TALES FROM THE CLASSROOM: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF TEACHER

EXPERIENCES WITH COVID-19

by

Stephen Thompson

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

School of Behavioral Sciences

Liberty University

2023

TALES FROM THE CLASSROOM: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF TEACHER

EXPERIENCES WITH COVID-19

By Stephen Boyd Thompson

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

School of Behavioral Sciences

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2023

APPROVED BY:

Dr. Kristin Kellen, Committee Chair

Dr. Yulanda Tyre, Committee Member

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this phenomenological study will be to discover insights into how the

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) lockdown has caused residual effects on students'

academic, social, and emotional health two years removed from the pandemic. COVID-19 has

impacted education from the lockdown that the leaders in the United States mandated. This

lockdown removed students from school's traditional routines, causing them to learn new ways

to participate in their education. The method guiding this study is a qualitative phenomenology

to focus on the lived experiences of teachers. Using a transcendental approach, the researcher

will focus on the depiction of the phenomenon by the participants. This research will provide

qualitative data that has been overlooked in studies on COVID-19. Additionally, this study will

add new perspectives on how COVID-19 impacted students' education.

Keywords: COVID-19, Phenomenology, Education, Social Constructivism, USA,

Academic, Social Health, Emotional Health

Dedication

This study is dedicated first and foremost to our Lord God almighty as he is the giver of all good things and our strength in hard times. This study is also dedicated to my wonderful wife, who supported me throughout the process, adjusting her schedule and responsibilities whenever I needed, allowing me to research and write. This study is also dedicated to my five boys, who always asked me how I was doing and understood when "Daddy needs to work a little more" when they asked to play. Finally, this study is dedicated to my friends, colleagues, and church members who checked in consistently genuinely wanting to know how I was doing and encouraging me.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my dissertation team, Dr. Kristen Kellen and Dr. Yulanda Tyre, for their invaluable support, direction, and guidance during the course of my dissertation research. I would also like to thank my colleagues Dr. Barbara May, Dr. Jennifer Stumphy, Dr. Ana Zorrilla and Dr. Rodney Gernert for their help, insights, and encouragement throughout my entire doctoral process. I would also like to thank Caleb Leal for the many times we discussed processes and ideas together, blessings to him as he finishes. Additionally, I would like to thank my office team for their daily enthusiasm in asking how I was doing with my dissertation it was greatly appreciated.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this research is to inform readers how COVID-19 affected students in the classroom from the perspective of teachers who were on the front lines during the lockdown and still working in schools. Using the accounts of teachers, this researcher looks to see if the effects of COVID-19 have been as severe as predicted by the early literature. In the literature, there exist studies that hypothesize how COVID-19 would disrupt the learning process, as well as more recent literature that begins to provide data on how this is happening. This study will explore in more depth some of the concerns raised in these studies. What needs to be improved are studies that provide audiences with the rich stories of teachers who had to try to adjust their learning models at the drop of a hat in 2020 and who teach students navigating online or hybrid instruction. Studying and recording these accounts is valuable for other educators and districts as it allows for a personal understanding of what educators identify as the most significant concerns they saw and are still experiencing. This information can spur new discussions for needed support and let other educators feel validated in having their stories heard and documented. To guide this study, the following research questions will be explored:

- What do teachers identify as the main factors from COVID-19 that influence student performance?

- What are the immediate academic, social well-being, and emotional/mental health effects of COVID-19 that were observed in the classroom?

- What area of student performance (academic, social, emotional) have teachers observed most affected by COVID-19?

- What are the long-term effects of COVID-19 still affecting the classroom?

Examining literature published at the beginning stages of the lockdown and within the last two years, this project will explore in more depth some of the main areas of concern that were first reported and presented more recently. Following the literature review, the methods used to gather data are reported. After methods for data gathering, the findings of the interviews will be presented, finishing with the conclusions that can be drawn from the data.

Background

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has had many damaging effects on students due to the required move to online education (Chaturvedi et al., 2021). Research on this relatively new phenomenon is minimal; only a few studies explore the effects of COVID-19 on students from the perspective of classroom teachers. This topic is of interest as this researcher works in education, and several educators still cite COVID-19 as the cause of classroom deficiencies similar to those found in Leech et al. (2022). The results of this study could benefit any educator or researcher investigating the effects of COVID-19.

Historical

With COVID-19 only being a few years old, research is limited, yet a variety of studies are emerging. Some early studies foreshadowed some of the long-term psychological effects of COVID-19 and stressed the need for more research (Akat & Karatas, 2020). Others converse about how COVID-19 would change the future of teaching (Barrett-Fox et al., 2020). Some of the studies focused on parent perceptions (Booth et al., 2020), social distancing (Pedersen & Favero, 2020), or how COVID-19 was creating a social crisis in the making (Van Lacker & Parolin, 2020).

The number of studies that concern COVID-19 has only grown and grown in specificity. Studies from 2022 vary in the category as they did in 2020, but now the titles show more results-oriented topics. Some studies focus on students' perceptions of their challenges during COVID-

19 and how they found hope (Bryce & Fraser, 2022; Velez et al., 2022; De France et al., 2022). Another study highlighted teachers' mental health well-being over three different points during the pandemic to gauge what resources teachers needed most (Kim et al., 2022). At the same time, others review the challenges remote education has on students across all grade levels (Leech et al., 2022). The collection of these studies shows that though much has been researched thus far about COVID-19, there is still a great deal to investigate that cannot be rushed as more time is needed to observe the ripple effect of COVID-19 to see how great some of the side-effects will grow to be. This study is designed to help contribute to such research.

Social

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the world into seclusion and, by doing so, halted the natural interactions of children at school. Some of these interactions may still have happened for students with siblings or younger family members living at home. For only children, it is possible that their only interaction with other young people during the lockdown came online. One aim of this study is to gather from teachers how much they feel the COVID-19 lockdown affected students. The work of Silver and Zinsser (2022) warns that psychologists from the early days of the lockdown feared what toll children's social-emotional development would have as a result of sheltering in place. The by-product of the COVID-19 pandemic was creating new norms for all, such as the need to wear a face mask, social distancing, and not seeing family members for an extended time. In this context, this study hopes to hear from teachers firsthand how they are seeing developmental delays in their students' social-emotional development and academic and mental health development due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Theoretical

The theoretical underpinnings for this study are qualitative because this researcher wants to accomplish what Creswell and Poth (2018) disclose as turning the world into a series of representations. This researcher wants to hear and see how COVID-19 affected students in teachers classrooms at the beginning of the lockdown. This researcher wants to hear how/what teachers identify as difficulties in their classrooms that they contribute as lasting effects of COVID-19. Using a qualitative approach, this researcher can capture what Creswell and Poth say by studying the problem and collecting the data in its natural setting, respecting the people and places under study. To accomplish this qualitative study, phenomenology was best suited as it is meant to describe the common meaning of a phenomenon from the viewpoint of several individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018). What will be necessary for this study is having a variety of teachers who were both teaching during the pandemic lockdown through the present, as well as having some interviewees who have been in education for several years before COVID-19 as it will provide a significant variable as they will have more experiences to compare the COVID-19 difficulties too. Alves et al. (2020) explore this variable and how years of service contributed to stress levels in educators. This researcher wants to see if his findings affirm the work of Alves et al. Additionally, the importance of having interviewees with more experience is demonstrated by Neubauer et al. (2019). The authors explain how phenomenology helps us learn from others' experiences and is essential for scholars to learn as they glean new information about a phenomenon (Neubauer et al., 2019).

Situation to Self

The motivation behind conducting this research is to add to the literature a research study that captures the challenges the educators faced and continue to meet in the everyday classroom.

The philosophical assumption utilized is ontological, as its goals are to investigate reality and to report different perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The paradigm this researcher will use to guide this study is that of social constructivism, as described by Creswell and Poth. With social constructivism, individuals seek an understanding of the world in which they live and work, with the goal of research to rely as much as possible on the participants' views (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Problem Statement

There is little significant empirical data on teachers' perceptions of how COVID-19 affected their students. Research on the impact COVID-19 has had on students' mental health (Nearchou et al., 2020) and ways to help mitigate its effect on depression (Arslan & Yildirim, 2021) can be found. Other studies confer the importance of preparing children for a future pandemic (Saxena & Saxena, 2020). Many convey insights into how college campuses and post-secondary institutions navigated the transitions to online education (Cohen et al., 2020) due to COVID-19. Even more recent studies report how students perceived educational challenges during COVID-19 using a mixed methods approach (Bryce & Fraser, 2022). What is lacking is a strictly qualitative study that details the stories of educators in primary and secondary education, including what they perceive as the most significant impact COVID-19 had on students at the onset of the pandemic and presently in their classrooms. This is significant because it will preserve this phenomenon for future researchers to look back and glean information from, as Neubauer et al. (2019) describe as essential for growth in research.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to understand the impact of COVID-19 on students for teachers at public schools in central Pennsylvania. At this stage in the research,

COVID-19 will be generally understood as the cause for the lockdown that led to drastic changes in how students received their education and how school staff supported students, whether as teachers. The theory guiding this study is a transcendental approach described by Moustakas (1994). With the goal of this study to obtain new perceptions on the effects of COVID-19, transcendental seemed the obvious choice, as Moustakas conveys that its purpose is to gain insights into the phenomenon through depictions from the participants.

Significance of the Study

In the years that followed the initial lockdown, COVID-19 has been investigated from many angles. This study hopes to add to that body of literature by providing a qualitative study that needs to be added to current literature, specifically research that has engaged teachers about their stories of what they saw and continue to see daily. Some studies hint at the classroom and COVID-19; for instance, McCorkell and Lobo (2021) discuss learning during the lockdown through a small-scale qualitative study. Almonacid-Fierro et al. (2021) also use a qualitative approach to examine the impact of teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, another investigates students' perceptions of COVID-19 (Bryce & Fraser, 2022) using a mixed methods study. Other topics are also engaged in the studies, such as attendance during the lockdown (Qutishat et al.,2022) or the achievement gap that will get further apart for students from disadvantaged families (Chrisman & Alnaim, 2021; Anderson, 2020; Capp et al., 2021). The study closest to this one in design is a quantitative approach by Shaw et al. (2021) that gathered teachers' perspectives from the classroom through a 10-question survey about the impact COVID-19 had on students regarding finances and academics. From this researcher's findings, no studies investigate the academic, social well-being, and emotional factors COVID-19 had on students from teachers' perceptions.

This study is significant because it will demonstrate what Cleland (2017) details about qualitative study. She states, "Qualitative research is very important in educational research as it addresses the 'how' and 'why' research questions and enables a deeper understanding of experiences, phenomena, and context. Qualitative research allows you to ask questions that cannot be easily put into numbers to understand human experience" (Cleland, 2017, p. 61). This desire to understand the human experience makes this study significant. As we get further away from the COVID-19 lockdown pandemic, first-hand accounts will be harder to remember. This preservation of thought would allow future generations to look back and see what people's opinions were with students in the classroom if something like this were to happen again. This thought of preservation is echoed by Kosciejew (2022), who teaches that we must remember now as an obligation to help tackle the complex pandemic challenges that continue and a responsibility for the future to help with another global health crisis. It will also help to aid future studies, in just as looking back at old photos can spur an aha moment, reading the accounts of other educations who lived a shared experience can act as a catalyst to spark memories for future researchers who also desire to dig into the qualitative human experience side of the COVID-19 pandemic and education or other related fields.

Research Questions

Research Question 1. What do teachers identify as the main factors from Covid-19 that influenced student performance?

The focus of this question is to provide an overview of what teachers viewed as the main COVID-19 factors impacting students' performance. Though this study focuses primarily on academic and social well-being and emotional/mental health, other areas that can be studied include home life (Pearce et al., 2022) and distance education (Feng et al., 2021).

Research Question 2. What are the immediate academic, social well-being, and emotional/mental health effects of COVID-19 that were observed in the classroom?

From the literature that was coming available shortly into the lockdown, the authors of these studies cited concerns about students' academic performance, social well-being, and emotional/mental health as areas that would be affected negatively. In their work, Feng and Li (2021) argue the comparison of the effectiveness of online teaching during the lockdown and traditional instruction pre-pandemic. Regarding social well-being, Van Lacker and Parolin (2020) suggest that students from lower-income families will see a widening learning gap for their students. Emotional/mental health, according to De France et al. (2022), was affected by COVID-19, especially with students seeing an increase in anxiety, depression, and emotional dysregulation. Each of these areas will be explored in this research.

Research Question 3. What area of student performance (academic, social, emotional) have teachers observed to be most affected by COVID-19?

With much of the literature exploring the topics of academic, social, and emotional distress as a result of COVID-19 from a quantitative or mixed methods perspective, this question is designed to provide feedback that gives the reality of COVID-19 from a personal viewpoint of the interviewee. The literature as it pertains to academic performance due to COVID-19 reports several areas that are affected, including remote learning (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020), widening achievement gap (Dusseault et al., 2021), household environment and its side-effects on learning (Booth et al., 2021), and specific topics such as attendance (Qutishat et al., 2022), and special needs students (Almonacid-Fierro et al., 2021). Literature focused on social-being aspects resulting from COVID-19 include topics such as the way minorities were affected (Crooks et al., 2022), teachers' impact (Annamalai, 2021), adverse side effects (George & Wesley, 2021), and

positive social supports (Cui & Chi, 2021). The third focus on what emotional/mental health effects of COVID-19; the literature provides examples of how students' lack of interaction increased mental health problems (Chaturvedi et al., 2021), teachers' stress levels (Alves et al., 2020), and positive impacts the lockdown had (Gaxiola et al., 2022) on students. This research question aims to identify which areas have impacted students most.

Research Question 4. What are the long-term effects of COVID-19 that are still affecting the classroom?

The answer to this question is still being developed by many as we are still not many years removed from the lockdown and following years of mixed delivery of education (strictly online, hybrid, or some other combination). This researcher thinks this question will help contribute to the literature with new insights into the long-term effects of COVID-19 in the classroom from teachers' perspectives. Literature exists that discusses adolescents' perspectives (Velez et al., 2022), lessons for the future in helping the social-emotional needs of children, families, and educators in Head Start (Silver & Zinsser, 2022), and getting information to minority households (Anakwe et al., 2022), but literature on ways COVID-19 is still affecting teachers and counselor's day to day is still difficult to find.

Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic created numerous changes to how society operated worldwide, with many affecting the millions of students in classrooms in every country. Presented in this chapter was the introduction to some of these areas affected. These areas include; the delivery of instruction, the growing learning gap, and the challenges educators face in making everything work. The problem that this researcher hopes to provide a solution to is the need for qualitative studies that focus on first-hand accounts from the individuals that were and still are in the

classroom. It is easy to look around and think that since schools are back at full-time in-person instruction and mandate such as mask-wearing only being optional, COVID-19 has gone away. Many students still feel the side effects of the learning loss and character maturation from society being isolated. Recording the stories of educators whose daily jobs are to teach and grow these students will benefit others in education and provide other disciplines of academia insights into these experiences, especially if they do not daily work with students. Many quantitative studies exist regarding COVID-19 to show researchers how many people have been affected by the various challenges the pandemic created. These studies are necessary to help understand the reach of COVID-19, but what is still needed are studies that do as Cleland (2017) informs and answer the "how" and "why." Within this vein of study, this researcher hopes to help the greater body of research and literature by providing insight into how COVID-19 has affected students and why teachers feel this is happening. By doing this, this researcher can stay true to Cleland, answering the "how" and "why," providing a record of the "human experience" related to education, student ability, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

COVID-19 surprised the world in the winter of 2020. This pandemic caused a change in the daily routine of the world as a whole and, by March 2020, had disrupted education across the United States. In this chapter, this researcher will present findings on how the COVID-19 lockdown affected students' lives within academic, social, and emotional health arenas. After looking at the theoretical and biblical framework in which this study will be conducted, this researcher will first present the reader with literature that displays trends in students' academic, social, and emotional well-being before COVID-19 to establish a baseline from which comparisons can be drawn. The studies and research used to establish the baseline were published between 2018 and 2019 to provide the data closest to the pandemic's beginning. The literature will then examine recent studies of students' academic, social, and emotional health, showing how the COVID-19 lockdown caused changes. The chapter will conclude with a summary of how the presented literature answers some questions in this study and how the gaps validate the need for further investigation, which this study hopes to provide.

Theoretical Framework

This study will be grounded in the theory of phenomenological case study. This is described by Creswell and Poth (2018) as individuals seeking to understand the world through subjective meanings of a shared experience. When working with the personal accounts of a shared experience, using a phenomenological approach allows the researcher to gain insights as it was immediately experienced (Hickman & Kiss, 2010). The phenomenological case study depends on the assessment and investigation of the verbal and non-verbal indications of the participant (Hickman & Kiss, 2010).

In this study, the issue of pressing concern is COVID-19. Walking down the street, an individual may not think COVID-19 is still an urgent concern, but being so close to the original epicenter, it is still unclear to know all the fallout that the lockdown has caused to education. Interviewing participants through a phenomenological lens, as described by Creswell and Poth (2018) and Hickman and Kiss (2010), is appropriate as it will ask educational staff to reflect on the residual effects of COVID-19. The meaning hoped to be gathered is from the perceptions of how the teachers report they feel the lockdown is still affecting students in their classrooms. Using the research questions outlined in Chapter 1 and further in Chapter 3, this study will hope to extend the phenomenological study by interviewing academic staff to answer and provide data on COVID-19 that has yet to be collected all in one study. The theoretical framework will be explored further in Chapter 3.

Biblical Framework

Along with the above theoretical framework, a biblical framework also underpins this study, guiding this research and literature review. The Bible provides foundations for studying the effects of COVID-19 on students. More specifically, the Bible gives instructions about community, education, and social well-being that are particularly useful in this research. This biblical framework provides additional ways to respond to those in need, still struggling with the fallout of COVID-19.

Community

The first part of the biblical framework for this study is the sense of community God has called Christians to be a part of. In Scripture, God talks about how he wants believers to be in communion. Looking at the very beginning of the Bible, God says in Genesis 2:18 that it is not good for man to be alone, and from this, God creates woman to be Adam's partner. Throughout

Scripture, countless verses contribute to this idea of community amongst God's people. Romans 12:5 states, "So in Christ, we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." In addition, Acts 4:32 says, "All the believers were one in heart and mind." Clearly, God desired for his people to live in a community with one another.

Though these verses speak about the church, similarities can be seen in school. In his work, Dibley (2018) discloses the importance of Christians meeting together as a community and in unity. He conveys that it is essential because it allows believers to encourage, care, love, and do good deeds for one another (Dibley, 2018). Matthew 22:39 echoes the same idea when he tells the command of Jesus to "love your neighbor as yourself." This connects with the community mindset of Dibley (2018) because if we love our neighbors (part of the community) who, as Jesus defined it, is the one who shows mercy to our fellow man (Luke 10:36-37), then in turn, all are receiving mercy. Remembering these Scriptures and points by Dibley (2018) prompts this researcher to be mindful of these thoughts on neighbors as he works with students as he is part of the school community, which may be the only positive environment the student experiences daily.

Continuing to report the importance of community work, Gallet (2016) speaks to the importance of the local church's job in building community. The author discusses the impact of the lack of connectedness on individuals (Gallet, 2016). Some of these impacts include increased mental health problems, such as feelings of hopelessness and depression (Gallet, 2016). She continues by stating that the church has traditionally held the role of building a sense of belonging where people feel valued, can connect with others, and receive assistance (Gallet, 2016). She reports that the church is unique in that, many times, it has access to property and resources that provide the ideal setting for a range of community-building activities (Gallet,

2016). The COVID-19 pandemic would upset this sense of community that Gallet (2016) discusses for churches and schools. Both congregations and school administrations were forced to be creative in providing for the families that attend and helping with the sudden spike in needs for the communities where they are located. Gallet (2016) shows the importance of the church and community in the success of God's mission.

Finally, how community is vital, primarily through a biblical mindset, comes from Darmawan et al. (2021). Their study investigated how as communities' churches should respond to the needs of others. The authors suggest two types of service ministry to help alleviate problems that the pandemic created, such as finical instability, and fill the void created by social services not being available (Darmawan et al., 2021). The authors suggest that it is during the COVID-19 pandemic, more than ever, that the church has to answer the call to help build social solidarity (Darmawan et al., 2021). Darmawan et al. (2021) suggest that by simply living out the commandments outlined in the Bible, God's love will be expressed to each other and those in need, which can lead to opportunities to feel empowered. Like the church, many often refer to their educational setting as the "school community," and COVID-19 disrupted the available services. The pandemic allowed a unique opportunity for the church to step in and supplement the schools' efforts showing that all helped a solidary in the community between church and schools.

Education

Transitioning to integrating biblical study and education, Eckel (2015) argues that God is the ground of all reality and ties together all the uniqueness of the human experience. Eckel (2015) challenges believers of Christ who work in education to observe each educational experience as an opportunity to reflect on where God's thumbprint is on it. This would remain

true throughout COVID-19 as well. Eckel (2015) argues that Scripture maintains that the

educational experience can benefit the educator by what they teach and what they can learn,

citing the Hebrew word *lamad*, translated as both teaching and learning. Perceiving each

educational experience as *lamad* allows greater opportunities to see God as the anchor to all

reality (Eckel, 2015). Turning to Scripture, two verses from Proverbs (New International

Version, 1978/2011) support Eckel (2015). The first is Proverbs 2:6 "For the Lord gives wisdom;

from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." This supports the argument that God

anchors and establishes reality and that all study falls under the purview of his truth. The second

is Proverbs 16:3 "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established." This verse

supports that no manner what discipline someone teaches from, the Lord will establish your

plans for his kingdom work if you allow him to be at the center. These ideas of Eckel (2015) are

translatable to how educators navigate education deficiencies due to COVID-19. Trusting in the

Lord and using him as the foundation can and will provide educators with the basis for helping

their students. This enables believers to look beyond the content taught or the delivery method to

the motivation and ultimate end of learning. This point is further validated by Galioto (2023),

who discloses that all education can be weaved through the prism of God's reality providing

ample proof that all knowledge comes from him.

<u>Wisdom</u>

Similarly to education, examining wisdom regarding a biblical framework is significant

as, many times, the goal of teaching is to help students gain wisdom. As noted above, God is the

source of all knowledge and reality. Hence, in pursuing wisdom, the focus should be on

acquiring it from a perspective that honors God and aligns with his created norms. Teaching

students gives them knowledge but does not entail that they will also gain wisdom (Sternberg,

2004). The same author continues to argue that wisdom is obtained by teaching students how to apply the knowledge they are learning to help contribute to a more harmonious world and contribute better to the communities in which they are living (Sternberg, 2004). Keeping with the argument that all knowledge comes from God with the points presented by Sternberg (2004), it would be a failure of the commandment to love our neighbor not to point students towards God when teaching them how to apply the knowledge they are obtaining. This would be a failure of the commandment to love our neighbor because, as stated above, Dibley (2018) says that it is vital for believers to encourage, care, love, and do good deeds for one another. Hence, by not pointing students toward God when teaching and sharing knowledge would be failing to care for them, according to Dibley (2018).

Truly, from the research above, simply teaching students does not guarantee wisdom but requires the additional layer of showing them how to apply the skills. Likewise, if all knowledge comes from God, so does wisdom, but how does one teach knowledge that leads to godly wisdom? To answer this question, Backfish (2019) shares that there are six important characteristics that, when put in place, produce biblical wisdom. It is theological, integrative, available to all, practical, transformative, and it involves a lifelong process. To emphasize this point, the author focuses on Proverbs 1:2-7 that within it highlights these six characteristics. From these six, the one that connects directly to the points of Sternberg (2004) is how biblical wisdom is practical. Here the author shares that being wise is not knowing the right answer but how to respond rightly (Backfish, 2019). From a biblical perspective, the school is uniquely set up to integrate wisdom that points to God, as the mission of many schools is to prepare the students who graduate with skills, abilities, and knowledge to be contributing citizens. From the research presented here, and its focus that the purpose of knowledge is to help students obtain

wisdom that leads to them making better choices, it would be a disservice to students then to not

educate them on the source of all wisdom, God. By integrating biblical wisdom into educators'

knowledge, they are giving students foundations that go deeper than the ones the world offers.

Aiding Social Well-Being and Mental Health

Another area to investigate regarding the biblical framework is how to support students

as Christians within the social aspects of recovery from COVID-19. Looking at the work of

Swenson et al. (2014), they explain the better-than-average (BTA) effect. This is explained as

how an individual makes a comparative judgment. Swenson et al. (2014) give examples of how

test scores are viewed after exams. The BTA effect is on display when reflecting on someone

else's score with the thought that they received a low score because they are lazy or not smart,

but reflecting on one's low score with thoughts such as the test was too hard or the teacher did

not explain the material well enough. Swenson et al. (2014) also suggest looking at others with a

less judgmental mindset. An example is, instead of looking at them as lazy, thinking perhaps

they did not get enough sleep or worked too many hours last night. Scripturally, Swenson et al.

(2014) reveal that Paul gives a remedy to help with the BTA effect in 1 Corinthians 13. From

this Scripture, Swenson et al. (2014) implore the teaching of Paul to convict others that any

actions done without love are worthless. This conviction of Paul is important for believers to

remember when supporting students socially because this teaching of Paul's existed before

COVID-19, and what Paul is teaching is nothing new. As Christians working with students who

have been negatively affected by COVID-19, it may be the love and patience they receive from a

staff member that is of the faith that helps that student recover long-term.

Along a similar vein, a related area to examine spirituality regarding students and this

researcher's biblical framework is mental health. Walker and Leach (2014) examine anxiety and

the Christian perspective in their work. Citing verses from Deuteronomy 20:8, Walker and

Leach (2014) explore ways anxiety can negatively affect a Christian. The authors impart that

anxiety can cause things such as fear and depression. An anxiety epidemic has not been

adequately researched concerning spiritual faith (Walker & Leach, 2014). As Dibley (2018)

revealed above, it is the responsibility of the body of Christ to take care of each other. By

treating others as ourselves, Christians provide a service that can be applied to all they encounter.

Christians have a resource they can impart to those in need to help with mental health that could

provide a different kind of peace. True peace will only come from taking time to know Christ

personally, reminding readers of Matthew 6:27 "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour

to his life?" (Walker & Leach, 2014). Christians are reminded that a resource to help students

with their mental health can be found in God the Creator (Walker & Leach, 2014). Whether

living out this for students or helping them discover it for themselves, a believer's faith can help

with mental health.

        This section has highlighted key facets of the Biblical framework for this study. First, it

communicated that the church has a unique opportunity to help the school communities by

loving them as neighbors and supporting the schools in areas of need (Dibley, 2018; Gallet,

2016). Next, it reported how every educational experience has the opportunity to show that all

learning is anchored in God's truth (Eckel, 2015). Lastly, it showed ways Scripture could help

support students' social and mental health through practicing loving patience and where to draw

peace (Swenson et al., 2014; Walker & Leach, 2014). Practicing the points set forth by the

authors listed above provides a strong foundation to show Christ in each interaction.

Related Theoretical Literature

When the pandemic hit in 2020, it was only a short time after that articles and studies reporting on COVID-19 started appearing in academic journals. These articles reported on many topics, including the areas this phenomenological study investigates. The topics of academics, social well-being, and emotional health, including mental health, in this study, are presented in the following sections. The works reported highlight these topics, but none encompass all three in a singular study from the perspective of teachers. These three topics were selected due to their consistent reoccurrence when searching for literature concerning COVID-19 and education.

Trends in Education in Regards to Students' Academics and Learning Before COVID-19

Beginning with data about education almost immediately before COVID-19 forced a change in education, studies showed the importance of encouraging academic achievement in students. The way to encourage achievement comes in several different forms, either finding activities that create positive connections (Raccanello et al., 2019), increasing academic reputation (North & Ryan, 2018), using physical activity (Shoval et al., 2018), creating hope (Dixson et al., 2018) or online learning (Naydanova et al., 2018) many of student's long-term success is determined by their view on academic achievement. When COVID-19 forced students out of the classroom, it would create conditions for students that would hurt their academic achievement, which could lead to higher anxiety (Raccanello et al., 2019), higher rates of worrying (North & Ryan, 2018), less focus (Shoval et al., 2018), loss of hope (Dixson et al., 2018), or negative view of mandated online education (Naydanova et al., 2018). The studies presented here show that data two years prior to COVID-19 showed that students benefitted from the interactions that occurred in school as it prompted engagement in the material and with each other. Another factor these studies present that COVID-19 would amplify for some is how online

study, when required, increases anxiety (Naydanova et al., 2018) and lessens hope for students

from lower socioeconomic homes (Dixson et al., 2018). These facts are imperative to establish,

as COVID-19 would create conditions where students' academic achievement would be

negatively affected in each area, argued by the authors.

Students' academic life is also impacted through involvement in extracurricular activities.

Research has shown that when students are involved in extracurricular activities, it influences

traits such as pride (Shaffer, 2019) and achievement in core subjects such as math and reading

(Carolan, 2018). Involvement in extracurricular activities instills a sense of pride and teaches

lifelong lessons and self-discipline. Participating in these activities also predicts several student

qualities, such as motivation, GPA, attendance, and graduation rate (Shaffer, 2019). This

increase in achievement scores is due to the development of non-cognitive skills that

extracurricular activities cultivate, such as locus of control, self-regulation, and self-esteem

(Carolan, 2018). These articles, in tandem with the ones above, showed how literature almost

directly preceding the COVID-19 lockdown reported the importance of students participating in

activities and the positive results this was producing. With the pandemic preventing

extracurricular activities from happening, many students would lose social support, mentors, and

connections to causes greater than themselves. The lockdown would immediately halt the growth

that these activities were providing.

The research regarding education before COVID-19 also speaks about trends related to

minority populations. Research a few years before COVID-19 presented information about the

importance of support in school for students who identified as part of a minority population.

These supports included teacher-to-student check-ins (Elsaesser et al.,2018), the inclusion of

culture in the classroom (Banse & Palacios, 2018), networking of same-culture peer groups

(Gbolo & Grier-Reed, 2019; Golden et al., 2018). Focusing on how minorities were affected is significant because, during COVID-19, all students would lose support at school, but the studies presented here speak of how significant they are. The studies highlighted that minority students with social support in school and the classroom saw increases in different areas. These increases included higher graduation rates, retention, academic success, connection to school, and attendance (Gbolo & Grier-Reed, 2019; Golden et al., 2018; Elsaesser et al., 2018; Banse & Placios, 2018). This data is particularly important as it shows that this student population encountered multiple obstacles before COVID-19 when academic supports were readily available. Once the lockdown happened,' students were forced to shelter in place many times with their parents, whom Elsaesser et al. (2018) report as a potential source that made academic achievement more difficult due to their lack of understanding of the American education system or coming from a lower SES. These studies show that before COVID-19, minority students were already at a disadvantage academically and economically. For many minority students, a key to their success these studies support was only obtainable because of the help they received at school.

When examining education and COVID-19 prior to the lockdown, special education students are also critical to remember. Students in special education programs tend to need more individual attention, such as teacher aides (Gottfried, 2018; Tindal & Anderson, 2019). The data from these studies show that students with special needs in the classroom benefitted from having an aide to assistant compared to those who did not. Some of the benefits listed are less negative behaviors, more individualized attention, and students being on task more often (Gottfried, 2018). The research shows these benefits extend beyond day-to-day classroom routines to mandated testing. Students with special needs in classrooms with an additional aide to

supplement the teacher saw higher scores on state testing (Tindal & Anderson, 2019). At the time of this research, the data shows that not only did students perform better, but this growth had happened continually over the last 15 years (Tindal & Anderson, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic's lockdown would force all these students with special needs to go into an environment where they no longer had this additional support to help keep them focused. The studies presented here highlight how important in-person supports were for students with special needs, and the loss of these supports would hurt the education of special needs students.

In addition to students' background discussed above, interpersonal relationships studies show also affect students' academics. Interpersonal relationships contribute to students' success in various ways. The influence these relationships have can come from family (Feldman et al., 2018), our neighborhood (Brisson et al., 2019), social support (Grier & Boutakidis, 2018), and classroom environment (Mucedola, 2018). One of the more influential relationships that students navigate every day is family. Students living in a positive family environment would report better protective factors to help with loneliness (Feldman et al., 2018). Similarly, a positive family environment where a student lives also contributes to their success. Students living in a neighborhood that identifies as economically disadvantaged but with the support that tries to increase social cohesion see positive ripple effects on students' academic success (Brisson et al., 2019).   The research continues to share that students receiving positive social support, whether at home, from peers, or in the classroom, helps with self-perception, resulting in higher scholastic competence (Grier & Boutakidis, 2018). Before COVID, these interactions primarily came from students' time in school, where the classroom environment was a significant factor in motivating and facilitating student learning (Mucedola, 2018). The COVID-19 lockdown would create barriers to significant interpersonal relationships to happen. As the authors here revealed,

an important factor in students' academic effort is the relationships they have in their lives. A

key factor to remember is that positive relationships contribute to this increase. The studies

above conveyed that when a student comes from a non-cohesive environment with fewer

supports, the student suffers more. This foundational research begs the question, how much more

would COVID-19 contribute?

Finally, it is pertinent to this discussion to explore academics before COVID-19 in the

school environment. Studies show that the school environment is influenced by several different

things, from teaching quality (Miller & Wang, 2019), adherence to rules (Wong et al., 2019),

peer connections, and classroom interventions (Clair et al., 2018). These studies showed that

students' attitudes towards the school environment were largely affected by their teachers'

presentation of the material, with better quality lessons contributing to positive reflection on the

school environment (Miller & Wang, 2019). Likewise, teacher support in and out of the

classroom and monitoring school rules, and teachers promoting valued student traits resulted in a

better school environment (Wong et al., 2019). Another factor in the school environment is

students feeling connected to their school, which may be especially hard for immigrant students.

For many students who have immigrated, it is hard to find positives in the school environment,

but some positives have been reported when the students can connect with others who share the

same background (Lee et al., 2018). In the same way that teaching quality promotes the school

environment, teachers' classroom interventions also contribute. Teachers who had established

positive interventions weaved into the class structure saw decreased inappropriate behaviors

resulting in better academic achievement and a higher connection to school (Clair et al., 2018).

With COVID-19, the school environment would change drastically as students were forced to

remain home. The authors here promote the importance of the school environment in helping to

engage students in meaningful learning and creating a positive mindset. Based on this research, the need to shelter in place removed opportunities for interaction among students and would hurt the school environment.

Trends in Students' Mental Health and Education Prior to COVID-19

Another topic to examine is students' mental health before the COVID-19 lockdown. Similarly, to academics, this is a crucial topic to investigate, as the COVID-19 pandemic would have an effect, as the literature will show. In this section, when examining students' mental health, this also includes their emotional health. Devices such as smartphones affect mental health the by hurting self-esteem (Yang et al., 2018) and health (Swetaa et al., 2019) provide insights. Students who used their smartphones excessively, especially for the internet, reported lower levels of self-esteem (Yang et al., 2018). The study also showed that most of the use came during downtime on the weekend (Yang et al., 2018). In addition, Swetaa et al. (2019) looked at smartphone use, reporting that 95% of teenagers reported spending most of their free time on a screen. The authors also report that large amounts of time on a screen are linked to negative physical and psychosocial health outcomes. The COVID-19 lockdown disrupted the normal routine where students had access to their phones all day; it connects to the research here, which shows that this increased use could hurt mental health. With students receiving 100% of their education during the lockdown through screens, this research would support there were effects on their mental and emotional health.

Furthermore, sleep quality contributes to student well-being with the use of substances (Tafoya & Aldrete-Cortez, 2019) and social networks (Deimazar et al., 2019), each impacting sleep. The authors found that several things factored into students' sleep quality, such as lack of exercise, tobacco use, and caffeinated beverages as the leading causes (Tafoya & Aldrete-Cortez,

2019). Additionally, research shows that students use of social networks for 1-2 hours a day contributed to lower mental health and sleep quality (Deimazar et al., 2019). The behaviors reported in these studies are important to review as these were published less than a year before the COVID-19 lockdown. If sleep quality affected mental health when students could operate in normal routines, these studies provide evidence that the need to shelter in place would further hurt sleep quality due to the change in routine. Before COVID-19, students were at school during the day and limited time on social networks due to classroom expectations and teacher oversight. The lockdown would also take students away from school, where they could not freely consume tobacco products, and there were physical education classes that promoted exercise. The lockdown removing teacher oversight and changing student routines would create more opportunities for students to engage in screen time on social networks throughout the day, contributing to potentially lower mental health and other physical ailments.

Continuing to examine mental health, students' connection with peers and other adults also affects their well-being. The way this connection looks can take many forms, such as identifying with a group (Miller et al., 2018), teachers (Shelemy et al., 2019), nurses' care (Jonsson et al., 2019), and coaches (Kroshus et al., 2019) all investigate how students' interactions daily with adults from various roles are significant to study as these interactions influence students. The research shows that students who identify with a group at school (i.e., demographic, academic, athletic, extracurricular) reported lower anxiety and stress regarding mental health and more satisfaction with school (Miller et al., 2018). Teachers also play an essential role in helping identify students' mental health needs, as they are often the first line of contact and have daily interactions allowing them to notice more discrete changes in behavior (Shelemy et al., 2019). In addition, data showed that nurses in their unique position positively

impact students' mental health, especially with problems at home, because their offices provide space for confidential conversations (Jonsson et al., 2019). Coaches also play an important role in helping identify students' mental health needs (Kroshus et al., 2019). The role of a coach is unique as they interact daily with students in an informal context which helps them to observe change and develop trust (Kroshus et al., 2019). The research about the roles described here all had one thing in common, they happened in person and allowed the adults or student groups to interact with e. These interactions changed dramatically when students were moved online because of COVID-19 and activities stopped. The instruction or meetings were all done online, and with that, the ability to read a student's demeanor and the unspoken things presented through body language became almost impossible to do. Teams no longer practiced, nurses were not making home visits, and social distancing made peer interactions difficult. This research supports that the pandemic's need to keep students and adults apart would remove a crucial component helping to identify and mitigate mental health needs.

One other set of individuals to examine as it pertains to student mental health and COVID-19 are counselors. A student could interact with many types of counselors, but this section will solely focus on those that provide school-based mental health services. These services can meet many needs to help schools (Naik, 2019), is an additional resource for lower socioeconomic students (Prince et al., 2019), staff who are better trained (Osagiede et al., 2018), and remove barriers (Searcey van Vulpen et al., 2018) all explore this topic. The research imparts that there are not enough resources for teachers and school counselors to serve all the mental health needs of students, but school-based outside programs provide for that need (Naik, 2019). The data also shows that, more often, students from a lower socioeconomic status have higher mental health needs, and school-based mental health services make it easier to meet those needs

as these students can access services directly at school (Prince et al., 2019). Besides having these resources at school, studies also discussed how teachers trained in their school's in-house mental health service felt more knowledgeable of student mental health needs and more comfortable approaching the therapist if they had questions (Osagiede et al., 2018). Support for school-based mental health also comes from parents who overwhelmingly favor school-based mental health services because it removes a barrier to accessing services (Searcey van Vulpen., 2018). The parents saw positive results in their child using in-school mental health services (Searcey van Vulpen, 2018). The studies presented here describe the need that school-based mental health services fill for students suffering, and COVID-19 would take these services away from children. The studies here support that removing these services could make it more difficult for counselors to identify and help students with mental health services.

Trends in Student Social Well-Being Prior to COVID-19

In addition to looking at trends in academics and mental health, the social well-being of students is valuable to examine. The research showed that quality of life amongst students and how that affects their overall well-being was important concerning school. Quality of life is presented regarding satisfaction (Calmerio et al., 2018), social support (Krawczynska & Zawierucha, 2018), and academic achievement (Gungor, 2019). The data revealed that satisfaction with school connectedness was one of the stronger predictors of student well-being (Calmerio et al., 2018). Additionally, reports showed that student well-being is closely related to a student's social support regarding family, school, and peer groups (Krawczynska & Zawierucha, 2018). Students who reported positive social well-being also were the ones who reported higher levels of social support in place (Krawczynska & Zawierucha, 2018). Other research imparts that academic achievement and social well-being are closely related to students

feeling burned out (Gungor, 2019). Burnout is also reported as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Gungor, 2019). When a student is feeling burned out, it can lead to depression which then lowers the students' social well-being (Gungor, 2019). With COVID-19, students quality of life would be affected as they would lose many aspects of social support and satisfaction that the authors here report as prominent. According to these studies, this reduction in social support would negatively affect students' quality of life during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Another notable factor that plays a role in students' social well-being is their socioeconomic status (SES). The research shows that the SES of students can be seen through elevated stress (Milas et al., 2019), social capital needs (Sun et al., 2019), and social competence (Creavey et al., 2018). In their work, Milas et al. (2019) examine how SES contributed to the stress level of high school seniors. They demonstrate that students with lower SES have higher stress levels due to setting high goals but not having the resources to obtain them (Milas et al., 2019). The research continues highlighting how students coming from families with a lower SES often only have one parent and benefit from schools that have programs that promote social capital, such as Head Start (Sun et al., 2019). Other data shows that students from lower SES households tend to have poor social competence (Creavey et al., 2018). The study explains that social competence is important as it reaches many domains, such as interpersonal, academic, and behavioral (Creavey et al., 2018). With the lockdown that COVID-19 would create, students from lower SES would lose access to many of the positive social supports that the authors here report would help mitigate these by-products of coming from a lower SES household.

Continuing to examine social well-being, another topic that connects to students is their interpersonal relationships. The bearing that interpersonal relationships have with students can be

from life stressors (Slavich et al., 2019), developing interpersonal skills (Forbes et al., 2019), and

life events (Davis et al., 2018). Many factors contribute to negative social well-being among

adolescents, including the loss of interpersonal relationships (Slavich et al., 2019). The authors

continue revealing that life stressors such as interpersonal loss with other factors can negatively

impact health (Slavich et al., 2019). Furthermore, peer relationships are influential in helping

students develop interpersonal skills (i.e., empathy, openness, conflict resolution, active

listening) and relationships (Forbes et al., 2019). Whether positive or negative, many of these

interactions often occur in school where if needed, the student can access support to help

understand them, especially if interactions are negative (Forbes et al., 2019). Another contributor

to students' interpersonal interactions and social well-being is life events (Davis et al., 2018).

The authors suggest that major life events such as trauma or life transitions impact students'

social behaviors either in a prosocial (ones that help others) way or aggressive (ones that increase

maladaptive behaviors) (Davis et al., 2018). COVID-19 would be a major life event as it required

everyone to change their way of life, and this change would reduce the ability of students to

interact with others in person. The research presented here would support that the loss of these

interactions could stunt students' development of interpersonal skills.

Another aspect to consider regarding student social well-being is how the parent-child

relationship contributes. With COVID-19 requiring all students to shelter at home, examining

this connection is important. This connection is seen in academic success (Dimitrova et al.,

2018), parent-child relationships (Lei Chang et al., 2019), and parenting styles (Hintsanen et al.,

2019). The first study examines how the parent-child relationship affects a child's academic

success (Dimitrova et al., 2018). The authors disclose that students' social-psychological

perspectives on their educational aspirations are connected to how their parents encourage and

help set goals for them (Dimitrova et al., 2018). Other research discusses how a harsh parent-child relationship can negatively affect academics (Lei Chang et al., 2019). The authors convey that harsh parenting and other stressful life events have consistently predicted externalizing behaviors and academic underperformance (Lei Chang et al., 2019). In addition, research communicates how parenting style manifests itself in the child-parent relationship, which is crucial for the child's development (Hintsanen et al., 2019). Children who report a higher level of warmth and acceptance within their parent relationship also have better levels of social well-being (Hintsanen et al., 2019). These studies raise the question of what traumas were created in homes where the relationship between child and parent/guardian was not positive. This research supports the idea that having a positive relationship with parents helps mitigate other difficulties created by the COVID-19 lockdown.

Trends in Students' Home Life Prior to COVID-19

Investigating students' home life before COVID-19 is significant as the pandemic would force all families to move to shelter-in-place. Depending on the family dynamic at home, this need to shelter in place could have many different effects on the student. Thus, it is essential to understand students' home life two or three years before the COVID-19 lockdown.

One topic of note is the connection between home life and academic achievement. Research seems to reveal that when home life is supportive of academics, either through family engagement (DeSpain et al., 2018), healthy (Jung et al., 2018), or an environment free of disruption (Lechuga-Pena et al., 2019), children tend to have higher levels of achievement. These connections are important because when COVID happened, home life changed for many students; parents either became more or less engaged, many parents got sick, and some parents were in and out at different times. This research then works to discover the effects of COVID on

family engagement, showing that at all levels of education, the more families commit to

interacting with children positively, the better academic achievement becomes (DeSpain et al.,

2018). Furthermore, students from homes where a parent is sick more often have behavioral

difficulties and lower academic achievement (Jung et al., 2018). Studies also tell how students

from a lower SES relocate more often, resulting in greater home life disruptions and hurting

students' academics (Lechuga-Pena et al., 2019). These studies show home life's importance on

students' academic achievement. Overall the studies concluded that students in homes where

there was little engagement and factors for instability resulted in lower student achievement. This

happened when teachers could check on students daily; this research backs the idea that COVID-

19 would amplify these problems.

Another theme is the ways that home life affects students' mental well-being. The

relationship between student mental health and home life is notable as COVID-19 limited the

availability of services for children. Studies demonstrate that home life influences mental health

through the SES of the family (Robinson et al., 2019), connectedness (Lombardi et al., 2019),

cognitive symptoms (Eg et al., 2018), and parenting style (Lu, 2019). The data shows that several

factors, such as being on benefits, poor family functioning, and stress related to other children in

the home, lead to mental health problems such as depression (Robinson et al., 2019).

Additionally, others report how connectedness with parents plays a role in adolescents' mental

health (Lombardi et al., 2019). Students with positive relationships see lower mental health

symptoms and better school connectedness (Lombardi et al., 2019). On the other hand, when the

cognitive symptoms (e.g., I hate myself and I did everything wrong) of children as reported by

themselves and their parents were negative, lower connectedness to many areas in the child's

life, including school, was reported (Eg et al., 2018). Finally, looking at the national trends of

depression in adolescents, reports show that one of the key factors in whether a child develops

depression is related to parenting style and environment in the home (Lu, 2019). The works here

inform how child parent relationship affects the students functioning. These examples

highlighted family dynamics before COVID-19 when the students followed a normal school

routine. The lockdown would test some of the data presented here. The research supports the

idea that students from a positive, connected, supportive home would still see positive results

once in the lockdown. Likewise, students whose homes struggled with the above qualities would

more likely have the potential to develop mental health diagnoses.

Next, looking at a student's relationship with their parent(s) and how this affects home

life is worth discussing with students who were forced to stay at home due to the lockdown. The

parent-child relationship from research shows that student academic success is impacted in

various through the value of time spent with the child (Vaterlaus et al., 2019), the long-term

repercussions of the relationship (Hill et al., 2019), the type of relationship (Oswald et al., 2018),

social-media (Abar et al., 2018), and externalizing behaviors (Ogg & Anthony, 2019).   Quality

time spent with parents affected the child's comfort in reporting vulnerable topics, asking

questions, and disclosing emotional feelings, and quantity did not equal quality (Vaterlaus et al.,

2019). The studies also investigate the parent-child relationship beginning with elementary

school and its long-term effects on children throughout their academic careers. The authors

report that higher levels of conflict during elementary years resulted in lower levels of purpose as

a young adult (Hill et al., 2019). Continuing to look at the type of relationship, the research

reports how a positive parent-child relationship is empirically related to many outcomes, such as

cognition, language, and socio-emotional development gains (Oswald et al., 2018).

Additionally, research showed that interactions on social media also affected the parent-child

relationship, with children who friend their parents having less likelihood of substance use

problems in high school (Abar et al., 2018). Lastly, studies also examined how the parent-child

relationship affected their child's externalizing behaviors (Ogg & Anthony, 2019). Their study

found that the frequency of interactions did not have a significant outcome. These studies imply

that quality time spent with parents often contributed to better success for their child than

quantity. The studies also showed that a contentious relationship between the parent and child

usually leads to the child having more difficulties in school (Ogg & Anthony, 2019). With

COVID-19 requiring families to shelter in place, these studies question how the extra time with

family helped or hurt child-parent relationships.

Trends on COVID-19 Effects on Students in Regards to Academics and Learning

Looking now at the effects COVID-19 had on students within the first two years of the

lockdown will be examined. Beginning with students' academics, the research investigates

challenges the move to online created regarding work due to COVID-19. With the move to a

new way of teaching that had not been encountered, developing assignments and assessments

that could not easily be cheated or plagiarized was a challenge many educators faced during the

lockdown (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). Similarly, research reports that COVID-19 impacted

children's education as early as grades K-2, sharing that they would receive assignments from

students at all hours of the night and had no errors and perfect grammar (Timmons et al., 2021).

These studies highlight how during the pandemic lockdown, it was hard for teachers to have

accountability for who was completing and doing the assignments they provided. This data

supports that long-term this lack of accountability on student ability would hurt students' quality

of work, especially when schools reopened and teachers again had oversight on work completed.

Next, looking at how online teaching compared to the traditional classroom environment pre-pandemic is significant as it provides insights into its effectiveness. This comparison is seen through statistics (Feng & Li, 2021) and distance education (El Takach, 2022). Studies show in-person education was statistically more effective overall for all grade levels, especially at the elementary and junior high levels (Feng & Li, 2021). Likewise, data found that two years after the COVID-19 lockdown, over half the students in the study reported distance education to be more complex and missing the traditional classroom environment (El Takach, 2022). This literature provides examples of teachers' difficulties adapting their classrooms to a virtual format. The research supports that the mandatory move to online education has not been received positively and has student desire the way things were pre-lockdown. Other research shows that long before COVID-19, when online education was voluntarily chosen, there was a positive correlation between work and classroom environment (Adams et al., 2014). This research begs the question: What about mandated online education is making it unsuccessful? With the lockdown forcing this change, it was impossible to avoid the move to online, but as the data showed above, younger students suffered more. With younger students having more difficulty, it raises the question of how much this would affect student academic growth.

Another theme relevant in the education literature was the growing academic gap among families in lower socio-economic areas. The research cited above shows how this was a problem before the COVID-19 lockdown, with this gap present in several studies. This gap is seen by looking at historical data (Dusseault et al., 2021), less access to necessities (Chrisman & Alnaim, 2021), comparison to affluent homes (Tomasik et al., 2021), effects on young children (Akat & Karatas, 2020), type of needs (Capp et al., 2021) and the neighborhood (Anderson, 2020). These studies support how students from historically disadvantaged areas will see more significant

achievement gaps. This comes from students living in lower SES areas needing more support at

home, such as educational liaisons to help identify resources (Dusseault et al., 2021).

Additionally, students from more improvised areas face disadvantages; specifically, the data

shares that these students have a larger disparity in their ability to access the internet and

technology (Chrisman & Alnaim, 2021). Another study found as one of their data points that

students who came from more affluent households fared better overall in all aspects of the

COVID-19 lockdown due to the greater structure and support at home (Tomasik et al., 2021).

Likewise, in their reporting, Akat and Karatas (2020) found that not only will children from

lower socio-economic suffer more, but it is usually the younger children as they have less ability

to make sense of and cope with the many factors of COVID-19. Other research shows school

social workers' feedback that the most significant needs of students from a lower socioeconomic

class are financial, mental health, and access to technology (Capp et al., 2021). Finally,

additional findings add to the topic by sharing that the neighborhoods students from lower

socioeconomic settings live-in lack resources and supervision, and these students often have a

higher deficit in food and other necessities of living (Anderson, 2020).

      The authors in the studies above highlight the significant socioeconomic obstacles that

contributed to the academic gap among studies during the COVID-19 lockdown. The studies

question how the free meals that schools offered offset some of the food deficits for these

families. The research also shows how the lack of transportation prevented some families living

in rural areas from getting the needed resources. With connecting to online essential for student

success, this research makes one wonder how much having limited or no access to school

resources hurts student academics. With schools having limited resources to provide for students,

what other sources did families from lower socioeconomic status utilize to help?

Another way the literature engaged students' academics during the COVID-19 lockdown was how the primary caregiver often navigated helping their children in the academic journey. Several studies discuss how the primary caregiver navigated the home as the classroom to help their child with academic achievement. Primary caregivers discuss learning loss (Booth et al., 2021), isolation (Niskac, 2021), and balancing work and children's academics (Yildirim & Eslen-Ziya, 2021). The research first shows parents' perceptions of the learning loss that their children experienced. The parents report feeling it was significant due to their inability to recreate the school environment at home (Booth et al., 2021). Additionally, the lack of social interaction was reported as one of the most significant reasons their children struggled with motivation in completing assignments at home (Niskac, 2021). Similarly, the research showed that families with school-aged children at home and two working parents saw the greatest difficulties (Yildirim & Eslen-Ziya, 2021). This reporting provides a unique view of the conditions and stress children with two working parents during the lockdown may have experienced. These studies are limited in presenting findings relevant to the beginning months of the lockdown. The authors above convey data that tell the struggles caretakers faced with the transition to online. This research raises questions: How did teachers navigate situations with less family engagement? Likewise, how did this lack of family engagement trickle down to the student? How would teachers describe their students' academics when they knew their students had siblings in the house? Questions in the interview from this research will address these topics.

COVID-19 had wide-ranging effects on student academics, including students who identify with special needs. This population of students was vulnerable as many received support services in the school. The variety of difficulties special education students encounter may have come in the form of support at home (McCorkell & Lobo, 2021), attendance (Cousik, 2022),

focus (Bendeck, 2022), and routine (Alshamri, 2021). Data found that the success of students with autism largely depended on how the task was given to the students online and the nature of the adult support within the home (McCorkell & Lobo, 2021). Other research revealed in a survey that the two biggest problems teachers of special education reported were attendance and work completion, citing that the more parents were involved, the better the results (Cousik, 2022). Similarly, other data reports on the challenges of delivering special education during the pandemic, with the greatest difficulty reported by parents as keeping their children focused on tasks at home (Bendeck, 2022). On a different note, Alshamri (2021) speaks to the loss of routine that the pandemic created and how the online platform cannot meet the physical needs of special education students. With the pandemic and special education, these studies question how much greater would the residual effects of the lockdown cause for these students. Earlier studies discussed how COVID-19 would contribute to learning loss and increase the academic gap; the research here supports that students with special needs would face an even greater potential deficiency. These studies also emphasize that the pandemic created difficulty for all students in receiving their academic instruction, but students with special needs had to navigate an additional layer.

Trends on COVID-19 Effects on Students' Social Well-Being

Along with academics, studying how students' social well-being has been and is being affected by the COVID-19 lockdown is significant because the research immediately before the pandemic cited above discussed how this affects the students' overall quality of life. For this study, social support refers to students and children's ability to have someone who listens to and engages them socially. Social well-being is essential as it is a factor that needs support to help children feel comfortable and have a sense of belonging. As the following literature will show,

there were studies where children reported positive outcomes and others where the lack of social support led to a continual deterioration of well-being.

The research shows several ways the lockdown affected students' social well-being. Some students reported a positive outcome due to the lockdown (Akinsanya et al., 2020), while others shared about adversity (Van Lacker & Parolin, 2020) or higher stress (George & Wesley, 2021). Not all reports were negative that discuss the pandemic. Some positives of the lockdown communicate that parents being forced to stay home benefitted the child's social development as they received additional time with parents who had been unavailable before the lockdown (Akinsanya et al., 2020). In comparison, other data convey the adverse side effects of the COVID-19 lockdown on social well-being, with the greatest being the widening of the learning gap among lower-income families, which leads to lower self-esteem (Van Lacker & Parolin, 2020). The authors suggest that this gap will increase because children in lower-income families lack adequate social supports to help promote social-wellbeing (Van Lacker & Parolin, 2020). Other research tells of the stress children experience as a side effect of mothers dealing with more significant stresses due to the lockdown. Some of these stresses include balancing work, home responsibilities, marital stress, and potential domestic violence (George & Wesley, 2021). Children would experience disarray in functioning at all levels due to the stresses projected on them by their mothers (George & Wesley, 2021). With most of these studies coming from early in the pandemic, questions arise: Did teachers see a widening learning gap amongst students in lower economic households? Two years after the pandemic, do teachers see lasting effects concerning social support for their students in lower economic households?

Many individuals influence students' social well-being, with one group being teachers. During the lockdown, teachers helped to promote social well-being in their classes by providing

gamification activities (Annamalai, 2021) and peer editing (Antipuesto-Angelo, 2021). First, Annamalai, in her study, reports that teachers should be purposeful in implementing ways that students can engage each other while online. To accomplish this, teachers can incorporate activities such as peer reviewing and gamification (Annamalai, 2021). Similarly, in her study, Antipuesto-Angelo (2021) looks at how peer editing writing assignments helped students' social well-being during the lockdown. Peer editing allowed the students to develop empathy, respect, and their overall humanity for their classmates as they critiqued their papers (Antipuesto-Angelo, 2021). These studies offer positive examples implemented during the lockdown; unanswered questions are, since this activity had positive results, did teachers continue these activities once schools resumed in-person instruction? What other activities did teachers find successful?

As everyone experienced difficulties with the restrictions of the COVID-19 lockdown, minority students had additional challenges to overcome. As the literature above examined, students who identify as a minority generally reported lower levels of social well-being. The research shows that minorities reported feelings of isolation (Crooks et al., 2022), new social customs (Galstyan & Galstyan, 2021), gender differences (Wang et al., 2021), and community (Cameron et al., 2021) all as being affected due to COVID-19. The data first tells how black girls have been affected by the lockdown, showing that compared to other populations, black girls felt as if they were more isolated and had a greater fear of losing peer relationships (Crooks et al., 2022). The authors also shared that the girls from the black population suffered higher rates of depression, anxiety, and weight fluctuations compared to their peers from other populations (Crooks et al., 2022). Living in America at the onset of the pandemic was difficult for those already living here. Other research investigates how families coming to America during the lockdown had to navigate changing or giving up social customs (Galstyan & Galstyan, 2021).

These changes included wrestling with shame when wearing masks or gloves during sacred

rituals or traditions (Galstyan & Galstyan, 2021). The lockdown also affected females, as data

shows how males and females were affected by the COVID-19 lockdown Wang et al. (2021).

Their report found that females, compared to males, were more likely to feel isolated, stressed,

and unsafe due to the lockdown (Wang et al., 2021). Additionally, data shows that living in a

more ethnically diverse neighborhood affected social well-being. Children from these homes saw

a decline in material assets such as income and food, with this decline increasing anxiety among

home members (Cameron et al., 2021). These studies provided insights into some of the

challenges facing minorities during the lockdown. However, the data showing the lasting effects

that this had on minorities is not existent in the literature yet, especially for populations here in

America. This study hopes to provide insight into some items the literature does not address,

including what social well-being deficiencies teachers still see in the classroom regarding

minorities.

Moreover, COVID-19, unlike anything this generation has seen, forced everyone to look

at the support networks they had in place. Studies showed the importance of positive social

support in helping students' social well-being in the face of COVID-19. The connection to

positive social supports helped social well-being in regards to internet addiction (Cui & Chi,

2021), lower stress (Ozer et al., 2021), positive environment (Marques & Braidwood, 2021), and

stress relief (Cantillon et al., 2021) during the pandemic lockdown. The research found that

students suffering from internet addictions due to the COVID-19 lockdown benefitted from the

development of positive social support as it gave them something and someone to focus on

outside of internet use (Cui & Chi, 2021). Similarly, it was reported how social support helped

specifically with students' stress (Ozer et al., 2021). The authors convey that students with an

established social support network that checked in on them reported lower stress levels (Ozer et al., 2021). Additional reports on older adolescents found that one-third of the participants reported positive and formative experiences due to the lockdown, such as developing new hobbies, spending more time with family, and feeling more supported (Marques & Braidwood, 2021). Also, research reports how grandparents are a source of positive social support as they help relieve parental stress and provide children with a rich multigenerational experience (Cantillon et al., 2021). This literature established how positive social support helped during the lockdown when students could not be together, but what influence did this play as schools opened back up? The ability to see each other suggests that some of these positive supports reported would only be enhanced once students could interact in person again.

In addition to students' support networks, spirituality is an important aspect of their personal lives contributing to their well-being. A student's spirituality can be utilized in different ways to help navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Some ways include understanding morality (Pompele et al., 2022), complementary treatment (Rias et al., 2020), helping with coping (Roman et al., 2020), and health promotion (Barmania & Reiss, 2021). The research reports that COVID-19 for many students of all ages forced them to confront death and dying. When approaching these subjects, students who had a belief in spirituality coped better because the concept of an afterlife helped ease the stress of death (Pompele et al., 2022). In another study, the belief in spirituality provided an additional treatment as it helped reduce psychological outcomes such as anxiety faster than those who did not practice religion or spirituality (Rias et al., 2020). Other data shows that spirituality is vital for well-being as it provides strategies with coping that promote recovery, reduce stress, prevent burnout, and is life-enhancing (Roman et al., 2020). The use of spirituality in overall better health is also supported by research. When incorporated

as part of a person's health regimen, spirituality provides them with a holistic approach to care, providing hope and meaning in uncertain times (Barmania & Reiss, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic made many students face realities they may not have experienced before, such as death and severe illness. This research shows encouraging students to engage in spiritual practices provides an additional resource to help with their social well-being.

Trends on COVID-19 Effects on Students' Emotional and Mental Health

A third and equally important aspect of COVID-19 to report on is how the pandemic affected students' emotional and mental health. According to the literature presented here, the need to lock down and isolate resulted in many individuals developing or having emotional/mental health concerns worsening. COVID-19 affected students' mental health in various ways, whether it was students' mental health pathways (De France et al., 2022), a by-product of increased internet use (Chaturvedi et al., 2021), or social distancing (Banki, 2021) investigate different ways the COVID-19 lockdown affected the mental health of students. The research reports how COVID-19 affected adolescents' mental health pathways. The authors report that adolescents' most common mental health symptoms they saw rise due to the pandemic were anxiety, depression, and emotion dysregulation (De France et al., 2022). The need to shelter in place created the need for all students to engage in their education electronically, with much of it coming through the Internet. Examination of data shows how the online education environment, with its lack of interaction, resulted in changes to sleep habits, weight gain, and isolation, leading to and contributing to a decrease in student's mental health with depression and anxiety increasing (Chaturvedi et al. (2021). Similarly to isolation, social distancing created or increased mental health concerns in some students. Looking at the harmful effects of social distancing on mental health, the research suggests that the need for social distancing resulted in

social disengagement, which increased depression among students (Banki, 2021). These studies

conducted at the beginning and during the lockdown provide valuable insights but are limited in

seeing the long-term effects on students. Literature providing up-to-date and residual effects

since schools opened is limited. This study will aim to answer questions such as how the re-

opening of schools and the lessening of social distancing help reduce student anxieties in

classrooms from the teacher's perception. For example, did teachers with students struggling

online with work due to mental health concerns see a change in work after students returned to

the classrooms? What long-term mental/emotional health concerns are teachers still experiencing

in the classroom from COVID, if any?

As discussed above, students with disabilities and part of special education programs also

suffered more due to the COVID-19 lockdown. As with education accommodations that special

education students receive, many of them happen in school. With the need to shelter in place,

families also lost or saw a decrease in the availability of mental health services. This lack or

decrease in services among special education students can cause increased maltreatment (Fegert

et al., 2020), increased worry and loss (Asbury et al., 2021), and increased loneliness and

isolation (Nicholas et al., 2022). The research shows that during the lockdown, with services for

students with special needs being unavailable or canceled, there is a chance of increased

maltreatment. This maltreatment is due to their lack of social control, impaired communication

ability, and heightened neural response to signals of threats (Fegert et al., 2020). Additionally,

the data shows that special education students saw increased mental health concerns due to

additional worry and loss. This worry manifested in special education students being overly

scared of COVID-19 and repeatedly doing behaviors like washing their hands (Asbury et al.,

2021). Similarly, these students saw increased anxiety and lashing out due to losing routine at

home and school (Asbury et al., 2021). Due to the need to shelter in place, all students experienced some isolation, but the research shows that this was increased for students with special needs. Students with special needs experienced a higher lack of social engagement due to the lockdown, which increased their feelings of isolation resulting in depression and loneliness (Nicholas et al., 2022). The studies show that the COVID-19 pandemic created or amplified a difficult situation for students with special needs.

Just as online education affected students' education, it also affected their mental health. The mandatory move for students to receive all their education online had several side effects. Some of the side effects include increased depression (Vladislav et al., 2022), greater distractions (Gamboa, 2022), loneliness (Cortes-Garcia et al., 2022), and less social anxiety (Washington-Brown et al., 2021). The research shows that adolescence is a sensitive period for social development, and the pandemic's need for isolation increased depression in students by 44% (Vladislav et al., 2022). The data also shows that the move to online education has the potential to cause greater distractions among students due to the lack of supervision in the room (Gamboa, 2022). This lack of focus resulted in students turning in less work, hurting their academics, which negatively affected their mental health, increasing depression or anxiety (Gamboa, 2022). In addition, other research reports that the move to online education, with less interaction among students, resulted in students becoming more lonely, which negatively impacted the students' development concerning school performance and psychological functioning (Cortes-Garcia et al., 2022). Though many of the side effects were usually negative, there were also some potential positives reported from the move to online education. According to research, students who suffer from social anxiety felt more comfortable and performed better due to not needing to interact socially with their classmates (Washington-Brown et al., 2021). This research shows that the

required move to online education due to the COVID-19 pandemic either created or worsened students' mental health symptoms.

Much of the research presented thus far defines and shows the many negative consequences and side effects COVID-19 created, with minimal positive outcomes noted. However, not all emotional/mental health reports during the pandemic were negative or caused concern. Some studies showed that the lockdown yielded gains or other positive outcomes. Several studies conveyed how COVID-19 did not lead to more significant distress in a student's mental health but had a positive correlation. This positive gain is seen through family engagement (Gaxiola et al., 2022), reflecting on life (Arslan & Yildirim, 2021), or fortified mental health (Chen et al., 2022). First, the research investigated levels of family engagement both pre and during COVID-19, showing that children living in families with a positive correlation in family engagement reported fewer incidents of children needing mental health services (Gaxiola et al., 2022). Similar to the above, this study shows that quality over quantity plays a crucial role in engagement (Gaxiola et al., 2022). The many lives that COVID-19 took and its far-reaching effect on families forced adults and students alike to examine life. Research reports how helping students find meaning in life has proven to provide positive protective factors improving students' psychological health through increasing optimism (Arslan & Yildirim, 2021). Additionally, other research tells how contradictory to many of the other studies that were coming out; they did not see any real difference in longitudinal changes to mental health regarding individuals exposed and not exposed to COVID-19 (Chen et al., 2022). The authors reported that their survey showed no increase in depression, loneliness, or anxiety and no decrease in life satisfaction (Chen et al., 2002). This literature raises questions such as whether Chen et al. (2022) was an anomaly or whether more studies will show that the long-term fallout

was not as severe. In classrooms, what did teachers see from students concerning positive attitudes? How did teachers utilize students who seemed to be doing better with their mental health to help students struggling more? What resources did teachers incorporate into their routine to help promote positive mental health, if any?

Summary

The literature presented here first examined student academic trends, mental health, emotional health, social well-being, and homelife one to two years before the COVID-19 lockdown. The works presented are significant as they show research on themes that the pandemic would affect directly. First, regarding academics, the works presented showed the importance of student engagement and how grades affect students' self-esteem, which affects students' performance (Raccanello et al., 2019; North & Ryan, 2018). The COVID-19 lockdown would force all children to engage in their education through a virtual format which was less desirable when mandatory (Naydanova et al., 2018). The topic of how movement affects students' academic achievement in kindergarten and involvement in extracurriculars was also examined (Shoval et al., 2018; Shaffer, 2019; Carolan, 2018). The topic of minorities, specifically Latino and African Americans, was reported in how connections at school with other students of their background and adults contributed to their success (Elaesser et al., 2018; Gbolo & Grier-Reed, 2019; Golden et al., 2018). Lastly, the topic of students with special needs and how this population saw growth in academic performance due to classroom support was presented (Gottfried, 2018; Tindal & Anderson, 2019). The lockdown necessitated by the pandemic would halt all of these supports reported to provide student success.

Just as research discussed trends in education before COVID-19, students' mental health was also a topic of concern. The literature showed that prior to COVID-19, topics of concern

including the detrimental effects of electronics on students (Yang et al., 2018; Swetaa et al., 2019), the quality of sleep (Tafoya & Aldrete-Cortez, 2019; Deimazar et al., 2019), connections to others (Miller et al., 2018; Shelemy et al., 2019; Jonsson et al., 2019; Kroshus et al., 2019), and school counselors (Naik, 2019; Prince et al., 2019; Osagiede et al., 2018; Searcey van Vulpen et al., 2018). These studies all showed different topics that the lockdown caused by COVID-19 would further influence. With only a few years removed, complete data on how the lockdown affected students' mental health is not readily available. This research aimed to contribute to fill in some of the gaps.

Besides academics and mental health, the literature above also reported student social well-being before COVID-19. The topics discussed included quality of life (Calmerio et al., 2018; Krawczynska & Zawierucha, 2018; Gungor, 2019), socioeconomic status (Milas et al., 2019; Sun et al., 2019; Creavey et al., 2018), interpersonal relationships (Slavich et al., 2019; Forbes et al., 2019; Davis et al., 2018), and parent-child relationship (Dimitrova et al., 2018; Lei Chang et al., 2019; Hintsanen et al., 2019). The research shows the importance of healthy social well-being on student success. With the pandemics' mandate to shelter in place, the quality of students' well-being would be tested. It would hinder practices and further limit resources the data presented as essential to help students.

One last topic the literature explored in trends prior to COVID-19 was students' home life. The literature showed that home life influenced students' academics (Robinson et al., 2019; DeSpain et al., 2018; Jung et al., 2018; Lechuga-Pena et al., 2019), mental well-being (Lombardi et al., 2019; Eg et al., 2018; Lu, 2019), and quality of parent-child relationship (Vaterlaus et al., 2019; Hill et al., 2019; Oswald et al., 2018; Abar et al., 2018; Ogg & Anthony, 2019). With COVID-19 requiring families to stay at home, examining trends in this relationship is important.

With the inability of families to separate, the research shows that students living in homes where it was difficult would most likely see those difficulties increase during the COVID-19 lockdown.

In addition to looking at works about trends before COVID-19, the studies presented here provided a glimpse into the literature about how the trends of the COVID-19 lockdown had students' academics, social well-being, and emotional and mental health. Regarding academics, the works provided insights into various ways the COVID-19 lockdown altered education. Themes such as integrity of assignments and assessments were presented (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; Timmons et al., 2021). One area of academics that was threaded through many of the studies was the concern of the achievement gap growing even wider for children who live in an area that has a lower socio-economic background (Dusseault et al., 2021; Chrisman & Alnaim, 2021; Tomasik et al., 2021; Akat & Karatas, 2020; Capp et al., 2021; Anderson, 2020). Other themes presented above regarding academics covered parents' concerns (Booth et al., 2021; Niskac, 2021; Yildirim & Eslen-Ziya, 2021), views of teachers on how COVID-19 affected their classrooms (Qutishat et al., 2022; Almonacid-Fierro et al., 2021) and insights into special populations (McCorkell & Lobo, 2021). These studies on various aspects of academic life for students provide some insights into the difficulty that teachers and students face, but it is limited in the scope of long-term effects; COVID-19 has due to most of them happening towards the beginning or amid the pandemic. This limitation on the data does not provide up-to-date reflections on how these various themes impacted classrooms. This study aimed to fill in some gaps regarding how academics, as detailed in the studies above, still affect students directly due to COVID-19 from the educators interacting with them daily.

Besides looking at academics, this literature review also presented studies that showed how students' and children's social well-being was being affected by the COVID-19 lockdown.

Some themes that emerged from this was that the lockdown did not hurt everyone but provided positive social support as children got to spend more time with their parents (Akinsanya et al., 2020). Other themes presented include increased social support and engagement through the assignments they created (Annamalai, 2021; Antipuesto-Angel, 2021). The literature also showed how individuals from a minority background had additional social support to navigate through (Crooks et al., 2022; Galstyan & Galstyan, 2021; Wang et al., 2021; Cameron et al., 2021). Additionally, research shows how spirituality can contribute to a student's social well-being in various ways (Pompele et al., 2022; Rias et al., 2020; Roman et al., 2020; Barmania & Reiss, 2021). These studies look at a wide array of angles related to social support and students. However, a qualitative study is lacking in the literature investigating COVID-19 and social well-being through the perceptions of teachers. Another goal of this study was to provide data on how the pandemic affects students' social well-being. The literature lacks any definitive study or answers on the long-term effects of the lockdown on students. This study hoped to explore students in classrooms today and ask teachers if they lack social development compared to students teachers had before COVID-19. The lack of significant data on this question provided support for the need for this study.

This literature also provided studies that looked at the ways COVID-19 is affecting the emotional/mental health of students. Several themes were present in the literature, with one highlighting the adverse side effects that COVID-19 had on students concerning anxiety, depression, and isolation due to social distancing (Chaturvedi et al., 2021; De France et al., 2022; Banki, 2021). Another theme investigated was how online education affected students' mental health. The research showed that online learning has negative effects on students' mental health (Vladislav et al., 2022; Gamboa, 2022; Cortes-Garcia et al., 2022) but also provides show relief

for students who struggle in social settings (Washington-Brown et al., 2021). Not all the studies presented had negative outcomes, but instead showed positive ways that COVID-19 provided opportunities to promote mental health (Gaxiola et al., 2022; Arslan & Yildirim, 2021; Chen et al., 2022). Additionally, themes of how COVID-19 affected teachers' mental health were presented to provide insight into why students' education may be affected (Alves et al., 2020; Bayod et al., 2021). A limitation of the literature here is that it gives readers an understanding of ways that COVID-19 was affecting emotional and mental health from the angle of the researcher conducting the study but not from the perspective of the school staff working with these students. As stated above, gaps in how this affected students long-term or still affects them in the classroom are not written extensively in the literature as we are still relatively close to the lockdown being lifted. This study added to the available literature by providing some data that begins to answer the questions of the residual effects of COVID-19 on students' mental/emotional health.

As this literature review has shown, some data tells readers about how students saw their academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health as both supported and hurt due to COVID-19. What is not represented in the literature is current trends in how COVID-19 still affects academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health in the classroom today. This literature also does not provide an in-depth look at these teachers' stories and how they have seen the students in their care either excel or be hindered by COVID-19. This study aimed to add to the available literature a qualitative phenomenology of teachers' stories that sheds light on how they have seen and continue to see the academic, social, and emotional needs of their students affected by COVID-19. It is vital to continue understanding all the lingering ways that COVID-19 is still impacting this literature review; many studies exist of early trends and hypotheses of

what the lockdown and quarantining would have on students. This study began to look and see if

some of these outcomes were true by interviewing the education staff who interact with them

daily.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

This phenomenological study investigated how teachers believe the COVID-19 pandemic affected their students during the initial lockdown and what lasting effects they still see in their classrooms. Specifically, this study explored how students' academic performance, social well-being, and emotional/mental health were affected. Literature exists that presents data on these three different topics individually and many times from a quantitative viewpoint. This study provided educators whose daily job is engaging students the opportunity to tell their stories gathering in one place accounts of how students were and continue to navigate the disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic. This study allowed others in education to see how other classrooms were affected by COVID-19.

Design

The planned type of study was qualitative. A qualitative study is defined by Creswell and Poth (2018) as research that is an inquiry to explore a social or human problem. This is done with the researcher building a holistic picture by analyzing the participant's words in a natural setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A qualitative study was selected as it presents the best means to collect teachers' perceptions regarding COVID-19. This design is appropriate as Creswell and Poth (2018) teach that a qualitative researcher attempts to make sense of a phenomenon regarding the meanings people attach to them. To accomplish this qualitative study, a phenomenological design was pursued.

A phenomenological study was selected as the research focuses on the lived experiences of the teachers selected as participants. With my goal as the researcher to gather perceptions of teachers, this design approach was the best to gather this data. In their book Creswell and Poth

(2018) instruct that a phenomenological study "describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experience of a concept or phenomenon" (75). Additionally, van Manen (1990) details that the purpose of phenomenology is for the researcher to reduce the individual experience into a universal essence. According to Moustakas (1994), the researcher then collects data from those who have experienced the phenomenon and creates a composite description of the shared experience from all individuals.

Phenomenological studies find their roots in the works of Edmund Husserl, a German mathematician (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Husserl's work was expanded upon by others, such as Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty, and is popular in social and health sciences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). From its beginnings, phenomenological research has expanded. Still, according to Creswell and Poth, two authors stand out as solid works that have contributed to the development of phenomenological study van Manen (2014) and Moustakas (1994). In his work, van Manen provides some of the common grounds that philosophical assumptions rest on, such as the lived experiences of individuals and the views of these experiences being conscious ones. Moustakas (1994) supplements by sharing that you should develop descriptions of the experiences, not explanations or analyses.

Several features define phenomenology, according to Creswell and Poth (2018). Some include the phenomenon is defined as a single concept and explored with a group of individuals who all have experienced it (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Other features include the researcher bracketing himself out of the study by examining personal experiences to allow them to be set aside so the researcher can focus on collecting their data primarily through interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Finally, the data is analyzed to summarize two elements of what and how the

phenomenon was experienced, ending with a descriptive passage that tells of the essence or culminating aspect of the phenomenology (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

This study used a transcendental approach described by Moustakas (1994). In his approach, Moustakas emphasizes the desire to focus less on the researcher's insights and more on the depiction of the phenomenon by the participants. With the design of this study to gather new perceptions on the effects COVID-19 had on students from teachers, a transcendental approach is the most appropriate. Moustakas (1994) reports that transcendental means for the researcher to take in everything regarding the phenomenon as if they were experiencing it for the first time. With this researcher's current role as a school counselor, the transcendental phenomenological approach allowed for bracketing the interview experiences to hear and engage in how COVID-19 affects others in the educational setting.

Research Questions

Research Question 1. What do teachers identify as the main factors from COVID-19 that influenced student performance?

Research Question 2. What are the immediate academic, social well-being, and emotional/mental health effects of COVID-19 that were observed in the classroom?

Research Question 3. What area of student performance (academic, social, emotional) have teachers observed to be most affected by COVID-19?

Research Question 4. What are the long-term effects of COVID-19 that are still affecting the classroom?

Setting

For this study, public schools in central Pennsylvania were selected as the sites to select participants. These sites were selected as this researcher resides in this area, making scheduling

interviews with potential participants possible. This researcher wanted to use public schools as

often in the literature; the schools or students that study came from a public-school setting. Using

the same schools cited in the literature allowed for consistency in the data collection. This also

provides ease in evaluating the information. This factor was important when validating potential

findings in this study. This study acquired participants from grades 6-9. Public schools provided

consistency in the structure, with them all having a similar setup with administration, teaching

staff, and school counselors. This researcher feels that the addition of private schools and cyber

academics was beyond the scope of what this study hoped to accomplish.

Participants

This research will use the criterion form of sampling as Creswell and Poth (2018)

detailed to find participants for this study. The criterion form of sampling "seeks cases that meet

some criterion; useful for quality assurance (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.159). The study focuses

on COVID-19, so a process to screen out potential candidates who were not teaching at the onset

of COVID-19 was part of the demographic information collected. To find participants, a study

description was shared with the local county counseling association and administrators of other

districts to elicit potential candidates via an email invitation. Persons interested in participating

contacted this researcher to establish that they worked in a public school as a teacher at the onset

of the pandemic and still currently work in that role. The study's design gathered the perceptions

of teachers. Administrators, school counselors and other educational staff were included in this

study.

Procedures

To complete this phenomenological study, this researcher obtained permission to conduct

the study through Liberty Universities Institutional Review Board (IRB). Once permission was

obtained, this researcher reported the description and intent of his study to the school counseling

associations he is a part of and asked the school principal to distribute it to the county principals

who had it announced in their school districts. To gather the data, this researcher conducted

interviews with the selected participants in-person at a location that is convenient for them.

During the interviews, answers will be recorded through an audio-capturing device and then

transcribed. Interviewees will answer questions on a questionnaire referenced below, and it will

be evaluated for themes after all interviews and transcription of the text.

The Researcher's Role

As the "human instrument" the researcher collected and interpreted participant data. As a

school counselor, this researcher did have some bias as he is experiencing the same phenomenon

he is asked his participants to report on. This researcher met these individuals for the first time

by eliciting participants from neutral school districts. This helped eliminate bias and assumptions

as this researcher would visit the participants' schools and districts. Acknowledging his

experience with the phenomenon allowed this researcher to bracket it out of the interview

process, gathering from my interviewee's fresh perspectives.

Data Collection

Following the procedures, as Creswell and Poth (2018) said, this phenomenological study

was completed through semi-structured face-to-face interviews with participants. Open-ended

questions were utilized to get the interviewees' experience with the phenomenon (Moustakas,

1994). The interviews were 35-45 minutes, and eleven participants provided the data needed to

answer the research questions. Semi-structured interviews are essential as they are standard ways

for a phenomenological researcher to gather data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Interviews

Standardized Open-Ended Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself as if we had first met.

2. Please share your educational background when you started teaching, including grade
    level, subjects, and role (teacher)

3. Please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown, as
    it relates to the academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health of the students.

4. What were some immediate concerns regarding academics, social well-being and
    emotional/mental health you experienced with students after the lockdown?

5. What were some feelings/fears you grappled with regarding students' academics, social
    well-being, and emotional/mental health in the immediate lockdown?

6. As the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social well-being, and
    mental/emotional health was COVID-19 having on your classroom?

7. When reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas academic, social
    well-being, or emotional/mental health do you feel has had the most significant impact on
    your classroom?

8. What have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your
    classroom you shared in the previous question?

9. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were
    missing entirely?

10. How do you feel having these supports at that time could have helped your students?

11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health?

12. What supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

13. Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental/emotional health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

14. What continued support/resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on students today?

16. We have covered a lot of ground during our conservation together, and I thank you for your time. One final question, what else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I have yet to ask you?

Data Analysis

As detailed by Moustakas (1994), these steps were followed to analyze the findings from data collection. First, a list of significant statements were established from answers by the participants using the horizontalization approach described by Moustakas. To establish horizontalization, Moustakas instructs the researcher to re-read and listen to the interviews to establish themes. To help establish themes, the data analysis using textural, structural, and composite descriptions as Moustakas details were used. Moustakas tells the researcher to review the data to establish textural themes to reduce and eliminate overlapping, repetitive, and vague expressions. In the data, they look at each expression that meets the experience to see if it

constitutes understanding (Moustakas, 1994). Once the data has been validated, the researcher

clusters the invariant constituents related into thematic labels; these are the core of the

experience (Moustakas, 1994). Using the relevant, validated invariant constituents and themes,

an individual textural description is constructed, a narrative that explains participants'

perceptions of a phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). This should include verbatim examples from

the transcribed interview (Moustakas, 1994). From these textural descriptions, Moustakas says

the researcher then creates the structural description of the experience based on the textural

description and imaginative variation. The structural description creates a mental picture of the

experience and helps establish the order in which it happened (Moustakas, 1994). The composite

description is developed from the individual textural-structural descriptions Moustakas explains.

This consists of a description of the meanings and essences of the experience, representing the

group as a whole.

Trustworthiness

This study utilized credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability to

establish the study's trustworthiness. How each of these was applied is detailed in the following

sections.

Credibility

Triangulation, as detailed in Creswell and Poth (2018), was used to establish credibility

for this study. According to Creswell and Poth, credibility is essential as it links the study to

reality. Triangulation, as described by Creswell and Poth, is using multiple methods or data

sources to provide corroborating evidence for validating the study's accuracy. Triangulation was

established using studies from the literature as examples that connect to direct statements from

participants in the study.

Dependability and Confirmability

Detailed field notes and quality recordings were used to enhance the dependability and confirmability of the data, as Creswell and Poth (2018) describe. Additionally, the intercoder agreement was employed, which uses multiple coders to assign and check code segments to establish the reliability of the data analysis process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Additionally, this researcher employed what Stahl and King (2020) describe as peer debriefing. Peer debriefing is a way to help establish dependability, according to Stahl and King (2020), as it conveys a sense of self-credibility.

Transferability

To establish transferability, this study employed what Creswell and Poth (2018) teach as generating a detailed, thick description. Doing this, as the researcher, allows the reader to decide on transferability by describing the participants and the setting in detail. This detailed description lets the reader decide if the information can be transferred to other settings because of shared characteristics (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Ethical Considerations

All information was stored on a computer, and only this researcher had the password to protect the collected data. All participants were volunteers who completed an informed consent form before the interview. Pseudonyms were used in the interview, and the participants' information remained confidential. The participants were warned of the potential harm of participating in the study. All participants will be provided access to the final study presentation if they desire.

Summary

This chapter provides the reader with an overview of the methods of this study. As detailed this study will employ a qualitative phenomenology with a transcendental design, as detailed by Moustakas (1994). This was deemed the best method, as phenomenology is best used when the exploration of a specific phenomenon wants to be explored. With my desire to study how COVID-19 affected students through teachers' perceptions, this seemed the obvious choice. The study was completed through interviews and document analysis utilizing academic staff in public schools located in the researcher's area of residence in central Pennsylvania. This data will be analyzed using Moustakas' methods and tested for trustworthiness regarding creditability, dependability, and transferability. This was all be conducted using universally accepted ethical considerations to data storage and participant anonymity.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

This study aimed to understand better the impact of COVID-19 on students from the teachers' perspective. In this chapter, the researcher will present the findings of his interviews as they provide information on the effects of COVID-19 in the classroom. This researcher used Moustakas's (1994) horizontalization methods to analyze the interview data, as described above in Chapter Three. First, a description of each participant who was interviewed using a pseudonym is provided. Following the information about the interviewees, results will be presented in two ways. Initially, the theme development from the data will be shared using relevant participant quotes to support its placement within the given theme. Next, the research questions will be answered using quotes from the interviewees to support each one. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the information given in this chapter before moving on to analysis in Chapter 5.

Participants

George

George has been a 6th-grade teacher in public education for 24 years. He has taught 3rd, 4th, and 6th grade in his education career. A majority of his time has been spent teaching 6th grade. He teaches at Charlestown Middle School, which is located in central Pennsylvania.

Sally

Sally is a high school business teacher with primarily 9th graders in her classes. She has been teaching at Charlestown High School, located in central Pennsylvania, since 1995. She teaches Business and Career Development, Savings/Investing/ Financial Decisions, and Business Management classes.

William

William is an English teacher who has been teaching at Charlestown Middle School in central Pennsylvania for 19 years. He spent his first nine years teaching 7th grade English and the last ten teaching 8th grade English.

Peter

Peter is a Social Studies teacher at Charlestown High School in central Pennsylvania. He has been teaching for 11 years. His classes consist of students in grades 9-12, though he reports not having many sophomores.

Lucy

Lucy is currently a science teacher who is also certified in special education. She currently teaches at Charlestown High School. Previously, she has taught at the elementary and middle school levels as well.

Chris

Chris has been teaching since 2007 in a variety of roles. He is currently teaching Social Studies at Charlestown Middle School but has also taught at Charlestown High School and other schools in the central Pennsylvania area.

Michelle

Michelle has been teaching for 18 years, all at Charlestown High School. She teaches various biology classes, and her student caseload consists of students in grades 9 through 12.

Jill

Jill is currently teaching 6th-grade reading at Charlestown Middle School. Previously, she has also taught middle school Social Studies as well as 1st, 2nd grade, and kindergarten.

John

John is currently teaching Social Studies at Charlestown High School. He has been teaching for 20 years, all at Charlestown High School. Previously, he was the coordinator of the Charlestown's alternative education program.

Bill

Bill is currently teaching Social Studies at Charlestown Middle School and has been for the previous seven years. He started teaching 7th grade but now teaches 8th grade. Before teaching here in Charlestown, Bill was an administrator and taught in Illinois.

Bruce

Bruce is a Social Studies teacher at Charlestown Middle School. He has been teaching full-time at Charlestown Middle School for ten years. He bounced between 7th and 8th grade for his first four years but has been doing 8th grade for the last six years.

<div align="center">

Results

</div>

Theme Development

As detailed in Chapter 3, this researcher used Moustakas's (1994) method of horizontalization to establish significant statements from participants. The interview responses, by nature of the questions, fall into three broad categories: pre-COVID, immediate lock-down/hybrid instruction, and post-COVID. The following sections will present the themes that emerged from the participants in each category.

Pre-COVID

In the interview, question 3 asked participants to share their classroom environment before COVID-19 as it related to academics, social well-being, and mental health. Participants gave various responses to this question, but the most common theme that appeared was the

teachers sharing how, before COVID, students were more social and easier to engage. William stated, "One thing that has changed is I think more about the social dynamics." Likewise, Michelle shared, "My desks were groups of four. I encourage kids to talk with a partner and check with friends." John reflected, "The kids, I feel, were comfortable expressing themselves, talking to each other, sharing, being friendly, talking with me, bantering with me, sharing with me." Bruce remembered, "They [students] were a very polite group like they were nice to each other. They were fun, they were hardworking, it was just an enjoyable class to be around, and it's kind of definitely changed since COVID."

In addition to the social aspects of students, two other themes emerged: group work and hands-on activities. In her interview, Sally shared, "I would say that my students prior to the lockdown were involved in a lot of group projects; they got to work very closely with one another and kind of go above and beyond." Lucy said, "We [the teacher and the class] did a lot of collaborative work; we did a lot of group work, partner work, a lot of critical thinking and problem-solving activities." Chris also contributed, "I feel we [teacher and students] were a lot more hands-on." and Jill stated, "We did a lot of hands-on learning. They [students] would play games against one another in math, for instance. They could just engage in things in a very hands-on approach." Other thoughts about group work come from Michelle and Bill, who shared that "We did a lot of group work" (Michelle) and "I saw students working together more; it was a group mentality" (Bill). Other things teachers mentioned regarding their pre-COVID classroom environment included better attendance (Bill), independence (Jill, Bruce), more foundational background knowledge (George), and more engagement (George, Peter).

Immediate Lockdown/Hybrid Instruction

Questions 4 through 7 asked the participants to reflect on how they saw the COVID pandemic affecting their students regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health. Questions 8-10 asked the participants to share what challenges they have faced in counteracting impacts shared in the previous questions, what resources they felt were missing, needed more access to, and how they could have helped.

Question 4

Question 4 asked the participants to share their immediate concerns for their student's academics, social well-being, and mental health after the lockdown. The participant's responses to these three areas fell into three themes: learning loss, student well-being, and socialization of students. Concerning learning loss, the participants shared a variety of thoughts. In his interview, John stated, "The initial concern for me was [student] academics." In his response, Bruce shared, "So the academic [rigor] definitely slowed, I had to adapt, I found myself grading a little easier because the kids were at home." When reflecting on learning loss, Bill said, "I knew there was going to be learning loss. It was inevitable; out of a class of 25, maybe five kids on a given day show up for the class."

Student well-being was the second theme that the participants were concerned about. This theme includes participants who mentioned student well-being or mental health in their responses. In his interview, Chris stated, "I was really worried about the mental health [of students] in that aspect because some of them [students], this is where they get two of their meals a day; this is their safe spot." Jill contributed, sharing, "So I had concerns for their [students] mental health with everything that was happening. I wanted to maintain continuity; there were kids that I never saw online, so of course, we [teacher and support staff] were worried for them."

Bill also shared on student well-being, saying, "I know a lot these kids at home don't have the greatest experiences, don't have supportive parents, don't have necessities."

Another challenge of the lockdown the participants reported was how to help students with socialization (social well-being). Reflecting on socialization, William said, "There were some kids who clearly struggled with it [socializing], and it took them a while to adapt to being around people again." In her interview, Lucy continues about socialization, sharing, "How do you get them [students] to learn conversational skills, problem-solving, and critical thinking when they're at home?" Michelle stated, "I feel like kids don't know how to communicate with each other anymore if they're not on their phone texting you; they can't carry on an actual conversation sometimes." Outside of these three themes, other responses that were given included creating a purpose for students (Sally), attendance (Bill and George), and student safety (Lucy and Chris).

Question 5

This question asked participants to respond to feelings/fears they grappled with regarding their students' academics, social well-being, and mental health. Of the three categories, the emerging themes reflected the fear of schoolwork, student safety (well-being, access to resources), and their connection to the teachers and other students. Examining fears related to schoolwork, the participants spoke about its completion and rigor. In her interview, Michelle shared, "The biggest concern or fear that I had was the lack of schoolwork that was actually getting done." Likewise, George, in his response, stated, "I was lucky if I had half the group come online to do the work." Additionally, John said, "I think that's probably the biggest fear I was worried about, is the sense of, I don't feel like it [completing assignments], so I'm not [going to]. And that becoming ingrained in who they are."

Looking at student safety, participants shared their feelings on knowing if their students had what they needed to succeed in school. Lucy shared, "The immediate things that I struggled with is, what do I do to help these kids, that desperately need this adult [teacher] to help them?" Chris echoed similar thoughts to Lucy, stating, "The fears were, you know, how are some of them going to get the connections that they need, the services that they need, the person to talk to that they need, that safe place." Similarly, Bill said in his interview, "The [biggest] fear being, are they [students] going to be taken care of?"

The other theme for this question was fear for the student's connections to each other and the teacher. Looking at Peter, he shared that by the end of the school year, "emails were never being returned, remind messages weren't being answered. I just chalked it up to students and families who are mentally worn out; education is not there." Also, Sally reflects that "I was concerned about the students that were not logging on and connecting with teachers." William provides his insights, saying, "In the immediate, some of the kids seemed like they were kind of searching for a connection or to feel some kind of belonging, they were a little bit lost, and now they're isolated, that was my main concern." A few other responses shared for this question included not having enough information (Bruce) and how to help students in an online environment (George).

Question 6

Question 6 asked the participants to share the effects COVID-19 was having on their classrooms as the lockdown continued as it pertained to academics, social well-being, and mental health. The participants' responses to this question formed two themes: academic difficulties (lack of work, quality, and participation) and concern for students' mental health. Many participants reported their difficulty with the academic work they were getting from students. A

few of the participants shared that "Students saw it as a free pass" (Peter) and "They are going to pass no matter what" (Sally). Other participants, Lucy and Chris, contributed their thoughts, stating, "It was a challenge to get students to do any work" (Lucy) and "Trying to get them involved was essentially impossible" (Chris). Likewise, several participants reflected on the quality, with John stating, "I could see the lack, I don't want to say lack of effort, but there was a clear lack of something in every kid." Additionally, Bill, George, and Bruce all spoke to the difficulty of getting quality work, with Bill sharing, "Kids were essentially missing every other day, as they were not logging on, I knew that [learning loss] gaps would be forming." George's insight was, "We were playing catch up every day with curriculum because even though they were online, I didn't know if they were doing it [assignments]." Lastly, Bruce said, "Academically, they were so frustrated with everything else [distance learning, masking, social distancing] going on it was hard to get them to focus."

When looking at mental health, participants' comments were not all negative. William and Jill shared some positives COVID-19 had with their student's mental health. Bill said, "There was less of a stigma to talk about, trauma or other things the kids had gone through, so they were more willing to open up." Likewise, Jill shared that "We did a lot of social/emotional learning during that time [lockdown and hybrid]; we really addressed their mental [health] and incorporated it into lessons." On the other side of that, some participants commented on how they were seeing a rise in anxiety in students. Bruce and Bill both speak to this, with Bruce saying, "There was a social anxiety rising due to the ever-changing protocols [both in school and public]." Additionally, Bill stated, "There was a rise in anxiety to the mask, social distancing, and the fear of getting sick." Besides these two themes, other responses included Peter's sharing

that teachers felt the "wear and tear [online instruction]" and William's stating it was "difficult" to get information from students.

Question 7

This question asked the participants to comment on which area of academics, social well-being, or mental health had the most significant impact on their classroom. Of the three areas, the participant's responses were evenly distributed between academics and mental health, with social well-being viewed as a lesser concern of the three. Looking first at academics, Peter, Lucy, Michelle, and Bill responded that this was impacted the most. Peter shared, "It's a struggle to have them get in-class assignments done, let alone homework." Michelle reported, "It's academics; the level [quality] of academics is still not the same as it was pre-COVID." In his interview, Bill said, "The learning gaps are significant, and as a result, I had to rewrite my curriculum." Lucy stated "The students rely on Google to answer everything, many have lost the ability to critically think."

In addition to academics, students' mental health was reported as having the most significant impact on the classroom. In their interviews, John, Jill, Bruce, and George discussed how mental health affected their classrooms. George shared, "Students' [coping] skills are not in place, and they are having a hard time holding it together." Jill contributes her input by highlighting "Mental health as it supports everything else and holds everything together." John, in his response, highlighted the rise in anxiety, stating, "I think anxiety was coming with the widespread use of technology, but COVID exacerbated it, just became so much of their identity." Similar to Jill, Bruce stated mental health impacts the other two areas going deeper, sharing, "Kids can't cope with the stress, they get angry very easily, and they don't know how to express it."

The impact of social well-being was the least reported, with Sally, William, and Chris sharing what they saw impacting their classroom the most. In their responses, Sally and William both mirror each other, sharing that "When [the] students came back, they all just sit quietly and didn't talk" (Sally) and "Students don't interact as much, and when they do it is usually mean." (Chris). In his response, William stated, "Students are harder to figure out, and it feels like there is a lot more angst."

Question 8

For question 8, participants were asked to share what they found to be the most challenging step in counteracting the impact they reported in the previous question. Examining academics first, Bill reported that he needs "to modify things [assignments, curriculum, expectations] to meet every student's individual needs." In her interview, Sally stated, "It's trying to get kids motivated as more of them seem to care less about their grades." Lucy shared that it's "getting the students to want to work at it [worked completion, critically thinking] and that it's not a simple, quick, easy fix." Peter felt that it's been making "connections with students who don't want to be bothered and would rather sit by themselves and just get through so they can move onto the next part of their day."

Turning to mental health, Bruce said that "Getting students to believe in themselves" has been his most challenging step. For John, it's been "dealing with the hostility of students having to put their phones away." George shared that it's been "trying to understand all their different needs because they are all over the board." Finally, Jill reported, "It's understanding their emotional needs."

Lastly, participants who reported on social well-being as having the greatest impact shared their thoughts on the greatest challenge in counteracting it. William stated it's "having the

patience to wait out students' undesirable behavior, not giving into fighting them on every little thing." In his classroom, Chris reported, "It's getting the students to stop goofing off and focus on class." Sally said it's "counteracting the technology, and the students need to use it, as it takes up a lot of their attention span."

Question 9

This question asked participants to share what supports they wish they had more access to or felt were missing entirely during the pandemic. The responses to this question varied greatly and were difficult to group into larger themes. Some of the participants spoke to similar topics, which is how it will be reported here. First, a few of the participants (Sally and William) couldn't think of anything in particular, feeling "the district did a good job at getting us prepared" (William). On the other hand, several participants (Peter and John) felt there could have been "More communication from Administration" (Peter), and there was a "lack of direction" from the top (John).

In their responses, Bruce and Lucy speak to mental health, with Lucy wishing there could have been "more family check-ins, with psychologists and counselors." Whereas Bruce wished "more access to mental health for students." Regarding academics, Jill wanted more support on making the "work at home count because it was hard to get students to invest when they knew it [assignments and assessments] didn't count." In his classroom, George wished "he had more support in understanding how the computer worked as that wasn't "part of his world." Chris stated more support in "getting the students back full-time sooner" would have been great. Lastly, a few of the participants (Michelle and Bill) wished there was more in-class support to help students "better understand what we were going through [with COVID-19 in school and in society]" (Bill).

Question 10

Question 10 asked the participants to reflect on how having the support they spoke about in question 9 would have helped their students. Just as in the previous questions, the responses to this question varied. To this question, Sally and William gave responses, with William stating, "Having emotional support sooner would have helped the students [difficulties] with having to work together sooner." Sally responded, "Technology applications that were more interactive would've helped with accountability more." In answering this question, Peter and John felt that having more communication from the administration would have "helped me better guide my students and their families, helping to debunk misinformation" (Peter). John felt it would have "given some hope that there is a light at the end of the tunnel."

Having these supports in place, Lucy and Bruce feel, could have "helped my students learn coping mechanisms to better deal with stress" (Bruce). Lucy likewise shared, "It would have helped them see they are not alone and could have taught some tricks to help the whole family." Looking at academics, Jill felt the backing would have "helped garner more support [in getting assignments turned in]and follow through from parents." Having more help understanding the computer could have "helped both students and parents get more engaged," George shared. Chris felt that having the students [in-person] daily would have helped their "social well-being." Finally, Michelle and Bill stated having in-class supports in place would have helped create a sense of "normalcy" (Sally) and "build confidence" (Bill).

Post-COVID

Five of the last six questions asked the participants to reflect on how they still see COVID-19 affecting their classroom. The questions reflect on residual effects and supports needed to help with those residual effects. Which areas of academics, social well-being, and

mental health do they feel are not getting attended to appropriately? What supports are needed to help with learning loss, and if they could go back and change one thing, what would have the greatest impact? The last questions ask the participants to share any other essential information that would help this researcher better understand COVID-19 in their classroom I have yet to ask.

Question 11

This question asked the participants to reflect on what residual effects of the COVID-19 lockdown they still see in their classrooms concerning academics, social well-being, and mental health. The participants were split among themes, with four identifying two things they still see in the classroom, four identifying academics as the area where they see residual effects, and three identifying social well-being. Looking first at the participants who reported two residual effects there was Bruce, John, Jill, and Michelle. In his interview, Bruce shared that "fewer students are willing to take on a challenge academically and socially, students are more argumentative, and they want us to handle everything." John contributed, stating, "You could see the anxieties from [students realizing], wait, this counts now [regarding assignments] and not knowing how to behave in a social setting." From her account, Jill said, "The value for learning and the prioritization of learning is just not there as much as it should be, So I do see a lot of anxiety, a lot of anxiety with kids." Michelle finished reporting, "So academics, definitely we have had to lower our standards so that kids are achieving, which isn't a good thing. Socially, kids don't talk to each other like they used to."

The second emerging theme was academics, where the participants saw the greatest residual effects. George, Chris, Lucy, and Sally each shared how academics still affected their classroom. In the interview with George, he spoke about student work ethic, stating, "Student responsibility would be a big thing; it's not there, it's just not there, giving homework or

expecting homework to be completed, forget it." Chris reported seeing students less willing to step up to harder work: "Students, not willing to accept a challenge, during the lockdown/hybrid [we] definitely did a lot of hand holding, and not challenging them." Lucy shared her thoughts on academic residual effects, saying, "I'm still seeing the trickle down of not being able to think critically and problem-solve." Michelle closes out this theme, stating, "I still see kids who are overly dependent on technology and want to look up answers to everything."

The last theme found in this question focused on how social well-being had a residual effect in participants' classrooms. In their responses, Bill and William report social well-being, with Bill sharing, "Yeah, the social-emotional, just not seeing kids be able to talk to each other, or refusing to talk to each other." William also said in his interview, "I'm still seeing that social interactions are strained a little bit. Kids aren't as patient with each other as they used to be." Finally, only Peter identified mental health as the area in which he is seeing residual effects. In his interview, Peter stated, "I'll say unfortunately, but I think it could be fortunately [students are more willing to talk about]; seems like a lot of students are struggling with mental health. But it's definitely a different comparison. Is it that more are struggling or that we're more aware of it?"

Question 12

Question 12 asked the participants to share what they felt was needed to help remedy the residual effects. The strongest theme that came from participant responses was the need for additional staff at the school to help the students. The addition of staff varies from more teachers, more counselors, or a learning loss coordinator. In their interviews, Jill, Lucy, and Bruce spoke to the need for more counselors. Jill shared, "More counseling 100 %, more counselors to support mental health, concerns about academics, and to support teachers." Additionally, Bruce contributed, "We need more counselors. We have three, which are fantastic, but our numbers

keep going up, three counselors for 1,200 students." Lucy spoke to the need for more counseling, but for parents, "maybe more counseling for parents; I think some parents are just so overwhelmed with everything." Bill, in his interview, told of the need for more teachers, sharing, "More teachers and reduce class size. My class size has grown from 13 to 22 students in all my classes, but one is at 29, which is the max." Lastly, William felt that having someone to engage with the learning loss would be beneficial, sharing, "Having a learning loss coordinator to help students who are behind. We have a [computer] program that helps, but it's not the same as having a person."

Other themes that were present included the need to hold students accountable and the need to address academics. First, looking at holding students accountable, Sally shared her thoughts: "Allowing teachers to hold their students accountable for the grades they're earning, and not forcing us to only have 10% off as the maximum that I can deduct." Likewise, John shared, "More discipline, creating boundaries for students, be a little bit more concrete [on the expectations] and then hold hard." In their interviews, Michelle and George shared that there is a need for more academic support. George said, "I think we need resources in place for the student, their academics, also their emotional well-being." Additionally, Michelle speaks to the rigor of the academics, sharing, "I think the school as a whole has to change our mindset. I think right now we're so focused on the kids who are failing and what can we do to get them to pass; we're trying to make everything easier so those kids pass; we need to have upper administration say, okay, here's the bar, let's get them to rise."

Outside of these three themes, two participants responded with thoughts of what they felt would help remedy these effects. Peter, in his interview, felt that more communication would be helpful. He stated, "Working closely with our guidance department, also working hand-in-hand

with our administration, for open communication and transparency, I know some things can't be shared, but I think bringing more of a team effort." Finally, Chris, in his interview, felt having an opportunity for more time with students would be helpful. He stated, "It's [the] time to build meaningful relationships to mentor them."

Question 13

Question 13 asked participants which area of academics, social well-being, or emotional/mental health they feel is not getting attended to appropriately and why. This question saw two themes in responses. The one with the greatest number of responses was student's social well-being. Six participants (John, George, Bill, Michelle, Chris, and Peter) reported on this area. John spoke to social well-being, stating, "It's the least quantified; academics has grades, but social wellness and teaching students social fitness is not dealt with." In his interview, George felt it's the key to all the areas sharing: "Social well-being, that has to be taken care of first, then everything else usually falls in place." In his interview regarding social well-being resources, Bill said, "We have some things in place, but it just seems kids don't have friends, and they don't know how to make friends." Similarly, Michelle echoed Bill's thoughts: "Social [well-being] is the biggest area. Kids lack basic social skills, such as how to talk to your classmate." Additionally, Chris is concerned with students' connections, saying, "Are they fitting in somewhere? Too many kids are falling through the cracks, get desperate to make a relationship, and end up making bad ones." Peter sees students' social well-being as "more students are nonchalant or maybe disrespectful in their approach, more students just going through the motions."

In response to this question, the other emerging theme was mental health not being attended to appropriately. Five participants (Bruce, Jill, Lucy, William, and Sally) reported this

needing attention most. Bruce shared how he felt "these kids experienced trauma. The inability to address it [COVID] in class and talk through it together in a safe environment" could have helped. In their responses, Jill and Lucy echoed each other, both telling how mental health is key, with Jill stating, "Mental health, because if those needs are not met, then nothing else will fall into place." Likewise, Lucy contributed, "Emotional well-being, if a student is happy and healthy in their mental health, then everything else falls into place." William shared his thoughts on mental health, reflecting on how "we have some students who go down to the counseling office each day and spend many hours there to get help with the things we can't handle." Lastly, Sally contributed her thoughts on students' mental health, sharing, "Kids are bombarded with so many distractions and so much negativity, and they put too much emphasis on what other people think."

Question 14

This question asked participants to share what supports they feel are needed to help with the learning loss due to COVID-19. From the responses, two prevalent themes emerged. The first focused on additional academic support in some way, with six of the participant's replies speaking to this. The other theme that emerged was the need for additional staff. Looking first at academic support, Bruce told how he felt there needs to be more support in retaining students and re-inventing education. He shared, "We're going to keep moving students along, but there are some students that, maybe, [speaking to a hypothetical student] you need to repeat the seventh grade, just because maturity-wise, you're not just there." He continues, "I think we're at a point where we maybe just need to completely reinvent education as it is." In his interview, John stated he would like some consistency, saying, "I think it's just a continuous, lowering our standards, you gotta keep the standards up. The more you lower them, they're just going to

continue to lower." In addition, Chris felt that the gaps need to be bridged. He felt this can be obtained by "scaffolding what we've lost, the academic skills, writing again, the oral communication." Likewise, Lucy echoed Chris in some ways, sharing: "I think we need to revamp the curriculum to guide for some of these missing chunks of learning." In his interview, William felt he knows where the learning loss is most prevalent, stating, "I think some of the diagnostic tests we do give us an idea of where the patterns of learning loss are, what particular area to focus on." Lastly, Sally shared that getting new materials would be helpful as she felt she has to spend so much time creating her things. She said, "I think I could be a more effective teacher if I just had the basis of the class started for me."

The other theme that became prevalent from the interviews was the addition of staff members to assist. This support came in three different forms from the participants. First, George felt an aide would be beneficial: "It'd be nice to have an aide in the room. I have a lot of learning support students in a class, and it would be nice to have an aide in the room or another teacher to help with those students." Bill sees a possible solution as adding more support staff. He commented that there are programs they use to help, but they are all independent learning. Bill shared, "I think we just need more teachers in the building, honestly, more support staff. I think that would solve a lot of our problems." In her interview, Jill keeps it broader on who she thinks could help, saying, "I mean, if we had a very qualified person or persons to oversee that [learning loss], that would be huge, just having, again, more people to be able to follow up with them [students]."

Outside of these two themes, Peter and Michelle had unique responses to this question. Looking first at Michelle, she shared, "I don't know, I feel the kids are getting better, I don't know what I would need." Turning to Peter, he felt the staff needs more help with some learning

loss. In his interview, Peter shared, "I think training, professional developments on mental health and the social aspect, we need to work with these students to teach them how to act while they're out in society."

Question 15

Question 15 asked the participants to respond to the prompt: if they could go back and change one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on students today? The responses to this question fell into three themes: an adjustment to something regarding academics, a change to hybrid, and student engagement. Four of the participants identified a change to something regarding academics. Looking at Sally first, she shared that she was focused on trying to create something that hit all students, saying, "I probably was too focused on trying to hit everybody, having something that kids could do at home and in school, I would've been a more effective teacher if I just focused on one thing and then somehow tried to tailor it." In his response, William felt if he made things a little lighter, it would have made an impact. He shared, "Just trying to be a bit more of an entertainer, telling more jokes or something to motivate them to be more in tune for the lessons." Michelle felt changing the grading rubric during the lockdown had ripple effects on assignments. She said, "Making assignments count and not just for a pass-fail; I think this would have changed their mindset so when they returned in September, they'd be more responsible." Finally, George felt if he could have changed his lessons, this would have helped. He shared, "Finding more engaging lessons because I think if the kids were enjoying the lesson more, the word would have spread, and they may have been more likely to come online."

Turning to the hybrid model, three participants responded to changing this as what they felt would have made an impact. Chris began, "Looking back at what we know now, getting

them in school. That's my opinion, just getting them back in school as soon as absolutely

possible. Additionally, Jill echoed Chris's feelings, sharing, "They need to be in person. And I

didn't even really realize it fully at the time, but that [having students back full-time] was huge."

Likewise, Bill told his thoughts, stating, "With keeping in mind trying to keep everyone safe, I

mean the easy answer would be just trying to get all the kids back as soon as possible and never

shut down in that time period."

  The other theme in the responses to this question was a change in student engagement.

Three of the participants shared that this is where they would have made a change. Looking first

at Lucy, she felt, "It's a catch-22. I would [want to] be available more for the kids in my

classroom, but then the catch would be not being available for my own family." In his interview,

Peter reflects on not knowing the status of students sharing: "I would make attendance

mandatory, even if it would mean social distancing and meeting in a public area to catch up with

students." Bruce wished he did not have to avoid talking about the pandemic. He said, "I think

just talking through what was going on. I think having honest conversations about what is going

on at home is important. Like, how is your family reacting to this?" Finally, in his response,

John didn't connect to any of these three themes, responding, "I wouldn't really change

anything. I'm pretty happy with what I think we did, and I did."

Question 16

  The last question asked the participants to share anything else that would be essential for

this researcher to know regarding COVID-19 and their classroom that I have yet to ask. One

theme emerged from the participants for this question: COVID-19's impact on teachers and

students specifically. Turning to Sally's interview, she shared, "You haven't asked questions

about the impact as a teacher, I think that has had a huge impact on people wanting to go into

this profession, and if we can't keep good teachers, that's going to be, you know, its own pandemic." Similarly, Peter's thoughts on the impact COVID-19 has had on teachers is, "How are teachers mentally handling the post-pandemic? How has our teaching style or classroom management changed?" Also, Bill told his feelings, stating, "I think the part, just the effect on teachers it had, just the amount of stuff that has been added to teachers and then the expectations of them, it just seems to be ever growing." In his reflections, William wondered what navigating this pandemic was like for his students. He shared, "I wonder if anybody ever asked students what their experience was like, you know, just what was a typical day like when you were home."

Outside of these responses, two participants replied with different thoughts. George inquired about the effect that not seeing extended family, especially grandparents, had on the student and the grandparents. In their responses, John and Michelle reflected on COVID-19 but not in the vein of the question. John shared he enjoyed the slower pace that the lockdown provided, and Michele felt that things are close to being back to normal. When asked this question, the other participants responded that they had nothing else to add.

Research Question Responses

When preparing for this dissertation, the researcher formulated four research questions to guide his work. The four questions are:

Research Question 1. What do teachers identify as the main factors from COVID-19 that influenced student performance?

Research Question 2. What are the immediate academic, social well-being, and emotional/mental health effects of COVID-19 that were observed in the classroom?

Research Question 3. What area of student performance (academic, social, emotional) have teachers observed to be most affected by COVID-19?

Research Question 4. What are the long-term effects of COVID-19 that are still affecting the classroom?

From the interviews and the themes established from their responses, this researcher feels he has the data to answer each question.

Research Question 1

This question asked what teachers identify as the main factors from COVID-19 that influenced students' performance. From the interviews, the most prevalent theme was the teachers' difficulty navigating the hybrid education model. Some of these difficulties came from academics trying to provide assignments with the same integrity when students were in the building and at home. Looking deeper, several participants shared it was difficult to get the students to turn work in. Additionally, the interviews supported the notion that students knew the assignments would be graded less rigorously, so they put less effort into their work. Looking through the interviewees' responses, the hybrid model made academics and all aspects of education difficult. Teachers reported attendance decreasing, especially on the days students were at home. Other teachers reflected on the lack of interpersonal skills lost due to students' decreased interactions, and when they did have opportunities, many chose solitude or struggled to make appropriate choices. Furthermore, teachers spoke to students' increased anxieties as they tried to teach them in the hybrid model. These anxieties manifested in several ways, whether it was the realization that assignments counted again or separating from their electronics. Michelle shared a quote that sums up these hybrid difficulties well: "The number of kids who would turn

in assignments as the lockdown went on dramatically decreased. The number of kids signing up

for the live lessons dramatically decreased."

Research Question 2

The second question asked teachers to provide their observations on the immediate

effects that COVID-19 had on their students' academics, social well-being, and mental/emotional

health. Looking first at academics, the theme that emerged from the participant's responses was

the concern about student learning loss. At this point, students were fully online, and the teachers

provided instruction entirely via the computer. The participants shared their concerns as the

teachers could not even talk to the students every other day. The interviews showed that the

teachers could not ensure students were engaging in academics during the immediate lockdown.

This concern for learning loss increased because the teachers knew the students would pass with

or without doing their assigned work. The teachers felt the lack of power to hold students

accountable, paired with the students' knowledge they would pass no matter what created the

starting point for learning loss, which only widened as the lockdown continued. Then, students

went into the summer break.

Next, regarding social well-being, the prevalent theme was concern over the student's

ability to socialize. The teachers spoke to this in various ways, sharing that they saw their

students struggling to connect. The teachers report this struggle coming from the lack of

interaction that the lockdown created. Teachers feel social distancing and the need to isolate at

home contribute to the students' loss of appropriate relationship building. Additionally, the

teachers feel the increased use of technology needed due to the lockdown increased the student's

decreased ability to initiate social interactions.

Lastly, looking at students' mental/emotional health, the established theme was concern about how the students would get essentials such as care and food. Many teachers reflected on how they knew students from their classrooms who were at home were not where they wanted to be. The lockdown forced these students into those environments full-time, and not knowing if the students were safe was difficult for the teachers. It was also reported how the lockdown would result in the loss of services for some students as they could not come to the building. These concerns about mental/emotional health are summed up well by Chris, who said, "I was really worried about the mental health in that aspect because some of them, this is where they get two of their meals a day. Some of them, this is their safe spot."

Research Question 3

This question asks which area of student performance, academic, social, or emotional/mental health, has been most affected by COVID-19, as reported by the teachers. The most prevalent theme was concerning students' social well-being. The teachers, in reflecting, shared how social health has been most affected because, as John shared, it's the "least quantified." The interviews showed how the students returning to the classroom via the hybrid model and eventually full-time lack appropriate socialization. The interviewees spoke to different aspects, whether it's how to engage someone they do not know or how to properly peer mediate a disagreement. The students have shown an increase in lack of these skills since COVID-19. Many of the teachers report they are starting to see an improvement in academics, as well as more comfortability for students to speak up about their mental health, but still trouble in students' social behavior. The continued difficulty with social well-being is perhaps due to, as John shared, the inability to quantify it. However, the teachers had some insights into where this gap in socialization and students' social well-being started, which is the isolation that COVID-19

mandated. Some feel that they will not see a complete return to normalcy until the kindergarten class of 2021-2022 reaches their classrooms. When reflecting on the impact of COVID-19 on social well-being, many of the teachers shared George's sentiment that "Social well-being has to be taken care of first, then everything else usually will fall in place."

Research Question 4

Question 4 asked the teachers what the long-term effects COVID-19 is having on their classrooms. The themes from the participants' interviews concern academics and social well-being. Academically, the teachers reported how they are seeing a lower quality of work and a desire by students to take the easier road rather than challenge themselves. This connects back to the teachers' overall concern that they feel the hybrid model has created this downturn in academic quality among students. Additionally, regarding academics, the data showed that the need to use technology more during the lockdown and hybrid model has led to this lack of students taking responsibility for their learning and this desire to simply get what is needed to be done in the easiest way possible. This then contributes to the reports by teachers who shared they see in students the inability to think critically, and this need to utilize their smartphones or the internet for every problem. This need to search for answers before processing is best summed up by Sally, who said, "Students are overly dependent on technology, wanting to look up answers to everything."

Regarding social well-being, several teachers spoke about their difficulty with students' ability to interact with each other in the classroom. The interviews provided data that highlighted the inability of students to have simple conversations with one another. Some of the teachers spoke about how, before COVID-19, the students in their class would always be talking during free time or at the end of the period to the point where they would have to be told to lower the

volume. Since the return from COVID-19, the teachers shared how it is almost eerily quiet in their classrooms. According to some interviewees, this loss in social skills can contribute to the lockdown and hybrid model as they already saw how technology was starting to take precedence in their students. To these teachers, COVID-19 exacerbated it. The results of this worsening of technology due to COVID-19 are classrooms with students who, according to the interviewees, do not know how to take care of their social well-being and struggle to recognize how to help a classmate or friend with their social difficulties. Peter, in his interview, provided a quote that encapsulates many of the interviewee's thoughts and feelings. Peter shared, "Some of the students just don't want to be bothered at all, and I've noticed it a lot more since the COVID-19 pandemic. They'd rather just be by themselves."

Summary

This chapter opened with a brief overview of each participant who was part of this researcher's data. Next, using Moustakas's (1994) methods, this researcher analyzed the participants' responses to each question to develop relevant themes. Continuing to use Moustakas, this researcher took the themes formed from each question and analyzed them to present how they further answered the research questions. Using quotes from the participants' interviews, this researcher showed what themes connected to each research question and how the themes were valid for each question.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this research was to conduct a phenomenological study to better understand how COVID-19 still affects students from teachers' perceptions. In this chapter, the researcher will present his thoughts on his gathered data. Beginning with a summary of the findings, the researcher will summarize the results concerning his research questions. Next, the researcher will discuss how his study addressed theoretical and empirical literature. Following the discussion, the researcher will share the implications of his study and the delimitations and limitations. Next, the researcher will provide his recommendations for future research and then conclude with a summary of the findings.

Summary of Findings

The study yielded answers to the researcher's four questions he proposed. First, he learned from question one that the teachers reported the main factor that influenced their student's performance due to COVID-19 was the need for a hybrid schedule. The difficulty of having students every other day and the inability to enforce rigor with academics created a culture of lower-quality work from the students. Additionally, the hybrid schedule contributed to a decrease in students' interpersonal skills because of the decreased interactions the schedule created. Another difficulty the teachers felt was a by-product of the hybrid schedule was a rise in student anxiety, which manifested in different ways.

The second question shared the immediate concerns teachers identified in their classrooms pertaining to academics, social well-being, and mental health during the COVID-19 lockdown. Academically, the teachers identified learning loss as their primary concern, as they could not ensure students were engaging in their schoolwork. Likewise, they felt they lacked the

power to hold students accountable, which helped create a culture that contributed to learning loss. Concerning social well-being, teachers felt the disconnect that social distancing and isolation at home caused was at the root of students' concerns. In addition to isolation and social distancing, teachers also feel the increase in technology use hurt students ability to interact socially. Regarding mental health, teachers' greatest concern was the lack of services students would receive due to being unable to come to the building. The teachers also knew that being at home full-time was not good for some of their students which made it difficult for them to keep their own feelings in check.

The third question asked teachers which area of student performance they noticed to be most affected. Students' social well-being was reported as the most. Teachers shared various ways they see students struggle with social well-being. These include difficulty engaging with other students, lacking peer mediation skills, and desiring to be isolated on their phones. Some feel that they will not see a complete return to normalcy until the kindergarten class of 2021-2022 comes into their classrooms. On a positive note, the teachers reported they are seeing improvements in student academics and their ability to speak up about their mental health difficulties.

The last question reported the long-term effects of COVID-19 that still affect the classroom. The responses identified that there is still a lower quality of school work from students trying to do the minimum to get by and that students socially have lost essential skills that help them navigate the daily interactions that occur in school. In regard to academics the teachers connect this lower quality of student work to their time teaching during the hybrid model. Moreover, the teachers also feel the increased use of technology has created this desire in students to want to get the task done in the easiest way possible not necessarily the best.

Speaking to social well-being, the teachers reported that they are still seeing students who would rather spend free time at the beginning and end of class absorbed in isolation on their phones than build relationships with their classmates. The teachers also feel this rise in technology use has hurt their students' ability to navigate everyday situations as well as recognize how to help a classmate or friend with their social difficulties.

Discussion

Connection to the Literature

The results of this study are connected to the literature presented in Chapter Two. The themes that emerged from this study parallel concerns evident in the previous studies. These parallels are important as they validate this study's findings. The studies in the literature above do not directly explore teachers' perceptions of how COVID-19 is still affecting their classrooms. Still, these studies provide the basis for things they were worried may be a side effect of COVID-19, which this study highlights.

Looking at this study, one major overall theme was how the hybrid teaching model negatively impacted students. The participants reflected on various factors of the hybrid model that made it difficult for students to succeed with their academics, social well-being, and emotional and mental health. The academic factors, as reported by the participants, included learning loss (George, Bill, John, Bruce, Jill), the rigor of academics lessening (John, George, Jill, Michelle), and lack of participation (Lucy, Chris, Bill, George, John, Sally, Peter) to name a few. Looking first at the works of Booth et al. (2021), they speak about how there would be an increase in academic learning loss due to the inability of parents to recreate the classroom environment. Participants in the study reported this concern as they shared their inability to know what was going on at their students' homes because they would go days without hearing from

them. Many reported the reduction in assignments they received from students, adding to their

concerns. Lucy said this in their interviews, lamenting the difficulty of getting her students to

complete any work.

The studies by Feng & Li (2021) and El Takach (2022) shared how, statistically, in-

person education was more effective and that distance education was more complex. This study

corroborates this literature as the participants reported the difference they saw in the quality of

the work they received from students. The participants shared the need to "rewrite curriculum"

(Bill), whereas Michelle spoke to the quality and quantity of the work she receives in her

classroom as being still lower than pre-COVID-19. In his interview, George provided insights

that sum up how online was not as inefficient, telling how he had to "play catch-up" each day

because, essentially, the day the students were logging in from home was lost because so many

did not show up.

Regarding the lack of participation, the study by Qutishat et al. (2022) investigated

attendance and participation in online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic, reporting low

student interaction. The data from this study echoes Qutishat et al. (2022), with the participants

telling of their frustration with trying to get students to log on and be part of the class. The

participants said that the students didn't care because they knew they would pass the class "no

matter what" (Sally) or that they had a "free pass" (Peter). All the participants reported the

students' passive attitude toward being part of their education. Still, the best representation of this

comes from Bill's interview, where he shared that "students are not logging on and essentially

missing every other day of school."

Turning to social well-being, this study revealed that the participants felt this area was

still the most relevant in their classroom. The participants reflected on how the students in their

classrooms display a variety of difficulties concerning social well-being. These difficulties range from lack of fitting in (Bill), lack of basic social skills (Michelle), not being connected and going through the motions (Peter), and desperation to make a relationship, resulting in making bad ones (Chris). This data from the participants connects to the works of Ozer et al. (2021), Marques and Braidwood (2021), and Cantillon et al. (2021), who all spoke to the importance of positive social support in connection to students' social well-being. The results from these studies in the literature review shared how students' social well-being was increased because the social support network they had in place helped to reduce stress and create a positive environment. The data from these studies supports the participant's findings in that the lack of connections students had to each other and the school has resulted in more students struggling with positive social well-being.

Finally, examining this study's results as they connect to students' emotional/mental health, the works of DeFrance et al. (2022) and Chaturvedi et al. (2021) are most relevant. These studies reported how the move to online education and the lockdown due to COVID-19 increased students' reported levels of anxiety and depression. In agreement with these findings, the participants of this study reported that the greatest mental health concern they were seeing in their classroom was a rise in anxiety (Bruce, John, Jill, Bill). In his interview, William shared that this rise in anxiety was causing students to be out of his classroom for hours at a time every day of school. Another topic related to emotional/mental health was student services and resource availability. The participants reported in their interviews how they were concerned about how the lockdown and the unavailability of support services affected their students. The participants shared that they were "concerned" (Bill), "afraid" (Chris), or "fearful" (Lucy) about what the reduced or absence of emotional/mental health services would do to their students.

These concerns by the participants relate to the works of Fegert et al. (2020), Asbury et al. (2021), and Nicholas et al. (2022), who all speak to the possible negative side effects for students not receiving the emotional/mental health services they need.

Extending the Literature

Just as the results from this study had connections to previous research, it also provided greater insights into the topics in the literature from Chapter Two. Much of the research presented above was focused on one particular area related to COVID-19 and how it was or would affect students' academic performance, social well-being, or emotional/mental health. The data from the studies above was also written a year or two after the COVID-19 lockdown, providing only a limited time to draw data. The interviews from this study were conducted three and a half years after the COVID-19 lockdown, allowing for more time to see the fallout of how COVID-19 still affects students holistically.

Additionally, this study included questions that asked the participants to reflect on all three areas [academic, social, emotional/mental health] presented in Chapter Two's literature. By asking the participants to reflect on each area, this study provides an up-to-date look at topics such as how learning loss and the growing academic gap are still seen in the classroom, how the isolation of students from the lockdown and the increased use of technology still impacting the classroom day to day and how is COVID-19 still affecting students emotional/mental health. The research presented in Chapter Two could not provide this data, being so close to the initial onset of the pandemic.

Furthermore, this study attempted to do something that this researcher had yet seen done: to provide a qualitative study that allowed teachers to express what they had and are still experiencing as a result of COVID-19. As stated above, the closest study this researcher had

found to his was quantitative, by Shaw et al. (2021), which provided numbers on how teachers felt the impact of COVID-19. The results from this study take the data from quantitative studies such as Shaw et al. (2021) and provide greater meaning to how that looks in the classroom for a teacher as it pertains to a student's academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health.

Implications

Practical Implications

This study presented a picture of what teachers' classrooms looked like before COVID-19, during the lockdown/hybrid time, and how this pandemic still has residual effects in their classrooms today. The insights from the participants provide for research a study that brings together a look at the holistic way COVID-19 has impacted students from the individuals who interact with them every day. The participants' responses give an up-to-date look at how COVID-19 still plays a role in the classroom regarding academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health. These residual effects inform different recommendations for counselors, administrators, and parents regarding how they can support this study's participants [teachers].

Regarding counselors, the participants shared how, at times, they have students who tend to spend several hours a day in the counseling office. The participants also recognize a need for more counselors both in and out of school. One recommendation for counselors is to create a survey through an application such as Microsoft Forms that can be distributed to students and teachers at the beginning of the year. This survey can ask students to choose from a list or write in what mental health challenges they are struggling with. For teachers, they can select behaviors or mental health concerns they regularly see in the classroom. The responses can then be exported into an Excel document where they can be filtered for themes or trends. From this data,

counselors can create resources such as groups that meet over lunch for students to discuss

mental health concerns, a compilation of web resources teachers can use in their classrooms, or

Public Service Announcements (PSA) utilizing the school's broadcast video class.

Looking next at administrators, several participants reflected on how they felt supported

by their admin teams but, at times, lacked information or the institutional backing to keep

students accountable. A recommendation for administrators is to get from staff a sense of what

residual effects they are still seeing in the classroom from COVID-19. To gather this data,

administrators could add a question to pre-observation forms for teachers, asking them what, if

any, residual effects they see in their classrooms due to COVID-19. The answers to the question

can then be addressed as part of the post-observation. Additionally, a record of responses can be

compiled to provide the administration team with ideas for meaningful training that can be

offered as professional development.

The final group to examine is parents. Throughout the interviews, the participants

lamented the lack of completed quality work. Additionally, the participants reflected on how

students' attendance and social behaviors are worse now than before COVID-19. A

recommendation for parents is to create a COVID-19 recovery community group that can act as

a forum or support for parents who desire to see their child succeed but lack the resources. This

group can discuss ideas for promoting positive student behaviors in school and perhaps act as a

networking location. A natural point of implantation can be a school's Parent Teacher

Association (PTA).

Christian Worldview

In addition to the practical implications listed above, this study also provides ways in

which the values of Christ can be incorporated. Reflecting on the results of this study, besides the

frustration and difficulties that the hybrid model of teaching created, another often-reported

difficulty was student's social well-being. These difficulties varied among students, from being

more isolated in the classrooms to struggling to have appropriate peer interactions or lacking a

desire to succeed. The church is equipped to help with each of these concerns raised by the

participants.

Concerning isolation, local churches can collaborate to create an event that draws

students from the school for fun activities. The event can be advertised with another school

activity, such as a sporting event or dance. Students who attend the churches can be the

mouthpiece to get the word out in their schools through flyers or promoting on the school

announcements. This is a simple way for the church to extend beyond its sanctuary to the

mission field of the schools in their neighborhoods.

To help teach students positive ways to interact with their peers, the church has a timeless

curriculum in the Bible. Many of the participants reported they feel there is a shortage of

counseling resources as a whole for students and families alike. One of the qualities of Christ is

that he is a wonderful counselor. To help with this shortage of counseling resources, the church

can step in and support. So many churches have various members, from pastoral staff to deacons

and youth volunteers, who could assist in answering this call. By establishing positive working

relationships with the schools in their towns, the church can position itself to be a reliable

resource to connect with troubled youth and provide life-changing aid.

Regarding students lacking a desire to succeed, the church is the ideal stakeholder to

provide guidance. Finding a way for the church to connect to schools can allow the Gospel to be

presented in the building. This connection can come in the form of before-school Bible studies

where breakfast is offered or the creation of an in-school group of students that local churches

sponsor. Either of these will allow students to hear the Gospel in school and offer them a chance to find a greater purpose to live for: serving God. This study provided data on the residual effects that COVID-19 still has in the classroom, all of which can be served by the church in some way.

<div align="center">**Delimitations and Limitations**</div>

Delimitations

For this study, the researcher has several delimitations to assist with retrieving data that would answer the research questions. The first was that the participants had to teach during the pandemic without interruption (i.e., sabbaticals, medical or maternity leave). This delimitation was selected as the scope of the study was getting teachers' perceptions on how COVID-19 has had residual effects on students. To help establish these residual effects, the participants would need to reflect on their student performance before COVID-19 and then compare it to their student performance currently.

Another delimitation selected was the use of 6th- 9th-grade teachers. The use of teachers was chosen as they are the individuals who interact with students consistently day-to-day. The use of counselors, administrators, and other support staff was excluded as their interactions with students would not be able to answer the research questions of this study holistically. Having the participants only be teachers from grades 6-9 gave the researcher individuals teaching students at both transition times [elementary to middle and middle to high school]. It would offer rich enough data to answer the research questions. Keeping within the parameters of a phenomenological study, opening the participant pool to include K-12th-grade teachers would not allow for data that could develop consistent themes.

The last delimitation chosen was recruiting teachers only from central Pennsylvania. The researcher had to select schools within reasonable travel time due to the use of in-person

interviews. The use of in-person interviews, as opposed to phone calls or video calls, was selected as the in-person interview allowed the researcher to see intangibles such as body language and the participants' classroom. Being in the room with the interviewee also allowed this researcher to be more cognitive of any emotions the questions induced.

Limitations

In addition to delimitations, this study also had limitations, with one being the age and gender of the participants. Recruitment materials for the study sought after teachers who had been teaching before COVID-19 without interruption to the present. This researcher could not control who decided to respond to his request. Similarly, the years of service the participants had varied, with some still at the beginning of their education career and others with over twenty years completed. Another element this researcher could not control was the geographical location of his participant's teaching. This researcher set a delimitation of central Pennsylvania, but this area consists of various urban, suburban, and rural school districts. All of the participants from this study came from suburban school settings.

Other limitations result from the use of a phenomenological study, which offers a distinct and descriptive insight into the lived experience of teachers navigating the day-to-day residual effects of COVID-19 in their classrooms. A limitation of the phenomenological method and small sample sizes is that they impede conclusions about how COVID-19 would have affected students across the K-12 spectrum. It is reasonable to assume that the lived experiences of teachers in kindergarten classrooms vary from those teaching in 5th-grade classrooms. With all the participants in the study coming from a school in a suburban setting, it is also reasonable to assume that the lived experiences of teachers from different demographics and economic and cultural backgrounds would be noticeably different.

Recommendations for Future Research

The stories and lived experiences captured in this research provide only one part of the picture regarding its residual effects on the classroom due to COVID-19. There is an opportunity for future research to gather data to get a holistic picture. Gathering the lived experiences of how COVID-19 affects students at the elementary and high school levels would then provide data to be compared to the results of this study, giving the reader an insight into teachers' perspectives across the entire educational landscape. Additionally, a phenomenological study interviewing school support staff (counselors, principals, and social workers) would yield supplemental data showing the residual effects of COVID-19 not just in the classroom but the school as a whole.

Another recommendation for future research is interviewing teachers in urban and rural settings. The literature cited in Chapter Two spoke to concerns for students coming from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. These studies would be beneficial as the lived experiences of teachers from these two distinct areas would contribute data to compare and contrast COVID-19's impact. Having data on the residual effects of COVID-19 in the classroom across all demographics allows for the perseveration of the stories that the pandemic created in classrooms.

An additional study that would further extend the data from this research would be one using quantitative means. Qualitative methodology creates hypotheses that can be tested and verified through quantitative research. The data from this research provided themes on how teachers perceive their students are still affected academically, socially, and emotionally due to COVID-19. A quantitative design survey creating questions related to the themes of this research could be used to gather from a large number of teachers what they feel is the greatest residual effect of COVID-19 on their classroom. The data from this research could be used to inform administrators where teachers feel they still need support and to provide resources appropriately.

Summary

This study provided a collection of rich stories that showed how COVID-19 is still having residual effects on classrooms today. These effects impact students' academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health. The most prevalent theme was how the hybrid model of instruction was at the root of many of the other concerns or difficulties the teachers reported seeing in their classrooms. Various stakeholders can help with reducing the classroom difficulties that the teachers shared. Counselors can utilize survey data to create interventions to help students' social or emotional/mental health. Administrators can gather insights from teachers in ways they can provide resources and training that help engage negative behaviors that are a by-product of COVID-19. The church body, with its resources, can find ways to partner with local school districts to provide support that offers change that goes deeper than the surface. COVID-19, just like a stone, created ripples that are still being seen today. It is important not to get complacent, thinking that all is recovered, but to continue supporting students in need to ensure that the ripples do not become waves.

.

References

Abar, C. C., Farnett, S., Mendola, K., Koban, K., & Sarra, S. (2018). Relationships between parent-child social media interactions and health behaviors. *Journal of Substance Use*, *23*(3), 335–337. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Adams, C., Yin, Y., Vargas Madriz, L. F., & Mullen, C. S. (2014). A phenomenology of learning large: The tutorial sphere of xMOOC video lectures. *Distance Education*, *35*(2), 202–216. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2014.917701

Adedoyin, O. B., & Soykan, E. (2020). Covid-19 pandemic and online learning: The challenges and opportunities. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1813180

Akat, M., & Karataş, K. (2020). Psychological effects of COVID-19 pandemic on society and its reflections on education. *COVID - 19 Pandemisinin Toplum Psikolojisine Etkileri ve Eğitime Yansımaları.*, *15*(4), 1–13. Humanities Source Ultimate.

Akinsanya, O. O., Olaniyi, O. S., & Oshinyadi, P. O. (2021). Exploring parental responses to social and safety needs of school-age children during COVID-19 pandemic in Ogun State, Nigeria. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, *31*(1–4), 27–42. Humanities Source Ultimate.

Alshamri, K. H. (2021). The challenges of online learning for teachers of children with intellectual disability in the COVID19 pandemic: Qualitative method. *Journal of Education - Sohag University*, *85*(Part 2), 77–94. Academic Search Ultimate.

Anderson, T. C. (2020). Academics, achievement gap, and nutritional health: The impact of coronavirus on education. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, *87*(1), 14–17. OmniFile Full Text Mega (H.W. Wilson).

Annamalai, N. (2021). Online learning during COVID-19 pandemic. Are Malaysian high

    school students ready? *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, *29*(3), 1571–

    1590. Humanities Source Ultimate.

Antipuesto-Angelo, R. (2021). Learning by teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic:

    Improving students' social and technical skills through peer editing pedagogy. *Eubios*

    Journal of Asian & International Bioethics, *31*(5), 274–279. Humanities Source Ultimate.

Arslan, G., & Yıldırım, M. (2021). Coronavirus stress, meaningful living, optimism, and

    depressive symptoms: A study of moderated mediation model. *Australian Journal of*

    Psychology, 73(2), 113-124. https://doi.org/10.1080/00049530.2021.1882273

Asbury, K., Fox, L., Deniz, E., Code, A., & Toseeb, U. (2021). How is COVID-19 affecting the

    mental health of children with special educational needs and disabilities and their

    families? *Journal of Autism & Developmental Disorders*, *51*(5), 1772–1780. Academic

    Search Ultimate.

Backfish, E. H. P. (2019). Biblical wisdom as a model for Christian liberal arts education.

    Christian Higher Education, *18*(5), 382–396.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2019.1579119

Banki, S. R. (2021). "Learning alone-a with Corona": Two challenges and four principles of

    tertiary teaching. *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching & Learning*, *14*(1), 65–74.

    https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIT-12-2020-0081

Banse, H., & Palacios, N. (2018). Supportive classrooms for Latino English language learners:

    Grit, ELL status, and the classroom context. *Journal of Educational Research*, *111*(6),

    645–656. Academic Search Ultimate.

Barmania, S., & Reiss, M. J. (2021). Health promotion perspectives on the COVID-19 pandemic:

The importance of religion. *Global Health Promotion*, *28*(1), 15–22.

Bendeck, S. (2022). "Because COVID Ruined Everything": The Impact of Learning Modalities

and Accommodations on Students with Disabilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Sociation Today, *21*(1), 4–20. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Booth, C., Villadsen, A., Goodman, A., & Fitzsimons, E. (2021). Parental

Perceptions of learning loss during COVID-19 school closures in 2020. *British Journal of*

Educational Studies, *69*(6), 657–673. Educational Administration Abstracts.

Brisson, D., Peña, S. L., Mattocks, N., Plassmeyer, M., & McCune, S. (2019). Effects of the

your family, your neighborhood intervention on neighborhood social processes. *Social*

Work Research, *43*(4), 235–246. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Bryce, C. I., & Fraser, A. M. (2022). Students' perceptions, educational challenges and hope

during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, *48*(6), 1081–

1093. https://doi.org/10.1111/cch.13036

Calmeiro, L., Camacho, I., & de Matos, M. G. (2018). Life satisfaction in adolescents: The role

of individual and social health assets. *Spanish Journal of Psychology*, *21*, N.PAG-

N.PAG. Academic Search Ultimate.

Cameron, C., O'Brien, M., Whitaker, L., Hollingworth, K., & Hauari, H. (2022). Income,

ethnic diversity and family life in East London during the first wave of the pandemic: An

assets approach., *34*(1), 221–248. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Campbell, K., Weingart, R., Ashta, J., Cronin, T., & Gazmararian, J. (2021). COVID-19

knowledge and behavior change among high school students in semi-rural Georgia. *The*

Journal of School Health, *91*(7), 526–534. https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.13029

Cantillon, S., Moore, E., & Teasdale, N. (2021). COVID-19 and the pivotal role of

grandparents: Childcare and income support in the UK and South Africa. *Feminist Economics*, *27*(1/2), 188–202. Humanities Source Ultimate.

Capp, G., Watson, K., Astor, R. A., Kelly, M. S., & Benbenishty, R. (2021). School social worker voice during COVID-19 school disruptions: A national qualitative analysis. *Children & Schools*, *43*(2), 79–88. Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection.

Carolan, B. V. (2018). Extracurricular activities and achievement growth in kindergarten through first grade: The mediating role of non-cognitive skills. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *45*, 131–142. Academic Search Ultimate.

Chamberlain, L., Lacina, J., Bintz, W. P., Jimerson, J. B., Payne, K., & Zingale, R. (2020). Literacy in lockdown: Learning and teaching during COVID-19 school closures. *Reading Teacher*, *74*(3), 243–253. Humanities Source Ultimate.

Chaturvedi, K., Vishwakarma, D. K., & Singh, N. (2021). COVID-19 and its impact on education, social life and mental health of students: A survey. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *121*, 105866. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105866

Chen, Y., Osika, W., Henriksson, G., Dahlstrand, J., & Friberg, P. (2022). Impact of COVID-19 pandemics on mental health and health behaviors in Swedish adolescents. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, *50*(1), 26–32. Public Affairs Index.

Chrisman, M. S., & Alnaim, L. (2021). Resources needed for education and meal programs by urban schoolteachers and staff during the 2019 coronavirus pandemic. *The Journal of School Health*, *91*(7), 535–540. https://doi.org/10.1111/josh.13028

Clair, E. B., Bahr, M. W., Quach, H. L., & LeDuc, J. D. (2018). The positive plus program: Affirmative classroom management to improve student behavior. *Behavioral Interventions*, *33*(3), 221–236. Academic Search Ultimate.

Cleland J. A. (2017). The qualitative orientation in medical education research. *Korean journal of medical education*, *29*(2), 61–71. https://doi.org/10.3946/kjme.2017.53

Cortés-García, L., Hernández Ortiz, J., Asim, N., Sales, M., Villareal, R., Penner, F., & Sharp, C. (2022). COVID-19 conversations: A qualitative study of majority Hispanic/Latinx youth experiences during early stages of the pandemic. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, *51*(4), 769–793. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Cousik, R. (2022). COVID-19 Pandemic and Special Education Teacher Voices. *Qualitative Report*, *27*(11), 2486–2500. Academic Search Ultimate.

Creavey, K. L., Gatzke-Kopp, L. M., & Fosco, G. M. (2018). Differential effects of family stress exposure and harsh parental discipline on child social competence. *Journal of Child & Family Studies*, *27*(2), 483–493. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (Fourth edition.). SAGE.

Crooks, N., Sosina, W., Debra, A., & Donenberg, G. (2022). The impact of COVID-19 among black girls: A social-ecological perspective. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, *47*(3), 270–278. Family Studies Abstracts.

Cui, X., & Chi, X. (2021). The relationship between social support and internet addiction among chinese adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic: A multiple mediation model of resilience and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. *Psychology Research & Behavior Management*, *14*, 1665–1674. Academic Search Ultimate

Darmawan, I. P. A., Giawa, N., & Budiman, S. (2021). COVID-19 Impact on church society ministry. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)*, *4*(3), 93–98.

Davis, A. N., Luce, H., & Davalos, N. (2018). Associations among life events, empathic

concern, and adolescents' prosocial and aggressive behaviors toward specific targets. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, *179*(4), 183–197. Academic Search Ultimate.

Deimazar, G., Kahouei, M., Forouzan, M., & Skandari, F. (2019). Effects of online social networks on sleep quality, depression rate, and academic performance of high school students. *Koomesh*, *21*(2), Pe312–Pe317, En44. CABDirect.

De France, K., Hancock, G. R., Stack, D. M., Serbin, L. A., & Hollenstein, T. (2022). The mental health implications of COVID-19 for adolescents: Follow-up of a four-wave longitudinal study during the pandemic. *American Psychologist*, *77*(1), 85–99. OmniFile Full Text Mega (H.W. Wilson).

DeSpain, S. N., Conderman, G., & Gerzel-Short, L. (2018). Fostering family engagement in middle and secondary schools. *Clearing House*, *91*(6), 236–242. Academic Search Ultimate.

Dibley, P. (2018). Do not forsake the assembly: The importance of Christian community. *Review & Expositor*, *115*(3), 407–411. https://doi.org/10.1177/0034637318790757

Dimitrova, R., Ferrer-Wreder, L., & Ahlen, J. (2018). School climate, academic achievement and educational aspirations in Roma minority and Bulgarian majority adolescents. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, *47*(5), 645–658. Academic Search Ultimate.

Dixson, D. D., Keltner, D., Worrell, F. C., & Mello, Z. (2018). The magic of hope: Hope mediates the relationship between socioeconomic status and academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*, *111*(4), 507–515. Academic Search Ultimate.

Dusseault, B., Pitts, C., Lake, R., University of Pennsylvania, C. for P. R. in E. (CPRE), & Walton Family Foundation. (2021). Recovery for U.S. students in 2021: What schools and districts can do to make up for lost learning time. In *Center on Reinventing Public*

Education

https://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true

&db=eric&AN=ED615195&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Eckel, M. (2015). Interdisciplinary education within Biblical theology: A scriptural-

philosophical-educational-practical overview. *Christian Education Journal*, *12*(2), 384–

396. ProQuest Central; Social Science Premium Collection.

https://doi.org/10.1177/073989131501200210

Eg, J., Bilenberg, N., Costello, E. J., & Wesselhoeft, R. (2018). Self- and parent-reported

depressive symptoms rated by the mood and feelings questionnaire. *Psychiatry Research*,

268, 419–425. Academic Search Ultimate.

El Takach, S. (2022). A Two-year Follow-up Case Study on Pre-service Science Teachers'

Attitudes towards Online Learning and Academic Achievement in Science Education

Courses. *International Journal of Technology in Education & Science*, *6*(4), 585–601.

Education Research Complete.

Elsaesser, C., Heath, R. D., Kim, J.-B., & Bouris, A. (2018). The long-term influence of social

support on academic engagement among Latino adolescents: Analysis of between-person

and within-person effects among Mexican and other Latino youth. *Youth & Society*,

50(8), 1123–1144. APA PsycInfo. https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X16656086

Ezechil, L., & Neacşu, M. G. (2017). Education for desirable behaviors and shaping the young

people's character in the spirit of Christian values. *Journal of Innovation in Psychology,

Education and Didactics*, *21*(2), 177–188. ProQuest Central; Social Science Premium

Collection.

Feldman, D. B., Einav, M., & Margalit, M. (2018). Does family cohesion predict children's

effort? The mediating roles of sense of coherence, hope, and loneliness. *Journal of Psychology*, *152*(5), 276–289. Academic Search Ultimate.

Fegert, J. M., Vitiello, B., Plener, P. L., & Clemens, V. (2020). Challenges and burden of the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic for child and adolescent mental health: A narrative review to highlight clinical and research needs in the acute phase and the long return to normality. *Child & Adolescent Psychiatry & Mental Health*, *14*(1), 1–11. Academic Search Ultimate.

Forbes, M. K., Fitzpatrick, S., Magson, N. R., & Rapee, R. M. (2019). Depression, anxiety, and peer victimization: Bidirectional relationships and associated outcomes transitioning from childhood to adolescence. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, *48*(4), 692–702. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Feng, X., Ioan, N., & Li, Y. (2021). Comparison of the effect of online teaching during COVID-19 and pre-pandemic traditional teaching in compulsory education. *Journal of Educational Research*, *114*(4), 307–316. ERIC.

Galioto, C. (2023). The incarnation and education as acts of weaving: Towards a comprehensive approach to schooling from a Christian perspective. *International Journal of Christianity & Education*, *27*(1), 50–64. https://doi.org/10.1177/20569971221098424

Gallet, W. (2016). Social connectedness: The role of the local church in building community. *Pointers*, *26*, 1–4.

Gamboa, J. N. (2022). I survived: Academic life of junior high school learners in online distance learning. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business & Education Research*, *3*(5), 828–841. Academic Search Ultimate.

Galstyan, N., & Galstyan, M. (2021). Social remittances during COVID-19: On the "new

normality" negotiated by transnational families. *Comparative Migration Studies*, *9*(1), 1–19. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Gaxiola Romero, J. C., Pineda Domínguez, A., Gaxiola Villa, E., & González Lugo, S. (2022). Positive family environment, general distress, subjective well-being, and academic engagement among high school students before and during the COVID-19 outbreak. *School Psychology International*, *43*(2), 111–134. Educational Administration Abstracts.

Gbolo, S., & Grier-Reed, T. L. (2019). An African American student networking group in an urban high school: Experiences and outcomes. *Urban Education*, *54*(9), 1210–1232. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916641170

George, E. S., & Wesley, M. S. (2021). Marital stress and domestic violence during the COVID- 19 pandemic. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, *8*(1), 1–9. Humanities Source Ultimate.

Golden, A. R., Griffin, C. B., Metzger, I. W., & Cooper, S. M. (2018). School racial climate and academic outcomes in Arican American adolescents: The protective role of peers. *Journal of Black Psychology*, *44*(1), 47–73. https://doi.org/10.1177/0095798417736685

Gottfried, M. A. (2018). Teacher's aides in kindergarten: Effects on achievement for students with disabilities. *Journal of Educational Research*, *111*(5), 620–630. Academic Search Ultimate.

Grier, L. K., & Boutakidis, I. (2018). The ecology of social support in relation to academic and behavioral self-perceptions among African American boys and girls. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, *28*(6), 798–816. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Gungor, A. (2019). Investigating the relationship between social support and school burnout in

Turkish middle school students: The mediating role of hope. *School Psychology*

International, *40*(6), 581–597. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Hickman, R., & Kiss, L. (2010). Cross-curricular gallery learning: A phenomenological case

study. *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, *29*(1), 27–36.

https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1476-8070.2010.01635.x

Hill, P. L., Schultz, L. H., Jackson, J. J., & Andrews, J. A. (2019). Parent-child conflict during

elementary school as a longitudinal predictor of sense of purpose in emerging adulthood.

Journal of Youth & Adolescence, *48*(1), 145–153. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Hintsanen, M., Dobewall, H., Keltner, D., Volanen, S.-M., Gluschkoff, K., Cloninger, C. R.,

Saarinen, A., Wesolowska, K., Raitakari, O. T., & Pulkki-Raback, L. (2019). Parent-

child-relationship quality predicts offspring dispositional compassion in adulthood: A

prospective follow-up study over three decades. *Developmental Psychology*, *55*(1), 216–

225. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Jönsson, J., Maltestam, M., Tops, A. B., & Garmy, P. (2019). School nurses' experiences

working with students with mental health problems: A qualitative study. *Journal of*

School Nursing, *35*(3), 203–209. Education Research Complete.

Jung, E., Zhang, Y., Hwang, W., & Zhang, Y. (2018). Parental health and children's

functioning in immigrant families: Family roles and perceived treatment at school.

Journal of Child & Family Studies, *27*(6), 1899–1913. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Kosciejew, M. (2022). Remembering COVID-19; or, a duty to document the coronavirus

pandemic. *IFLA journal*, *48*(1), 20-32.

Krawczyńska, J., & Zawierucha, E. (2018). Subjective assessment of health in secondary school

adolescents. *Środowiskowe Uwarunkowania Subiektywnej Oceny Zdrowia Młodzieży*

Szkół Ponadgimnazjalnych., *34*(4), 296–303. Academic Search Ultimate.

Kroshus, E., Chrisman, S. P. D., Coppel, D., & Herring, S. (2019). Coach Support of High

School Student-Athletes Struggling With Anxiety or Depression. *Journal of Clinical*

Sport Psychology, *13*(3), 390–404. SPORTDiscus with Full Text.

Lechuga-Peña, S., Becerra, D., Mitchell, F. M., Lopez, K., & Sangalang, C. C. (2019).

Subsidized housing and low-income mother's school-based parent involvement: Findings

from the fragile families and child wellbeing study wave five. *Child & Youth Care*

Forum, *48*(3), 323–338. Academic Search Ultimate.

Lee, M., Kim, Y., & Madyun, N. (2018). Do relational and structural characteristics of negative

school environments independently predict immigrant adolescents' academic

achievement? *Social Psychology of Education*, *21*(3), 539–563. Sociology Source

Ultimate.

Lei Chang, Hui Jing Lu, Lansford, J. E., Skinner, A. T., Bornstein, M. H., Steinberg, L., Dodge,

K. A., Bin Bin Chen, Qian Tian, Bacchini, D., Deater-Deckard, K., Pastorelli, C., Peña

Alampay, L., Sorbring, E., Al-Hassan, S. M., Oburu, P., Malone, P. S., Di Giunta, L.,

Uribe Tirado, L. M., & Tapanya, S. (2019). Environmental harshness and

unpredictability, life history, and social and academic behavior of adolescents in nine

countries. *Developmental Psychology*, *55*(4), 890–903. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Lombardi, C. M., Coley, R. L., Sims, J., Lynch, A. D., & Mahalik, J. R. (2019). Social norms,

social connections, and sex differences in adolescent mental and behavioral health.

Journal of Child & Family Studies, *28*(1), 91–104. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Lucas Shelemy, Harvey, K., & Waite, P. (2019). Secondary school teachers' experiences of

supporting mental health. *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education, and Practice*, *14*(5), 372–383. ProQuest Central; Social Science Premium Collection. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMHTEP-10-2018-0056

Marques, S. S., & Braidwood, R. (2021). Impact of the Coronavirus lockdown on older adolescents engaged in a school-based stress management program: Changes in mental health, sleep, social support, and routines. *Children & Schools*, *43*(4), 198–208. Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection.

McCorkell, L., & Lobo, L. (2021). Learning in lockdown: A small-scale qualitative study exploring the experiences of autistic young people in Scotland. *Educational & Child Psychology*, *38*(3), 75–89. Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection.

Milas, G., Klarić, I. M., Malnar, A., Šupe-Domić, D., & Slavich, G. M. (2019). Socioeconomic status, social-cultural values, life stress, and health behaviors in a national sample of adolescents. *Stress & Health: Journal of the International Society for the Investigation of Stress*, *35*(2), 217–224. Academic Search Ultimate.

Miller, K., Wakefield, J., & Sani, F. (2018). Identification with the school predicts better mental health amongst high school students over time. *Educational & Child Psychology*, 21–29. Academic Search Ultimate.

Miller, R. S., & Wang, M.-T. (2019). Cultivating adolescents' academic identity: Ascertaining the mediating effects of motivational beliefs between classroom practices and mathematics identity. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, *48*(10), 2038–2050. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Moustakas. C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* SAGE.

Mucedola, M. S. (2018). Intrinsic motivation paired with community outreach strategies to

improve student success. *Clearing House*, *91*(6), 229–235. Academic Search Ultimate.

Naik, P. (2019). When trauma-informed pedagogy is not enough: The need for increased

school-based mental health services in public schools. *Harvard Kennedy School Review*,

19, 66–69. Academic Search Ultimate.

Naydanova, E., Beal, B. D., & Doty, D. H. (2018). Internet use for school-mandated and self-

initiated learning: Good, bad, or both? *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social*

Networking, *21*(7), 444–449. APA PsycInfo. https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2017.0003

New International Version Bible. (2011). Zondervan. (Original work published 1978)

Nicholas, D. B., Zulla, R. T., Conlon, O., Dimitropoulos, G., Urschel, S., Rapoport, A., Katz, S.

L., Bruce, A., West, L. J., Belletrutti, M., Cullen, E., & Zwaigenbaum, L. (2022). Mental

health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children with underlying health and

disability issues, and their families and health care providers. *Paediatrics & Child Health*

(1205-7088), *27*, S33–S39. Academic Search Ultimate.

Niskac, B. T. (2021). Distance learning and new forms of discipline during the pandemic.

Školovanje Na daljinu I Novi Oblici Dsicipline Tijekom Pandemije., *58*(1), 85–106.

Humanities Source Ultimate.

North, E. A., & Ryan, A. M. (2018). The Association of Peer Academic Reputations in Math and

Science With Achievement Beliefs and Behaviors During Early Adolescence. *Journal of*

Early Adolescence, *38*(6), 772–794. Professional Development Collection.

Ogg, J., & Anthony, C. J. (2019). Parent involvement and children's externalizing behavior:

Exploring longitudinal bidirectional effects across gender. *Journal of School Psychology*,

73, 21–40. Academic Search Ultimate.

Osagiede, O., Costa, S., Spaulding, A., Rose, J., Allen, K. E., Rose, M., & Apatu, E. (2018).

Teachers' perceptions of student mental health: The role of school-based mental health services delivery model. *Children & Schools*, *40*(4), 240–248. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Oswald, D. P., Zaidi, H. B., Cheatham, D. S., & Brody, K. G. D. (2018). Correlates of parent involvement in students' learning: Examination of a national data Set. *Journal of Child & Family Studies*, *27*(1), 316–323. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Özer, Ö., Özkan, O., Budak, F., & Özmen, S. (2021). Does social support affect perceived stress? A research during the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, *31*(1–4), 134–144. Humanities Source Ultimate.

Pompele, S., Ghetta, V., Veronese, S., Bucuță, M. D., & Testoni, I. (2022). Spirituality and children's coping with representation of death during the COVID-19 pandemic: Qualitative research with parents. *Pastoral Psychology*, *71*(2), 257–273. Religion and Philosophy Collection.

Prince, D. M., Rocha, A., & Nurius, P. S. (2018). Multiple disadvantage and discrimination: Implications for adolescent health and education. *Social Work Research*, *42*(3), 169–179. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Qutishat, D., Obeidallah, R., & Qawasmeh, Y. (2022). An overview of attendance and participation in online class during the COVID pandemic: A case study. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies*, *16*(4), 103–115. Computers & Applied Sciences Complete.

Raccanello, D., Brondino, M., Moè, A., Stupnisky, R., & Lichtenfeld, S. (2019). Enjoyment,

boredom, anxiety in elementary schools in two domains: Relations with achievement. *Journal of Experimental Education*, *87*(3), 449–469. Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection.

Robinson, M., Doherty, D. A., Cannon, J., Hickey, M., Rosenthal, S. L., Marino, J. L., & Skinner, S. R. (2019). Comparing adolescent and parent reports of externalizing problems: A longitudinal population-based study. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, *37*(2), 247–268. Academic Search Ultimate.

Roman, N. V., Mthembu, T. G., & Hoosen, M. (2020). Spiritual care - 'A deeper immunity' - A response to Covid-19 pandemic. *African journal of primary health care & family medicine*, *12*(1), e1–e3. https://doi.org/10.4102/phcfm.v12i1.2456

Searcey van Vulpen, K., Habegar, A., & Simmons, T. (2018). Rural school-based mental health services: Parent perceptions of needs and barriers. *Children & Schools*, *40*(2), 104–111. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Shaffer, M. L. (2019). Impacting Student Motivation: Reasons for Not Eliminating Extracurricular Activities. *JOPERD: The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, *90*(7), 8–14. SPORTDiscus with Full Text.

Shaw, A., Williams, R., Hux, A. R., Henley, J., McBride, J., & Nichols, J. (2021). The "New Normal" For Public Schools: A Look At Teachers' Views On The Changes In Public Schools As A Result Of COVID-19. *Education*, *142*(2), 65–76. Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection.

Shoval, E., Sharir, T., Arnon, M., & Tenenbaum, G. (2018). The Effect of Integrating Movement

into the Learning Environment of Kindergarten Children on their Academic

Achievements. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *46*(3), 355–364. Professional

Development Collection.

Slavich, G. M., Stewart, J. G., Esposito, E. C., Shields, G. S., & Auerbach, R. P. (2019). The

Stress and Adversity Inventory for Adolescents (Adolescent STRAIN): Associations with

mental and physical health, risky behaviors, and psychiatric diagnoses in youth seeking

treatment. *Journal of Child Psychology & Psychiatry*, *60*(9), 998–1009. Academic Search

Ultimate.

Sternberg, R. J. (2004). What is wisdom and how can we develop it? *The ANNALS of the

American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *591*(1), 164–174.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716203260097

Sun, X., Xie, Q. W., Huang, Y., & Ip, P. (2019). Quality of life of rural–urban migrant

children in China: A cross-sectional study. *British Journal of Social Work*, *49*(5), 1124–

1143. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Swenson, J. E., Schneller, G. R., & Henderson, J. A. (2014). The Better-Than-Average Effect

and 1 Corinthians 13: A Classroom Exercise. *Christian Higher Education*, *13*(2), 118–

129. https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2014.872491

Swetaa, A., Gayathri, R., & Priya, V. V. (2019). Awareness of mental health among teenagers.

Drug Invention Today, *11*(8), 1979–1982. Academic Search Ultimate.

Tafoya, S. A., & Aldrete-Cortez, V. (2019). The interactive effect of positive mental health and

subjective sleep quality on depressive symptoms in high school students. *Behavioral

Sleep Medicine*, *17*(6), 818–826. Academic Search Ultimate.

Timmons, K., Cooper, A., Bozek, E., & Braund, H. (2021). The impacts of COVID-19 on

early childhood education: Capturing the unique challenges associated with remote

teaching and learning in K-2. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *49*(5), 887–901.

Educational Administration Abstracts.

Tindal, G., & Anderson, D. (2019). Changes in status and performance over time for students

with specific learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *42*(1), 3–16. Academic

Search Ultimate.

Tomasik, M. J., Helbling, L. A., & Moser, U. (2021). Educational gains of in-person vs

distance learning in primary and secondary schools: A natural experiment during the

COVID-19 pandemic school closures in Switzerland. *International Journal of

Psychology*, *56*(4), 566–576. APA PsycInfo. https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12728

Van Lancker, W., & Parolin, Z. (2020). COVID-19, school closures, and child poverty: A

social crisis in the making. *The Lancet Public Health*, *5*(5), e243–e244.

Vladislav, E. O., Marc, G., Pop, O., Paica, C.-I., & Iordachescu, D.-A. (2022).

Adolescents during the pandemic. Difficulties and adaptive strategies. *BRAIN: Broad

Research in Artificial Intelligence & Neuroscience*, *13*(1), 420–425. Academic Search

Ultimate.

Yildirim, T. M., & Eslen-Ziya, H. (2021). The differential impact of COVID-19 on the work

conditions of women and men academics during the lockdown. *Gender, Work &

Organization*, *28*(S1), 243–249. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12529

Vaterlaus, J. M., Beckert, T. E., & Schmitt-Wilson, S. (2019). Parent–child time together: The

role of interactive technology with adolescent and young adult children. *Journal of

Family Issues*, *40*(15), 2179–2202. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Walker, D., & Leach, J. (2014). Anxiety: Etiology, Treatment, and Christian Perspectives.

Journal of Christian Nursing, *31*(2), 84–91.

https://doi.org/10.1097/CNJ.0000000000000051

Washington-Brown, L., McKinney, B., Fair, T. W., White, S. L., & Washington, L. (2021).

Psychological impact of COVID-19 on inner-city children. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*,

28(4), 83–87. Sociology Source Ultimate.

Wong, M. D., Chung, P. J., Hays, R. D., Kennedy, D. P., Tucker, J. S., & Dudovitz, R. N.

(2019). The social economics of adolescent behavior and measuring the behavioral

culture of schools. *Journal of Child & Family Studies*, *28*(4), 928–940. Sociology Source

Ultimate.

Yang, J., Aaron, A., Baidya, A., Chan, C., Wetzler, E., Savage, K., Joseph, M., & Kang, Y.

(2021). Gender differences in psychosocial status of adolescents during COVID-19: A

six-country cross-sectional survey in Asia Pacific. *BMC Public Health*, *21*(1), 1–18.

Public Affairs Index

Appendix A

Recruitment Letter

Dear Potential Participant,

As a doctoral candidate in the School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to understand the academic, emotional, and social impact of COVID-19 on students for teachers at public schools., and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be a licensed teacher who was teaching at the onset of COVID-19 and still is currently teaching in grades 6-9. Participants must have taught from the onset of COVID-19 to the present day without stoppage. Participants will be asked to take part in a one-on-one, audio-recorded, in-person interview. It should take approximately 1 hour to complete the procedure listed. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but participant identities will not be disclosed and the information will remain confidential.

To participate, contact me at sthompson236@liberty.edu to answer my screening questions. If you are eligible, I will work with you to schedule a time for an interview.

A consent document will be emailed to you if you meet the study criteria. The consent document contains additional information about my research.

If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document at the time of the interview.

Participants will receive a physical $25 Visa gift card upon completion of the interview.

Sincerely,

Stephen Thompson
School Counselor
Sthompson236@liberty.edu

Appendix B

Consent

Title of the Project: Tales From The Classroom: A Qualitative Study of Teacher Experiences With COVID-19
Principal Investigator: [Stephen Thompson, Doctoral Candidate, School of Behavioral Sciences, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a licensed teacher who was teaching at the onset of COVID-19 and still is currently teaching in grades 6-9. Participants must have taught from the onset of COVID-19 to the present day without stoppage. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to understand the academic, emotional, and social impact of COVID-19 on students for teachers at public schools.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:
1. Participate in an in-person, audio-recorded interview that should last no more than 1 hour.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include adding to the literature a study that focuses on teachers' perceptions of the impact COVID-19 had on and continues to have on students in the classroom. Additional benefits include preserving the first-hand experiences of teachers that will aid future studies.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and on a USB drive stored in a locked cabinet. After five years, all electronic records will be deleted and all hardcopy records will be shredded.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for five years and then deleted. The researcher and members of his doctoral committee will have access to these recordings.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will be compensated for participating in this study. At the conclusion of the interview, participants will receive a physical $25 MasterCard gift card.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Stephen Thompson. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at ████████████ ████████████████████. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Kristin Kellen, at ████████████████.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix C

Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself as if we had first met.

2. Please share your educational background when you started teaching, including grade level, subjects, and role (teacher)

3. Please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown, as it relates to the academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health of the students.

4. What were some immediate concerns regarding academics, social well-being and emotional/mental health you experienced with students after the lockdown?

5. What were some feelings/fears you grappled with regarding students' academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health in the immediate lockdown?

6. As the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social well-being, and mental/emotional health was COVID-19 having on your classroom?

7. When reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas academic, social well-being, or emotional/mental health do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

8. What have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your classroom you shared in the previous question?

9. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

10. How do you feel having these supports at that time could have helped your students?

11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academics, social well-being, and emotional/mental health?

12. What supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

13. Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental/emotional health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

14. What continued support/resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on students today?

16. We have covered a lot of ground during our conservation together, and I thank you for your time. One final question, what else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I have yet to ask you?

Appendix D

Interview Transcripts

Interview Sally

Steve
Good afternoon and thank you for sitting in the interview with me. I'm going to ask you 16 questions here just kind of on like your experience with COVID in the classroom. After each question, you can give me a little head nod that you feel like you've answered it. So I'm not just staring at you. And then I'll go on to the next one. So the first two questions I kind of have been combining. It just comes naturally. But could you please introduce yourself as if we first met and then give me your educational background. Like when you started teaching, including grade levels and subjects.

Sally
Okay, I'm **Sally**. I am a business teacher at Charlestown High School. I started teaching here in 1995 and I've been here my entire career. I graduated from Bloomsburg University with my business education degree and I have a Master of Arts in education from Graz University. I've taken a lot of other additional classes since then, so I have the master's plus 60 plus plus plus. I've not worked on my doctorate though, and I teach business classes, electives, including business and career development, saving, investing, and financial decisions, business management. I do Microsoft Core. I sometimes teach business and personal leadership. I've taught entrepreneurship, intro to business, you name it, I've taught it.

Steve
Okay, thank you. Question number three, please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to the academics, social well-being, and mental health of the students.

Sally
I would say that my students prior to the lockdown were involved in a lot of group projects through organizations like Junior Achievement. At that point we were still, I was still involved in a lot of bringing consultants and things in with outside organizations to make more hands-on projects, teaching students how to run a business, but actually doing it in a way where they got to, it wasn't just a simulation, it wasn't an online thing, it was a real deal. And so they got to work very closely with one another and kind of go above and beyond. And that was par for the course in a lot of the classes that I taught. So that was kind of the normal thing that was happening at that point.

Steve
Thank you.
Question number four. What were some immediate concerns regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health you experienced with the students after the lockdown?

Sally

So immediately, we were in the beginning stages, and I remember this very clearly, when we locked down. We had just got started with Junior Achievement, because we always did it in the spring, and spring and so students had been very excited about planning their business and our junior achievement consultant had been coming in regularly and they were elected their officers and had come up with their business idea and had done everything they needed to do and we're all excited about the prospect of starting their business and then you know we were at home and then that was no longer going to be a possibility so we had to pivot and thankfully we had I had something else that I could kind of pull out of my back pocket to keep them focused in that one particular class. So we took what was going to be junior achievement and we turned it into a leadership opportunity called Lead for Change that I was able to work with and amazingly my students it gave them a focus because I think a lot of the other classes at the time didn't have the ability to kind of immediately pivot to do something else. And my kids actually won a national competition and we got $10,000 awarded for their efforts. So that was a pretty awesome thing to have happen. And I know they were so excited during that time. It didn't happen in all of our classes, obviously, but I think for them, they gave them a purpose to come online every day and it gave them something to do because they actually had a specific job. In my other classes, I would say that didn't happen because we didn't have that particular project that I could immediately come up with. So a lot of it was just me giving them an assignment to do and then them coming back the next day and some of them came and some of them didn't. So I definitely think that the ones that had some sort of active project and that had roles and tasks assigned and could interact and were given responsibilities had more of an opportunity to interact with each other and to be more social than those that didn't.

Steve

Thank you.
Question number five. What were some feelings and fears you grappled with regarding students' academics, social well-being, and emotional mental health in the immediate lockdown?

Sally

I would say I was very concerned about the students that were not logging on and connecting with teachers that didn't ask any questions, that obviously were not participating in their education in any active way. Whether that was during the actual lockdown from March to the end of the school year or when we were doing the hybrid and they were at home and you could tell, you know, they were logged on to class but they actually didn't turn their cameras on and then when it was like, okay, you guys can go off and work on whatever, they never disconnected. They would still be connected no matter what. They never, you know, they didn't do what you asked them to do, and that obviously concerned me, just because you knew they were off watching television, sleeping, on their phones, not really caring about what was happening with their own education. And so I thought that was pretty concerning to me as a teacher. And then just the concern about turning on their cameras and interacting with each other, and just kind of, I don't know if it was embarrassment, or just because they hadn't been taught maybe how to do that and to just feel comfortable with, it's okay. If you see each other, it doesn't have to, we're not gonna make fun of each other if we're on the camera. Turn off your, mute yourself when you're

not speaking, but unmute yourself when you go to talk, and that kind of thing. I think that was a learning curve for sure, but they weren't very comfortable with it. So, I think that was a problem.

Steve
Thank you.
Question number six. As the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social wellbeing, and mental health was COVID-19 having on your classroom?

Sally
For sure, the importance of students turning assignments in on time, it's been getting worse I'd say over time I think in the 29 years that I've been teaching here, but just that concept of responsibility and with the fact that everybody passed and if you did, you just tried, okay, good. I think they really took that mentality back the following year when we came back to school and we were doing the hybrid thing. They just kind of assumed that as the teacher I was gonna just, of course we were gonna extend them some grace, but took advantage of it, it seems like. So I would say that that was an ongoing issue. And something that I saw that was kind of to the students detriment.

Steve
Thank you. Question number seven. When reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, academic, social well-being, or mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

Sally
Immediately I thought it was their social, their ability to socialize with one another because they really didn't. When we started to lift restrictions and we started to come in person all the time, they would just sit quietly and not talk to each other and it was the strangest thing to not have that interaction. You know, you didn't have discipline problems but you also didn't have students talking to each other and that really concerned me just about it seemed like they had just completely forgotten and I thought a lot of it here at the high school level was that they didn't have the time to transition the middle schoolers you know they need that time where as they come in as sixth graders they're kind of a low person on the totem pole and they're you know it's just that whole like rowing and becoming more mature and then as they transition to eighth grade and and then again low person on the total poll again in ninth grade and I have a lot of ninth graders but um I just they just didn't talk to each other and it was kind of scary I it's evolved since then now I'm finding that I think probably in the last year I'm seeing that they're talking to each other a lot in classes again and that part has kind of become better but the academic performance I think is concerning to me because they want to look up everything they don't want to use their minds they just want to look up the answers to every possible question that they have and and not put it you know let me just google that and that that's kind of concerning I think and that might be a long term because, you know, they have the ability to do that at home. So, I'd say that's it.

Steve
Thank you.

Question number eight, what have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your classroom? You shared in the previous question.

Sally
For sure, the technology piece of it, because we're, one thing that I love about what happened during COVID was kind of being forced to put everything onto Schoology has made it very easy for me to be able to go back and pull things that have been successful in the past and and then when students are absent like I can still hold them accountable because everything is available I can make it right there for you you know like I have a weekly agenda I update it all the time I have links to everything you know and I kept that up since we've come back in person and kind of returned to normalcy. So I really like that, but at the same time, because the kids have a device a lot of the time, their attention span is on their device and not so much in the classroom on me. And they have a hard time stopping stopping themselves from a YouTube video or a game or working on something for another class or trying to work ahead on something because they see the agenda and they can see what's coming up. So some students, you know, they're just so academic they just want to get everything done or some just want to be focused on whatever else they're behind on in another class. So I think there's all those like issues with just kind of keeping focused on what are we doing right now and not worrying about what's coming up and not worrying about whatever they want to do that's not school related because of the device. So I've kind of tried to find a balance between devices and back to paper because I think initially it was too much online stuff. At the same time though why use so much paper when you have the ability to use the device? That's kind of a fine balance. I think that's a problem. I'm trying to find that balance.

Steve
 Thank you. Question number nine. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

Sally
I don't, honestly, I don't know that there was a lot of things that I felt that were missing because I felt relatively ready to transition and pivot because I personally have been doing a lot of just, I like to do a lot of classes and things and I've been taking coursework so I've been kind of been modeled to with a lot of online classes and doing professional development. I had already applied for and received a grant to use something called Nearpod through an outside organization so I had access to that so I could keep my kids engaged. I was creating content which I could interact with them in a live manner to keep them focused and I could be able to say when we were in lockdown I could create this near pod and then I could say oh **Steve** you're not interacting with it and even though I wasn't you weren't physically in front of me I could see that **Steve** wasn't interacting with his computer so that kind of kept me moving I don't know the other teachers felt that way so even though I personally felt like I had what I needed because we had access to Edpuzzle and because I personally had the near pod I don't think that all teachers felt that way. I think that probably, certainly those first couple weeks were crazy for a lot of people just getting clarity on what was expected of us. And then for those of us that weren't real comfortable with technology, I think that was a huge learning curve. Thankfully I kind of had a good grasp on it, so it wasn't that big of a deal to me.

Steve
Thank you.
Question number 10. How do you feel having these supports at that time could have helped your students?

Sally
Again, I don't know that it's particularly my students, but I think in general, having the technology available for things like interactive programs, like Nearpod, when the kids were not physically in the classroom but then able to like see that they're doing something and require them to be interacting with it at that point could have helped keep them a little bit more accountable and and part of their own education and then forcing them to to actually remain there as opposed to being outside or playing on their phone or whatever they were doing at home where we couldn't see them I think that would have probably benefited them in the long run with the actual academic part of their experience.

Steve
Thank you. Question number 11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academic, social well-being, and mental health?

Sally
So again, I still see kids who are overly dependent on technology and want to look up answers to everything. And I don't know if it's AI at this point, but they're just so used to being able to be on their devices for everything. They have a hard time separating themselves from that device because for a year and a half, two years, they were just able to do that as part of school. What else do I see? I would say, I'm starting to see kids finally turning the page and being more willing to join a lot of organizations which is a it's a nice thing to see them becoming more active in like community service and that seems like it's coming back to where it kind of was maybe pre pandemic can you repeat the question again one more time?

Steve
Being a few years removed from lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health?

Sally
Okay, so the residual effects are the negative ones, I'm thinking.a lot of... When we didn't have the ability to have them face-to-face and we had to give them a lot of more contextual clues or I don't know whatever you would call it you're putting on Schoology and a lot of extra resources Again, it leads to probably, they want all of those resources because they want to be able to look up the answers and things as opposed to maybe use their own thoughts and kind of spoon feeding a lot of it, I think, is still probably some of the residual effect.

Steve
Thank you.
Question 12 What supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

Sally

Again, maybe it's just a allowing teachers to hold their students accountable for the grades that they're earning and not forcing us to, you only have 10% off is the maximum that I can hold you accountable for when something is late, or if you've looked up the answers to everything, oh, it's not that big of a deal. So there should be consequences for cheating, consequences for late work. Because in the real world, when these kids do those kinds of things in their workplace, there are going to be consequences, and it's going to be you're fired. So I mean, unfortunately, I mean, I realize that we're training them for that point, and training them to go to college and higher education and the next step in their life, but I think a lot of times it doesn't seem like the consequences that they face are very serious at this point. So I don't think that they really consider what are the residual effects of the things that I do wrong, what are the consequences, and this isn't that big of a deal. And they could be in the future if you continue to act in a way that's inappropriate in society. So I think that's probably what I would, how I would say that, that might play out.

Steve

Thank you. Question 13 Which of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental health. Which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

Sally

So even though I haven't talked about mental health at all, I don't think in any of my responses, I think that that is an emerging problem with students today. Just because they're bombarded with so many distractions and and so much negativity and just the ability to have so much feedback from people and they just put so much emphasis on what other people think and just don't develop that backbone and that ability to say, I don't really care, right? What I think about myself is the most important and what you have to say and what you post about me, I can just delete it, it doesn't matter, or I'll just ignore it. So that mental health part of it is really a big deal. But I'm also concerned about the academic performance in terms of, and I guess it's the social as well, but just the responsibility and the attitude and those kinds of things that we see maybe in the classroom with just professionalism, the things that are gonna segue into their jobs and into, you know, challenging themselves and not just expecting to have answers given to them or expecting that they're just automatically going to be number one and or that it's all about competition and that it's not about just like the learning process that I have to be the best and I can cheat to get my way there and those kinds of things that does concern me.

Steve

Question number 14, what continued supports do you need to help recover from learning loss due to COVID-19 pandemic?

Sally

It's really a shame. I don't know if this is just our district or if this is just education in general, but the fact that we as educators are pretty much responsible for finding our own materials, curriculum, designing it. I don't know in the other areas, but in the business department, as an elective area, let's say, we don't get access to do textbooks, we don't get access to any materials,

other than I do have an online simulation program that you know I've been a champion of for 15 years that I keep saying we have to keep renewing this and the district's been really good about that but there are so many great resources that are available it would be nice to have some new materials and not feel like I'm doing, and then so many students, and just trying to keep my head above water. I think I could be a more effective teacher if I just had the basis of the class started for me, and then I could develop things off of that. It would make me feel, I think, like I could be more effective, because I wouldn't be so busy trying to always constantly be creating new stuff to keep my kids motivated because obviously what worked five years ago, ten years ago, is not working now. So it's a lot of trying to keep up with them. So I think that would be helpful.

Steve
Thank you. Question 15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on students today?

Sally
This is personal to my classroom, okay. So I would say during the hybrid portion of our time, I probably was too focused on trying to hit everybody with, personally, having something that kids could do at home and something that kids could do here, and it just became too overwhelming for me. And I, when that year ended, I was like in my wits end. So for me, I think again, I would be a more effective teacher if I wasn't so concerned about I have to do the dog and pony show for everybody, and if I can just focus on one thing, and then somehow try to tailor it. Or if you're at home, this is how you're gonna do the assignment, and if you're here in my classroom, this is how you're gonna do it. It did become overwhelming because then you had kids that were here every single day and it just was so much to juggle and to try to to keep all of a handle on what was happening and keep everybody working and That was just a lot so that was the one thing that I probably would change if I could not do hybrid and if we could have everybody all or Nothing that would have been ideal. So That was a mess.

Steve
Question 16. We've covered a lot of ground in our conversation together and I thank you for your time. One final question is, what else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I've yet to ask you?

Sally
That's a good question. You haven't asked questions about impacting me as a teacher. I mean it's been a lot about the students. I think at this point we see a lot of people leaving the profession and that's kind of a you know a scary thing. I'm here for the long haul at this point. I'm too close to retirement to say no I'm gonna but there certainly were a lot of times where it was like, why am I doing this? So I think that that is also something that's part of this research. Not yours, in particular. I know this seems like it's more geared towards students and learning and their social and emotional, mental health, but there's also that teacher component to it as well. And I think that has had a huge impact on people wanting to go into this profession. And if we can't keep good teachers, that's going to be, you know, that's its own pandemic. Because we have like a rotating door of people in the classroom and you can't, how can you impact a student positively when you don't have a consistent teacher there every single day. Because for a lot of students

you know like we're the the positive role model in their life so I think that's kind of the we're the the positive role model in their life so I think that's kind of the to be seen component to all of this.

Transcribed with Cockatoo

Interview William

Steve

Good morning, **William**, and thank you for sitting down with me. Could you please introduce yourself as if we first met, and your educational background, including when you started teaching, and grade levels and subjects?

William

Yeah, my name is William. I've been teaching here in the middle school for 19 years, 9 of them in 7th grade English, and the last 10 in 8th grade English So, 2005, first year.

Steve

Thank you. All right. Question three. Can you describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to academics, social well-being and mental health of the students?

William

I think one thing that has changed is I think more about the social dynamics. I think COVID was a bit of a wake up call about how much education is a person-to-person thing. It's a social endeavor. So I feel like I'm a lot more aware of my classes now than I used to be. So looking back, of course I remember plenty of things, but it's not as clear of a focus for me because I think I was a little more focused on content than on the relationships and managing student interactions with each other and trying to like draw out the students who would kind of keep to themselves. But I think in general classroom management and behavior we're almost like afterthoughts at certain times, whereas now it's always front of mind. Not that it's less enjoyable, but it's it's almost always tougher in any given class than it might have been before.

Steve

Thank you. Question four. What were some immediate concerns regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health you experienced with students after the lockdown?

William

After the lockdown, you know, my first thought was that kids were just happy to be back in school. When they came on a hybrid model for most of that 2020-2021 school year, they're just sort of glad to be back in school again, I think. And they were willing to play by the rules a little bit better, I think. Like it was a relief. They realized this was something they needed and appreciated more. And there were some kids who clearly struggled with it and it took them a while to adapt to being around people again. For the most part I thought it was kind of an unusual year. Normally kids kind of complain about school. I don't think I heard much of that upon that return from the lockdown.

Steve

Thank you. Question five. What were some of your feelings, fears you grappled with regarding students' academics, social well-being, and mental health in the immediate lockdown?

William

In the immediate, it was some of the kids who already seemed like they were kind of like

searching for a connection or to feel some kind of belonging. Like, you wonder what's it like for them right now at home. If already they seemed like they were a little bit lost, and now they're isolated, that was my main concern. But some of those kids might actually have been better having their parents around more, even if the parents were out of work, which is obviously a negative. They might have been around more. It was just hard to tell. We would have those virtual lessons in that spring, but even if kids signed in and were there first and you said hi, who knows where they went for the remainder of that time. I didn't have any reason to be concerned for anyone's like safety. You know there was less ability to report things I guess, but I'm sure that was an issue.

Steve
Thank you. Question six. As the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social well-being, and mental health was COVID-19 having on your classroom?

William
You mean into that next fall or just when we were fully at home?

Steve
Fully at home.

William
It was hard to get much information from kids. If a kid hadn't signed in for a couple of days, I would try sending them a message on Teams. Sometimes they'd respond. It's hard to tell. That's the weird thing. It was just kind of mysterious.

Steve
And then additionally, can you tell me, into that next year, the hybrid year, the same things, it continued, what effects on academics, well-being, and mental health was it having?

William
Yeah, the mental health thing, another thing may have been happening at the same time where it just became a little more, there was less of a stigma to talk about, you know, trauma or other things the kids had gone through, so they were more willing to be open about it. So I think that was a positive thing. And even now, like, a lot of kids talk about their anxiety in ways that I don't think they would have before. And then you can work out little strategies to try to reduce that with them. In terms of, I lost track of the question. Just academics and social well-being. As the effects, the continued effects on academic social well-being and mental health. I think a lot of it is just like sort of the basics like I thought every kid knew what nouns and verbs were and now it's just so obvious that like just maybe from being out of practice a little bit I'm teaching more somewhat basic things that I'm used to, but like maybe they didn't know them before and I just didn't pick that up. So there's a lot of relearning I think that has to happen.

Steve

Thank you. Question seven. When reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, academic, social well-being, or mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

William
It's probably that social side. I feel like there are a lot more kids who just, it takes me more time to figure out how to interact with them. Maybe things have been rough at home, maybe you go a little bit feral when you're at home trying to learn independently for a while, but like the social side of figuring kids out has gotten tougher. And most of the time they come around, I think, but there's a lot of built up, I don't know, like angst or something, I think, that kids just have to work through. And just, like I said before, on the academic side, just have to be really repetitive and always be open to questions like you can't say oh you should know this by now. That's not my job. My job is to help them understand it better. So I guess if I had to pick one though it's that social side. I'm sure the mental health effects are there in ways I can't see as I'm working with our counselors but socially it's the biggest thing for me.

Steve
Question 8. What have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your classroom you shared in the previous question?

William
Just being patient I think. And remembering it's not personal. One of my biggest challenges so far this year was one student who just came in on the first day kind of spoiling for a fight. So don't give the fight. You know, wait the person out. Keep letting all the kids know you care about them. And, you know, I don't really forget what happened the day before, but I come in like I have no recollection of it. And I think that helps.

Steve
Thank you. Question nine. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

William
I thought the district did a good job of getting us all set with the capability to have those live lessons, to record things so kids could watch them later. So I feel like I had everything I needed. What I wish I'd taken the time to think through was just ways to get more engagement going, even if it wasn't all that academic in nature, just to get kids interacting with each other, with me, sharing what life's like when you're home for all that time, when concerns that they had, little things like that, instead of trying to stick to any semblance of what my plan was before, in retrospect, I think just coming back to that basic and open communication would have been a little better for the kids, those who tuned in.

Steve
Question number 10. How do you feel having these supports at that time could have helped your students?

William

Hmm. I'll have to circle back and answer that one a little bit better. I felt like when we got back in the building and then even the year after that, there was an increased focus on social-emotional learning that I think was good for the teachers, it was good for the students. So had everything been able to work ideally, we would have had that a little sooner, but everyone was trying to figure out how to keep something going. But can you repeat the first half of the question?

Steve

How do you feel having these supports at the time helped your students?

William

Yeah, now that I think about it, I mean, a lot of that is almost kind of like addressing the aftermath in terms of like having to work together again and be around people and learn how to get along. So at the time, maybe there wasn't a lot you could do there, but just like the emphasis on it, I think, helped me think differently as a teacher.

Steve

Thank you. Question 11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academic, social well-being, and mental health?

William

I'm still seeing that social interactions are strained a little bit, I think. Kids aren't as patient with each other as they used to be. In some cases, I wonder if they want attention one way or another, whether it's negative attention from a teacher or another student getting mad at them for a comment. That's probably the biggest thing. Still, some skills deficits, I think that's going to keep going for a few more years. These kids are in 8th eighth grade that I'm teaching, so they were in fifth grade when it happened. It's just gonna take some time to sort of dig out of that hole in a way.

Steve

Thank you. Question 12, What supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

William

I know we had a learning loss coordinator here who was working with certain students. That certainly makes a lot of sense to me in terms of targeting the ones who have had it the worst. I think one thing that helps here is, at least for some of the gaps in their education, is that we use this exact path program, like for reading, language arts and math, where kids can get lessons and work on some of those things they're missing. But it's not the same as having it person to person, you know, when you're working with a computer program. Even if they do ask for help, and I go over and look at it with them, it's still like just not quite the same as working with a full class all on the same subject.

Steve

Thank you. Question number 13. Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental

health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? Which makes you get this response?

William

kids as they can, but they have a few students who are just kind of always there and they have to spend a lot of time with those and then there's only so many hours in a day, there's kids they just can't get to. And we the teachers can certainly give them an ear and give them some broad advice maybe, but we don't really know how to handle some of those things

Steve

Thank you. Question 14, what continued support resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

William

I think some of the diagnostic tests we do give us an idea of where the patterns of learning loss are, what particular areas to focus on, but there's just so many of them that it's hard to know, you know, you can't quite individualize it all. So those have been the most valuable things, just to see like, you know, do kids still understand what FEMA is in a short story, you know, you can look at the data for that and that seems to be a pretty good tool to use for it. I don't feel like I'm in the dark when it comes to that.

Steve

 Thank you. Question 15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on students today?

William

During the lockdown?

Steve

Yes.

William

I think I just would have tried to be a little bit more of an entertainer, unless, like, I'm certainly not the influencer type, but just videos, just tell some jokes, give them something to motivate them to tune in for the lessons that we were trying to do then. But that's just not in my personality, so it wasn't something I was thinking of at the time, but looking back, like they just need some kind of engagement more than simply like, you know, trying to teach about poetry still.

Steve

Question 16. We've covered a lot of ground in our conversation together. And thank you for your time. One last question. What else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would it be essential for me to know that I have yet to ask?

William

Take a moment here.

William
Can you say it again?

Steve
Sure. What else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I've yet to ask you?

William
I think we covered a fair amount, but the question itself kind of brought an idea to my mind that I consider, which is like, I wonder if anybody ever asked students like what their experience was like you know that would be a good writing assignment just what was a typical day like when you when you were home no one ever really talks about it and maybe they just some just kind of general debriefing would still be kind of good for kids because it's still probably affects the way they think. It's still a bit of a cloud. Maybe they're worried that we'll go back into lockdown. And they wonder, why doesn't anyone else talk about this? Everyone wants to pack up and move on, but for a lot of kids, it might not be that far in the past. That's not quite an answer to the question, but it does make me wonder.

Steve
Thank you. I appreciate your time. Thank you. I appreciate your time.

William
Glad to.

Transcribed with Cockatoo

Interview Peter

Steve
Good morning, thank you for your willingness to sit down and interview with me. I have 16 questions I'm going to go through. I'll say, before each question, I'll say this is question number one and so forth. The first question, combined with the second one, I realize they all flow together, but is could you please introduce yourself as if we first met and share your educational background when you started teaching, including grade level, subjects? Thank you.

Peter
All right, my name is Peter. I am a social studies teacher at the High School. I teach grades 9 through 12, although I mostly do not have sophomores. This is my 11th year in education. My undergrad work was done at Lebanon Valley College, and I have a master's degree from Temple University and a master's degree from University of West Virginia, and I'm in the third semester of my doctoral program at Temple University.

Steve
Thank you. Question number three, could you please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it related to your students academics, social well-being, and their mental emotional health?

Peter
I'm a teacher that has a pretty laid-back approach to my classroom management. I make sure that my students understand the lines that we create in the classroom when it's time to get to work, when it's time to have fun. Before COVID, I would say it was very easily managed. I did not have to give too many cues to students to let them know, hey, let's buckle down, let's get this assignment done. Essentially, all I had to do was say, hey guys, we need to get this work done, let's do it. And for the most part, other than a few students here and there, it would get done. To also talk about the behavioral, again, very little interruptions. I never had to remove a student from the classroom. You know, to send to the office. Occasionally maybe had to have a quick conversation with the student out in the hallway, and from there they would correct their behavior and get to work or do what was needed. Since COVID, I've had to remove three students from the classroom. One to the office, which was severe enough that I actually had to call for administration. I have also noticed an uptick in fast passes that our guidance office offers to students who are struggling either mentally, physically, or what have you going on in their lives to where they can directly go and seek assistance. Before COVID, I honestly can think of maybe one or two students that had that. So since then, it's definitely been an uptick on just behavior where I kind of have to reign the students in a little bit more and also just the fast passes that they need to go and seek help.

Steve
Thank you, Question number four. What were some of your immediate concerns regarding your students academics, their social well-being, and emotional mental health when the students went to lockdown?

Peter

So are you asking going into the lockdown, the actual lockdown itself or post? Okay, the actual lockdown. Okay, so the actual lockdown itself, unfortunately due to restraints of laws, our assignments were not mandatory. So during the actual lockdown itself I had very little participation. Most students, and this is kind of funny, would log into our either kind of like our classroom time or office hours that we had scheduled, mainly just to say hi and ask to see my dogs. Very few students turned work in. Very few students actually turned into, logged in during the classroom and also during office hours. So I was extremely concerned that these kiddos were not getting the education that they needed to go to the next level. Fortunately, in social studies, it's not cumulative. We're not building off of one thing to another. Although you can say for US history one and two, you definitely need a little bit of a background and then also from civics from when they used to offer in seventh grade, now I think it's offered in sixth grade, to them when they take it in 11th grade in high school. I think some of them and I'm seeing this they've lost that foundation of kind of just the basic governmental foundation that we have here in the United States and Pennsylvania.

Steve
Thank you. Question number five. What were some of your feelings, fears, you grappled with regarding students' academics, social well-being, and emotional mental health in the immediate lockdown?

Peter
The fears that I had, how did I grapple with it? I would make sure to reach out and contact my students. At that time, I used a Remind app, so I know they had their phones on them, or at least most students have their phones on them. So I would send a Remind message, hey, don't forget about class at this time. We're gonna go over X, Y, and Z in our topics. Please make sure you're there. I would send emails, especially at the beginning to remind people. I will say by the time we were wrapping up and there was only like maybe a week or two left of actual classroom, virtual classroom time before the end of the school year, I did get lax a day school in my approach because the emails were never being returned, remind messages weren't being answered. And at that point I just chalked it up to students and families are mentally worn out, education is not there. So that was kind of tough for me to wrap my mind around, but it was something that I accepted towards the end. That's like, okay, you know what? Maybe these families have a bigger fish to fry than to worry about US cultures.

Steve
That kind of leads to the question six. As the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social wellbeing, and mental emotional health was COVID-19 having on your classroom?

Peter
Again, it was more, I think, taking a wear and tear on myself as the educator. I think the students saw it as a free pass, I think, not having to do work once they kind of heard the rumors, and the rumors were true, that the work was not mandatory, unless it was an AP or college in the classroom course. So, teaching CP and honors courses, a lot of my students, actually all my students, the work was not mandatory. So I don't think, I think they kind of just took it as, you know what, this is time away from school, I believe the students mentally it was just for them I

think it was a break I actually think it may have helped them somewhat in that immediate moment not saying it helped in future but in that immediate moment it was a break for them and for me I think once I got over the stresses of trying to make sure my students were doing the work it was a little bit of a respite for myself too. And, you know, to focus on the family, make sure with that we were following COVID protocols. So I think overall in the media, it may have been a nice break for the students.

Steve
Question number seven, when reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, the academic, social well-being, or emotional mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

Peter
Hard to rank them, especially I think, you know, mentioning academic. Now it being 2023, I'm finally beginning to see students who are getting back into the swing of understanding of being in school every day. When we first came back, it was an extreme struggle just to even get students to complete work in the classroom. I'm not a teacher that assigns homework. That is just my own personal philosophy. And I was still having students struggle to get in-class assignments turned in on time. It was almost like taking the approach, well, this is optional, I don't need it. Mental health, it's hard for me to kind of grasp exactly what's going on. I think there's more awareness towards mental health and I think if there's a positive to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was to put an emphasis on mental health. And I believe we're doing that here at my high school. So I think we're just more aware of it. Social aspect, again it took a good full year to maybe a half a year and a half for my students to understand kind of how to behave in the classroom again.

Steve
Thank you. Question number eight, what have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your classroom you shared in the previous question?

Peter
Really making the connections with the students. It's something that I take extreme pride in, that I make connections with students, students make connections with me. Once that connection is there, that's when you can educate. That's part of my educational philosophy. Some of the students just don't want to be bothered with at all, and I've noticed it a lot more since the COVID-19 pandemic. They'd rather just be by themselves or they would rather just sit by their friend and not, let's just get through class, so we can get to the end of the day and do whatever we wanna do, either have fun, go to work, play sports. So I think my biggest challenge is just making the connections, because more and more students would rather not be interacted with. They kinda just wanna, what I see, just kinda fly under the radar. they kind of just want to what I see. Just kind of fly under the radar.

Steve
Question number nine. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

Peter

Being an armchair quarterback and looking back at it, I will say before I critique, I think that we at Cornwall Lebanon School District handled it as well as they could. This was something that really hasn't happened since 1918 to public education. So I believe we did what we felt was best in regards with support. So I wish we had. I truly wish there was more communication from the district office administrators and administrators to teachers. I feel like a lot of the teachers were kind of left in the dark on what decisions were being made and why they were being made. And it kind of felt like you were on a need-to-know basis. And I wish there was more support in just open communication and transparency.

Steve

Thank you. Question number 10. How do you feel having these supports at the time could have helped your students?

Peter

It could have helped me guide my students and let them know what's going on. Instead of going by rumor or hearsay or my parents said this or my parents said that, I could actually present to my students and their families facts on why we are doing what we're doing instead of again not being completely transparent and not openly communicating to all staff to let them know exactly what the school district is doing based on what we're being told by Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Steve

Question number 11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding the academic, social well-being, and mental health?

Peter

The academics are getting better, more consistent to what it was before COVID-19, before the pandemic. You always had those handful of students who you kind of had to push harder to work with, to get work done, to get their grades up, to stay consistent, consistently productive. So when the first, as I mentioned, about maybe 12 to 18 months post-pandemic, that was extremely tough. It was more and more students. It just wasn't a handful. You're talking maybe 60-70% of the classroom where it's having issues. Now here in the 2023, 2024 school year, it is starting off much better, kind of like 2018, 2019, where the students understand that the work needs to be done and they're more focusing on getting their assignments completed. With the mental, how they act in the classroom, again, I think that's becoming, it's better and kind of showing itself pre-pandemic. Students are, at least this school year, starting off more well-behaved in my classroom, understand, again, when we need to get serious and get down to work and grind and finish assignments and get through lessons, but then also understand, hey, you know, if we have four or five minutes, either before or at the end of class, to kind of have fun and socialize, they're doing it in a productive manner, they're not getting out of control. I'm not telling them, no, you can't do that, or let's calm down. It's that they're kind of more in line to pre-pandemic. And mental health, unfortunately, I'll say, unfortunately, but I think it could be fortunately, seems like a lot of students are struggling with mental health. But it's definitely a different comparison. Is it

that more are struggling or that we're more aware of it? I'm not sure which it is. I would like to think that we're more aware of it, and therefore we're identifying it and trying to help the students. Again, I think that may be a positive post-pandemic.

Steve

Thank you. Question number 12. What supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

Peter

I think, you know, communicating and working closely with our guidance department, also working hand-in-hand with our administration team, I think it is something that we're beginning to do better here at my school. But again, I think it's for open communication and transparency. I know some things can't be shared due to privacy acts, and I understand that, but I think we're just kind of openly communicating on what needs to be done and bringing more of a team effort. You know, always things to work on, something I like to bring up, yes we're doing better, but what does even better look like? How can we make better look better? I know that's kind of funny to say, but it's just a cool saying that I have. So yes, we're doing better, but what does better look like? And I think that's something that we're trying to achieve in our school district.

Steve

Thank you. Question number 13. Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental, emotional health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

Peter

Social, I would say the social aspect and how students are to interact with peers and also their teachers, administrators, and guidance officer are all building staff. I do tend to see a little bit more of a nonchalant or maybe disrespectful approach. How do we, why do I say that? Just responses by students. Typically, I've had a very good history of building that rapport and connection with students to where I can get a response or at least a legit response by them where it's not just yeah yeah yeah I'll get it done to where they could actually communicate with me and tell me what's going on in their lives. I'm still concerned about that I'm still kind of seeing a you know yeah I'll get it done and they're just kind of going through the motions they're not really wanting to get what they're learning they just want to get past it. And that's something that didn't exist pre-pandemic, but I think I'm seeing more of it post-pandemic.

Steve

Thank you. Question 14, what continued support research do you need to help recover from the learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Peter

I think trainings, professional developments on mental health, and really the social aspect. I think we're doing, again, a better job of addressing mental health, but mental health and social, they kind of go hand in hand, but they're also different. We need to work with these students on to teach them on how to act while they're out in society, while they're out in a public setting. I think these students, post-pandemic, are used to kind of just wearing what they wanted to wear, say

what they wanted to say, do what they wanted to do. And it does take, you know, the saying, it takes a village. I think our school district needs to start making those connections with the families outside of schools, letting them know that our school is a community hub to where we can help improve these students' lives.

Steve

Thank you. Question 15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on students today?

Peter

Am I to answer that in a utopian world or within the legal guidelines that we have to follow? I think whatever you could change the things. If there's one thing I can change was would be to almost make attendance mandatory to like how it is when we weren't in the pandemic now. I do understand legally that that could not be done. I know it violated FAPE and I understand that but in a perfect world perfect situation. Okay, we're in the pandemic. We still need to log in online if they don't have internet use, then we would do maybe the few students because there weren't many, but the few students that you had, then we would meet with them during our office hours through a phone call. Even if it would mean social distancing and meeting in a public area, there were still many places that were open through the pandemic to where we could be socially distanced and catch students up. to be able to. Get back to school and socially distance and have students up that's how I think that would have worked great- but but again I do understand the legal guidelines we have to follow.

Steve

Thank you. Question 16, We've covered a lot of ground in our conversation together. And thank you for your time. One last question. What else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would it be essential for me to know that I have yet to ask?

Peter

How teachers mentally are handling the post-pandemic? How has our teaching styles or classroom management changed? Because I have a feeling that many of ours have changed, including myself, where the long leash that I used to give my students and again most of the time they respected that long leash I had to kind of reel it in and make it tighter so I had to change my classroom management style with the kids and maybe be a little bit more stricter than I used to be just to kind of keep them on task. I think that would be interesting to kind of look at how did teachers change how did we change our approach to teaching since post pandemic.

Steve

Thank you for your time.

Transcribed with Cockatoo

Interview Lucy

Steve
All right, good afternoon, thank you for sitting down with the interview for me. I have 16 questions I'm gonna go through here. And each question, I'll preface it before I say this, I'll say number one, two, and so forth. And when you're done with the question, you just give me like a head nod or some sort of, and we'll go forward, okay?

Lucy
Sounds good.

Steve
The first two questions together are, please introduce yourself as if we first met, and then please share your educational background when you started teaching, including grade levels and subjects.

Lucy
All right, I'm Lucy. I started teaching special education. So I started with a high school emotional support class and in a neighboring district, and then immediately went over to the middle school and taught there for a year in a learning support setting. And then the district pulled me into taking over our life skills class at our local at our district in the elementary level and I taught through through fifth grade. Eventually moved to learning support regular learning support for fourth and fifth grade at Charlestown Elementary and then moved up here to the high school to teach biology in a regular ed setting.

Steve
Thank you. Question number three, please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to academics, social, and mental/emotional health of your students.

Lucy
 Okay so like I said, it was like a transition year for me with learning support and then also a regular ed setting. So the learning support and the regular ed setting, I ran pretty much the same. We did a lot of collaborative work, we did a lot of group work, partner work, a lot of critical thinking and problem solving activities. And the kids were able to kind of take charge of their learning. And they were digging into the material, their grades were up, they were asking good, deep thought questions, they were just really engaged. I'm sorry, what was the rest of the question?

Steve
Describe your classroom environment before COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to academic, social well-being, and then their emotional, mental health.

Lucy
Okay, so emotional well-being and mental health. So we, I'm very big on that. So we, in my learning support setting, it was a small group. So every day we would do check-ins. And we would kind of talk about our day. And we didn't really have a whole lot of negatives that were

happening within the classroom, within the home. It was a lot of, guess what I did? Guess what we can do this weekend? That type of thing. And then in the regular ed setting, the group was much larger, so we had a very generalized morning conversation, and then throughout the day I would pull little conversations in, just checking on their mental well-being. But they didn't really have many things. Like you would have one or two kid, one or two kiddos that would come up and be like, oh I'm having a stressful day at home, or this is happening, but it was very pinpointed, it was very specific, it was very like, this is what happened and this is the reason why. And the kids were able to process through that and figure out a why. And then we were able to process through.

Steve

Thank you. Question number four, what were some immediate concerns regarding your students' academics, social well-being, and mental health that you experienced with the students after the lockdown, so when the lockdown kind of started?

Lucy

The biggest thing, I had a group of kids that didn't want to go home on the weekends and then didn't want to go home on the holidays for various reasons, in learning support and regular ed. And when the lockdown happened, my initial thought was, now what do I do with those guys? How do I keep them safe? This school was their happy spot. School was their happy and safe area. And now they're gonna be locked down in that quote unquote unsafe area for them that was a big trigger for them. So that was my initial thought, like oh no, how are we gonna get the emotional well-being and the social peace happening? The other concern was the social peace. Like how are we gonna keep these kids that are in such a developmental age with socialization? Like how do you get them to learn conversational skills, to learn problem-solving, to learn critical thinking when they're at home? Academic same thing. How do you get them to learn the critical thinking pieces and the higher level thinking skills when they're over a Zoom call or asynchronous when they're just reading and doing whatever.

Steve

Thank you. Question five, what were some feelings or fears you grappled with regarding student academic social well-being and mental health in the immediate lockdown?

Lucy

Pretty much the same thing. The immediate things that I struggled with is like, what do I do to help these kids? Because I was so involved with them when they're in person, and I was their person that they would go to. Well then, how long do I keep myself available every day? Do I have open hours all night long? Like, do some of the kids only have access to their laptops, because in the elementary level, we don't have one-to-one laptops for the kids. So did they have access to the internet if they had a laptop? Do I leave myself open from school hours, or do I go into the evening when the parents are home to have conversations or, well, parents would be home all the time during lockdown, but when they weren't working on their own laptop. So it was all that big questioning of, well, how do I help these kids that desperately need this adult to help them? Academics, you really can't dig into the academics as much as you would in person, because you can't gauge their responsiveness, and their engagement is off.

Steve

Thank you. Question six, as the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social well-being, and mental health was COVID-19 having on your classroom and students?

Lucy

So as it was going on, the scariness and the nervousness that was initially there from all the kids, like, when are we coming back? When are we going to do this? What am I going to do here? All of that was starting to dissipate. And, uh, I don't feel like doing anything. I'm just going to pass anyway. I'm just going to, I don't have to do any of your work. They're just going to pass me anyway, so why do I have to read? Why do I have to do this math? Why do I care about the Revolutionary War? They're going to push me off to sixth grade. That was like the mentality of that slide for academics. For the majority of the kids, like you would always have the one or two that were really like, no, Mrs. Kreider said I have to do this, so I've got to do this, and then some. But the academic piece, like you couldn't get the kids to really latch on and grab into it, because they knew there was no consequence for not doing it. And they figure, well, if everybody else is in the same boat, everybody else is gonna have to start the same level, so why should I push myself? At least that's what I was grabbing from some of my kids.

Steve

Thank you. Number seven, when reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, the academic, social well-being, or emotional, mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

Lucy

Oh, I would say it's a good combo of all three. Academics and social, the critical thinking and the problem-solving skills are so low. And those, when they were at home, all they had to do was Google something, or they all they had to do was ask somebody for the answer and they would typically get it. So then when we come into the school after the COVID, they're expecting to just Google things and they're expecting Siri to answer it for them. And then they don't have to think. So the academic and the social, the emotional wellbeing, I think is also highly affected because again, they're not really invested in solving problems and critically thinking, and even in their relationships, so-and-so said this, so I yelled at them, or I stopped talking to them. But why would they say that? Let's look at the why behind the behavior over here, and let's see if we can't process this in. So it's really hard to say one was more than the other because they're all intertwined.

Steve

Thank you. Question number eight, what have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your classroom you shared in the previous question?

Lucy

I think the hardest, this biggest hurdle is getting them to understand that they need to work at it. That it's not just in simple, quick, easy fix. That they have to actually want to work and they need to start thinking of others. I think that was a big thing. Because during COVID, they could just stay in their room and just think about what they wanted to do and they could just do what they wanted. They didn't have to take other people's thoughts, expectations, desires, needs into

account. Because it was just their family unit, their personal individual desires and needs and wants and they could just run. But now that they're out in the real world and they have all like 24 other kids around them they're like oh crud now where am I gonna go with I want that how am I gonna get that they're not taking into consideration that it's gonna take work to work work together.

Steve
Thank you. Question nine, What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

Lucy
I think, it's hard to say. I think academic wise, I think at the elementary level in the fifth grade, sixth grade level, it would have been really nice to have one-to-one laptops and curriculum that was geared towards the digital era. We never had digital pieces in our curriculum at the level we needed them. Then I think also, I honestly think, I know it's not even feasible, but getting counselors and psychs into everybody's home, whether it was once a week or even once every other week, just as a check-in with the whole family. Not just the kid, but the whole family. Because they were dealing with so many things, a lot of these families never had full weeks with their kids at home before. So I think having a psychologist or a counselor checking in with each family and I know that wasn't possible it's not even feasible but In dream world it would be amazing for these kids.

Steve
Thank you. Question number ten, how do you feel having those supports at the time could have helped your students?

Lucy
I Think they would have been able to See the bigger picture I think they would have been able to see that they're not alone, that they're not fighting through this COVID scare by themselves. A lot of our kids that struggled with going home were pretty much just pushed into their rooms and kind of ignored a little bit to fend for themselves. And I think having that counseling or that guidance for the whole family, they would have seen, okay, well, maybe we could do it like this, or maybe we could do a game night with our kids, or maybe we could have dinner together tonight. Just little tricks or little things that some of us take for granted that other people might not even know that that's beneficial. So even just that, just getting that mental and that emotional well-being taken care of might help academically then, because it's all related.

Steve
Thank you. Question 11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health?

Lucy
I'm still seeing the trickle down of not being able to critically think and problem solve. Whether it's academically or socially, even emotionally, they're not able to take a step back and work for figuring out an answer, or figuring out why they feel the way they feel, or why someone said

something to them and they're like, well, no, they're bullying me. No, they're just having a conversation, but let's look at this. So they're really having a hard time taking ownership of their learning, I think, because it was so easy for them just to Google and Siri it. And I think now, they're not wanting or willing or a combination of both to step back and dig into their learning.

Steve

Thank you. Question number 12, What supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

Lucy

I have no idea. Maybe, like I said, with the at-home piece, maybe more counseling for parents to see more supports that are there, or, hey, let's, this really helps with the emotional well-being of your child at this age. Like, because an elementary kid is going to be different than a middle, than a high. And I think some parents just are so overwhelmed with everything, including life and kids and work that some of that went out of the wayside during COVID. And I think now coming back, maybe some of those educational supports coming back in might be beneficial.

Steve

Question number 13, Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental emotional health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you get this response?

Lucy

I think the emotional well-being. I think if you can reach that kiddo at the emotional well-being site, everything else falls into place. If they're happy and healthy in their mental health, they're gonna be happy and healthy and willing to do everything else and willing to work through for the most part. I see a lot of kids since COVID that are on anxiety meds, are on like depression meds, are cutting, are like all of these things that we didn't really see on my level at my area. We didn't see a whole lot of that before COVID. Now we're seeing it. And I don't know if it's because it's becoming more mainstream, like it's becoming people are becoming more aware of it, so they're more willing to talk about it, or if it's an actual increase since COVID.

Steve

Thank you. Question number 14, what continued support resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to COVID-19 pandemic?

Lucy

Unfortunately, I think it's like we need to revamp the curriculum to guide for some of these missing chunks of learning. So every kid, you know, in our school setting today has had at least a half of a school year of missing curricula. So everything in your curriculum builds on itself. So I think the kids that are struggling, especially our, you know, our kids are struggling that have been in the school setting since COVID because they're missing that piece.

Steve

Thank you. Question 15, if you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most impact on your students today?

Lucy

If I could go back and change, I would probably change, it's a catch 22, I would wanna be available more for the kids in my classroom, but then the catch would be not being available for my own family and their needs. And I had three little ones at home, so it's like, how do you balance that out? So it's like I really would wanna be here for my kids, because I know that's what they needed for my students, but then how do I take that for my family? So honestly, I have no idea. I have no idea what I would've done.

Steve

Thank you. All right, question 16. We've covered a lot of ground during our conversation together, and I thank you for your time. One final question. What else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I have yet to ask you?

Lucy

Everything was covered. Yeah, I think everything was pretty much covered.

Steve

Okay, well thank you for your time.

Transcribed with Cockatoo

Interview Chris

Steve
Good afternoon, thank you for sitting down and interviewing with me. I have 16 questions going to go through here that kind of talk about your perspective of COVID in the classroom. And so the first two I've been combining is just kind of can you introduce yourself as if we first met and just give me a little bit of your teaching background, like when you started teaching, including clay levels and subjects.

Chris
Sure. My name is Chris. I've been here at Charlestown High School. I actually started teaching in January of 2007 in a number of different districts, middle school and high school. Some of that day-to-day, some of it short-term sub, some of it long-term sub. I actually did a two and a half year stint in Lancaster City at a charter school as well. So kind of a varied background. Okay, thank you.

Steve
Question three, please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to students academics, social well being and their mental health.

Chris
Okay, um, before COVID and sometimes that's actually hard to remember it anymore. But I feel we were a lot more hands on obviously, then I would say we've gotten back to that a lot of that now. And I think in my classroom we pretty much have gotten back to that. But yeah, certainly I think there were less barriers. I think COVID definitely put barriers up that weren't there before where number one proximity, so classroom management, that was taken away a little bit. Although the classroom, if I'm crossing over questions too, I apologize. But I'm thinking back to hybrid, where actually class management in hybrid was easier because you only had half the kids in your class at the time. But I think making those relationships, forming those bonds became much harder after COVID than it was before COVID. I think still there's a little residual from that. So before I think overall teenagers were better at communication and I think they lost some of that over that period too. But I just think, it just felt freer thinking back on it. I mean I don't know if that makes sense. Okay, thank you.

Steve
Question four. What were some immediate concerns regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health you experienced with the students at the lockdown?

Chris
Okay. Yeah, when we locked down, honestly, the last of my thoughts was academic. Because, I mean, to me, I'm a social studies teacher. Obviously, I love my content. and must do or die need to find out information they can find it on their own. I was really worried about the mental health in that aspect because some of them, this is where they get two of their meals a day. Some of them, this is their safe spot. So, yeah, that's what I worried about. Those three months ending that school year. And then here, as I know you remember, we did that drive-thru graduation. And just that, you could just see kids got to see people again. And like, you know, you've been a couple

months. And then we went over the summer. And that's what I still worry about how that affected them. Because I know it is still affecting some of them, even though we're pretty much, we are back to normal. Well, we are back to normal. But it's still affecting them today, in my opinion.

Steve

Thank you. Question number five. What were some feelings slash fears you grappled with regarding students' academics, social well-being, and mental health in the immediate lockdown?

Chris

I mean, the fears, again, were, you know, how are some of them going to get the connections that they need, the services that they need, the person to talk to that they need, that safe place. That's what I worry about. And honestly, I didn't have an answer. I mean, we weren't allowed to meet them here, and obviously, you're not going to start contacting them personally to get together with them. So I mean, it really is, it caused pain, you know, on I think a lot of teachers, but you know, somebody who thrives on that and actually, I remember an episode of Everybody Loves Raymond where the father used to sniff the kids' heads. I don't sniff my students' heads. But being around them actually makes me feel younger. So, it was just tough. I mean, just knowing that so many of them needed something, but you didn't know who they are and what they needed. So yeah.

Steve

Thank you. Question number six, as the lockdown continued what effects on academics, social well-being, and mental health was COVID-19 having on your classroom?

Chris

And this is academics? Or any of it?

Steve

Any of it.

Chris

Okay. Academics, I mean, still, it still wasn't my top concern, but now that we're back in school in that hybrid setting, trying to get them involved, which was essentially impossible from when they were at their days at home. And as we kind of found out, they became very crafty in making themselves look visible even though they weren't there. I don't know if you know this, a lot of the kids had friends logging into their teams in school for them at home. But found that out late in the year. So I mean, academically, I mean, social studies, I can pick a kid up wherever we are. I mean, I can only, in hearing and talking to other teachers like Matt, where if you miss a piece, you can't move on, they really saw it. And that's, again, talking with others. those things and then just the fear. I mean, you had people picking sides. Are we worried about COVID? Aren't we worried about COVID? And everybody had, there was misinformation out there on both sides again. So that created confusion and again, building up walls that helped to build walls, but in some cases, with students, student to staff and staff to staff at times. So I mean it was definitely a challenging period, I mean in in every way.

Steve

Thank you. Question number seven. When reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, academic, social well-being, or mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

Chris

I think you can probably guess where I'm going to go at this point, but the social. I mean the social well-being. I see it, and I know the district has changed some just over time, and that's not good or bad, it just is what it is. But the kids don't interact nearly as well as they used to. And again, some of that is, all the different backgrounds, all the different schools I've been in, but they treat each other meaner than they used to at times. And I know kids have always been mean to each other, but some of it's just blatant. And they don't know how to talk things out. Yeah, that's social well-being. And we have many more kids need services. I mean, we don't have near the teachers we need on the Lyft team to help kids that need those services. There's not, I mean, I'm hearing at Lyft meetings, getting services outside the school, kids are waiting six months or more. And I'm sure you have direct knowledge of that better than I do. For services that they needed yesterday. So it has just caused an epidemic. And it's not just the teenage level, we see it, I'm sure, through all ages. I don't know, I know you're not asking me, but I don't know how we recover from it. But that social well-being has caused a lot of damage. Yeah, I'll just leave it at that. But yes, unless you have another question about it. I won't pontificate too much.

Steve

Question number eight is what have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your classroom? You shared in the previous question.

Chris

Okay, getting them to focus on what is actually important. And again, there's always been some of that. But somebody says something and they can't let it go from four days ago. Somebody said something to them and trying to get them to focus in class. It's not just a few goofing off now. It's not always just goofing off. It's just so many more kids now it's and it's really it's really challenging and then you know kids just maybe to make up for it but a lot of it's the drama that's created is just talking about nonsense stuff and yeah that's become a real challenge though just getting them to focus and it it's really at the beginning of the period. It's not like it's a lecture 20 minutes in. It's the very beginning of class. It's just sometimes it's just, and many times, it's just so hard to get them to focus and just get started. So, and I find that is different than what it used to be.

Steve

Thank you. Question number nine, what supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

Chris

Supports. I don't see this is the first thing I think of is I wish we had them back full time that next full year. And I mean at that point I think we could have done that. I know there was still some fear and again that's my personal belief. I know others don't necessarily agree with that. But I

personally feel we, just as a, you know, whoever you want to add to that, we failed them. And when they needed us most, we weren't there for them. I was more worried about them not getting what they needed than me getting COVID. So I never feared that and I'm not disrespecting others that did fear that, I get that. I don't know. And any support that I may think of, it was impossible to provide anyway, because there weren't the people to do it. I think at this school, we did a pretty good job at trying to do the best we could under the circumstances that we had. I just wish we were there for them a little bit more, is what I wish.

Steve
Thank you. Question number 10. How do you feel having these supports at the time could have helped your students?

Chris
I think some of that social well-being could have been helped. Whether it's getting them all into school every day, even if it wasn't all in together, maybe done half. I don't know. I don't know what the answer is. But if we were there for them more, I think that social well-being would be better. And again, we can always catch up gaps. We can take care of that over time. But we're not going to ever bring catch up on the social well-being part, on the mental health.

Steve
Thank you. Question number 11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academic, social well-being, and mental health?

Chris
Students, the focus again, but not willing to accept a challenge. I think part of what we did during the lockdown, the hybrid, a lot of it was... we definitely did a lot of hand holding and not still challenging them, not allowing them to fail. And of course that's how we grow. So I think it's a lot more students now, it's hard to get them to engage in something challenging. Even though you'll end up walking them through at the end anyway, but just getting them to try something hard. Adding rigor right now is still extremely difficult because so many are just going to be left behind. And a lot of that's because they won't accept the challenges. So I think that is a residual that they didn't have to do anything for a long time. I mean, as you may or I'm sure you remember, that last semester, I mean the last quarter, everybody was going to pass that year. And when everybody came back the next year, they assumed that whatever they did they were going to pass and many of them did even though they did nothing. So what does that do to you? I mean that hurt a lot of kids in itself and even the kids are doing really well they start to say, hey, why am I working so hard.

Steve
Thank you. Question number 12, what supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

Chris
Taking time to build meaningful relationships with students. To mentor to them and teach them in some cases what it means to be a good citizen again. I think citizenship, which that is the basis of my subject. It is why public school started in the first place, is teaching citizenship. And

I think if we can do a better job of doing that, I mean, if we build relationships with students, they'll do almost anything we want. If we build relationships with students, they'll do almost anything we want. Obviously, they have bad days just like everybody. And then actually show them the proper way to do things. And it's not necessarily specific, because we all have different ideas. I mean, just giving them a path to show them. I think a lot of us do try to do that, maybe being more intentional about it.

Steve

Thank you. Question number 13. Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

Chris

And I know, when you say them again, I know a couple of times I flipped social well-being and mental health back and forth. So say the last part of that again, please.

Steve

Sure. So those three areas, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

Chris

I think I'll go with social well-being. I think mental health, there is a lot of attention on that. Still not enough funding for different things and all that. I mean, I know that. But I think that social well-being, are they fitting in somewhere? Still too many kids falling through the cracks. Desperate to make a relationship with somebody and then it turns out it was a really bad relationship that they got into for whatever reason. So I think social well-being, because I think we have a big focus on trying to bring back academics, and that's in general, not just here, and we have a big focus, especially in educational mental health, but I think social well-being does get lost sometimes.

Steve

Thank you. Question 14, what continued support slash resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Chris

I think we have to um, I think I have to do a better job in or We I guess the supports are involved but just Scaffolding that what we've lost, you know bridging those gaps scaffolding what they have and really bringing them along. And I know that means different things in different subjects. But I think just academic skills, the writing again, the oral communication. That's something I've seen too. I mean, we've always had kids, like when they had to do anything in front of the class. There's always a few that are scared to death but it seems like it's three quarters of them are scared to death now. So yeah just bridging those gaps in academia. Maybe we should have a class just on academic skills. Yeah because I mean we always assume that it's been taught to them or some kids get it, some kids don't, but you know, that note taking, the writing, all those things that, sometimes I think, especially the further along they get, we seem to start taking more and more for granted.

Steve

Thank you. Question 15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on your students today?

Chris

Looking back at what we know now, getting them in school. That's my opinion, just getting them back in school as soon as absolutely possible.

Steve

Question 16. We've covered a lot of ground during our conversation together, and I thank you for your time. One final question is, what else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I've yet to ask you.

Chris

Oh boy that's a tough one. I like when you lead me a little bit. Not that any one of the questions were leading but you gave me an idea of what to talk Oh gosh, I don't know. Nothing really comes to mind. I just hope we've learned from what we did and hopefully something happens like that again. We handled it a little bit differently.

Steve

Thank you for your time.

Transcribed with Cockatoo

Interview Michelle

Steve
Thank you for sitting down and interviewing with me. So 16 questions. Each question I'll ask you, I'll tell you the number of the question. And then when you feel like you've given me an adequate response, you can just give me a little head nod, and I'll go forward to the next question. Questions one and two together are, please introduce yourself as if we had first met. And then please share your educational background when you started teaching, including grade level subjects.

Michelle
I'm Michelle. I've been teaching at Charlestown this is my 18th year. I teach nine through 12 biology. Mom, wife, coach, do a little bit of everything. Education wise, I got my undergrad degree from Lebanon Valley. I graduated from there in 2006. Got my job at Charlestown right away. I have my master's in curriculum and instruction from University of Scranton. And then I've done my plus 60 random classes.

Steve
Thank you. Question number three, please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown, as it related to your students' academics, social well-being, and their mental health.

Michelle
I think I had a very welcoming classroom. We did a lot of group work. My desks were groups of four. I always encourage kids to talk with a partner, check with a friend. It was always just, I hope, a welcoming place for the kids.

Steve
Thank you. And question four. What were some of your immediate concerns regarding academics, their social well-being and mental health you experienced when the students, after the lockdown?

Michelle
After the lockdown, it's been a big problem with the social aspect. I feel like kids don't know how to communicate with each other anymore. If they're not on their phone texting you, like they can't carry on an actual conversation sometimes. I think it's getting better. I think it was definitely worse the past couple of years. And it could be, I mean, potentially maybe the kids. But I'm definitely seeing improvements this year versus the first couple of years.

Steve
Thank you, Question five. What were some of your feelings and fears you grappled with regarding your students' academics, their social well-being, and their mental health in the immediate lockdown?

Michelle

So during the immediate lockdown, I think everybody was scared. Nobody knew what was going on. I was struggling trying to teach and I had my own children home that they were still trying to do their schoolwork. So, you know, there was those fears for my kids at home. I know some of them depend on school for food. I was, you know, worried about them. The biggest concern or fear that I probably had was the lack of schoolwork that was actually getting done and how that was going to impact them, especially being a keystone subject. I didn't know if those kids were still going to be forced to take the bio-keystones at and they were missing a good two, three units of material.

Steve
Okay, thank you. Question number six, as the lockdown continued, what effects on academic, social well-being, and emotional mental health was COVID-19 having on your students?

Michelle
Academically, they got very, very lazy. The number of kids who would actually turn in assignments as the lockdown went on definitely dramatically decreased. The number of kids who would sign on for the live lessons dramatically decreased. I don't think I had one kid, I lie, I may have had like one or two kids pop into the office hours during lockdown just to say hi because they missed my class or they wanted to have you know just a conversation see how things were they missed talking to people but I mean that was it was a big big decline with the kids.

Steve
Okay question number seven when reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic which of these three areas academic, social well-being, or mental health do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

Michelle
My classroom personally I would say it's the academics. I'm definitely not seeing the level of academics that I was before. I'm not seeing now, three years after, the social effects as much. I'm not seeing as much mental health with my students, but that could also be because I'm just not aware. But definitely the academics have definitely changed pre and post COVID.

Steve
Thank you. Question number eight. What have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your classroom you shared in your previous response?

Michelle
So trying to get kids motivated. They don't value, maybe not value is the right word. not values the reward. The level of effort doesn't seem to be where it used to be and they don't seem concerned about that, which is definitely the biggest struggle because I haven't found the thing that's motivating them yet. Like I've tried, you know, the grades. Some of them it works, most of them it works. There's a good group though, grades they don't really care. I've tried giving candy, I've tried doing wings and frees. So just finding that motivator for those kids.

Steve
Okay, thank you. Question number nine, what supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or you felt were missing entirely?

Michelle

Oh, I don't know. I think when we came back to school, like during that September, I wish we had had maybe a little bit more support understanding what these kids were actually going through because I mean as an adult you know what high school was like but you also never went through high school during a pandemic where you were only seeing half of your friends so I think that was a little bit hard and I wish there was maybe a little bit more support with the kids and trying to have normalcy even though it wasn't normal.

Steve

Thank you. Question number ten. How do you feel having those supports at the time could have helped your students?

Michelle

I Think it would have given them more of a normalcy And I think we might have been able to rebound possibly a little faster If the kids had realized or felt like things were kind of back to normal. I know a lot of my students were so glad when they could come back to school for five days a week and have that sense of normalcy.

Steve

Okay, thank you. All right, question number 11. Being a few years removed now from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health?

Michelle

So academics, definitely we have had to lower our standards so that kids are achieving, which isn't a good thing. I feel like we just keep lowering the bar instead of raising the bar and seeing who can rise to it. And kids don't do homework. If it's not in school, they're not doing it anymore. Socially, kids don't talk to each other like they used to. Like before, kids were always chatting, and I just feel like that's kind of lacking. Yeah, mental health, I just maybe am not aware of it, but I'm not seeing anything that was any different than pre-pandemic.

Steve

 Okay, thank you. Question 12. What supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

Michelle

I think the school as a whole has to change our mindset. I think right now we're so focused on the kids who are failing and what can we do to get them to pass that we're trying to make everything easier so that those kids pass. When in reality, you know, maybe we need to have upper administration say, okay, here's the bar, let's raise it, and let's get them to rise instead of going the other way.

Steve

Question 13. Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, or, and mental health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

Michelle

I think social is probably the biggest area. Because these kids, they lack basic social skills. And

we see that in their behavior and how, I mean, something simple, like you should know how to communicate and talk to your classmates, where they don't. And I mean, part of it could be technology too, that we've become so focused on technology since the pandemic. I mean, you can't go anywhere without self-checkouts and that we're losing that human connection. And so, by losing that, when they actually have to interact with somebody, they're like, wait, what? I have to talk? How do I talk to this person? I'm not friends with them. What's appropriate and not appropriate? So I think that's the biggest is social.

Steve
Okay. Number 14. What continued support resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Michelle
I don't know. I feel like at this point like the kids they're getting better. We're getting getting there as far as learning loss. I don't know what I would need. Sorry.

Steve
No, that's okay. Question number 15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on your students today?

Michelle
I think making things count and not just, it was essentially a pass-fail for all the kids during that time where if you did something, great, you passed everybody. I think if we had kept with them as far as, you know, in order to get an A, you have to do A work, you have to turn in your work. I think that would have changed their mindset so that when we came back in September and it was the hybrid and they were at home, they still knew they were responsible for work. So I think the, and I mean it's easy to look back and say like we should have done that nobody knew what was going on, but I think if we had maintained our standards and the expectations for assignments that would have provided the kids more normalcy and it would have helped the transition back.

Steve
Okay, all right, last question. Okay. We have covered a lot of ground during our conversation and thank you for your time. Yeah. So the last question is, what else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I've yet to ask you?

Michelle
I don't know. I definitely think the first couple of years were the worst right after and I think we are finally now like my classroom feels normal. I'm back to doing even last year I was back to having my desks in groups and having kids do more group work and work on those social aspects and so I think I think fingers crossed we are work on those social aspects and so I think I think fingers crossed we are moving back to that normalcy.

Steve
Thank you for your time.

Interview Jill

Steve
All right, good afternoon, thank you for sitting down with the interview for me. I have 16 questions I'm gonna go through here. And each question, I'll preface it before I say this, I'll say number one, two, and so forth. And when you're done with the question, you just give me like a head nod or some sort of, and we'll go forward.

Jill
My name is Jill. I teach sixth grade reading right now. Before that I taught sixth grade social studies and prior to that I taught first grade, second grade, and kindergarten at an elementary level, all subjects.

Steve
Thank you so question number three is can you describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it related to the academics, social well-being, and mental health of the students.

Jill
Okay, so I taught second grade prior to and at the beginning of the pandemic and classroom environment was you know we're very hands-on. We did a lot of hands-on learning and we kids sat at my table and I would teach them a lesson. They would play games at another center for math, for instance. They were just able to engage in things in a very hands-on approach and work one-on-one a lot with the teacher. So that was right before the pandemic and just so you wanted to know what it was like in the classroom. Yeah yep just prior to COVID. Prior to COVID and thinking about independent work so this was a second grade level there wasn't a lot of homework but I would say you know a lot of parental involvement and understanding of expectations and kids at that age kind of knew what they had to do and and there were always students who wouldn't complete work But for the most part Kids were engaged in work and doing what they needed to be doing.

Steve
Thank you. So question four. What were some immediate concerns regarding academics social well-being and mental health? You experienced with students after the lockdown?

Jill
Okay, so immediately when that first week happened, I was trying to get things in order to connect with my students. You know, at that age, I was almost like a second parent to them. So they were with me more than they were with their parents. So that was a huge break for them in what had been. And so week one, even before our district put anything out, we were connecting with our kids on Zoom, which is what we thought was gonna be the way. And just, I was reading aloud to them, and so I had concerns for their mental health with everything that was happening, when it was just gonna be two weeks, you know, we weren't so concerned with their mental health, but I wanted to maintain continuity, and then after that, we definitely wanted to maintain those connections with them. Brought them little Bitmoji me's, like mini me's, and told them to bring me places and stuff like that. And there was just like this constant, we'd sit and read every

day together. We'd journal back and forth, stuff like that. So the mental health, I felt like we were connected and I was able to be in touch with families that way. There were kids that I never saw online, even when our district had put out some requirements for that. So of course we were worried for them. I went to each of their houses to bring them things, but it was tough. It was a tough time and people were at different places with that. Academic well-being, was that another question? Of course we were worried. Again, it was only second grade, but just there was a lot to do between March and the end of the year with, you know, practicing. And we had been working one-on-one and very up close and personal with kids. And, you know, like when they were at my table, it would be like practicing math skills like I did small groups. And then writing, like let's work one-on-one with this. So not having any of that for all that year was huge. Like huge loss and then like I said a lot of kids just didn't even show up to listen to stories and just had no books probably in their home for a long time. So of course that was a concern. Thank you.

Steve
Question five. What were some of your feelings and fears you grappled with regarding students academics, social well-being, and mental health, and then immediate lockdown?

Jill
I guess the difference is like that one was like after the lockdown and one was like more like the immediate lockdown. Just do it, I guess your fears you grapple with, or is there anything that kind of stuck out you're really really worried about with the students overall? I wasn't immediately, I wasn't super concerned for their well-being. I would say later on that happened, you know, even in the following school year, I really became worried. And even just seeing, so it took a little while before I was really concerned about how kids were re-entering society and how that was happening. But immediately and in the soon aftermath, I was just trying to manage their learning, trying to support their learning in the best way I could from home.

Steve
Okay, thank you Question 6 as the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social well-being, and mental health was COVID-19 having on your classroom?

Jill
Yeah, so that was a tough year. We were hybrid that year, as you know. And so we had half the kids here, half the kids at home, and this was also then I came to middle school. So it was a different experience for me here and just communicating with kids being online and in person at the same time was like extremely challenging and it had already seemed like the effects had impacted them like COVID had super impacted them just like very little concern for having things done or accountability, any of that. So it just had really shifted very quickly because they had been off from kind of March till September and then they came back in this weird capacity where they were at home one day and then in person the next day. So it was like not consistency and there was it was a really challenging time academically. So I was concerned. We did a lot of social emotional learning during that time. We really addressed their mental health needs. We had specific lessons for that. So that I think supported them. We had very open communication

with that. I feel like that since then has kind of pulled back and I still feel like there's a need for that.

Steve

Thank you. Question number seven. When reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, academic, social well-being, or mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

Jill

It's hard to choose. Academic is huge, but I also feel like I guess I would go with, I think that mental health supports the academics. I'm gonna go with mental health.

Steve

Okay, thank you. And then what have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact on your classroom, you shared from the previous question?

Jill

The challenging step. So last year we did a project on, my colleague and I did a social emotional learning project to be able to continue to implement that support for students because that's a huge factor and part of the reason I'm studying this counseling because I feel like they need it all students need it by and large but so just having that opportunity to implement what we know the kids need when it's not necessarily a priority in the district.

Steve

Okay thank you. Question number nine. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

Jill

Like when we were at home? I think that the kids, it was great that the kids were supported food-wise and stuff like that. I was fine but you know I just remember teaching at that time and then when they our district finally came out with the declaration that grades weren't going to matter it was all they were all going to be fine and that was that was hard because it was sending a message to our families that you know well this doesn't really count so but it does it did count you know.

Steve

Thank you. Question number 10. How do you feel having these supports at the time could have helped your students?

Jill

Well I think if parents received the message that this mattered, that their families, they would have you know followed through a little bit more with their families. And seeing what that ripple effect could have been, right?

Steve

Thank you, question 11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health?

Jill

So I do see things starting to improve. Just this year, every year I feel incrementally better about things. But academically, just that accountability again. Like that, I don't know how that could so quickly could have, you know, the value for learning and the prioritization of learning is just not there as much as it should be. And then mental health, I feel like, you know, obviously there's a huge demand for people who need help and they're not, it's, that demand must be a result of other, you know, everything that's happening. So it's not being met. So I do see a lot of anxiety, a lot of anxiety with kids. It's not all school-based, it's just like socially and, you know, they're not really, they have challenges in managing social interactions, academic things, everything. So it's tough for kids. And the support, they're struggling to find the support. Yeah. Thank you.

Steve

Question 12, what supports are needed to help remedy some of these residual effects?

Jill

More counseling. Yeah, 100%. I think we need more counselors in our district to support that mental health, to support their concerns about academics, to support the teachers. You guys have so many roles. We were just talking about this morning, that this morning. I did another survey for someone else. Yeah, she said, what do you think we need? I said, absolutely more counselors. And more people in the building to support all of these different things. We as a sixth grade, I have 110 students. And so they're in and out. And I think even at this young age, I think they should probably not be in and out as much. Like if I had kids for half the day and then shared them with another person for half the day, and that would require lower numbers. Like other school districts have lower numbers of student-teacher ratio, and you're able to support kids in bigger ways then, you know.

Steve

Thank you, question number 13 is, of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental health, which are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately?

Jill

I mean as a teacher I have to be concerned about their academics. I feel like they're, you know, that's what our our conferences are about. Like we're working towards that, but helping them for the future. But unless their mental health needs are met, that's not gonna happen. So I feel like if we support them mentally, they're more able to, and a big part of that with me is I think supporting families. Like I think we need to somehow be able to make better connections with families to offer them the sort of education about what's happening here or the connections that are going to make this a meaningful place for them. So yeah, I mean let's focus on mental health.

Steve

Thank you. Question 14. What continued supports or resources do you need to help with recover from the learning loss?

Jill

I don't know. We had a learning loss counselor last year. Not counselor, but a person in the building that was here to support that. And I mean, if we had a very qualified person or persons to oversee that, that would be huge, and probably at multiple grade levels. We have a lot of kids who need academic support and it's not because of necessarily academic or intelligence, you know. So, just having, again, more people to be able to follow up with them. Because in this cycle that we have, they leave our room and we beg them to do stuff and that's it, you know? So I guess more staff.

Steve

Thank you. Question 15, if you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on students today?

Jill

So I think we would be considering pandemic still to be when we came back hybrid. Yeah, I think any time we were in that hybrid. We were so worried about being in person, but we were in person, just like, you know. It was so much better the next year when they came back. So much better. They need to be in person. And I didn't even really realize it fully at the time, but that was huge. And another thing is the online assignments, I think mostly kids really respond to in-person paper assignments. I think like that was a marked change for me between last year and this year because I switched subjects from social studies, which was a lot of their coursework was online and Schoology and everything, and then switching to here's this, do that, the tangible is really beneficial for kids. So, just having those physical items that now we're allowed to have again and all that was helpful.

Steve

Question 16. We've covered a lot of ground during our conversation together and thank you for your time. So the last question I have is, what else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I've yet to ask you?

Jill

I don't think... I think you kind of hit it all. Yeah. I think we got it.

Steve

Thank you so much for your time.

Transcribed with Cockatoo

Interview Bill

Steve

Good morning and thank you for your willingness to sit down. So I have 16 questions I want to ask you. For each question I'll see the number. It kind of helps me keep track later on. And as we go through, kind of capturing your perspectives on COVID in your classroom, I've been combining the first two questions because they just kind of naturally flow together. So the first two questions are, could you please introduce yourself as if we first met and just give me your educational background when you started teaching, including grade levels in subjects.

Bill

My name is Bill. I've been teaching here now for seven years, this will be my seventh year, and then prior to this I was teaching in the Mid-West for several years, so I think this is my twelfth year in education now. I'm a social studies teacher for eighth grade. Love it. I used to teach seventh grade as well, but now I'm more focused on the eighth grade, just the social studies sides of things.

Steve

Thank you. All right, so question number three, could you please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown, as it relates to the academics, social wellbeing, and mental health of the students?

Bill

Yeah, before COVID happened, I would say that a lot more students were working together. It was more of a group mentality. What I saw was just the willingness to see kids help each other out, willing to participate in class a lot more. I would say that the academic performance, while it wasn't perfect, it was pretty good. A lot more kids were willing to complete homework assignments outside of school. And then with attendance, attendance was almost perfect for most students. And then the social emotional aspect beyond just the conversations. Very rarely will we have kids being pulled out by the counseling office or having extended times away because they're going to like a Phil Haven or something like that. So that was kind of more before the COVID-19 happened.

Steve

Thank you. Question number four what were some of your immediate concerns regarding the academic, social well-being and mental health you've experienced with students after the lockdown?

Bill

Yeah, so a lot changed after COVID-19. So in the months following, I mean, right when we went to shutdown, I mean, I first remember thinking like, oh, we have two weeks off, this is going to be great. And then immediately realizing this is going to be something that was going to be a little bit longer. So my head for my students went immediately to like, I know a lot of these kids at home don't have the greatest experiences, don't have supportive parents, don't have necessities like food and all that stuff. So I was kind of concerned about that in one aspect because a lot of

the kids come to school and get their meals and all that stuff. So from the academic standpoint, I knew there was going to be learning loss. It was inevitable. I know we went to the online system with Teams and whatnot, but we were having maybe out of a class of 25, maybe five kids on a given day show up for the classes, and you can only do so much for that. So luckily I had a lot of experience working with Schoology, so my class kind of like seamlessly transitioned to online if they attended the class. So that was really helpful. The kids that continued to do the classwork, I actually had them come back to me the following year because a lot of kids do come back and say hello, and they were like, oh, yeah, I feel like I was confident going into freshman year. The kids that didn't, I mean, we see the learning losses across the board. So this has been going on now for several years and we're having kids come to us with the inability to read basic sentences, understand basic math, understand proper grammar, just writing skills have gone by the wayside. The social emotional piece is probably the biggest concern for me. We have, I would say even this year already, we've had several kids be pulled out from on a weekly basis for counseling services here at school and then we've had a couple kids now miss extended time due to suicidal threats, maybe having to go to Philhaven for a couple of weeks and their attendance has been sporadic. There are also other kids that are just not showing up to school. We already have kids, I mean we're probably what, uh, how many days into the school year? We're probably like 60 now, um, 55, um, and kids missing 15, 20 days already. So that is something that has been noticeably different from before COVID to now is the attendance. I think just during COVID and even that year afterwards, it was kind of almost like attendance was like optional. And so for a lot of parents, and I do understand a lot of parents need their kids to stay home, babysit, all that stuff, so I get that aspect, but that growing disparity between the kids that clearly understand the skills, have the skills, and the kids that just don't is growing. There is really, there's no middle student anymore, I would say, very few at least.

Steve
Thank you. Question five. What were some of your feelings and fears you grappled with regarding your students' academics, social well-being, and mental health in the immediate lockdown?

Bill
Yeah, so I kind of just expand upon what I already just said. The fears being, are they gonna be taken care of? Are they gonna have the skills to be prepared for, not just school, because school's one thing, high school's one thing, but really be prepared for life. I know the uncertainty for students was scary for a lot of kids, even before we went into that lockdown, kids coming up being like, is this gonna kill us? Is this a really bad disease? And I didn't know any of the answers. So I was just trying to help them remain calm. So the fact that we went to a lockdown, no school, I think that just created a lot more anxiety for kids moving forward. So I did have several kids that did log on. Like I offered an extracurricular type thing online where we just did like creative writing. We showed like videos, like hat videos, and they had to do some creative writing. And I've noticed that the kids that typically had the anxiety that they were seeing beforehand were the ones that were logging on for that, because I think they just wanted that outlet for some reason to just kind of have some fun, because I think it was a scary time for everybody.

Steve
Thank you. Question six. As the lockdown continued, what effects on academic, social social well-being and mental health was COVID not even having on your classroom?

Bill
In the immediate year when we came back, because we were in person, but now the students were every other day, so sometimes online, we did the virtual, like had a camera in the classroom, got a videotaping, and then they could like live stream it at home. The kids weren't doing that at home. They were logged on and then you would ask a question to them and it was no response. So you knew that they put the computer on, turned off their screen, and then walked away. So I knew the gaps were gonna be forming there in itself because then you're missing every other day of school, you're coming in and not able to comprehend the content. In social studies, it kind of builds upon itself a little bit. So if you don't understand the first part of it, you can't understand the next event. So that was definitely a concern. The social part of it was definitely a concern too, just the kids not being able to interact with some of their friends. So like if you were like every other day and then like your friend was the opposite, you weren't seeing your best friend. So for some of these kids they never saw any of their friends outside of school or inside of school. So that was a concern for them as well. And just so many different protections set up, like we had the social distancing, we had like making sure you're wiping down your desk and all that stuff. So a lot of that I think created some anxiety for kids too, wondering are we actually safe here or not? And then I actually had COVID several times during the time. So I missed several weeks throughout my couple years during the COVID time. So when you have the teachers away, I think that just creates the anxiety even more of like, oh, well, if he can get it, can I get it? Are we bringing this home? So it was just a lot of uncertainty during that time.

Steve
Thank you. Question seven, when reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, the academic, social well-being, or mental health do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

Bill
In the day-to-day, I would say the academic now,just because there are, again, those learning gaps are so significant. It's just apparent every single day. I've had to rewrite basically my entire curriculum activities. As I'm sitting here at my desk, I'm looking at things I took. I used to do things with, like I thought that was like the lower level, like my kids that would struggle maybe with like a sixth grade reading level. Now I'm dumbing things, I won't say dumbing things down, but I'm bringing things down to almost a second or a third grade reading level, and they still struggle with it. So they just don't have that foundation, these kids that I currently have who are fifth graders, they miss the second half of fifth grade. So a lot of that content that they miss, a lot of the skills that they missed, and then compile that with sixth grade being kind of on off and even seventh grade still not being quite right. These kids just never really had middle school. So, and then the expectation to come in and try to like write like an eighth grader, it's just, it's not there for most of these kids.

Steve

Thank you. Question number eight. What have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact of the classroom you shared in the previous question?

Bill

Yeah, trying to modify things to meet the needs of every individual student. I use Schoology and it's very helpful because you can push assignments to different kids, and they don't even know the difference, which is great in class. So we'll work on something and I have my lowest, lowest kids working on those elementary level reads just to build the foundation, whereas I actually have some kids who are quite frankly honors kids that can handle high school activities, so I have them doing something different, but it used to be kind of like you created two, three levels, like a lower level on grade level and then the advanced level. And now it's creating six, seven different activities just for one lesson. So the time commitment is significant. I find myself working most nights trying to modify for kids and that's compiled with we have a lot more, I know this is not necessarily related to COVID, but we have a lot more ELL students. So I have kids in my classroom now in my class of 29, where I have two kids that literally don't speak any English, and I have to kind of create something for them to keep them engaged, involved, and also help build their skills. So that's the biggest challenge right now, is just time to build those activities.

Steve

Thank you. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

Bill

Supports. I would say just having more understanding of what we were going through, honestly. I know admin has an impossible job. I was an administrator for a couple years back in Chicago, but I also don't think they realized the toll it was taking on us to see these kids, trying to help them grow, but also help them through the social-emotional understanding and processing of everything that was going on for them. And it was kind of more just like, here's your kids. The numbers are growing, and your class size is, figure it out. And I just didn't feel like we had enough support in the sense of staff, or just even some teachers that could push in for some of these ELL learners, or my lower, lower learners. So I just felt like I was finding time. I had spent almost, I would say, probably about 90% to 95% of my time helping those low, low, low kids, whereas with those honor level kids, I was just like, sink or swim, here you go, here's the assignment, figure it out. So that would be something I wish we had more of, was just more in-class support.

Steve

Question number 10, how do you feel having these supports at that time could have helped your students?

Bill

I think it would have helped them build confidence. I know to have the teacher kind of sit next to you constantly is not something that an eighth grader wants. They're going to obviously be a

little shy about that. They don't want to look silly in front of their friends or different. So I think if you have somebody that's like a push-in teacher, a motion support teacher, something like that, kind of guiding them through the process as we're going through it as a class, I think that would have been a little bit more subtle and more helpful, and then they could have helped them build those skills up a little bit, maybe even faster than what I was doing by myself.

Steve

Question number 11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding academics, social well-being, and mental health?

Bill

Yeah, the social-emotional, like just not seeing kids be able to talk to each other, or refusing to talk to each other. I was actually just talking to one of the math teacher on my team about this, just having them do a partner activity with somebody that's sitting next to them, being like, hey, just work together, talk about the answer, explain why you did that, and then just absolute refusal to do it. So, most of the kids don't even know the kids' names in my classroom, or they will learn them, or we'll do a team building activity, and they'll instantly just forget about it, and they just don't care. So, unless it's their best friend, or someone they feel confident or comfortable around, they are not willing to work with other people. Even this activity I literally just did moments ago, I had them work in groups of six and just seeing them try to get started and try to divvy up the work and figure out who's going to do what, it really became like an individual assignment that was kind of piece mailed together. It wasn't really a group activity. So the social-emotional is definitely there. A lot of kids, I would say, don't identify as having any friends in the school. So I try to talk with them more one-on-one so they have that connection here. But yeah, I think the friendship aspect of it is really tough. And then academic, I know I already kind of explained that in depth, but just that learning gap is just astronomical at this point for a lot of these kids. So we're expecting them to do like exact path and benchmarks and all these different tests and assessments, and some of these kids really struggle just to read a basic sentence.

Steve

Thank you. Question 12 What supports are needed to help remediate these residual effects?

Bill

We have the endless amount of resources. I think more teachers, lower the class sizes. Again, our district is growing real fast, it seems like, these past couple of years. Whereas, when I first started here, I had class sizes of, I would say anywhere from 13 to 22 was kind of on the high end and now almost every single one of my classes is 29, which is the max. So I have one class that's a little bit lower than that, but it's really tough to get to everybody so a lot of the kids that are struggling can just kind of fade into the background. If they don't raise their hand it's like I'm going to help the kids that really are reaching out, but it's really tough to get around to everybody. So I do feel like some kids are kind of slipping through the cracks. So I think we just need to, again, if we had endless resources, hire more teachers, have more building space, have lower class sizes would be really helpful at this point.

Steve

Thank you. Question 13. Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

Bill

I would say the social emotional piece. We do some things. We had the social emotional committee, even I think it was even until last year. And it was like we created these activities through our Falcons Care program at the end of the day. I don't know how helpful that was. I think a lot of kids, as I just mentioned, some of these kids don't have any friends, and they don't know how to make friends. They just don't have those skills. So I think if we had more attention to that, that would potentially solve a lot of the problems we're seeing with mental health. I think that would solve maybe even some problems with academics, they might be more invested in the learning process if you have people around you to help you and support you. So having your only connection here be a social studies teacher in the building when you're 13 years, 14 years old is probably not ideal. So I think if we could invest more in that area, I think that would help as well.

Steve

Thank you. Question 14, what can teams support slash resources you need to help recover from learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Bill

If I had a set answer for that, I feel like I could make a lot of money. Honestly, there's just so much that they need, a lot of these kids need, and it's not just one concrete thing. I know we've invested a lot into learning loss programs. Exact Path is just an example. I know, I think we're looking at another program, IXL or something like that, to help those kids. But the problem with those programs are that it's independent learning. So you're gonna set up a kid with a computer, try to have them read through things and learn by themselves. It's a great idea in theory, but it's not really the kids that can't do it aren't going to do in the first place. So I think that's going to be a huge problem. I think we just need more teachers in the building, honestly, more support staff. And I think that would solve a lot of our problems. But I know also there's a financial piece to that, too, which is maybe not realistic. So in an ideal world, more teachers would be better.

Steve

Thank you. Question 15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would have had the most significant impact on students today?

Bill

With keeping in mind trying to keep everyone safe, I mean the easy answer would be just try to get all the kids back as soon as possible and never shut down in that time period. So I would say just trying to have some building, some connections, having some kind of outlet. I don't even know what it looks like, honestly, for these kids to kind of connect outside of school or even when they were here, something that would kind of build up that social emotional development, building connections, all that stuff. We have some of those programs with Falcons Care, flex

activities, but nothing that's going, that would prove to be helpful now. So I think that that loss is so big, not just social emotional, but academic. I really do think it's gonna be until like the new kindergarten class comes through, or I think currently it's the third grade class comes through, that we're gonna start to see things get back to normal in education.

Steve
Thank you. All right, so question 16. We've covered a lot of ground during our conversation together, and I thank you for your time. One final question. What else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I've yet to ask you?

Bill
I think the part, just the effect on teachers it had,like just talking to some of my colleagues, everyone always like, the focus was on students and the parents and all of that stuff, but just the amount of stuff that has been added to teachers and then the expectations of them, and it's just like, no, that's part of your job. It just seems to be ever growing. And I think that's why we're starting to see that teacher shortage in the Pennsylvania and really across the country. It's just one thing after another. It's no longer teaching your content to your eighth graders. It's now teaching multiple levels of content to all of your students. Also, kind of keep an eye out for that social emotional piece, helping those kids bridge the gaps, make friends, try to promote that, and then also just keeping an eye out for those warning signs of like, oh, this kid's clearly struggling, something's going on. It takes a toll on you as a human being to see it, and really in my personal life, I'm trying to do better about keeping what happens at work at work, because my wife has even told me when I come home, I'm a completely different person in the last couple years, especially to, I would say about two years ago, that first year back, she was like, something needs to change otherwise you need to leave the industry because we can't keep doing this. Like, you're gonna have a heart attack. It's just not healthy for you. So, just the emotional toll on teachers was significant as well, and I think that's the emotional toll on teachers was significant as well, and I think that's something that kind of gets overlooked often.

Steve
Thank you for your time today.

Transcribed with Cockatoo

Interview George

Steve
Good afternoon and thank you for your willingness to sit down and interview with me. So we have about 16 questions we're going to go through and I'll just start off I'll say the number of the question and I'll ask you to respond afterwards. So question number one is could you please introduce yourself as if we had first met.

George
My name is George. I'm a sixth grade teacher. I've been in public education for 24 years. I started teaching third grade, then moved to fourth grade, and then jumped ahead of that group of kids. And they eventually caught up to me in sixth grade. So I've been at the middle school ever since.

Steve
All right. Thank you. And I covered question number two as well. I kind of put it together there. That's it. Because it was about your educational background. Thank you. So question number three, can you please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to the academics, social well-being, and emotional mental health of your students?

George
Repeat the question again.

Steve
Sure. So please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to the academics, social well-being, and emotional mental health of your students.

George
Okay. I keep a very structured classroom. Students know I have high expectations. So before COVID, that was already in place. I already had 20, minimum of 20 years in teaching. Can you repeat the question again? So I'm getting the parts of that.

Steve
Oh yeah, so your classroom environment has to do with academics, the social well-being, and then your emotional and mental health of the students.

George
So the social well-being of the students, I'd like to think they were highly actively engaged. I hope so. Looking back on it now, were they? But I do know that over, and this had to do with, this was before COVID, that things were definitely changing. And there's a lot of factors as you know feeds into it. Their students background knowledge is getting whittled away real fast. It's just not there. And that was before COVID. But it really skyrocketed during COVID and after we're really seeing the effects, I think the effects of it. But it was already in place and happening. I can see that happen over the years. The well-being of the students, I don't think that has changed their well-being. I think it's the same, but I think there are other factors in society that are affecting it. And that has been ongoing. Whether it's our political climate, our school climate, our local climate is very different than it was and it's changed over the years. Definitely. Mental

health of the students, I think that is changing. We're seeing a lot now students more services. That has definitely skyrocketed this year. Big time. Now is it because of their age? Could be. This group would have been in... when was COVID? 2020. 2020. So that's three years ago. So this group was in third grade. Yeah. So they were just starting to be aware of what's going on and grasping it. So that could be a big factor right there.

Steve
Thank you. Question four. Do you remember what were some of your immediate concerns regarding students, the academic, social well-being, and emotional mental health with students after the lockdown? Do you remember any of those immediate concerns?

George
So when we came back, you mean?

Steve
Yes and/or when you came back during the lockdown, so that online phase there.

George
That was really tough. I'm sure you knew as well. It's hard to get students first to come online. But it was a learning curve for all of us, including teachers. I think we as teachers were thrown into it without administrators really knowing what to do. I'm just being honest here. We had to figure out what this is. I remember the term was asynchronous. I had never heard that term before. Never. So I'm while we're being instructed online I'm Google what this is? I've never heard it before. Well that was their buzzword to use. Yeah. They kept using blah blah blah. So once I figured out what that was and of course they used it all the time. Trying to navigate the technology. Your populate... yes we all deal with the same age group of students For example, minor 11- 12 year olds, but that group stays the same but myself I'm getting older So for me to grasp the technology gets at times more challenging So to learn how to do the team set up all those things Try to get the students in try to find lessons to put online Because I did not use a whole lot of computer use prior to that on my any lessons. You know I used my smart board I did all that stuff but I still didn't have lessons that came from the internet that just wasn't my style. So it forced us to do those things. What helped is that I had a I worked with a small poor of teachers that we would meet a lot to try to figure out what we're gonna do to piece all this together. Then to load it, how do you do all that? How am I gonna interpret this to the students to be able to log into because they had very little experience using a computer prior to that. They didn't have their own. Coming to middle school, they come to middle school, that's the first time they get their own. So that's an adventure right there. And then that sounds like a really comprehensive on the academic part. I mean, immediately,

Steve
Do you remember any of the mental health, concerns there immediately with the lockdown?

George
At first I think, excuse me, I think the mental health of the students was, okay, I don't worry about school, not important. But I remember having one student that if she knew I was online, because apparently they could see on their computer, there was a little message that would light

up. So if she knew I was online, she always contacted me and wanted me to guide her through wherever the lesson was. But that was one out of a hundred twenty-five students, roughly. So that was a rarity. Extremely rare. Even if it was a Sunday, she saw I was online. And I would answer it just, I was happy to have at least someone was engaged. Some students I never saw ever again. They never came back online. But some of that I knew was probably going to happen because their attendance here was terrible. Or when they were in here they were not engaged. They were always getting in some kind of trouble. I don't know how much I can say. I had a set of triplets that were high maintenance. Extremely high maintenance. So I never saw them again. And I could, following up, you know, I would like to know what became of them. Well, when they came back, that next year, remember the next year we did, it was blue-gray. Well, they didn't come back at all. And then the next year, my team, we had all students were back except one class. I had one class that was online. So I had instructed one more group online. And it was a small group. It was 12. But that in itself was hard too. I mean, I had to make sure, or my team had to make sure that we had packs ready every week, or every two weeks for the parents to pick up. Some students, or some parents never picked up stuff, so I would go out and deliver them. Oh wow. Just to make sure they got it. And then after a while I said, I can't keep doing this. I mean at some point they've got to step up to the plate and come to this. So the well-being for the students, it definitely hurt them. The responsibility just wasn't there.

Steve
Thank you. Question number five. What were some feelings, fears you grappled with regarding students' academic, social well-being, emotional and mental health in the immediate lockdown?

George
So when they're online, getting the content, understanding the content, which just didn't happen. I was lucky if I had half the group come online to do the work. And do I know if they were doing the work? I have no idea. Mom and dad might have done it. Aunt, uncle, grandma, grandpa. I have no idea. It was kind of like a survival. Yeah, I can't imagine. You experienced the same thing too. Oh yeah, absolutely. And high school doesn't have to be much different. I know, yeah, they're more mature, but I think they still have the struggles. Not everybody can navigate through that computer.

Steve
Thank you question number 6, as the lockdown continued, what effects did you see with their academic, social well-being, and mental health that COVID was having on your classroom?

George
I think the academics were improving on the students that were in class. When they were not in class, it was always a catch-up. Even though they were online with us, I couldn't see what they were doing. are they engaged with what's going on? So it was this constant every day it was a catch-up for everybody back and forth. So when you do that, that slows the whole getting through the curriculum. You're always playing catch-up for everybody to be engaged. I'm the kind of teacher that I will not move on until I have 99% of my students on board. You've at least got the 70%. You're there. If you don't have that, we cannot go any further. It's tough, but that's the way it is.

Steve
Did you see anything with the social aspect of it?

George
Coming back and forth, I think they struggled with, especially sixth grade, because this is the year that they come from four elementary schools. So they struggled with meeting up with the friends they had and then trying to make new friends from the other buildings. They really couldn't grasp who these kids are. I'd be curious to know what happened when they were in seventh grade. You know, they got to more meshed.

Steve
And then with like the mental health, were you starting to see anything there? So you have kids that are kind of coming out of lockdown and back in the building, you know, this kind of hybrid.

George
I think a few struggled.

Steve

Steve
Thank you. Question number seven, when reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, the academic, social well-being, or emotional mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

George
Looking at the group I have now, probably the emotional. Because their skills are not in place, and they're struggling with navigating through what's... being responsible. They're not sure how to hold it together. And that's become more than half the group, which is a high percentage. I think it's an alarming issue. The academics will fall into place once they can get their emotional and the environment. Environment I think is fine. Coming to middle school is ready to change anyway. So COVID, they don't really know the difference. That year of COVID or those two, three years when they were coming in. So that part they didn't know. Again, I'd be curious to know what happens when they are in seventh or eighth grade because they've already been in middle school.

.

Steve
Question number eight what have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact or in the classroom you shared in the previous questions?

George
That's a good question. Trying to understand all their different needs they have, their emotional needs, because it is all over the board. A lot of it is definitely the family life. That is a huge factor. We're seeing that now. So I can only imagine what it was like for those kids during lockdown. Now they're with their parents, maybe, or lack of parents in those many hours. In fact, we even got to see that with our group. That was, remember I said I had that one year, that one

group was online and we could see what was going on in the backgrounds of the family. And actually that was that part I didn't even like about COVID. A lot of times I would tell my students, blur the background, I just felt like your home is your private, just like my home is. We're not friends, I'm your teacher. When we start to see each other's homes inside, now we're invading that area. And I think that made it uncomfortable for all of us. Some clueless. Others like, hmmm. Because you get to see how the house functions. So I think that was a big factor too. Even for us as adults.

Steve

Question number nine. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

George

For myself? Mm-hmm. Probably the computer. Understanding how teams work. That whole bit. Now in fact it's had an effect on a lot of us. When our you know we're hooked up now through teams on our phone. When that phone rings I actually get kind of like an anxiety. Like I'm flashing back to COVID because it's that sound that I don't like that. It's not a good feeling about that. And I've heard other teachers say the same thing. It's a flashback to that period. So, yes, it's more like access to... Understanding the whole computer better because it was not part of my world. Some teachers, they grasp it right away. They could navigate through all that. No, I need to figure this out and better understand it before I can expand on it.

Steve

Thank you, question number 10. How do you feel having these supports at the time could have helped your students?

George

Yeah, probably the help with the technology. I think a lot of families were, like myself, struggling. How do I get my child on there, how do I keep them engaged on there, where I, you had to do the same thing, you're attending your own job plus raising your own family. So now we pushed it all together. I'm single, so I didn't have to worry about those things at home. I still had to work hard to learn all these things and work with other people.

Steve

Thank you. question number 11. So being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom? Particularly regarding those same categories of the academics, the social well-being, and the emotional and mental health?

George

I still see students struggling with the computer. And again, I think that ties in because they haven't had a computer on their own. When they come to middle school they get their own to take home. That's not going to change. But yet on the other hand I have some students that are very good. They will come to your rescue. I have a lot more students coming to the rescue to help. So that was a positive thing because they're confident in doing these things. It's at the point I can say I need help with something here. Can you help me? And I can always have at least one student will jump to it. Usually five, but I'm happy to have one. Ask the question again, there

were some other parts. Oh yeah, just for being a few years removed from lockdown, the residual effects you're still seeing in regards to like academics, social well-being, and their mental health. Probably student responsibility would be a big thing. It's not there. It's just not there. At first I thought when parents were exposed to, or parents or guardians were exposed to it and having their kids at home, they got to see as teachers we have a huge, a lot is on our shoulders. And so there was some empathy. Now it's typical United States, we quickly forget those things and life goes on. So now we're back to where we were before that education doesn't really matter. So it's giving homework or expecting homework to be completed, forget it. It is not going to happen. And that's become the norm for most students. They are not going to invest the time to do it. I'm seeing that increasing. But that was already in place before COVID. It's just increased even more since COVID. Lack of responsibility. It's an exaggeration of values. Yes. It's all there but now it's just... It really... It's exploded. Is the right word exacerbated? I think that's the right word.

Yeah. It's really since COVID and I don't know how to fix that. I have no idea. Yeah. So what supports are needed to help remedy these visual effects? What do you think would help with remediating that? It's got to come from home. It's got to come from school as well. We often hear paid teachers more. Yeah, pay is nice. We're already paid well, I think. But I know what my fear is that we're paid more, then that means more work will be dumped on us. I already have a load dumped on me. Don't give me more pay and then expect more work out of me. I've got a lot to work with. I think we need resources in place for the student, not only their academics, but also their emotional well-being. I can see our counselors are stretched to no end of trying to reach every kid that has an emotional issue. I don't know how they do it. I have no idea.

Steve
Thank you, next Question 13. Of the three areas, the academic, social well-being, and mental health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately?

George
Probably the social well-being. I think you have to have that taken care of first, then everything else usually will fall into place. If we're going to pour money into education, I think we need to pour it more into those social services that they need. We just don't have enough of them. There's only one sixth grade counselor, one seventh, one eighth grade, but yet we have over 400 students in sixth grade, seventh grade, eighth grade. I don't know how they can do it. And that's just addressing those that we know are identified. What about those that are not identified that we haven't spotted yet or we suspect? How are they ever going to get the services sent?

Steve
Question 14. What continued support resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

George
It'd be nice to have an aide in the room. I have a lot of learning support students in a class and those are the ones that are identified. I've never had an aide. I did when I first started and then the aid, for whatever reason, it was the emotional or the learning support teacher would come in at least once a week, which was a great help. Now I don't see them at all in the classroom. It would

be nice to have an aid in the room or another teacher to help you with those students. I mean just one class alone, I have seven that are learning support. They're identified. That's not taking care of that group that's not identified that is struggling. So trying to master and you see the same thing I'm sure. You know just because they're older doesn't mean they're better. They still have learning issues.

Steve
Thank you, question 15. If you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would you have had the most significant impact on your students today?

George
Probably more if I could find more engaging lessons because I think the word might spread then because kids talk to each other. We do. So they're gonna do the same thing. More than likely it would have spread. You want to come online because it's a really good class. But at the time trying to navigate with my colleagues on we got to get something up to get online to get a grade. So I wish I that's what I that area I wish I could improve on.

Steve
We covered a lot of different topics and ground in our conversation together and thank you for your time. I appreciate that. One final question what else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I have yet to ask you?

George
I think there's also a tie to this, the elderly. Has anybody thought about looking at the well-being of the elderly and does that have an effect on our students? Yes. Think about that generation. They grew up with talking to people, whether it was on the phone or seeing each other visiting. The generation of kids that were coming through and are coming through during the pandemic, they're on social media. So they knew how to connect with each other through their social media. That elderly group, they got locked out. So they were cut off from physically seeing their grandchildren, nieces, nephews, grandchildren, etc. So what effect does that have on the elderly, as well as the kids missing that opportunity, not being able to see grandma, grandpa, aunt, uncle physically. I think there's something there. It's that kind of wisdom of ages, you know, with this stuff. How to get your past down and just, yeah, just did that. It goes, again, how many times did the grandma check in? Like, how did that, you just positively affect the academic or the emotional health or the social well-being. Because you have this, another adult asking them, you know, how things are going. And so, it just had that extra encouragement. Oh my gosh, yeah, it worked on both ways. It worked for the child getting that love and support or the other way where is I mean I have a great niece and nephew and my gosh when I physically see them oh my gosh it just lifts your spirits that is like that for most people I can't say all you know that there's some that have a cold relationship but maybe those relationships got even colder because they couldn't see each other so how do you mean it how did it go when if a family lost an elderly person? How did they handle all that? They couldn't be with them at that moment. So I'm sure there's some residual effects from that. I think it's tragic.

Steve
Thank you for your time today.

Transcribed with Cockatoo

Interview John

Steve

All right, thank you for sitting down and interviewing with me. So I have 16 questions we'll go through here. Just for keeping it as for later on, I'm going to say like question number one, I'll kind of go down. So when you've answered the question well, just give me like a thumbs up, and I'll sit there and stare at you. But question number one, one and two kind of combine. Can you just please introduce yourself as if we first met, and then share your educational background when you started teaching, including grade levels, subjects. Thank you.

John

Okay, my name is John. Actually, I have to include that since my son goes to the high school. I actually was a graduate of Charlestown High School in 1998, I went to Bloomsburg University. I was there for five years, four as an undergrad, major in history, minor in political science. Another year, I got a master's degree in curriculum and instruction, a certification program that got me certified to teach. I worked one year at a juvenile placement out of college. And then I worked, I was hired in the spring of 04, beginning the school year of fall of 04, 05, as the CLIP coordinator, Charlestown Intensive Intervention Program, the alternative ed program, which I worked for three years. And then I moved to the high school after three years to teach American cultures, ninth, 10th grade, which I've done now for the past. This is my 17th year doing that, 20th overall at Cedar Crest.

Steve

Thank you. All right, so question number three. Please describe to me your classroom environment before the COVID lockdown, as it related to your students, like the academic makeup, their social well-being, and their emotional and mental health.

John

I taught mostly American cultures. It was 10th grade initially, it became 9th grade. The general teen taught level with a special ed teacher, college prep level, honors level. All the classroom environments, regardless of the academic level, I believe were fairly open. The kids, I feel, were comfortable expressing themselves, talking to each other, sharing, being friendly, talking with me, bantering with me, sharing with me. Prior to COVID, I would say my honors students were most likely the quietest of the classes, but they still felt comfortable talking to each other, sharing, not being afraid to speak. Certainly my lower level course students being a bit more active, definitely love to talk a little bit more, move around the classroom a little bit more, those sorts of things. But overall, I do believe I have a welcoming environment in the classroom and the kids are comfortable when they're in here. And you still, in the mental health, do you remember, can you call back, how are students' mental health overall? I hate to say normal, because I don't know, obviously normal doesn't mean anything, but I would say the... as I've seen now the widespread use of cell phones, the mental health I started to see deteriorate with the use of cell phones. The constant focus on cell phones, almost to the point of fixating on what's being said and what's on there. And I think the anxiety levels and the constant worry about what's being posted and what's being shared here and who's saying this and the instant information of this and that has certainly played the largest role in the, I do want to say decline of their mental health, their mental well-being. I did start to see that, like I said, probably, you know, maybe eight years ago, the introduction of smartphones being more widespread. More likely, and I can't say more in one level than anything else, more likely in anything else, excuse me, more likely in any class or a different one, depending on level. It really didn't matter. I had honor students who were fixated on it, and I had in-talk level students who were fixated on it. It really had no, it had no academic marker. It was just across the board.

Steve

All right, question number four. What were some of your immediate concerns regarding your students in regards to academics, social wellbeing, and their mental health when we had that COVID lockdown?

John

The initial concern for me was the academic, I don't wanna say this, not the work ethic, but kind of the desire, there was already a little bit, I mean, it's high school, so you're going to get a little bit of apathy from certain students. My initial fear, because I even started feeling it, was, for lack of a better word, a sense of laziness. That I just don't really want to do this right now, and because it didn't count, I don't really have to, and I'm still going to pass. And even though it was only two and a half months, half of March, April, and May, I even felt it a little bit. Like, I don't really want to do this, I don't really want to do that when it came to academics. And I even noticed that with students with the COVID lockdown, some students who I had great relationships with who did show up to my early Microsoft Teams sessions, they would, by the end, they just stopped coming, even though they, not I like your seminars, I just don't feel like doing it. And I think that's probably the, that was the major thing I was worried about, is the sense of, I don't feel like it, so I'm not gonna. And that becoming ingrained in who they are. And I know that sounds kind of odd, but it's just such a characteristic of, I don't feel like it, so I don't have to, and I'm not gonna, becoming part of who they were. And that was my biggest fear.

Steve

Thank you question number five. What were some of your feelings and fears you grappled with regarding students academic social well-being emotional health and the immediate lockdown.

John

The academic aspect of it you know I have obviously you know you were gonna have a loss of content knowledge with social studies being that it is still at the end of the day in American culture is a survey course where you're doing time frames that you can get that information made up. So I wasn't as concerned from the social studies standpoint. You can pick that, I mean even as an adult you can pick up aspects, oh that happened in the 1960s or this happened during Vietnam. The writing components I was concerned about because the amount of texting, the amount of social media usage and the lack of any formal writing just becoming habit, that was probably my bigger one, is the loss of some basic writing skills.

Steve

Thank you question number six, as the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social well-being, and mental health was COVID having on your classroom?

John

I think my biggest fear actually was, to a degree, realized. Early on in the second, after the lockdown, the following year we did a hybrid year. We did an every other. And I think we did it the best way we could by getting everyone, kids in the building. They needed to be in the building. I could see the lack, I don't want to say lack of effort, but there was a clear lack of something in every kid. There was either a lack of writing out five sentence paragraphs, there was like a two sentence paragraph, there was a lack of effort from some kids. It was a combination of all of those things. In every kid there was a piece of something missing. In some kids it was bigger than others. So some kids it might be the academic thing missing or in other kids it was a social thing missing. The kids in my one honors class did not talk for the first entire marking period. They had their masks on and didn't talk. They just did whatever work I gave in front of them, but they did not, honestly, did not speak hardly at all. My other classes, they spoke, but the work was seriously lacking at any effort. It was the short, not even one sentence, blurbs from the COVID

discussion board things that we used to do. And these were in writing assignments that were assessments. So that was what I saw that next year. It's just a lack of a little bit of everything, but just different in every student, whether it was socially or behaviorally or academically, something was missing in every student.

Steve

Thank you, question number seven, when reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of the three areas, academic, social well-being, or emotional mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

John

Um, that's a tough one. Um, it's, like I said, it's tough to put one over the other. I think the anxiety that was coming with the widespread use of social media and cell phones was dramatically exacerbated by COVID because that's all you had. And so it just became so much of who their identity, or how they identified. You know, what's my social media persona and how, you know, the things that they said to each other and then screenshotted and backstabbed each other. Like, I think that was probably the one that was affected the most in my classroom. It's just become so difficult to get the phones out of their hoodie pockets, their pockets between their legs, just because it's just so much of who they were. I think that's, like I said, I think COVID, it was like it was gasoline on a fire that was already burning.

Steve

Question number eight. What have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact in your classroom? You shared from the previous questions, you mentioned the social well-being. So what has been the most challenging step in counteracting those things you mentioned?

John

Dealing with some, that's a tough one, but I think dealing with some of the hostility at, I'm not going to put my phone away, has probably been the most challenging step. And I think the school has felt it as well. I like that Mr. Groff, early on, particularly in the school year, the get your phones out of your pockets, don't take them to the bathroom, they're such a distraction. That stuff is true and I think we need to really continue to hammer that. I think the administration really needs to stick with us on that too because I think the resistance of the students, like I said, has become so ingrained in who they are now, taking it away from them. For them, I think they feel like it's taking a piece of them away. And they're just very, very resistant to it, and they're very hostile to it. Even now, three years later, I still think that's probably one of the toughest steps in trying to remedy the social health of our kids.

Steve

Thank you, question number nine. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or you felt were missing entirely?

John

It's tough because my response would be a sense of direction from, you could say all the way at the top with regard to our government and then filtering down to our education leaders whether it's in Washington or whether it's in Harrisburg. There was just a lack of direction from there and so the school district had to really kind of feel it out as they went. So I'm not blaming them. I think that's probably the... I think our district I think did the best job you could possibly do. There were no big you know blowout social media trending explosion school board meetings none of that stuff you know there were I don't think there were really any issue I mean parents everyone had their opinions but I think our district did as

good a job as you could ask in trying to remember that hey this is a school we're here to teach and the kids are here to learn and I think you know they did the probably best job with that so I think just the lack of direction which is not on any on anything in our district I think it just came as a everyone trying to figure this figure it out and feel out what's the right step and and where should we go.

Steve

Thank you, question number 10, how do you feel having these supports at the time could have helped your students?

John

I think it would have given a sense of direction, a sense of there's an end to this, a light at the end of the tunnel, a goal, whatever phrase you want to use. And I would have particularly liked feeling that as well. I think the anxiety of not knowing what's next, not knowing what the mask mandates are gonna be, not be. I think just having that sense, having something a bit more concrete with an end goal probably would have alleviated a lot of anxiety from everybody, particularly our students. And I know certainly me as well.

Steve

Thank you. Question 11 being a few years removed from the lockdown, now what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding the academic, social well-being, and emotional mental health?

John

Still getting there with, it's funny because the last couple of years I've seen a progression, a very clear progression. The year out of lockdown, we did a hybrid year. The following year, it was every day, we started no masks for a week, masks were back on then in January, and that group of kids, and it was just my perception, that was a very, that for freshmen particularly, because they were seventh when the lockdown happened, eighth, just kind of sort of hybrid and get through. They were very hostile to getting back to normal, so to speak. They were very, I'm not doing this and you're not making me. And there was, you could see the anxieties from the lockdown era. You could see the anxieties from, wait, this counts now. I don't care that it counts because it hasn't before for a year and a half. They were a bit more hostile and resistant to everything The that was a behavioral thing the group I had a year ago It was very much a social interaction thing and that there were and there was an incredible amount of immaturity Not knowing how to behave in a social setting not knowing when it's time to get up and go You know asked to go to the bathroom not knowing How just to interact with each other, their social behaviors were very behind. I can give you other examples across the board of just very little things that kids were doing. It's like, this is a fifth grade behavior or sixth grade behavior. You're a 15-year-old in high school now. I think some of those effects are starting to wear away now. I've seen now in my ninth grade group, again, they were fifth graders, I believe, and I'm seeing some of it wear away now. There's a bit more of how to act appropriately, there's a bit more writing effort, starting to see it slowly wear away a little bit. I am, so the first, we did a hybrid year, that was kind of, we just had to get through it, and then the next two years, you could really see the, I'm not doing this and you're not making me and I have no idea how to act appropriately. I think some of that's starting to wane away now.

Steve

 Thank you. Question number 12, what supports are needed to help remedy some of these residual effects?

John

It's tough because I want to say more discipline. I think some of that would help. It would hurt early on. It's almost like ripping a band-aid off. Like it's gonna hurt for a second and then it's going to get better. I think the slow, I think that's one of the things, and I'm not again not picking on administration, but I would have liked to see things a little, I hate to say heavy-handed, but a little bit more concrete and create those boundaries and then hold hard with them and really force that, particularly the year after the second year, the first year after the hybrid year. You know, like I said, the group that was particularly hostile to getting back to normal, I think it would have been appropriate to set hard, concrete boundaries for behavior and attitude and discipline then, which would have, again, it would have been tough, particularly early on, but it would have made things better in the long run for a lot of those kids. I still see a lot of those kids who are juniors now struggling behaviorally because it's just they're so used to just kind of getting away with it and dealing and kind of get what they want so I would have liked to see those things early on like I said I hate to say the word heavy-handed but just to be more firm and eliminate it particularly early on eliminate the excuses the wiggle room it's this is it this is the discipline this is what's happening again there probably would have been a lot of discipline early on that would have been corrected, if that makes sense.

Steve
Thank you. All right, question number 13. So the three areas, the academic, social well-being, and mental health. Which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

John
Social health, because it is the least, I don't want to say quantified, but you can see academic growth. You can see, there's obviously grades attached to it, but you can see writing improve. You can see test scores, that sort of stuff. And behaviorally, you can of course see the discipline issues. But socially, just interacting with each other, just communicating with each other appropriately. I have kids who are really good friends one day and all of a sudden they're fighting and in a fist fight two or three days later. This happened, I don't remember, a year ago. I think the social health, the social wellness of our kids is probably the one that's dealt with least. I had an in-service this summer with Mr. Rohrbach, actually, and we talked about that social fitness. It was like this new term that someone that he had heard in a workshop and then he brought to us. It's the only one I really can recall of any of the Falcon Flexes or any of our in-services where it's like, how do we get these kids to just talk to each other, but also then listen to each other, with their phones not in their hands, that sort of stuff, just like, again, socially it's difficult to do that because that's the least important, so to speak. The grades and the behavior, you gotta do best one and two.

Steve
Thank you. Question number 14, what continued support or resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

John
Like I said, I think it's just a continuous... The biggest thing is to not lower our standards. I don't think there's any other supports other than support what we've already got as far as our standards. We can't continuously lower standards because of this, you know, well, they were this and they had this going on and then this locked down. You gotta keep the standards up. The more you lower them, they're just going to continue to lower. So I don't think we need any supports. I think we have a good system in place here at our school. I do believe we just need to follow it and enforce what we have and stick with what we have. And yeah, I think that's just, it just means we, you know, made clear to everyone, this is the expectation for everyone and that's how we're going to meet it. So, you know, don't lower it.

Steve

Question 15 if you could go back and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what would you, what change would have the most significant impact on your students today?

John

I don't know what I would change to be honest with you. I really do think we as a district and with my interactions with my students online and in the classroom, particularly in the hybrid year, I don't think I would really change anything. I think we got the most out of what we could get. I do believe the hybrid schedule, like I said, it was very, very difficult as a teacher. It was very frustrating, lots of little tech issues, lots of little clicking. If I got 25 minutes of instruction, that was a good day in a 45 minute period because of the tech issues and things like that. But it was a lot better than just having them at home. At home is nothing, it doesn't really work unless you are fully at home all the time and working at your own pace. If you try and teach from home and hybrid it, and no one's gonna listen. It's just, I've been there myself with workshops where you're just not paying attention. It's just not the same. So we needed to do it, so I wouldn't really change anything. I'm pretty happy with what I think we did and I did.

Steve

Thank you. Last question, number 16. We've covered a lot of different ground and topics during our conversation together, and I want to thank you for your time. One final question. What else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I have yet to ask you?

John

Um...Hmm...I think I've kind of hit mostly everything. Um... You know, like I said, the early... Even I felt it in the lockdown portion and then when we came back to hybrid, the sense of like, I don't really feel like doing this. It was like... I hate to say it was fun, because there was a lot of anxiety during those first six weeks. But there was also a lot of mental quiet. As a parent with teenagers, I can recall, like, I don't have to run anywhere to practice, we don't have a game this weekend, we don't have a travel thing this weekend, we can sit as a family. There was a little bit of that. It was nice for a little bit, in the sense that it was mental quiet. There was no rush to go anywhere. And then after a while, it got, all right, this sucks, we need to get out and do stuff. I think that's the one thing that a lot of people didn't realize. I remember realizing it the following fall when football was going to start up. We only had a seven-game season. We had to do workouts outside. Kids had to wear gaiters around their neck during practice, things like that. I love football and even recognizing, man, I kind of want to not do this right now. Because even that sense of, I hate to say it, but there's not a better word for it. Just a little bit of laziness, because it was easy to do that. That kind of, that took some time getting out of. Even as us as teachers, I think, as adults, my wife is not a teacher, a little bit with her, and I think our kids, it took a little bit to get out of that. It really did, like just, I don't feel like doing this right now. And it was tough, so, like I said, I think a lot of that has been, is washing away now. I think it really is washing away. We're kind of truly getting back to normal, so to speak. I remember saying it was going to take at least five years to get out of this when the lockdown happened. We're four now out of it. So we're almost there. I think things are going to pick back up now. things are going to pick back up now.

Steve

Thank you. I appreciate your time.

Interview Bruce

Steve

Good morning, Travis, thank you for sitting down with me. Please introduce yourselves, as this will be first met, and share your educational background when you started teaching, including grade levels, subjects, thank you.

Bruce

All right, so Bruce I actually did my student teaching here in 2012. Did two long-term sub gigs in 12-13 and 13-14, and was officially hired in the 14-15 school year. I taught seventh grade and eighth grade, went back and forth for the first three years, and I've been permanently eighth grade, I think this is the sixth year that I've been permanently eighth grade. I got my bachelor's degree at Penn State in social studies education, and then I got my master's in the science of education from Wilkes University.

Steve

Thank you, Question number three. Please describe for me your classroom environment before the COVID-19 lockdown as it relates to academics, social well-being, and students' mental and emotional health.

Bruce

So before COVID, we were really able to do a lot of group stuff. I hate the whole rows. I'd rather them be interacting with each other and helping each other out, problem solving games, those kind of things. Academically, I had a pretty high standard. I was giving them, here's the Declaration of Independence, good luck. And what helped them, I'd be there to facilitate them along the way, but really trying to push them beyond what their boundaries would be and all they would take a little bit more time and they would eventually get it. They were a very polite group, like they were nice to each other, at least in my classroom. They were nice to me, they were receptive to feedback, and they wanted the challenge. I think a lot of them could handle being in groups. There were a few classes here and there like, yeah, no, this isn't going to work or maybe, hey, you, yeah, you got to sit by yourself kind of deal and you can be with a group when you kind of deserve it. But I think the majority, like the first two years were probably the best years I ever taught, like I had the same class two years in a row, seventh grade and eighth grade and it was just awesome. They were fun, they were hardworking, it was just an enjoyable class to be around and it's kind of definitely changed since COVID.

Steve

Thank you. Question number four. What were some immediate concerns regarding students' academics, social well-being, and mental health you experienced at the lockdown?

Bruce

So when we came back and we were hybrid, some of the concern was like, how are these guys gonna interact socially with each other like they have to be so far apart Everyone's afraid from the virus because at that point we were still like can we get it from a surface? Like and pass it on, you know, it should be we be washing our groceries Should we be washing like all that kind of stuff? They gave us the cleaner this around the desk every period but even myself like after

spraying the desk Like I would get a massive headache So I can only imagine the desk the kids sitting there like is this even safe to be using while we're trying to clean our rooms so I think there was that element of just the environment just feeling very like an unsafe and secure place when I first started doing kovat lessons I would teach them like I'd have a day of instruction and then when they were home it was hey well I gave you yesterday that's what you're doing at home so I wasn't trying to do the in real time, like I was on teams, if they needed me they could ask a question, I could reply back, and that worked really well. Like the kids were going home, they were doing the work, they're coming in the next day. That got shut down, I had to have them one-to-one at the same time, and then as soon as they got home they weren't doing anything. So that was a little bit of a struggle, and the kids really, they weren't making connections like they normally do. So academics definitely slowed, I had to adapt. I found myself grading a little bit easier because the kid who was at home, well maybe they couldn't hear me the right way or their internet was lagging and so they couldn't see things on the screen, they couldn't hear me. And we had a lot of that throughout the year. So it was just, hey, you tried it, good enough, here we go, move on. I think just the isolation that a lot of them felt. It was just a very weird environment. Like I still try to joke around, but I was sitting at my desk. I was never really standing in front of the room. And I mean I was in front of them, but I was sitting in front of them. And I'm watching the computer, and so it just was a completely different feel for what it would normally be. Is there any element that I didn't answer with that one?

Steve
Thank you. Question five, what were some feelings and fears you grappled with regarding students' academics, social well-being, and emotional mental health in the lockdown?

Bruce
I mean, when we first came back, there was a lot of things I felt that we, we didn't have enough information to really know what we should be doing. And I think personally with fear was, OK, well, I'm not afraid necessarily of being sick, but I don't want to take this illness home to my family. I didn't know if we were making the right decision, because there were some times where it was, hey, we're having a six-seat apartment and we can have their masks off. It's like, what do you mean you can have their masks off? Like, we're in this room. What's going on? And even after COVID, like after the lockdown, there were still kids wearing masks because they were still like, well, I can't go home. I don't want to get this family member sick or whatever. And so just having that, I think there was just a lot of pressure on the teachers and the students for, here's this virus. We know it's a deadly virus. Thankfully, it didn't quite end up being quite as deadly as they had thought, even though it was still pretty bad. That first year was pretty rough. But just, how do you deal with that? And how do middle school, elementary students, how do they wrap their head around, like this is a real deal, and you're getting sick and people are dying, and we had family members, I had family members that passed away, we had some students who lost some family members, and it's like, well, how do you then come back into this environment knowing that this thing is killing people? And so I think that was just always in the back of people's minds, and certainly it was always in the back of my mind. I know we tried to reach out to families and just be like, hey, thanks for letting us know that, what can we do? Is there anything we can send your way, we can get food your way, or whatever. Just trying to help keep

that connection going. But I really think that, generally speaking, there was just this sense of isolation. We tried as a staff to have lunch together every once in a while, but even then it was like, this feels weird. I think I'm just gonna go eat in my room. I think the kids felt that too. I think they wanted to just be kids and they wanted to interact and they wanted to have that stuff and we just said, no, you can't do that anymore. Everything that in your soul, you know, as human beings, we want that connection. And so to be like, no, for a year you can't do that. I think it probably really did the kids that needed it in particular. I think they probably suffered for it more than anybody else.

Steve
Thank you. Question number six. As the lockdown continued, what effects on academics, social well-being, and mental health was COVID-19 having on your classroom?

Bruce
So after the initial year and we started having the kids come back, there was a lot of confusion like, hey, we're going to still be masks. Oh no, we're not going to be masks anymore. We're not going to be masks. It's like, well, when are we wearing masks? When are we not wearing masks? Like, are we going to keep social distance or are we not going to keep social distance? So there was a lot of those things that just, I understand that the districts and the buildings are all trying to do their thing. And then just with the uncertainty with some stuff, like, well, now here I am. And yesterday I told you how to do this. Today I'm telling you, you got to do it this way. And then we're going to bounce back and forth. So I think there was just that element of stress of like, OK, what's tomorrow going to be? Is it going to be something else we're going to try? Like, are we going to just keep going through the motions with this stuff? I think everyone was just kind of over it. Like we're at a point where, like okay, if we're gonna get sick, I'm gonna get sick. I just wanna be able to go to school. I just wanna be able to hang out with my friends. I just wanna be able to do whatever. And so I would see more conflict in the students. I would see them getting irritable much more than they normally would have. I think some of that has to do from carrying over from home. Like if they're dealing with the same, maybe their parents are, oh COVID's a hoax and all that kind of stuff, now they're coming into this building, it's like well I don't care if your family says it's a hoax, like I lost an aunt, it's killing people, like we're wearing a mask. And so I think that led to some conflict between myself and the students, even the students and other students. When the mask was lifted, you had a lot of students that said, yeah I'm done, I'm not wearing this anymore. But then, like a lot of teachers, we still were, there were still some students who were, and so there was that harassment going on, like, oh, what are you afraid? And I'm like, well, it is a virus, and this works, so we're gonna keep doing that. But definitely, I think an element of conflict was kind of coming out, I think irritability. I think academically, they were so just frustrated with everything else that was going on that it was sometimes hard to kind of focus. And again trying to be light-hearted like how do you be light-hearted and fun and joke around while you're still dealing with something that's very serious. And again, Marines, so we're dealing with that all the time. Trying to do that with 13 and 14 year olds is a little bit more of a struggle.

Steve

Question number seven. When reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which of these three areas, academic, social well-being, or mental health, do you feel has had the most significant impact on your classroom?

Bruce

Oh, wow. That's really hard to kind of isolate which one would have the most. I think if I had to pick one, I would say probably mental well-being, just because it kind of carries over into the other two. Like they didn't get those years of social interaction the way they normally would, and we really kind of like, I think, spoon-fed the kids to a certain degree, the academics, just to make sure they could get through it. And now they're at a point where, well, that's the way it's always been, and we're saying, no, you have to do this on your own now, and they don't want that, they don't want to try, they just want to be told what it is. And so I think because we've kind of changed up the whole philosophy of how they're supposed to learn, that that has kind of impacted their mental health, and then that carries over academics and social. So yeah, I would say probably their mental health is probably what's, we see a lot of that. Kids just can't cope with stress. They get angry very easily. They don't know how to express that the right way. We have probably more fights than we've had in a long time. Massive increase in vaping and those things in the middle school. So I think that all comes back to their mental health.

Steve

Thank you, question number eight. What have you found the most challenging step in counteracting the impact of your, on your classroom you shared in the previous question?

Bruce

Getting them to believe in themselves. Like getting them to go, no, you can do this. Like, like it's going to be okay. Whether it is an academic thing, whether it is dealing with an interaction with a student, whether it is just stress. Like, no, you can handle this. You got to, you know, here are some different techniques that you can use to try to get through the conflict that you're having. They just don't want to hear it. They want that to just everyone else take care of it and I'll be okay.

Steve

Thank you, question nine. What supports during the pandemic do you wish you had more access to or felt were missing entirely?

Bruce

 I mean definitely mental health, like being able to like, whether you took time out of my classroom, whether you did like a special period in the day where hey, we're going to meet with this team, we're just going to talk through, hey how are things going, like what are you feeling, like just kind of acknowledging some of that stuff, we just kind of said, no you're afraid, it's okay, be afraid, let's move on, and really didn't take time to identify like what these kids were going through. We just said, hey, it is what it is. We're going to kind of move through it, and we're just going to keep going. So I wish we would have had more access to just take some of

that time and recognize what was happening in the world, how we can identify with it, and how we can kind of move forward. Mm-hmm.

Steve
Thank you, Question 10. How do you feel having these supports at the time could have helped your students?

Bruce
I think they would have figured out more coping mechanisms that would have been beneficial to learning how to deal with any kind of high stress environment, right? You know, we all know as we get older, like, oh, it's just a homework assignment, who cares? But then when it's like, oh, I lost my job because I was late all the time and now I can't pay my mortgage, like, well, how do I deal with that? You can't just throw your hands in the air and someone's gonna take care of it. Like, you have to figure out a solution to that problem. So I think being able to have them work through their emotions, I think being able to talk about what they were experiencing, some of the struggles, both you know personal, social, whatever, it just would have helped them to process what was going on instead of us just trying to kind of, no we're gonna do things like it normally is and you're just gonna have to deal with it. So I think they would have been able to just cope with it and have better maybe empathy with other students and just for the staff and what we were going through at the same time and just try to be able to make those connections instead of feeling like okay well I'm just in school in a mask and I'm away from everybody okay here we go.

Steve
Question 11. Being a few years removed from the lockdown, what residual effects do you still see in your classroom, particularly regarding the academics, social well-being, and mental health?

Bruce
Yeah, so academics, again, they just, there are far fewer students who are willing to take a challenge. They just wanna go the easiest route. They just wanna get through what they can get through. They don't wanna read the directions. They just want you to tell you every step of the way. They wanna make sure that when they've done step one, hey, did I do this the right way? Like, they're not just willing to, okay, here's what I need to do, let me go ahead and do it. So that's been stressful for me because normally, like yesterday I'll give you an example, we were playing a game called Win the White House. And so it was just, hey, here's all the electrical college work we talked about last week, let's see what it really goes. And it's a game, it's fun. And every year kids have a great time. And for whatever reason this year, they were just stressed out and I had to run around the room like, what's going on? Why are they just, they didn't want to read what was going on in the game. They didn't want to try to figure it out. They just wanted me to sit there and like here's how you do this. Oh you want to make this move. You want to make that move. Now later on in the day once they had actually played it and then they had like study hall and they're like oh I want to do this again. Then they were finally like oh I can do this. But it was just really like I'm not gonna, like normally it's a day where I can just kind of sit back here and maybe get some grading done or like really help that one student who I know is going to

struggle. And so academically that's been a little frustrating with any assignment where it's like no the directions are there. Here's how it goes. Just step by step you should be fine. They want that reinforcement every single step of the way. Instead just believing that they can do it on their own and just be willing to make mistakes and learn from them. They want to have it right perfectly every time. In terms of socially again they are very argumentative with each other. If they are having an issue with a student who's nearby, it's not even a, hey, can you move me, it's just, they just blow up at them right away. And then that gets the entire rest of the class all fired up. Or we have into situations where I'll rearrange the seats and kids come to me like, I can't sit by this person, like, well, all three of you said you can't sit by this one person. Like, where would you like me to go? Like, everyone's moves. And so if I keep moving them, like, no one wants to sit by that person. Well, that's not reality. You're going to be by people that you don't necessarily like. So finding ways to kind of deal with that, like, well, ignoring them, you know. If they're being annoying, then telling them to stop. You know, just those kind of things. They want everything to be handled by the teacher. And yeah, we'll do that when it gets elevated. If they're being bullied or something, then yeah, absolutely come to me. But if it's just, they're looking around the room, and you don't like the fact they're looking around the room, well there's not a whole lot that I can do or you can do, just let them look around the room. So we've had a lot of weird stuff with that this year, and even last year, but more so I think this year. Mentally, again, just having not knowing how to process stress. Willing to give up. Just kids who, their computer's not working the right way, so they just slam it shut and throw it in their bag. I'm like, what are you doing? You have to do this assignment. Well, my computer was slow. OK, when was the last time you restarted it? I haven't restarted it yet this year. Well, there's your problem. They just don't recognize that there are things that you, there are ways to, like, hey, that's conflict. It's minor conflict. I can just ignore it and get past it. Or, no, this is major conflict. I need to deal with it. They just kind of, like, everything's major conflict. And, but they, I have a student who had a bad interaction with another student, and they're like, well, they kept, they keep turning around and looking at me. Like, okay, so I was watching them. And the student, this student who complained was staring down that student, and when the other kid got up to just throw something away and they just happened to glance in their direction, they're like, why are you looking at me? They got up to throw something away. Like, so sometimes they're like asking for it. So I don't know if it's because they want the attention. I don't know if it comes down to that and they just want to be recognized because maybe during COVID we were just like, hey, I gotta do all this stuff. So I'm, it is what it is. But it's been really stressful the last couple of years just trying to get these kids to believe that they can do what they need to do, to figure out how to solve problems and to know like when you're stressed, you can't just throw things, punch things, run out the room, like you got to stay calm and realize this is not a big deal. And I don't think they've recognized what is and what is not a big deal.

Steve
Thank you, question 12. What supports are needed to help remedy these residual effects?

Bruce
Oh again, just like everybody else, we need more counselors. We have three counselors here at the middle school, and they are fantastic, but our numbers just keep going up. I think we're at

like 1,200 students. So three counselors for 1,200 students, like how do you possibly, even the high school, can only imagine, how do you possibly meet with those kids? How do you also do the scheduling? How do you handle new students when they come in? How do you deal crisis with the kids when they actually are in crisis? How do you deal with that kid who keeps coming back to you for the same issue without them taking some ownership on their own stuff. Like we just don't have that. And until we can really wrap our minds around what schools should be and how we can really support these kids, like so long as we're still focused on well we gotta get the PSAs, that's the most important, like they're not important. It doesn't matter to anybody in education at all. What we do care about is can you push through a problem? Right, academic, social, whatever. Can you handle yourself? Like, can you be accountable to yourself? Can you have integrity? Can you have respect for other people? Can you be a leader to others? And instead, nope, nope, your number. We gotta know this number. And it's just like, if you sent some of that money, and said we're not gonna test you anymore, we're not gonna give PSSAs, we're gonna put that money towards hiring more counselors at schools, I think you'd see more bang for your buck than anything we have with all the focus on testing and diagnostics and benchmarks and testing and diagnostics and benchmarks. Let the teachers do what they need to do, and let everyone else do what they need to do, and we'll be all right.

Steve
Thank you, Question 13. Of the three areas, academic, social well-being, and mental health, which one are you most concerned about not getting attended to appropriately? What makes you give this response?

Bruce
Yeah, I think that comes back just to the mental health aspect again. Like these kids experienced trauma, like COVID with trauma. And for these eighth graders, what they would have been in fourth grade, fifth grade. So as a kid, you're trying to figure out everything. And am I safe, am I not safe? My parents say I'm safe, but my grandparents say I'm not safe. My friends at school are mixed because their parents believe this, their parents believe that, just all the misinformation that was out there with all that. And I don't think we've ever taken a chance to address it because it was so politically polarizing. It's, oh, well, we can't really talk about all the fake information that's out there about COVID because one party believed it was more of a hoax than another party. So if we bring it up, now we're bringing politics in the classroom. Like, well, we're not, we're trying to address the issue so we can move forward and not keep making the same mistakes. And I think not having the ability to do that, we just kind of like, no, no, we're not gonna talk about it, we're just gonna kind of move on. They don't know, it's just like when you're growing up, if your parents, like my wife, her family, they never fought in front of each other. Like, they did it behind closed doors, the kids never saw it, so she never saw a good conflict resolution. My parents fought in front of each other all the time. Still didn't see good conflict resolution. So, until you can actually see that and recognize how adults are dealing with it, like you don't really know how to process it, so you just kind of fall back on whatever you think feels right. And in this case, we have kids who are slamming their laptops, throwing things around, yelling at their kids. Like, where is that support to help these kids process that trauma that they've done? Because I don't know whether it's PTSD or not, but just like in the military, like

whether you are diagnosed with it or not, everyone has it. If you've been to war, you've experienced that. Well, these kids have gone through a major pandemic that radically changed their lives for a number of years. There's gonna be trauma there, and can we identify that, and can we give them the skills to move forward?

Steve
Thank you, question 14. What continued support resources do you need to help recover from learning loss due to COVID-19?

Bruce
I think with learning loss, it's really hard because we are still in this. We're just going to keep going through the process. We're going to keep moving students along. But there are some students that, like, hey, maybe you need to repeat seventh grade and you'll be the oldest seventh grader, but maybe you need to repeat seventh grade just because maturity wise, you're not being able to handle what's going on. You haven't, you have not mastered any of the information that we're doing, but we're just like, okay, just keep moving on through. Um, but that's a whole societal, like as a nation, just stop. I kind of wished with COVID we had said, you know what, we know education's not working the way we want to. We're just going to stop. And we're going to try and reconfigure everything but we just want to kind of get back to normal and and move on I think just parents and students and even teachers need to realize like look it's okay to repeat it's okay to take that same class again because maybe you weren't quite ready for it and sometimes that happens and kids do beautifully because now they finally they finally I think a lot of things. I think we're at a point where we maybe just need to completely reinvent education as it is. I think we just need to kind of start from scratch and say, hey, what do we know works well? What has not been working? How can we redefine that to try and help these kids? And maybe it is more of a high school mentality where we do more of a junior high stuff so we can have more of those classes and maybe have, like myself, I just teach one level. That's all I teach. So I have kids who can read 12th grade stuff in 8th grade. I have kids who are reading 3rd grade. They're all together. We've gotten away from leveling because of, I think, class sizes and those things. Maybe we need to go back to that because if I have those kids who are struggling, well, look, I don't need to go through all 37 topics. We're going to just do, of the 10 topics we cover in Unit 1, we're going to cover four of them. And we're going to do it really, really well. We're going to focus on the reading and the writing and just make sure they get those skills while also benefiting the content where it's still just, we just got to keep going, just got to keep going. Oh, you're not catch that. Well, we got to keep going. So I don't think there's enough time even for us to identify and really be able to differentiate, trying to differentiate in a class of 29 with completely different skill sets. Like I can't differentiate 29 students. And I think that's just been more of a struggle as we continue to try to work through some of this stuff. There are kids that are absolutely being left behind. And as a teacher, it's really frustrating because I don't want to have that kid left behind. But I've got these kids that need help over here and these kids that need help over here. And so it's only a matter of time before I'm just not doing what I need to be doing.

Steve

Question 15. If you could go back in time and change just one thing about teaching through the pandemic, what change would you have had, which change would have had the most significant impact on students today?

Bruce

I think just talking through what was going on. I think having honest conversations with what is going on at home. Like how is your family reacting to this? Oh, they believe this is some way just to get the government to track us with GPS vaccines. Like, let's look at how that's not true. And why, you know, but how does society, especially for social studies, like how does society get to that point where like vaccines are like, no, everyone gets vaccines, so it is. Now all of a sudden we have a virus and, oh, vaccines are bad, like wait, what changed? Like how do we go that route? So I think having those honest conversations, which is definitely harder at like elementary, but for middle school, like we can have those conversations and make it appropriate. I think having that time to connect with the students and still trying to have fun and not having so much of a focus on the curriculum. I think that it was kind of stated like, hey, don't worry so much about the curriculum or the kids, but at the same time, it was like, but we still need you to focus on the curriculum. So I wish there was just another way that we could have slowed things down, taken a day, a week or something, and just like, hey, we're just going to take the morning and we're going to relax, we're going to like play some games, we're going to talk about what's going on in the world. Try to give them time to socialize with each other. Now, how do you do that when you have to maintain six feet distance? That I don't know. But I'm sure there's plenty of things that we could have done, and I don't think anyone's even thought of it at the time. I think we were just kind of in survival mode, and like, well, I've got to make sure these kids are getting what they need to get, and I need to make sure I'm getting home safe to my family. And so I think if we could just slow things down a little bit and just had conversation with the kids and like let's talk through this and like oh like you have a family member in the hospital like do you need anything like hey kids are anybody that can bring anything to their house like I just I don't think that we necessarily did a good job with that.

Steve

Thank you. All right we've covered a lot of ground during our conversation together and thank you for your time. One final question what else regarding how COVID-19 affected your classroom would be essential for me to know that I've yet to ask you?

Bruce

I'm not sure. I really don't know. I think I've kind of said most of the things I can think of.

Steve

Thank you for your time.

Bruce

You're very welcome.

Transcribed with Cockatoo