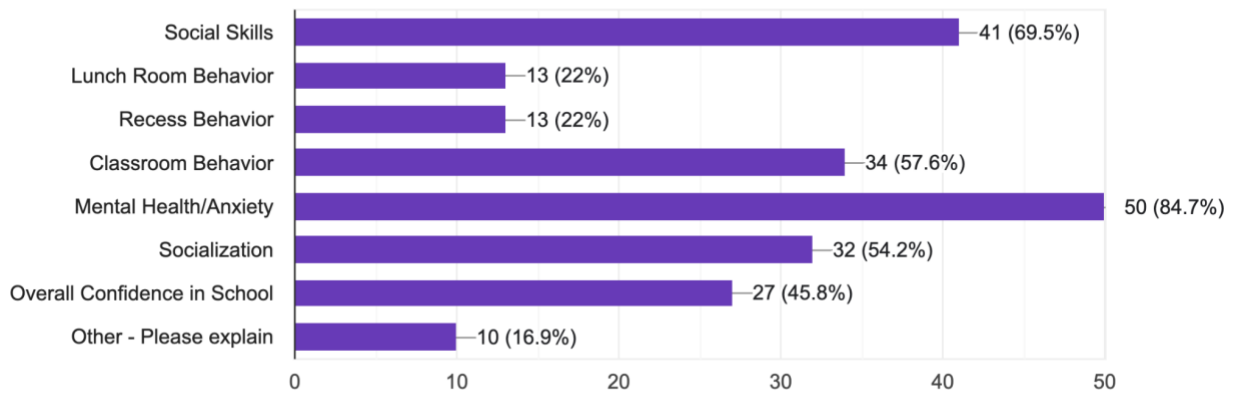
Subject Area	Percentage of Staff seeing increase in problem academic areas
Phonics	18.3%
Reading Comprehension	36.7%
Letter names and sounds	11.7%
Handwriting	40%
Writing	46.7%
Math Facts	18.3%
Math Concepts	16.7%
Science	6.7%
Work Completion	53.3%
No Changes	3.3%
Other Factors written in by teachers	***Attention, all subject areas affected, many gaps, expecting leniency, on task behavior, length of time able to stay on task (stamina), critical thinking skills, technique and confidence in lab situations, problem solving skills, lacking grit or perseverance, executive functioning, social-emotional maturity,

Of academic areas in question, staff indicated that the largest academic impacts were found in reading comprehension, handwriting, writing and work completion. In addition to these, staff listed other areas impacted to include attention, stamina, critical thinking skills and problem solving skills.

Have you noticed any declines in the following Social Emotional areas?

Have you noticed any declines in the following social/emotional areas?

59 responses

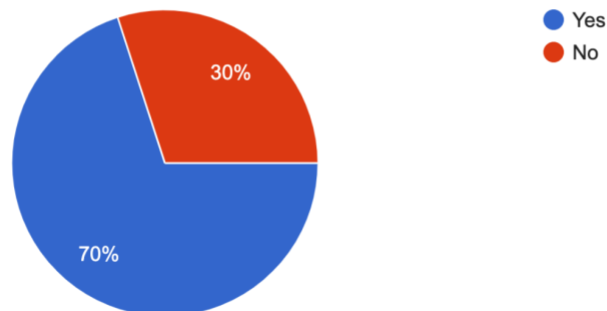


In Social Emotional areas, staff noted that social skills, classroom behavior, mental health/anxiety, socialization and overall confidence in school seemed to have the most significant impacts on learning.

Other Declines in Social Emotional Areas:

Do you feel you have the resources you need to be successful post COVID-19?

60 responses



While 70% of staff indicated they had what they needed to be successful post COVID-19, 30% of staff members indicated that they could benefit from additional resources or training. Below are some of the interventions staff members have put into place post-COVID along with resources staff feel they may benefit from.

What Interventions have you put in place due to COVID?

Teachers have put in a wide range of interventions to include: increased direct instruction, less outside work, increased modeling, more breaks, adjusted/slower pacing, chunking assignments into smaller parts, more hands on activities, increased visuals around the room (ex: math facts), repeated practice of classroom management techniques/ teaching and re-teaching expected behaviors, more group/collaborative work based on student need, practice of social skills, catering the curriculum to students current level of performance, class-wide behavior visuals, behavior checklists, rewards, students meeting with a mental health counselor, more focus on organizing work on a page, given more explicit directions, more lenient with work completion, provided opportunities to type vs write, removed technologies such as earphones, brought back paper planners, practice of study skills, reteaching skills when needed, scaffolding time management, direct instruction in executive functioning skills use of more visuals (multiplication charts, manipulatives), review of how to check where/when assignments are due, one-on-one conferencing and goal setting, and increase of group time per day and focus on multi-sensory approach during intervention/resource room instruction.

If you need more resources, what resources would benefit your class?

Some of the common themes in this section included:

- More aide support in classrooms (not specific to special education)
- More counselors
- More behavior support
- Support to Parents
- Reduced class size
- Sensory supports in class to help with anxiety
- More opportunities for teacher work days
- Clear school wide behavior plan/Expectations that all classrooms follow
- More expert help on the social/emotional, neurodiverse, trauma-sensitive, etc. aspect of students.
- More resources to cover review of previous grade-level concepts

If you need professional development, what professional development would be beneficial?

Of the items requested, the most common themes included:

- Mental Health/Anxiety Training
- Social Emotional Learning Training
- Executive Functioning Training
- Understanding ADHD, ODD, trauma and other factors impacting learning and learning how to support their needs within the classroom
- Other: time management, vertical alignment in general/ vertical alignment using assessment, reading training and resources, Responsive Classroom, brain research to focus on the impact of COVID-19, increasing academic engagement/time management training.

STAFF INTERVIEWS

We interviewed one teacher from each building. These teachers taught different content areas. Their responses are summarized below.

1. Overall what are impacts are you seeing in your classrooms that you attribute to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Although Madeira students had a better experience than students in many other schools due to the majority of Madeira students being in school during the 2020-2021 school year, students missed a critical developmental period over the past several years. Their natural development was interrupted during this time. Many students spent much more time on screens than usual and were more socially isolated. Madeira placed a necessary emphasis on “grace over grades” which may have lead to a decrease in perseverance and stamina, as well as a lack of accountability. There are more disruptions from students which makes it difficult to focus on academics. Although not every student is disruptive, the teachers interviewed had a small number (6-7 students) that are consistently disruptive resulting in difficulty teaching the entire class.

2. Has COVID-19 impacted academics in your classroom and, if so, what adjustments have you made?

Teachers have seen some specific academic skills negatively impacted such as basic math facts, however, the main academic impacts teachers have noted are a lack of grit, resilience, responsibility and accountability. Students are struggling with evidence based thinking and critical thinking, Students have difficulty with homework and due dates. Students who may have already been struggling seem to be disproportionately affected. The teachers interviewed have responded by reducing the pace of teaching.

3. Outside of academics, are there impacts of COVID-19 on your students and on your classroom? If so, what adjustments have you made?

Teachers noted that there are more classroom disruptions. Students have difficulty with emotional regulation, age appropriate behavior, following expectations, interacting with others, and social skills. This is not true of all students but enough that it impacts the classroom and the teachers’ ability to teach. Teachers have to stop teaching to redirect students more often than pre-COVID and are spending more time managing behaviors. This has led to a slower pace of instruction. Teachers commented that this is the main area of concern at this time (moreso than academic gaps).

4. Do you feel you have the resources necessary to be successful post COVID-19? If not, what resources would be the most helpful?

All of the teachers interviewed said they felt very supported by the administrators, school

counselors, and Children’s Hospital school based therapists. They commented on a need for continued access to and focus on mental health resources and support. More aides in the middle school would help with behavior and disruptions. At the middle school, teachers felt an additional school based therapist would be a great resource. Teachers also felt that resources to support students’ social-emotional learning and resiliency would be beneficial.

5. What, if any, professional development would be useful?

The teachers interviewed all felt that professional development has been adequate so far.

DISTRICT TESTING INFORMATION

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged traditional forms of teaching and learning and placed immeasurable stress on the public education system. It is imperative districts and schools understand how the pandemic impacted students’ learning and progress to help inform both policy and practice moving forward. Using NWEA MAP data across grades 1-8 allows us to examine student learning in Madeira amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

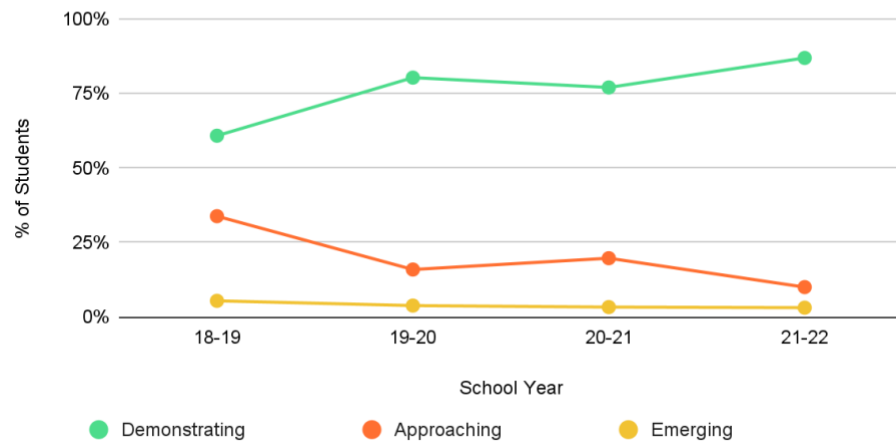
The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth assessment is a computer adaptive test, which means every student gets a unique set of test questions based on responses to previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions get harder. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions get easier. The test is not concerned with which student a grade is in- it will go as high or as low as it needs to. By the end of the test, most students will answer about half the questions correctly. MAP provides us with measures of performance of every student, whether on, above, or below grade level. Results from the MAP Growth assessment provide teachers with insights on how what students currently know and what they are ready to learn in reading and math. Additionally, the MAP Growth data can be used to track a student’s growth and achievement throughout the school year and over time.

The change in reading and math data is relatively small compared to national averages. Four of the eight grades showed gains in math test scores and four of the grades showed declines averaging 2 percentile points. Examining reading MAP scores we found similar statistics. The average decline was 3.6 percentile points in reading with two grade levels showing positive gains.

The chart below shows Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) results for Madeira City Schools for school years 2018-2019 through 2021-2022. Consistent with national findings, one of the student groups shown to be more significantly impacted academically is the group of students in kindergarten in the 2020-2021 school year.

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

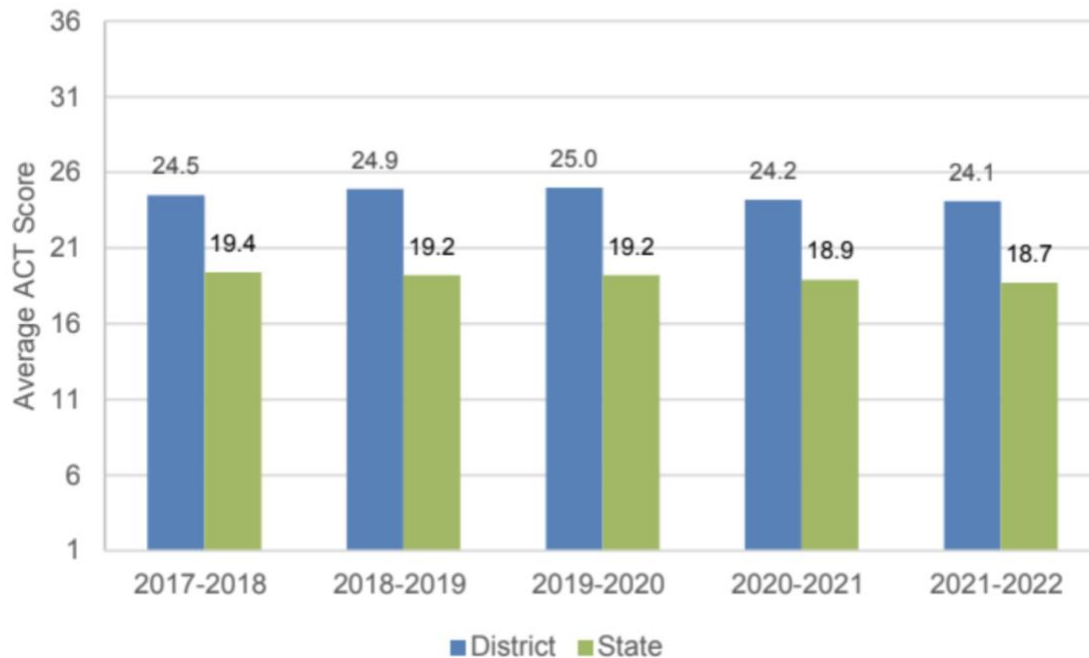
Student Overall Results by School Year - Madeira



202	257	258	269	270	298
EMERGING READINESS 202-257		APPROACHING READINESS 258-269		DEMONSTRATING READINESS 270-298	
A child demonstrates minimal foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for curriculum based on kindergarten standards.		A child demonstrates some foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for curriculum based on kindergarten standards.		A child demonstrates foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for curriculum based on kindergarten standards.	

At the high school level, the percentage of students with AP scores of 3 or higher stayed relatively steady through the pandemic and increased slightly in 2022.

Figure 1.1. Average Composite Scores: 5 Years of Testing*



Madeira students’ ACT scores also have remained stable from the 2017-2018 school year to the 2021-2022 school year.

Table 1.2. Five Year Trends—Average ACT Scores

Year	Number of Students Tested		Average ACT Scores									
	District	State	English		Mathematics		Reading		Science		Composite	
			District	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District	State
2017-2018	111	114,228	24.6	18.2	24.9	19.5	24.8	19.7	23.2	19.5	24.5	19.4
2018-2019	96	108,008	24.8	17.9	24.8	19.2	25.5	19.7	24.2	19.4	24.9	19.2
2019-2020	102	104,338	24.7	18.0	25.0	19.3	25.4	19.7	24.4	19.5	25.0	19.2
2020-2021	90	97,429	23.7	17.6	23.5	18.9	25.0	19.5	24.0	19.3	24.2	18.9
2021-2022	115	97,607	23.7	17.3	24.3	18.7	24.9	19.3	23.0	19.1	24.1	18.7

Table 1.3. Five Year Trends—Average ACT Scores Statewide

Year	Number of Students Tested	Average ACT Scores				
		English	Mathematics	Reading	Science	Composite
2017-2018	114,228	18.2	19.5	19.7	19.5	19.4
2018-2019	108,008	17.9	19.2	19.7	19.4	19.2
2019-2020	104,338	18.0	19.3	19.7	19.5	19.2
2020-2021	97,429	17.6	18.9	19.5	19.3	18.9
2021-2022	97,607	17.3	18.7	19.3	19.1	18.7

MADEIRA’S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Overall, Madeira responded well to the circumstances brought about by COVID-19. Students had the option of returning to school in the Fall of 2020 and the majority did opt for in person instruction. Madeira’s administrators and staff remained flexible and adjusted quickly to put

different plans into place for close contact quarantines, COVID positive quarantines, and giving parents and students grace. Madeira prioritized the mental health of students and teachers.

In response to the increase in students requiring reading intervention at the elementary level, a position was added (Chrissy Fast reading specialist). A Lindamood Bell reading program called Seeing Stars was also put into place which included extensive training for intervention specialists. This is for elementary students who are not meeting reading benchmarks. There is also an intervention specialist at the elementary school that is available to support teachers and students with social-emotional learning and behavior.

At the middle school administrators and the counselor meet with grade level teams once per week to discuss students' needs including both academic and social-emotional/mental health needs. They determine what, if any, interventions may be appropriate using data points to drive decisions and considering the whole child. A key behavioral specialist is available to explore next steps with students struggling with behavior and self-regulation in the classroom.

At all levels teachers have made adjustments as needed including time outside of classroom instruction to work with students individually or in small groups to address content gaps, adjusting work load, extending deadlines, breaking projects into smaller steps to aid with planning, allowing for increased interactions between students to build social and collaborative skills. Teachers and staff have also been intentional about providing connection and support for students who are struggling in areas outside of academics.

It's also important to note that prior to the pandemic, Madeira had placed an emphasis on mental health district wide. This has included adding school-based Children's Hospital therapists in each building, HOPE Squad at the high school, student recognition beyond just academic achievement and grades/grade point average, the Mind Peace room at the middle school, and Wellness Wednesdays organized by the CARE committee at the elementary school. Having these resources in place to support students' mental health prior to COVID has been key in responding to increased mental health needs throughout the district.

CONCLUSIONS

The impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our students are just emerging and beginning to be understood. Effects of COVID on the learning environment, students, and teachers will likely continue to be studied and understood for years to come.

Students in Madeira experienced less of an academic decline than students nationwide as seen through standardized test scores and teacher report. However, there are some gaps that need to be addressed, specifically Madeira's MAP scores declined an average of 2 percentile points in math and 3.6 percentile points in reading (compared to national scores which declined 3-7 percentile points in reading and 9-11 in math). Madeira has begun to address these gaps, especially in reading and specifically at the elementary school level through science-based reading programs and an increase in interventions.

Perhaps more evident than the content gaps are the social-emotional impacts on students. Students are reported to lack grit, resilience, emotional regulation skills, executive function skills which include self control, self monitoring, emotional control, flexibility, task initiation, organization, working memory, and planning and time management. Although this is not evident in all students, it is affecting enough students that it is disruptive to the entire learning environment. Teachers have had to slow the pace of instruction, increase the time spent managing behaviors, repeating instructions, adjusting deadlines, and assisting with task completion.

Additional considerations are the growth of Madeira’s student population and increase in the number of English Language Learners in the district leading. Students also continue to need differentiated instruction. Teachers are reporting fatigue and mental health needs as they have had to constantly adjust to a shifting environment during COVID. Both students and teachers need increased opportunities for connection and support.

Overall, COVID has amplified the challenges that students, teachers, and the district as a whole are experiencing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the diverse impacts that occurred because of the pandemic, recommendations are organized below into several different categories.

Category	Recommendation
Data-Driven Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to monitor the academic and non-academic impacts of COVID on students by gathering teacher and staff feedback ● Track data within the district, locally and nationally ● Use ongoing assessment data to further understand the impact of the pandemic on student achievement. We must prioritize students’ access to high-quality mathematics and reading instruction and interventions.
Academic Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructional pacing guide (for all subject areas for grade level teams that is vertically aligned--(A lot of reference was made to concerns with how to pace the instructional practices post COVID)-- scope and sequence curriculums ● Targeted interventions for cohorts of students most impacted, according to test scores, by COVID. Example - the significantly lower test scores from the 1st and 2nd graders mentioned above...and the test score ‘rebound’ that hasn’t yet happened.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider the need for additional instruction (after school/summer groups)
Classroom/District Resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on cohesive building-wide expectations -- major focus on classroom procedures, routines, expectations up-front and follow it up more consistently. Ensure that all staff have the buy-in. ● Investigate the need for additional educational assistants, counselors, and/or school-based therapists. ● Investigate resources for teachers/parents on developing students' executive function skills (study skills, planning, organization, time management) ● Increase opportunities for connection and building social skills (after school clubs, group work and collaboration in class) ● Investigate resources for social-emotional learning and building emotional regulation skills ● Enable students to use the resources that are in place at Madeira (ex: MindPeace room at MMS) ● Continue focus on mental health for both students and teachers
Resources for Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enable parents/families/caregivers by sharing resources that enable families to supplement student education during the school year or between school years. This could be for more than just those students that are at-risk or below a certain test score threshold. The research alludes to the "unfinished learning" that impacted all kids, evidenced by the lower test scores, and there could be opportunities to fill in some of the gaps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highlight resources available within the district ○ Highlight resources/opportunities available locally or within the region to support students academically ○ Collaborate with other local districts to source supplemental resources that might not be available to a smaller number of students within a district itself ● Share with Madeira families some of the findings (from research or using this report) to validate, or identify, what they may be observing at home (lower test scores, mental health, absenteeism, etc.) Would it be helpful for some to know that some of the changes they've seen in their kids might not be abnormal...and there could be a connection to the pandemic?

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Appendix

What, if any, interventions have you already put into place due to COVID?

more project checklists to increase productivity and time management & more so-emo check-ins
no phone or headphones allowed in classroom
I have increased the amount of direct instruction and modeling.
Less outside work
More talking time, more brain breaks (just to help with the transition to school in general)
I have adjusted pacing of some units, and I've started direct instruction of some executive functioning skills.
I break tasks into very small chunks, build in brain/physical breaks, sit with individual students to check engagement/comprehension
more help to break down big assignments into smaller pieces
Giving more grace to students who are struggling/missing deadlines/etc.
There is a greater focus on mental health - this has brought about multiple interventions/conversations/more awareness
I have built in more hands-on activities, gross motor activities, modeling social interactions and creating opportunities for more social interactions with peers, worked on Zones of Regulation, Interoception awareness and mindfulness for students to become more aware of their bodies and to improve their regulation skills.
Giving more guidance, asking more questions, trying to model behavior and talk about expectations more
Requiring minimal outside of school work, checking in on students' mental health, providing flexibility, providing recordings when absent.
more hands on activities, more changes in activity, more supports available to complete work, larger number of students in intervention groups
I have more displays of letters and numbers around the room. I have tissues, wipes and hand sanitizer on each table. Students do not share as many supplies. I review a lot of 2nd grade or early 3rd grade skills that students lack. Students with pencil grip issues are not referred to the OT as often.
Just an increase in flipped lessons - see above response. Also, as an educator I just think my overall awareness of student mental health needs has increased. I try to be a lot more patient and empathetic with the kids.
Really focusing on classroom management and personal space.

More small group work based on students' needs. Changing my seating arrangements and coaching students through collaboration work. Students have become MAJOR copiers... like cheating by not doing any thinking and writing down someone else's worksheet or answers. The weird part of about this is that it is even the good kids who do it. They do it in front of teachers because they don't think it's cheating. My theory in COVID this is how they did a lot of their work at home--and now they don't see it as a problem. We have had to really crack down and explain the difference in completing work and doing the thinking over the last 2 years. This has been a real adjustment.

Slower curriculum pace

Responsive Classroom

I have slowed the pace of introducing new concepts to give more time for social skills and basic classroom etiquette to be addressed. I have more small groups, mainly reading and math to meet the wide range of abilities in the classroom. The students above benchmark are only in a small group 1 or 2 times a week giving me more time with the students that need the extra help. Pre-COVID I met with those groups 2-3 times per week.

By meeting students' current understanding, each student has a "catered" curriculum to what they need to be successful in class.

Behavior intervention plans have been in place within our grade level. This has allowed for students to observe what they need to change to become more successful students.

I have asked for classroom social/emotional lessons, but we haven't had any. Interventions - I have to do more small group interventions at the tier 2 level for reading, phonics, and math.

class-wide behavior cards, individual daily behavior check-lists for multiple kids, rearranging and restructuring recess, weekly parent emails concerning behaviors for multiple kids, constantly rearranging desks, rewards (that teachers pay for) for the children who are not struggling with behavior issues

I've had to slow down my lessons and actually take out some assignments that I've done in the past.

Lots more social emotional learning during morning meetings. Students meeting with a mental health counselor.

more time spent teaching how to organize work on the page; writing on the lines; neatness (not sure this is due to COVID or overall change in expectations of the earlier grades)

I've taken away some non-essential units of study, encouraged more socialization (appropriate ways of interacting) activities in small groups/partners, allowed more time for thought, given more time for discussion, given more explicit directions and set timers, and many other things I can't think of now. Kids seem to need A LOT of reassurance in their work; they don't have the confidence that they know what they know.

I am much more lenient with late work from students.

I have adjusted the pacing of the instructions. I've created more cooperative learning opportunities and fostered more time for students to interact using partner and small group activities.

I have become much more lenient with work completion and have had to spend more time reviewing previous concepts/providing materials to reinforce concepts.

None really. My approach at this point is to treat my classes the same as I always have. Most of my students are resilient enough to meet my class expectations pretty well, though the emotional scarring and anxiety, which I attribute to COVID but additional factors as well, is very troubling for those who do not, and even for some who do. Nonetheless, it is important to me that students receive a similar opportunity to grow academically, emotionally, and socially in my class now as they did pre-COVID.

The other significant issue to address here is the fact that my classes, in general, have more accelerated students than some other classes. These students suffered less academic loss than some of their peers simply because they can learn more easily and need less intervention than others. By and large, as a result, my students are not as significantly behind as students in less accelerated courses.

I have been intentional about having students write on both the computer and on paper. I think that there was a large focus on computer based assignments during the COVID teaching years, which has caused students to struggle with handwriting and writing endurance.

I have changed classroom policy on retakes of assessment
I have also changed level of clarification on assessment
I have incorporated more collaborative work

Many more positive behavior plans. We have brought back paper planners to help students organize, prioritize, and do better with time management.
I have added more ways to review materials for a test (study guide, in-class Jeopardy, and on their own Kahoot, Quizlets) since many students don't know how to study.

reteaching, working with small groups, and calling students in to work with me individually

Standards Based Grading; Teaching/scaffolding time management, studying skills, test taking strategies, organization, use of planners

Opportunities for as much partner, group, interaction time as possible. So many of our students were isolated from peers that they need to continuously work on positive peer interaction. Executive functioning skills are absent from so many. Teaching organization, planning, and study skills are consistently a focus. It is also really critical to continue to teach and reinforce expected behaviors.

I have never needed the use of multiplication charts and factor lists with a whole group of students. In the past, I have used them very sparingly for students with specific IEP math goals. This year, I have them available to my CP level classes. Not all students use them, but a majority use them on a regular basis because they are not able to recall the facts.

I meet with a handful of students each Monday to go over the work for the week on Schoology. There is a ton of specific direction the students need whereas in years past, students have not needed as much one on one and hand holding to achieve this task.

Not consistently, but from time to time I will make sure students (especially underclassmen) know how to check where/when assignments are due. I've adjusted deadline expectations, but I'm moving back to firmer deadlines as I don't think extending always helps certain students.

one-on-one conferencing with students, goal-setting and checkpoints with reflections, a redesigned semester exam, updated late work and retake policy
I am very focused on the social well-being of each child. Once I know the children are comfortable, happy, and can trust me, I feel like learning can take place. I try very hard to connect to each child, as I see so much worry and anxiety each day. I feel that their feeling of being loved and safe can come before the academic rigor.
Increasing group time per day, intervention specialists and reading specialists started implementing Lindamood-Bell programs (Seeing Stars, Visualizing and Verbalizing, On Cloud Nine) to help address the academic needs for students in our groups.

If you need more resources, what resources would benefit your class?

More support. First grade teachers need a full-time classroom aide to deal with the behaviors we are experiencing in order to teach. We need more discipline and support from administrators but they are also overworked/overwhelmed. We need more intervention specialists to meet all the academic needs.
access to mental health provider daily
I don't need items in the room. If there were ways to reinforce, outside of my classroom, the executive functioning skills I'm working on, that would be helpful for the students and for me.
Not sure.
Parents need help! We need to offer parents resources, workshops, tools, and help.
more counselors throughout the district
Continue to add resources to the environment to help make it sensory friendly for all, for example areas where lighting is less harsh. Opportunity for standing desks, sensory areas for students of all ages to help reduce overstimulation as well as decrease stress and anxiety.
reduced class/group size or more aide support
It seems that responsibility, motivation, and retention of students is much lower than it was prior to COVID. I would love to be able to help students improve these skills, but not sure the best way.
More time and more EAs. There are so many kids who need more individualized help than I can provide during and outside of class time, that we need more aides in the classrooms. I am also using quite a bit of my personal time outside of school hours to adjust curriculum, make accommodations, provide meaningful feedback, etc., that it would be extremely helpful to have some teacher work days throughout the year.
I need more support with behaviors. I'd like more time as well. I feel like we have way more needs and less planning time/more duties than we had before COVID.
Additional support staff, small class sizes and/or IA in classrooms to meet the needs of our growing population at the elementary (speech, math, reading etc).
More experiences for student learning. This could be an online resource that allows students to access science material at home/not within the classroom.
More science/lab equipment that would enhance students' ability to understand concepts within the classroom.

Clear school wide behavior plan.
The presence of administration in my classroom, talking with students and working with them every once in a while would be nice.
We need more aides in the classrooms!
More aids to help in class. There are so many disruptions that it's hard to do it myself.
Yes, a full time classroom aide in all primary classrooms. The behavior and academic needs are very great. Smaller class sizes would be beneficial as well.
CONVERSATIONS about building-wide expectations for behavior and academics
I think making parents aware of specific deficits of this group of kids would be helpful to teachers.
As I have had to adjust curriculum, I have spent a lot more time/money creating and buying new resources.
aids to help support the level of needs relief from some of the extra responsibilities put on my plate so I can use the resources that are currently available
*Per the resources question above, I have researched, attended seminars, read books and discussed with colleagues many different resources to help me better reach students post COVID-19. Most of this has been on my own time, so I feel I have the resources for science teaching.
I really want more expert help on the social/emotional, neurodiverse, trauma-sensitive, etc. aspect of students.
It'd be great to have more science resources for a better variety of levels of content especially when it comes to reading and math in science. I have seen a drop in ability especially in struggling students to do the basic graphing/calculations needed to understand the science content.
school wide / district discussions on assessment (are grades used as communication of ability to demonstrate a level of mastery in the standards of a class or as something else?)
The continued purchase of student planners each year.
I would love resources to reinforce skills that should have been learned in the lower grades. I am not saying the skills were not taught, but students are coming to my class missing foundational skills needed for the current year. I spend a lot of time (and money) creating or purchasing resources to reinforce previous grades standards.
someone (besides me as the classroom teacher) teaching and reinforcing skills to students
We have so many awesome resources in Madeira and I am so thankful every day. If anything, I would always like more books at varying levels with multiple copies instead of having to spend my resources or depend on the public library at times that may not be synchronous with their schedule to gain multiple copies.
A variety of engaging reading materials

If you need professional development, what professional development would be beneficial?

Mental health/how to deal with challenging behaviors in the classroom or how to support struggling
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learners
mental health and wellness, how to break from technology, how to resocialize the students
Skills for increasing academic engagement
More research-based PD as we get more data from post-COVID brain research and learning.
More training in the area of SEL for all teachers to improve understanding of student's behavior at times, strategies to use and co-regulation techniques.
I feel that it could be helpful for everyone to have more mental health professional development.
Differentiated instruction strategies in the high school math classroom. Time efficient and effective ways to bring mindfulness into the high school classroom. Non behaviorist strategies for classroom management and culture building in the high school classroom.
I think any PD related to the mental health of our students is important, and makes us better teachers / a stronger MCS community,
Not professional development but continued mental health opportunities.
Mental health... I need skills for helping students with ADHD and ODD. How do we help the students that haven't been here for 2 weeks because they have anxiety... and then they come back and OF COURSE they are anxious to talk to me--I get anxious when I miss ONE day of school. But I feel like I pile on to those kids because I don't have the training to help them with their emotional space... and Julia can't talk to each teacher each time a kid misses school for several days... There are just too many. Honestly I think we need another counselor as a result of all the side effects of COVID on this developmentally crucial middle school age. But, regardless of that, as a teacher I need help with trauma, anxiety, ADHD and ODD in kids and how to keep teaching them even when they are not in the best mental space to learn.
Sidenote: I feel like this survey is reading like I hate my job and kids... I promise it isn't. But do I have major concerns about kids and the "invisible" changes that have come from these unprecedented times. Yes! I don't blame anyone and think that Madeira did better than MANY schools by getting kids in the building. But the side effects are GLARING to me. I have only taught 7th grade at MMS for the last 12 years... so I feel like I have a really good comparison of OUR kids before and after. And it's real. But, we will all be okay and get back to normal! But yes it's been a major adjustment in my opinion.
Practical, subject- and grade-specific ways to help students with executive functioning needs
Quality professional development around any new adoptions prior to schools starting to give enough time to learn and plan for the new year.
Collaborating with other school districts and meeting teachers in similar subjects/grades.
Anxiety training
Would LOVE true (not just one day) Responsive Classroom and Orton Gillingham training.
Ways to encourage kids to listen to adults/each other, push through when things are difficult, more book talks to encourage reading....
Perhaps something about encouraging time management skills in students while still being empathetic to their struggles.
Any professional development around student/staff social emotional well-being is helpful.

I'd love ways to help empower students to take more responsibility, initiative in their learning, have a growth mindset, and utilize their executive functioning skills better. Emotional regulation especially for students who have more oppositional defiant tendencies or those who have perfectionist tendencies. Also, ways to help students quickly with a large variety reduce or calm anxieties.

motivating kids, closing the gap

SEL PD to continue to find the best ways to help students navigate their emotions.

I would like more guidance on how to work with kids who are oppositional defiant or show work refusal, kids who have experienced extreme trauma and kids who are super ADHD and not medicated. I would like help to develop a skill set to work with these kids. I am seeing more and more students with these challenges as the years progress.

I guess I haven't really thought about it, but I would say PD on dealing with students whose executive functioning has declined. I would like to know more about strategies to help them.

I do feel a bit in space with our reading curriculum as a cohesive whole in MES. I would like some up to date training specifically for classroom teachers in the realm of reading and SPELLING. What is the overall district goal / vision for a spelling program? We need more time with vertical team members to see where children are coming from, where they are going, and the validity of what assessments are chosen to use in each class.

The MES MTSS team closely tracks school-wide student reading and math data. After trending reading data over the last 5-7 years, as well as the implications of COVID, the district responded by providing research-based reading training to Tier 2 and Tier 3 staff members. Intervention specialists and reading specialists were trained in research-based reading and math program(s) as well as the most updated brain research that supports how students learn to read (LETRS).