

SUCCESSFUL REOPENING!!!
We're open! Our first week was a huge success! Children and parents alike rapidly adjusted to the new protocols and procedures in place to ensure a healthy environment. Congratulations to our staff, parents and children who made it possible.



Hello to all of our wonderful Meher parents and friends.

Our return has been a time of adjustments and

many centers haven't been able to open because of being unready to implement everything that is required now.

The children quickly adjusted to the social distancing that we are enforcing. Gentle reminders are usually all that is needed when we notice someone starting to

stray. They quickly got back to their work and lessons. Although things are different, getting back to aspects of their pre-

newness. I first and foremost want to thank our amazing staff, from both the Monterey Park and Altadena locations, for their positive attitude and their hard work and willingness to make all of the changes work. They are true keepers of the light and show so much caring for your children.

We had a small group of children return to all the classrooms. Overall, they were very happy to be back. Parents were amazing in communicating their trust and confidence in how we were handling things. And things are definitely different. We spent many hours informing ourselves of the new rules and coming up with a plan of protocol so that we cover all the new expectations. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Chavez and I had a video conference and inspection with our analyst from Child Care Licensing and I am pleased to report that she was extremely impressed at how well we prepared for and are executing all the new guidelines. She said

Mrs. Chavez and I had a video conference and inspection with our analyst from Child Care Licensing and I am pleased to report that she was extremely impressed at how well we prepared for and are executing all the new guidelines. She said many centers haven't been able to open because of being unready to implement everything that is required now.

closure time has been a good thing and you can see it in their peacefulness and joy.

We are sad to announce that Ms. Tenold will not be returning to Meher. The Elementary children are enjoying lessons from Mr. Mindes. He has a small, mixed group of 7-11 year olds. Mrs. Gonzalez is

*The city of Monterey Park is having an event called **Chalk It Up** inviting the community to create sidewalk chalk art with positive messages. The Elementary students, under the guidance of Mrs. Gonzalez, have been creating beautiful art work in front of the School. You can see some of it on our Instagram.*

assisting him and quickly got the children back to the garden and artwork. The city of Monterey Park is having an event called **Chalk It Up** inviting the community to create sidewalk chalk art with positive messages. The Elementary students, under the guidance of Mrs. Gonzalez, have been creating beautiful art work in front of the School. You can see some of it on our Instagram.

Thank you to all of you for your love and support. If you have any questions or are considering having your child return soon, please call the school and you can speak to either me or Mrs. Chavez. We are Meher Strong and we will get through this together.

Love and Peace,
Adela Muñoz



A report from Ms. Lopez

Hello Parents! **Welcome Back** (it feels so good to say that). The kids are excited to be back, happy to see their friends, and

relieved to have some normalcy back in their lives. They jumped right into working and doing activities they've had a lesson on. They are adjusting well to our "new normal."

This month we got a new student: **Oona Bennett**. She is doing a lot of exploring in our classroom and



receiving lots of "Grace and Courtesy" lessons which are part of the initial curriculum. Welcome Oona Bennett. On June 9th we celebrated Dylan Chavez' birthday with delicious chocolate cupcakes.



Happy Birthday Dylan.

Mrs. Suh and I miss everyone and we can't wait to see you all!



A report from Mrs. Rivera

Hi parents and children in Mrs. Rivera's class,

We as always are wishing and praying for all of you to be safe and healthy.

The School reopened on June 1st and we welcomed six children to our classroom. These children and their parents were eager to come back to our School and have their children learn in the Montessori Prepared Environment.

The children jumped into the lessons given them and were glad to learn new ones too! As always, the children look forward to our circle time. This is the time when an older child volunteers to pick a book and read it to the group, or they sing songs and recite poems, and most of all interact and share with the group ideas they have on the stories read. They also may bring in projects they have done at home with the help of their parents to share in class too! Circle time is a way wherein children come out of their shell and enjoy speaking to the larger group.



The children are content and happy as their parents drop them off in school. In the afternoon parents are happy to see their children go home with a few activities done in class and talk about other lessons they have learned. Washing hands, distancing in line and seats in the classroom has been strictly observed. As always, we clean and sanitize materials regularly before children arrive, at mid day and after class time. All these procedures are done foremost for our

love and care for the children in our class and the School as a whole.

I thank Mr. Page for opening our School and allowing me to

continue the passion I have always had: to educate and show the children in my class the skills that can be developed within them. We did great in the first week of classes this June and will continue to do so through the month of July and the years to come.



Missing you all. Take care and stay safe.

Love always,
Mrs. Rivera and Ms. Martinez

A report from Mr. Mindes



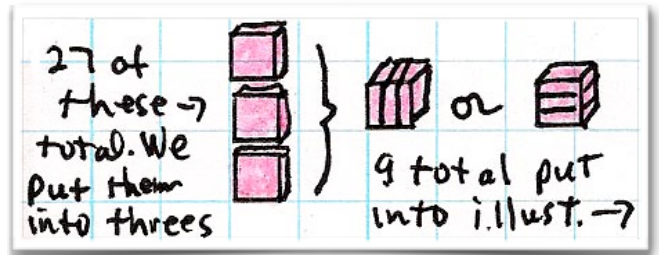
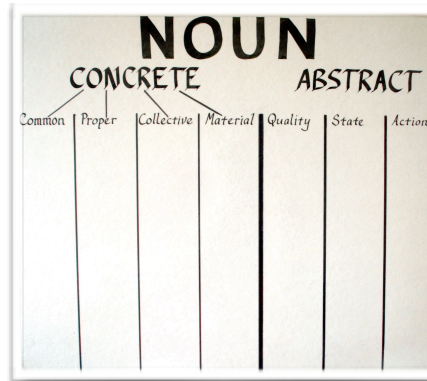
Greetings Meher families!
Hope everyone is doing well. Just wanted to write a few words about our returning to the classroom. The Lower Elementary classroom got up and running on the first day with students

excitedly greeting each other and chatting away, all while knowing the social distancing rules! However, the first week did show a sign of the stay at home orders we had all been following these last two months. Namely, a number of students appeared so tired in the afternoon, particularly if the activity was quiet reading, that they fell asleep! We figured it was probably due to children staying up a little longer at night and sleeping a little longer in the morning;

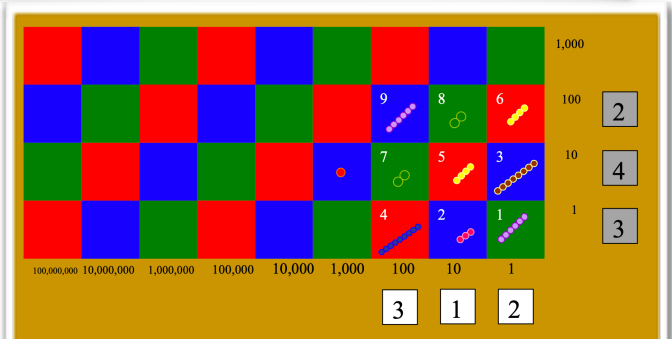
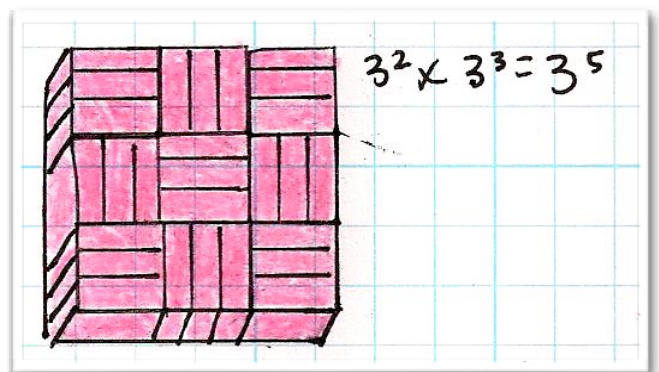
be that as it may, it wasn't long - in fact, by the start of the second week - that the number of truly tired students dropped considerably!

On the other hand, the classroom itself has been kept very cool, even with the class door kept wide open (per our current policy) and

students burning energy calculating, investigating, and expressing. Some of the topics students have been exploring include



the parts of speech - currently nouns, articles, and adjectives; identifying plant



Now let's do 312×243 . We always start by forming our units. Then we find our tens, first in the units of tens. Then we get our tens in the tens of tens. Next we go to our hundreds. First we do our units time hundreds, then our tens times hundreds, then our hundreds times hundreds. Doing this with three digit multipliers, we more easily see the diagonal. Then as usual when we finish multiplying, we slide and combine. So 312 multiplied by 243 equals $75,816$.

parts and their functions; and examining mathematical concepts. These include graphing exponential functions (Upper Elementary students) and performing 3-digit multiplication and remembering math facts (the Lower Elementary students). It's wonderful to see the classroom gears start to turn again, while keeping our distance!



Welcome Back Families!

**From Ms. Wildhaber,
Director of our
Altadena Campus**

First off, the staff would like to thank you for all your patience and care during drop off and pick up. We appreciate the effort you're all making to ensure everyone's transition back is as smooth as possible.

Miss Tinajero, Miss McCray, Miss Roque and I had a great first week back. We were so



surprised by how much the children have grown in their 11 weeks away from Meher.

They all seemed like they missed being here, and adapted to the necessary changes with ease. On our first day back, each child came in and went straight to taking out materials without missing a beat. We spent the first week back reviewing classroom rules, providing refresher lessons, and reminding the children that we were all here to help them if they forgot how to do something. Some of them were ready to jump into to new lessons, and some of them appeared eager to revisit materials as old friends.

I think the hardest part has been demonstrating self control-on the part of the

staff! We missed your children so much and it has been hard not showering them with physical hugs.

We have adopted "air hugs" to go with our longstanding "air high fives." Please do not misunderstand, we absolutely offer your children comfort as needed.

However, we are refraining from unnecessary physical contact at this time. Also, we had forgotten how interesting (and entertaining) the conversation between two preschoolers can be!

Thank you for once again trusting us to put your child's safety first while enriching their learning in a warm and loving environment.

As always, we promote diversity, differing abilities, and self-expression in the classroom. While many of our books

such as *Mixed*, *I Will Not Give Up*, *Wonder*, *Love is All Around the World*, and *You're All Kinds of Wonderful* reflect that naturally, we have been amplifying these themes with a focus on black lives. Books we have added this week include *Hair Love*, *I Am Enough*, *Cece the Scientist*, *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*, and *Shades of Black*.



Is It Safe to Reopen Schools?

These Countries Say Yes

From the Wall Street Journal, by Bojan Pancevski in Berlin and Naja Dandanell in Copenhagen
May 31, 2020

A number of countries that have reopened schools in the past two months have reported no resulting increase in coronavirus infection rates, an encouraging sign for authorities around the world that are contemplating how and when to safely bring children back to the classroom.

Authorities in many hard-hit countries such as Italy and the U.S. have so far resisted reopening schools for fear of triggering an increase in infections. In the U.S., schools have been drawing up plans to reopen in September, partly based on the experience of other countries.

Researchers and European authorities said the absence of any notable clusters of infection in reopened elementary schools so far suggested that children aren't significant spreaders of the new coronavirus in society.

They acknowledged that their findings might change with the onset of winter and cold weather, and a recent outbreak at a Jerusalem high school affecting students and staff was a reminder of the higher risk to teenagers and adults.

But Denmark, Austria, Norway, Finland, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and most other countries that have reopened classrooms haven't had outbreaks in schools or day-care centers.

In Denmark, the opening of schools had no impact on the progress of the

epidemic, said Tyra Grove Krause, a senior official with the State Serum Institute, the country's disease control agency.

Denmark became the first Western country to reopen schools on April 15 and maintains a sophisticated monitoring system to detect any increase in infection and identify its source.

"Our interpretation is that it may be that the children aren't that important for the spread of infection," Dr. Krause said. Infections in Denmark among all age groups have been decreasing since schools reopened, she added.

Denmark has imposed a number of precautions on teaching establishments, from maintaining air circulation to rules on distancing and hygiene.

In Norway, the government won't close schools again even if the number of cases starts rising in the country because there have been no negative consequences from

reopening schools on April 20, said Education Minister Guri Melby.

Since Austria reopened on May 18, no increase in infections has been observed in schools

and kindergartens, a spokesman for the government said.

Schools in some German states have been open for almost a month. While Germany has since experienced outbreaks at slaughterhouses, migrant shelters, a church and a restaurant, schools have been spared.

Finland hasn't recorded any increase in infections since it reopened schools and day-care centers on May 14, Mika Salminen, director of health security at the Finnish

Institute of Health and Welfare, said on Thursday.

Why children rarely develop serious Covid-19 symptoms, how susceptible they are to getting infected and why

Researchers and European authorities said the absence of any notable clusters of infection in reopened elementary schools so far suggested that children aren't significant spreaders of the new coronavirus in society.

One reason for the absence of infections in schools could be that children below 10 have fewer of the receptors the virus uses to enter the body, said Prof. Herman Goossens, a medical microbiologist and coordinator of a European Union task force for researching Covid-19.

they don't appear to be effective spreaders of the disease are among the most discussed riddles of the epidemic among scientists.

One reason for the absence of infections in schools could be that children below 10 have fewer of the receptors the virus uses to enter the body, said Prof. Herman Goossens, a medical microbiologist and coordinator of a European Union task force for researching Covid-19.

The number of so-called ACE2 receptors in some cells in the upper respiratory tract that the novel coronavirus uses as a gateway only starts to increase from the age of 10, making younger children comparatively less susceptible, he said.

His advice to EU governments: Bring children up to the age of 12 back to school.

Data from around the world showed children in this age group accounted for less than 1% of total infections, Prof. Goossens said.

Initially, many countries based their decision to close schools on their experience with influenza, which children are susceptible to and can easily pass on to adults. Prof. Goossens said the new coronavirus seemed to behave more like the bacteria that cause tuberculosis; children between 5 and 10 years old are less susceptible to TB bacteria and hardly pass it on to others even if they get infected. He cautioned that more research is needed into the possible role of asymptomatic children in spreading the virus.

The southern state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, one of the hot spots of the epidemic in Germany, became on Tuesday one of the latest to announce it would reopen schools after a preliminary local

study found that children were highly underrepresented among Covid-19 patients.

German Health Minister Jens Spahn cautioned in a broadcast interview on Thursday that "the state of science at the moment doesn't allow for any real conclusions about how much children contribute to the spread of the virus.... There are different assessments and that makes it especially difficult to make political decisions."

In some countries, sporadic infections have happened among schoolchildren and staff, but none have been reported to have resulted in bigger infection clusters. In France, after schools reopened on May 11, several closed after around 70

reported infections in schools and preschools nationwide. Almost all were adults, local authorities reported.

Sweden is the only Western country that hasn't introduced a lockdown during the coronavirus pandemic, and its schools have been open throughout. There have been no notable outbreaks involving children, though a school in the northern city of Skelleftea made national news when a teacher with underlying health conditions

died after becoming infected.

The teacher had worked in a primary school where 18 of 76 faculty members later tested positive, forcing it to shut

down. It is unclear whether children or teachers spread the virus, said Thomas Ekholm, local chairman of a teachers union. He said the union wasn't aware of any other outbreaks at Swedish schools.

Mr. Ekholm and other union leaders published a letter in Swedish newspapers in early May that called for principals to allow instructors in high-risk groups to teach from home. In Germany, teachers can be exempt from returning to school if they can prove

*Prof. Herman Goossens, a medical microbiologist and coordinator of a European Union task force for researching Covid-19 to EU governments: **Bring children up to the age of 12 back to school.***

"Our interpretation is that it may be that the children aren't that important for the spread of infection," Dr. Krause said. Infections in Denmark among all age groups have been decreasing since schools reopened, she added.

they would be at high risk if infected with the new coronavirus.

The Results Are In For Remote Learning: It Didn't Work

By [Tawnell D. Hobbs](#) and [Lee Hawkins](#)

June 5, 2020 From the *Wall Street Journal*

This spring, America took an involuntary crash course in remote learning. With the school year now winding down, the grade from students, teachers, parents and administrators is already in: It was a failure.

School districts closed campuses in March in response to the coronavirus pandemic and, with practically no time at all for planning or training, launched a grand experiment to educate more than 50 million students from kindergarten through 12th grade using technology.

Even though many students these days are tech savvy, that doesn't ensure they will do well with remote learning. Some education experts say there is a huge gap between what students can do for fun on their cellphones and gaming systems and how good they are at using a device for educational tasks such as reading a document, answering a question or figuring out a problem.

The problems began piling up almost immediately. There were students with no computers or internet access. Teachers had no experience with remote learning. And many parents weren't available to help.

In many places, lots of students simply didn't show up online, and administrators had no good way to find out why not. Soon many districts weren't requiring students to do any work at all, increasing the risk that millions of students would have big gaps in their learning.

"We all know there's no substitute for learning in a school setting, and many students are struggling and falling far behind where they should be," said Austin Beutner, superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified

School District, in a video briefing to the community on Wednesday.

Already, school administrators are looking ahead to an uncertain fall, when many will be trying to apply lessons gleaned from the rocky spring to try to reopen classrooms, possibly using a mix of in-person and remote learning. To prevent a repeat of the spring disaster, some of them

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say, more students will need suitable electronic devices and internet access, and teachers will need much better training about how best to instruct from afar.

Preliminary research suggests students nationwide will return to school in the fall with roughly 70% of learning gains in reading relative to a typical school year, and less than 50% in math, according to projections by NWEA, an Oregon-based nonprofit that provides research to help educators tailor instruction. It expects a greater learning loss for minority and low-income children who have less access to technology, and for families more affected by the economic downturn.

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“I think we have this assumption that since they spend all their time on their devices, it’s no big deal for them to learn remotely,” said Janella Hinds, a social-studies teacher at the 500-student High School for Public Service in Brooklyn’s Flatbush neighborhood. “But being a digital consumer and a digital learner are two different things.”

“I think we have this assumption that since they spend all their time on their devices, it’s no big deal for them to learn remotely,” said Janella Hinds, a social-studies teacher at the 500-student High School for Public Service in Brooklyn’s Flatbush neighborhood. “But being a digital consumer and a digital learner are two different things.”

Parents, for their part, are frustrated after more than two months of trying to supervise their children’s at-home learning while juggling jobs and other responsibilities.

“It’s been very challenging,” said Mara LaViola, who has a 17-year-old son with autism and other disabilities in the Eanes Independent School District in Austin, Texas. Initially, she figured she would be more tolerant of teaching shortcomings during such an unprecedented time. But she was dismayed that her son’s interaction with teachers didn’t extend much beyond a morning greeting.

“The vast majority of it failed because of a lack of imagination, and a lack of effort,” she said.

Molly May, the district’s executive director of special education, said she felt “all of our students got a high-level of services given the platform and their ability to access remote learning. Teachers were innovative and creative and tried to meet the needs of each child.”

School districts and teachers that had previously used forms of online learning made the transition more easily. But many educators, even those comfortable with the method, say remote learning isn’t comparable to in-person teaching.

“I find it hectic and stressful,” said Dallas middle-school teacher Delna Bryan, whose advanced Spanish classes include both fluent and nonfluent youngsters. “In the classroom, I can look around and see body language and know when some of my students not fluent in Spanish need me to switch to English. I can’t do that online. We need the interaction with the kids, face-to-face.”

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Districts are now debating what they should do when schools reopen for the next academic year—whether to rewind back to where students left off in March, or to plow ahead with the regular curriculum and let teachers fill in missing skills. Some plan to

administer exams at the start of the school year to gauge learning shortfalls. School districts didn’t realize the number of students without access to devices and the internet until they surveyed parents. Districts that could

afford to do so hurried to buy the technology needed to get students online. Some, such as those in Austin and Belleville, Ill., put Wi-Fi wired buses in parking lots for students to connect from their parents’ cars. Many districts prepared printed packets of work for students without online access, which were handed out in food drive-through lines at schools.

One major issue has been how to assess students fairly when learning is done remotely. Many school districts aren’t comfortable issuing grades for remote work. Some have told teachers not to give failing grades because of equity issues. Many are using a “hold harmless” approach, where grades that negatively affect students can’t be used, but ones that help them or are

neutral are permitted. Some teachers believe the rule has simply resulted in students not doing work.

Others worry that remote learning facilitates cheating. “Whatever work we’re receiving online may not always necessarily be the work completed by the

child,” said Alexa Sorden, founding principal of Concourse Village Elementary School in the Bronx.

Some of the nation’s largest school districts, including Los Angeles and Chicago, concerned about inequities in internet access and parental involvement, have told teachers not to give students failing final grades or anything lower than what they had before the shutdown. Washington state banned “F” grades in all of its districts.

“We can’t use the shutdown to fail them,” said Michael Hinojosa, superintendent of the Dallas Independent School District in Texas. “And some teachers are really good with this and some of them are not. We didn’t want to penalize people until we can make it better.”

Dr. Hinojosa said students won’t be failed for not completing remote work assignments, but those already failing before the pandemic who didn’t do any work will still fail. He said teachers can give an “incomplete” to students who fell short of passing but are willing to complete the work over the summer.

Many teachers unions have been supportive of not grading students because of inequities, although some of their members feel like it allows students to slack off.

Remote learning has turned the simple task of taking attendance into a challenge. Many count students as present if they log

in to do work in programs like Google Classroom, an online classroom manager. Some give attendance credit for weekly

progress on completed work, while others allow parents to call in to vouch for their children. Some districts aren’t bothering with attendance at all.

Those that have been able to track attendance say it has been below regular levels.

Some students have simply gone missing. Early into the shutdown, the Los Angeles Unified School District estimated that on any given day in a week span, 32% of high-school students didn’t log in to learn.

Mr. Beutner, the Los Angeles superintendent, said at the time that some of those missing are among the most vulnerable—those in the foster-care system

or living in deep poverty, students with disabilities and those who regularly missed school in ordinary times. “It’s simply not acceptable that we

lose touch,” he said, while noting that the number of students logging in has grown

Some districts have opted to end the academic year early. The Bibb County School District in Georgia wrapped up on May 1, three weeks ahead of time. Officials cited stress on the community and said they planned to use the time to get ready for next school year.

The Quitman Independent School District in Texas stopped giving new assignments two weeks before the school year ended to focus on teaching life skills. Based on their age, students were asked to complete tasks ranging from making a bed to changing a tire to reading a bill.

“Parents are overwhelmed,” said Rhonda Turner, superintendent of the 1,200-student Quitman district. “It seemed like a

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perfect time to implement this. We've had a phenomenal response" from students and parents.

Lucia Curatolo-Boylan, a mother of four children, ages 4 to 10, in New York City public schools, found supervising the schooling a challenge. "It was definitely more difficult than I probably could have ever expected," she said. "There was a lot that my oldest son was able to do on his own, which was wonderful. But the other two children really required my constant supervision and presence, which made it also harder to be there for my baby. Her nursery school education of her letters and numbers is quickly disappearing and not a priority because I had to sit with my kindergartner from 9 to 2 every day."

Her son, 10-year-old Miles, has found remote learning exhausting and unpredictable. "Sometimes you have a lot of work and sometimes you don't," he said, recalling a time when he worked "almost an entire school day on three things."

Some schools, particularly those with ample resources and some experience with remote learning, had a far easier time of it than most.

In Broward County Public Schools in Florida, the district had been building its technology program for several years and many teachers were already managing classwork online, so things have gone more smoothly.

Nevertheless, a survey of Broward students in grades 6 through 12 found that 52% don't feel motivated to complete distance-learning assignments. About 45% said they almost never receive adult help at home to complete assignments.

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Administrators at Riverdale Country School, a private school in New York City, said their foray into online learning was successful, thanks to careful preparation and execution and having the

resources to pull it off. The transition involved a month of infrastructure design and collaboration between administrators, teachers, the school's technology team, students and parents.

Faculty and students participated in one-hour training sessions during the school day, and the school closed for two days before its spring break for a remote learning trial run.

As the school year comes to a close, districts are focused on making improvements. Some will use summer break to retool remote learning, provide teachers with professional training to use it, and work to outfit students with needed technology, with hopes of using federal stimulus money to do so.

About 9.7 million students aren't connected to the internet, according to an estimate by the

EducationSuperHighway, a nonprofit focused on connectivity in public schools. "As a nation, we were not prepared to take learning online," said founder and CEO Evan Marwell.

Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, West Virginia and Washington, D.C., have the largest percentage of unconnected students, ranging from 26% to 28%, more than the national average of about 20%. New Hampshire, North Dakota and Utah have the lowest percentage, ranging from 10% to 12%.

Many districts plan to offer summer school, likely remotely, to get students

caught up and help combat “Covid slide.” But some educators worry that the same remote learning that wasn’t effective in the spring won’t have changed much for summer.

Many districts plan to offer summer school, likely remotely, to get students caught up and help combat “Covid slide.” But some educators worry that the same remote learning that wasn’t effective in the spring won’t have changed much for summer.

New York City Department of Education will provide remedial instruction over the summer and possibly in the fall to thousands of students who have fallen behind during remote classes this spring. Officials expect about 177,000 of the city’s 1.1 million public-school students to enroll in remote summer learning, with about 102,000 of them required to take part.

School superintendents differ on how to reopen schools in the fall using social-distancing practices. Many are contemplating a hybrid system of splitting up classes and rotating students in and out

“We’ve been building this plane and flying it at the same time,” said Danielle Buttacavoli, a school counselor at IS 61, the William A. Morris Intermediate School, in Staten Island.

of classrooms, with some reporting to the school on some days while the others work remotely. Another strategy being explored is to have younger students who can’t be home alone in classrooms every day, while older students learn at home.

To keep everyone safe, districts are considering new rules such as requiring students and teachers to wear masks, having students eat lunch in classrooms and requiring them to attend school in person only two days a week. Other possibilities include prohibiting the sharing of school supplies and the spacing of desks closer than 6 feet apart, and limiting parents and other visitors on campuses.

Educators hope that the rockiest days of remote learning are behind them.

“We’ve been building this plane and flying it at the same time,” said Danielle Buttacavoli, a school counselor at IS 61, the William A. Morris Intermediate School, in

Staten Island. “We’ve been getting stronger at using these platforms, and I think the same goes for the students.”

Tawnell.Hobbs@wsj.com
and Lee Hawkins at
lee.hawkins@wsj.com

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Quotes of Dr. Maria Montessori



“The child who has never learned to work by himself, to set goals for his own acts, or to be the master of his own force of will is

recognizable in the adult who lets others guide his will and feels a constant need for approval of others.” —*Education and Peace*

“A child who has become master of his acts through long and repeated exercises, and who has been encouraged by the pleasant and interesting activities in which he has been engaged, is a child filled with health and joy and remarkable for his calmness and discipline.” —*The Discovery of the Child*

“The Secret of Good Teaching is to regard the child’s intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination.”