

The school year is rapidly approaching, or already has begun, and we wanted to take this moment to say good luck to all administrators, teachers, students, parents, and education supporters! We know the past year has not been without its challenges and that this upcoming year will come with even more challenges as situations change across the country.

There is plenty to look forward to in government! The infrastructure bill, which is supposed to provide some of the largest social safety nets in history, has been passed! There is also a new Senate Democratic Spending plan of [\\$3.5 trillion dollars](#) - where the funds are partially allocated to go towards universal pre-K and childcare for working families and 2 years of universal free community college to help support the communities that have struggled the most during this pandemic. The other portion of that spending will go towards immigration services.

According to research from [The New York Times](#), more than 1 million students that should have enrolled in school had not - mostly kindergarten-age, low-income students. The missing students were concentrated in mostly the younger age-group, mostly due to unstable internet connections and parent's ability to watch their children and assist their children throughout their online school day. By providing universal pre-K and childcare for working families - this will hopefully narrow the gap between students' accessibility to education created during the pandemic.

We cannot thank elementary school professionals enough during this tumultuous time. Your influence this past year and in the near future is truly transformational for the students that have suffered - especially those from disadvantaged communities that have struggled with access to education and educational technology for years. An excellent way to combat this inequity is to ensure that all students are learning at their own pace and are developing both intellectually and emotionally - through Project-Based Learning. To learn more about our professional development opportunities, please explore our [website](#) and see all the many accessibility gaps that a project-based learning model can close in your elementary schools. It is a great way to promote both mental health and technical skills for your students, as mentioned in our prior newsletter, [The Intersection of Mental Health, Tech, and Education](#).

An excellent way to show your staff appreciation would also be applying for our [microgrant program](#). It can provide the [support and physical educational technology](#) to help your students and teachers close the gap created during the pandemic even faster. As a reminder, our application closes **September 15, 2021**, and it is open to Private, Public, Charter, or Religious K-12 Schools, Young Adult Edu Centers or Community Service Centers, English Language Learning Centers & Orgs, and STEM/STEAM Centers & Orgs.

Again - we cannot thank all educational professionals enough during this past year for their unwavering commitment to empowering students to be the best version of themselves! We have a positive outlook for this next year, and wish you all the best as schools hopefully open their doors again.