The West Virginia Chamber of Commerce has just released a new report on public education in West Virginia. The report focuses on education results from a variety of sources and provides an in-depth analysis on the background of this information. Spending at the state and county level also receives significant attention.
Brian Dayton of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce joined Hoppy Kercheval on MetroNews Talkline yesterday morning to discuss the Chamber's findings. You can listen to the interview by clicking here (segment begins at the 27:45 mark).

The West Virginia Chamber of Commerce hopes this report will be used to facilitate an honest and candid conversation about education results in West Virginia.

Read the Report

Registrations are Pouring in!

The 83rd Annual Meeting and Business Summit of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce is just over 3 months away! This event will take place Wednesday, August 28 - Friday, August 30 at The Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, WV. This tis the not-to-be-missed event of the year, where you can meet and network with the best minds in business, government, education and policy in West Virginia. To take advantage of Early Bird Registration rates, please click here.
To reserve your room at The Greenbrier, you must first register for the meeting. In your confirmation e-mail you will receive a code to provide to The Greenbrier staff when booking your room. To make your hotel reservation after registering for the meeting, please call Jessica Dowdy at 1-855-453-4858, option 2, and ask for the West Virginia Chamber Room Block. Rooms at The Greenbrier sell out during this event, so don't delay! Register now!

For information about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Amanda Pasdon at apasdon@wvchamber.com. We look forward to seeing you at The Greenbrier!

Register Now!

Hoppy Kercheval: Boston charter school success spawns growth

WV MetroNews

Charter schools have played a significant role in improving outcomes of Boston public school students. And now, as reported in a Wall Street Journal editorial, a new study by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER),* those advances can be replicated at new locations. Boston follows the "No Excuses" charter model, where the practices include high expectations, strict discipline, a longer school day (even some Saturday classes), high-intensity tutoring, frequent teacher feedback and data-driven instruction. Continue...

From Strong Accountability to Open Enrollment and Community Engagement, 10 Reasons New Orleans's Schools are Succeeding

The 74 Million - New Orleans's public schools have shown significant growth and progress in the past 13 years. This progress did not happen overnight; it took passion, leadership, accountability, funding and focus to turn our education system around. The results are impressive. In 2005, 62 percent of New Orleans students attended the lowest-performing schools in the state, compared with just 8 percent in 2018. Our college-entry rate has risen from 37 percent in 2004 to 61 percent in 2017. How did we do it? This work has been nuanced
and complicated, but when I look at what distinguishes education in New Orleans, 10 things stand out: Continue...

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**West Virginia News**

**Charter schools top school board's list (Blast from the past)**

*Charleston Gazette-Mail* - The state Board of Education on Monday unanimously approved a wish list of legislation it hopes will bolster the state's second-round application for federal Race to the Top dollars. The big-ticket recommendations included new charter school legislation, called "Charter Innovation Zones 2.0;" alternative certification programs for non-teachers; a teacher performance monitoring system based on student performance and other factors; incentive-based pay for teachers; and changes that would allow the state board to remove ineffective principals in a timely fashion. The board submitted its proposals to Gov. Joe Manchin, who is expected to convene a special legislative session in May. Continue...

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**State school board committee has no recommendations before special session start**

*Charleston Gazette-Mail* - The West Virginia Board of Education committee that includes powerful Republican lawmakers and has been discussing possible policy, law and funding changes hasn't approved recommendations and doesn't plan to meet again until Wednesday of next week. That's two days after Monday's scheduled resumption of the special legislative session, which is so far only allowed to include education- and pay raise-related legislation, plus a bill paying for the session. Continue...

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**Carmichael: No education session next week, but still straight ahead**

*WV MetroNews* - Senate President Mitch Carmichael acknowledged a special session on education won't start next week as originally indicated, but said the session will start a couple of weeks after that with a bundle of bills meant to change West Virginia's school system. "I think we're looking at no more than another two weeks to launch our 'Student Success Act,'" Carmichael said today on MetroNews' "Talkline." Continue...
Unions call for special session on education to be cancelled

**WV News** - Officials from three unions representing public school teachers and school service personnel have called on Gov. Jim Justice to abandon the special session he called on "education betterment." "The Legislature has already convened pursuant to the governor's special session proclamation; it cannot be rescinded," Hunt said in an email. "The only way for the special session to end now is for the Legislature to adjourn Sine Die." In a statement released hours after the unions' press conference, House Speaker Roger Hanshaw, R-Clay, said he has instructed attorneys working for the House to begin reviewing all of state code that deals with education.  

Continue...

More than a dozen vetoed bills could get do-overs in special session

**Charleston Gazette-Mail** - More than a dozen vetoed bills from the 2019 regular session could be back for do-overs by the Legislature when the special session resumes next week. Gov. Jim Justice - who was not at the Capitol Tuesday - has not yet amended the special session call or indicated which of the regular session bills he vetoed for technical errors will be included on that agenda.  

Continue...

West Virginia files suit against opioid maker Purdue Pharma

**WV MetroNews** - West Virginia is going after opioid maker Purdue Pharma. State Attorney General Patrick Morrisey announced a lawsuit Thursday morning at the Capitol against the company and former CEO Richard Sackler, alleging that their actions in marketing helped drive the opioid epidemic in West Virginia. "Enough is enough," Morrisey said. "The opioid epidemic knows no boundaries but our state will not go down quietly."  

Continue...

Ahead of Scout Jamboree, WV health officials prepare for possible measles cases

Charleston Gazette-Mail - With thousands of young people from around the world expected at an event in West Virginia this summer, state health officials and Boy Scout leaders say they're preparing for the possibility of children bringing measles with them. About 45,000 Scouts and adult leaders from the United States and abroad are expected to attend the World Scout Jamboree at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in Fayette County from July 22 through Aug. 2. The event approaches as outbreaks of highly-contagious measles are growing in several U.S. states and elsewhere.  

U.S. Supreme Court wants to hear from Workman before it discusses impeachment case

West Virginia Record - The U.S. Supreme Court hasn't decided if it will hear the state Legislature's appeal regarding the impeachment of state Supreme Court justices, but it has asked Justice Margaret Workman to file a brief in the matter. Last month, the court asked Marc Williams, who is representing Workman, to file a response to the petitions filed by the House of Delegates and state Senate. Workman originally had waived the right to respond to the petitions. Williams, the managing partner of Nelson Mullins' Huntington office, said he thinks the request signifies the importance of the issue.

WVU Rockefeller Innovation Center plans for groundbreaking research

WV News - From all around the world, some of the greatest minds in neuroscience, innovation and leadership congregated in Morgantown to celebrate the opening of the new Innovation Center at the West Virginia University Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute. The new Innovation Center is a dedicated building featuring the latest medical technology for rapid applied human research.

National News

Lawmakers, industry leaders discuss ways to better understand broadband access
WV MetroNews - The U.S. Senate Broadband Caucus hosted on Tuesday a panel discussion with private and public leaders on addressing the challenges with providing broadband internet across the country. The caucus, in which Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., is a member, hosted the event to foster talks on providing better services through actions such as ensuring service maps are accurate. "If those of us are left behind in the digital divide aren't able to close that divide, we're going to drag the rest of our states and our regions down with us," Capito said. "We want to see a lot of equity between urban and rural, and getting good accuracy on our maps is something that's exceedingly important." Continue...

Carol Miller, the only new GOP woman elected to the House, wants to help more Republican women get to Congress

CNN - For freshman Republican Rep. Carol Miller, work-life balance looks a bit different. While she was running for her House seat last fall, there were times when Miller had to rush back to the bison farm she owns in West Virginia to deal with unexpected problems with the animals she helps raise. Miller has a lot less time to spend on the farm now that she represents West Virginia's third congressional district, but she still helps out with the work when she can. Continue...

Editorials / Op-Eds

Editorial: Do Charter Schools Replicate?

The Wall Street Journal

One critique of charter schools is that while a few energetic principals show success, it's impossible to replicate. Not so, says a new study of Boston's charters, which doubled from 16 schools to 32 in four years, even as they maintained their effectiveness. "It appears that proven providers successfully transmitted hiring and pedagogical practices to new campuses," the authors write in a working paper posted last week by the National Bureau of Economic Research. "Expansion charters generate achievement gains comparable to those of their parent schools." Continue...
Hoppy Kercheval: Sisyphus and the heavy lift of education reform

WV MetroNews

The mythological figure Sisyphus was a cruel king. As punishment, he was forced to push a huge bolder up a hill only to have it roll back down, where he would start all over... for eternity. Sisyphus' struggle feels like where we are now with education reform. The regular session of the Legislature ended in early March with the collapse of Senate Bill 451. The Republican-driven omnibus bill could not garner enough support from majorities in both chambers or the backing of Governor Justice.  

Tom Crouser: Education report doesn't reflect will of all people

Charleston Gazette-Mail

"Public has spoken, but will politicians listen?" At least that's the claim of a May 8th op-ed headline in this paper regarding education reform. Well, has the public spoken? No. But you have to read the fine print in the West Virginia Department of Education's report to understand. Here are my findings: The education department based this report on several online surveys and eight public forums they held across the state. State Schools Superintendent Steve Paine said, "We collected the data, we took a look at the strategies that were recommended and suggested, filtered them through strong research-based practice that had promise, and thus came out the recommendations."  

Bill Bissett: Let's not detract from good works around us

Huntington Herald-Dispatch

Whether it is driven by a topic of public policy, politics or something that perplexes me, I tend to let the words of my opinion pieces roll around in my brain for some time before moving my thoughts to text. While this submission is no different, it is also connected to the strong
reaction, both mostly positive and somewhat negatively, to some recent thoughts I shared with your newspaper, titled, "Getting a much better understanding of West Virginia."

Hoppy Kercheval: Where does all the public education money go?

WV MetroNews

Most debates about public education in West Virginia will eventually include the subject of money. Is public education underfunded? Should outcomes be better considering how much we spend? How much more can we reasonably afford to spend? How do we compare with other states? These questions and many others constantly circulate, and the answers depend on not only the dollar figures themselves, but also one's perspective on the value of a good education.

Mark Sadd: My commencement address

Charleston Gazette-Mail

Good evening, graduates and friends of Don Knotts Senior High, the home of the Fighting Cowards. I understand that I was invited to speak because I am one of the few politicians remaining in West Virginia who has not been impeached or under federal indictment. I consider my status not only a badge of honor but a tribute to my lawyer. Speaking as a lawyer myself, it had been my plan to charge your high school for my services by the hour in minimum increments of six minutes. Instead, I will charge by the pound. You will be getting a load of it this evening.

Upcoming West Virginia Chamber Events
West Virginia Chamber 2019 Annual Meeting & Business Summit

August 28-30, 2019

Register Now!

West Virginia Chamber 2019 Women's Leadership Summit

December 4-5, 2019