

SPOTLIGHT ON ASSESSMENT

[Vital Testing Data Can Ensure Students Get Support They Need](#) | The Seattle Times

The president and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle, Michelle Merriweather, penned a compelling and racial justice-minded defense of standardized testing this school year in the Seattle Times, saying “The results from these tests also play a critical role in shining a light on vast disparities in educational opportunity, helping to secure support for students who are too often underserved in our schools.”

Merriweather’s words echo a vision for using assessment data this year to identify how inequitably the pandemic likely impacted different communities proposed by Harvard professor Andrew Ho. In a [post for FutureEd](#), Ho provided a checklist for state officials on using assessment data to keep equity center in pandemic recovery plans. Ho underscored that the results from student assessments can be used to help schools target instructional interventions and guide a massive influx of federal relief dollars - if states take steps now to [maximize the effective use of data](#).

[Educators](#), advocates, and researchers continue to issue calls for the collection of data on student learning as the Biden administration [signals approval of broad - but not limitless - flexibility](#) around the administration of spring tests.

To stay up-to-date on state assessment plans this school year, follow Testing 1-2-3 author Dale Chu’s new [Power Rankings series](#) evaluating state plans to use learning data to inform their pandemic recovery. Check out Chu’s first ranking, Washington State, [here](#).



IN THE NEWS

[Billions Come to K-12 Schools for Safe, Equitable Reopening](#) | Governing

Governing Magazine’s Carl Smith details the more than \$130 billion in school relief funding included in the American Rescue Plan, highlighting how the funding will flow to schools via the federal Title-I formula, will be required to be targeted at reopening and addressing learning loss, and is heavily weighted to benefit schools with high rates of poverty. While the Biden administration says the massive disruption of the pandemic warrants the influx of federal dollars, Education Week’s Daarel Burnette II [argues that COVID-19 could make fixing poor performing schools more difficult than ever before](#), even in light of the significant federal investment in school recovery.



[Colorado Reading Bills Seeking More Transparency and Teacher Training Extension Move Forward](#) | Chalkbeat Colorado

A series of bills being considered by Colorado lawmakers exemplify the struggles many states have experienced in identifying the best ways to bolster flagging literacy rates, improve teacher training, and provide resources to students and families. While one proposal would make it easier for parents to identify how schools approach reading instruction, two others would weaken teacher training and

curriculum requirements - moves that run counter to [actions taken in other states](#) to refocus education investments on literacy.



THE QUICK LIST

[As Pandemic Upends Teaching, Fewer Students Want to Pursue It](#) | The New York Times

[Northam Signs Legislation Creating Tuition-Free Community College for Low, Middle-Income Students](#) | NBC12

[Providing the Transparency Parents Deserve](#) | The Hill

[Massachusetts Education Commissioner Proposes Waiving MCAS Requirement for Class of 2022](#) | Boston Globe

[As Florida Schools Prepare for Testing, At-Home Learners are a Concern](#) | Tampa Bay Times