Has Education Reform Failed?
Three Decades of Improvement in U.S. Education

Thomas J. Kane
Harvard University
“The education reform movement that started with George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind law is dead. It died because every strategy it imposed on the nation’s schools has failed.”

Diane Ravitch

*Time*, February 1, 2020
Before 2019, every state had improved in math.
And many states improved in reading.
Gaps were narrowing by race.
As well as by income.

Source: Shirin A. Hashim, Thomas J. Kane, Thomas Kelley-Kemple, Mary E. Laski & Douglas O. Staiger
As well as by income.

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Those Born in States with Large NAEP ↑ Benefited

Before 2019, every state improved in 8th grade math.

But the U.S. just gave up 40% of pre-pandemic progress!

Currently 29 states (plus DC)
~4,000 school districts
~12 m students gr 3-8

What happened in my district?
Use state scores on NAEP
To rescale local achievement losses on state tests.
The pandemic widened achievement gaps.
Implications

1. No time to abandon test-based accountability.
2. Ask districts to revisit their recovery plans, show their plans are commensurate with student losses.
## Right-sizing the response

An “ambitious” – but under-sized plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention Options</th>
<th>% of students</th>
<th>Effect Size from Research</th>
<th>Multiply % by Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutors</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>.1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Math</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>.5 year</td>
<td>.15 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Sch</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>.25 year</td>
<td>.045 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend school year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Per week</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sum of expected effects:**

\[
\text{.295 years}
\]
Implications

1. No time to **abandon** test-based accountability.
2. Ask districts to **revisit their recovery plans**, show their plans are **commensurate** with student losses.
3. **Instructional Time Set-Aside**: Require districts to set aside funds for additional instructional time unless/until all subgroups return to 2019 proficiency.
4. A Chance to **Reinvent Summer/Support for Learning at Home**
## Right-sizing the response

Closer to the right size.

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<td>.175 yr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extend school year</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.5 weeks</td>
<td>.083 yrs</td>
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Sum of expected effects: **.495 years**

Repeat for 2 years to replace 1 year.