

What Was Lost? What Was Recovered?

Hardin L.K. Coleman, Ph.D.

Boston University

Karen Corbett Sanders

Fairfax County School District

The Future of Education Conference

Florence Italy

June, 2023

Be Prepared to Build a World of Good



Brief Bios

Karen Corbett Sanders

a retired international business executive, is the Mount Vernon Representative on the Fairfax County School Board. In this role, she works full-time to ensure the students in Fairfax County have access to a world-class education at each school in the district is Corbett Sanders is also a member of the Dean's advisory board at Boston University, Wheelock School of Education and Human Development.

Hardin L.K. Coleman

is a professor of counseling psychology and applied human development at BU Wheelock College of Education & Human Development. He prepares professional school counselors to apply an ecological systems perspective to their work. He is faculty director for the Center of Character and Social Responsibility. His work is focused on creating equitable access to high quality learning opportunities for all children.

Introduction

- Pandemic and Social Emotional Learning
 - Learning loss during the pandemic was more than just academic
 - The loss in social emotional development was also significant
 - In this presentation we will:
 - Address the issue that, in the US, we do not have a systematic approach to recovery from SEL loss
 - Give a case example of a district attempt to address learning loss
 - Suggest a way to take this model to scale

Academic vs. Social Emotional Well Being

- Academic Performance
 - Parents
 - Teachers
 - Professional Development
 - Principals
 - District Leadership
- Social Emotional Well Being
 - There is no systematic leadership, approach or model for SEL
 - It varies school by school, district by district, state by state

The Case: Fairfax County School District

- Student-Focused and Data-Driven Response to the Pandemic
 - 2021 Student Survey in response to perceived increase in stress and anxiety

Fairfax County Youth Survey

- 17.8% of 6th graders report feeling stressed most/all the time
- 62.3% report experience stress a little or some of the time in the month prior to the survey
- Female students reported more feelings of stress most/all the time 22.7% v 12.2% of male students.
- 33.1% 6th grade students reported feeling sad or hopeless every day for two or more weeks in a row during the prior year (39.5% females v 26.3% male)
- 20% students reported having been bullied; 3.9% reported bullying others.
- 12.2% reported cyber bullying (13.7% females, 10.6% male)

In Addition

- In March 2023
 - 25.3% of the schools in the state had issues with chronic absenteeism
 - According to the Fairfax County Opioid Response Plan, In Virginia for the first time in 2021 opioid-related deaths exceeded the total number of vehicle- and gun-related deaths, with a year-over-year increase of 60% between 2019 (1630) and 2021 (2660)

The Fairfax Response: Comprehensive and Multifaceted

- An aggressive education and parent awareness program
- Increase access to mental and behavioral health services
- Changed daily academic schedules to reduce stress
- Made existing SEL curriculum available online
- Established a regular SEL Screener for all students
- Engaged with parents to address how to respond to findings
- Created access to telehealth for families

Summary

- The Fairfax County response was comprehensive and multi-faceted
- It included parents as partners in the process
- It serves as a model for using data to help target areas for intervention and tracking progress to improved services for children and their families.

Conclusion

- Let's imagine that 95% of our children leave our systems career and life ready
- In addition to academic progress, this we require paying systematic attention to their social emotional well being
- Successful districts will
 - Track their social well being data
 - Create and implement curriculum that drives growth in social and emotional well being
- Successful districts will not only recover, they will flourish