

2022RekewegAcadia-abstract

## Abstract

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic created an urgent need for schools to adapt and accommodate in order to continue providing instruction. For many, distance learning has been the solution. This paper examines how the three largest public-school districts in Indiana each implemented distance learning in their communities. Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS), Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC), and Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) each faced similar issues this school year but took different approaches. Through news stories and pre-COVID-19 research, a story is told of how distance learning and/or blended learning is going in practice. The categories of findings from each district include staffing concerns, technology support options, supporting learners who need special services, and creating equitable learning for students at school and at home. After conducting a thorough analysis of distance learning in each of these school districts, I find some extremely valuable new ideas in the time of distance learning. I find that FWCS has created an effective method of technology support by providing one-on-one meeting days, EVSC has provided special learners with online adapted instruction, and IPS has created learning pods to ensure distance learners can be supported regardless of the support they receive at home. I also find that FWCS quickly learned that the hybrid model is ineffective for elementary students, IPS has been largely unwilling to accommodate for their online special learners who need additional support, and that staffing can be an unfortunate consequence of distance learning. These results show that there is no one solution to effectively implementing distance learning requiring flexibility and support to be key.

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