

Learning Loss Project Grassroots Perspective:

Historically Black and Brown children have been denied the opportunity to excel and shine academically due to a lack of resources, a subpar curriculum, and unjust policies. Advocates and educational leaders have found resources and opportunities to dismantle structural barriers to empower underrepresented groups by providing an array of supports through initiatives funded through resources such as Title I. Unfortunately, early leaders constructed educational systems systematically and structurally where racism negatively impacted the lives of these marginalized groups.

In 2020 the pandemic has now impacted underrepresented groups. COVID-19 has been the root of environmental and biological stressors. These communities were already facing challenges before the pandemic which have exponentially impacted our socioeconomic and underrepresented communities. The research denotes a strong correlation between stressors and their influence on student performance. The pandemic crisscrossed the nation, destroying communities of color, accessible resources, increasing socioeconomic disparities, and social, emotional health concerns. This project proposes to contribute to this collective effort by assessing the pandemic's academic consequences for North Carolina students and identifying both challenges and sources of strength for the years ahead.

Goal

To assess learning loss (where, with whom and how much), from the grassroots perspective.

- Identify school districts where MOUs are established to include the Sandhills and part of the Piedmont region. The identified school districts must be in a Tier 1 or Tier 2 area within North Carolina.
- Extrapolate samples of identified schools for a representation of K-12 classrooms at traditional public, charter and private schools.
- Analyze surveys and interview responses completed by principals, parents, teachers, school personnel and community stakeholders as it relates to learning loss. Community stakeholders are either profit or nonprofit entities such as the YMCA and Boys & Girls Club.
- Categorize schools based on specific criterion (Title 1 schools / non-Title 1 schools, Rural areas vs. Suburban) and analyze the inequalities that exists within the districts.
- Identify and analyze community resources readily available to meet the needs of students within identified schools and districts.
- Identify “home base” which is the school, interviewing the principals, teachers, support personnel within the school and community stakeholders utilizing a purposeful sampling method. The “home base” interviewees will assist in identifying potential parent interview participants supporting the triangulation of findings.
- Examine survey and interview findings to identify how the rate of Covid 19 infections, hospitalization, mortality, increased the need for trauma informed practices due to the pandemic which impacted student performance.

Timeline:

July: Data agreements and acquisition, IRB approvals, develop electronic surveys and interview questions and protocols

Surveys – Principals and teacher (same survey) Teachers (interviews) Parents (survey and interviews) Community (Survey and Interview)

Develop a database of possible school partnerships and community stakeholders within the districts. School districts are span across the Sandhills and part of the Piedmont area. (To include charter, and private schools)

August: Develop relationships and identify LEAs, Schools, Teachers, Parents, and community organizations and organizers that will be part of the study. Start delivering electronic surveys and set up interviews

September-November: Qualitative data collection, interviews, focus groups, in communities, with families and community and school related supports

December: Prepare report describing preliminary findings (proposed format: 1-page executive summary, approximately 10-page summary of analyses of findings, and recommendations based off the categories and areas aligned to be focused as it relates to learning loss in these grassroot communities.