

**Question:** Have you identified any “upstream” problems at your school? What crises are percolating just beneath the surface?



**The poverty gap.** The gap for students of poverty is growing. We have subgroups that are overrepresented and underrepresented in behavior referrals, special education, talented and gifted programs, and interventions. There is a teacher shortage that is growing and impacting our ability to provide high-quality educators to every student, especially those with IEPs.

—Amy Denney (@AmyADenney), Perry Creek Elementary School, Sioux City, Iowa



**Reading skills.** Our response to improving students’ reading skills is the most recent. We have gone upstream with a focus on professional development on the science of reading, standards-based learning, and collective efficacy. We redesigned our school district during the 2017–2018 school year; after reading *Upstream* and hearing [author] Dan Heath speak, our process aligns with this mind frame. Macro success starts with micro work.

—Stacey Green (@usd271sgs), Stockton Grade School, Stockton, Kansas



**Addressing needs.** Focusing on consistency, routine, and predictability while providing basic needs for our families is a top priority. We have a lot of poverty in our community, and it was impacted greatly by COVID because many of our families work in the service industry and are uninsured or underinsured, without day care options or access to the internet.

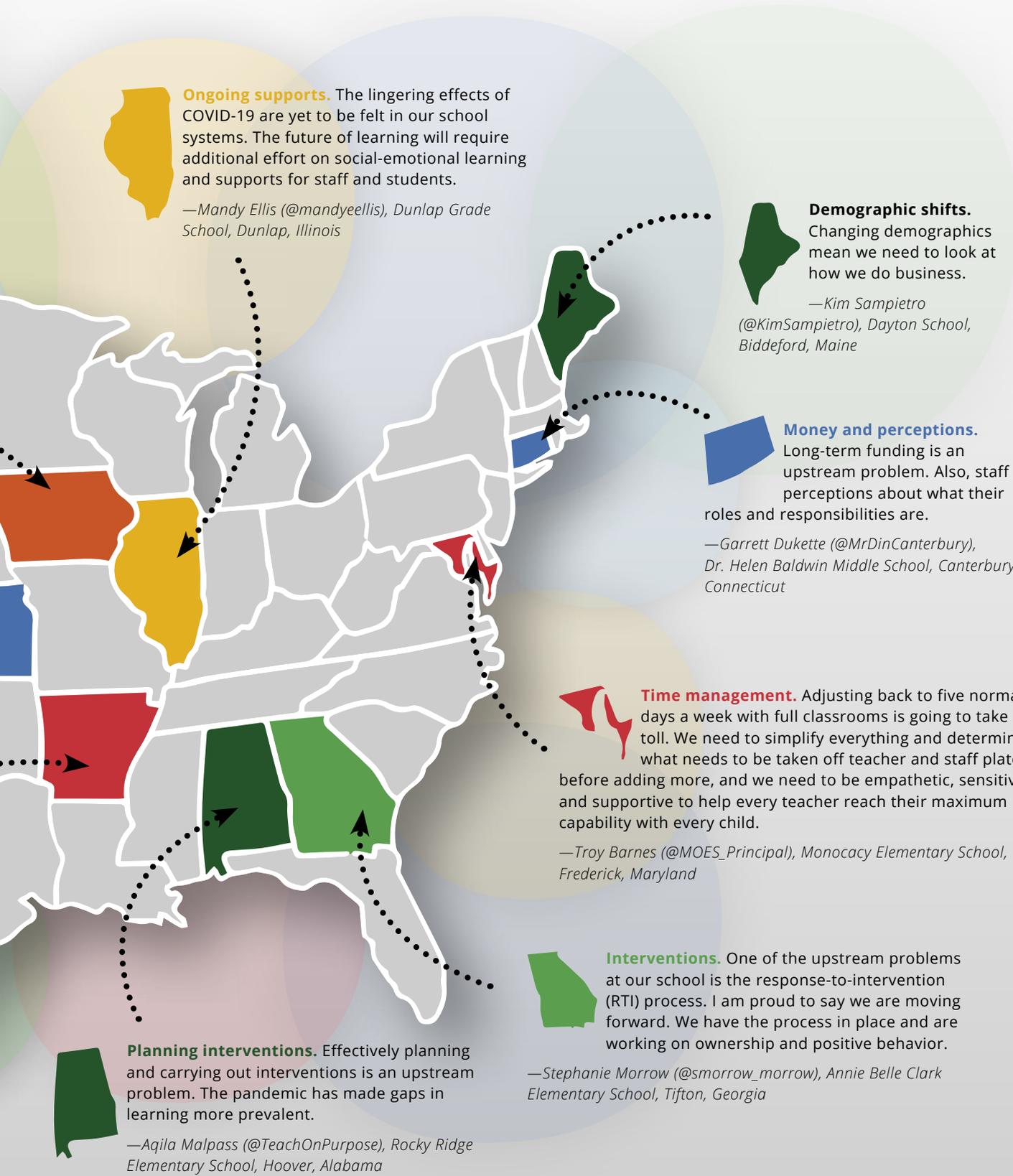
—Heather LeeMaster Anguiano (@tresanguianos), Hartford Sylvia Encinas Elementary School, Chandler, Arizona



**Building a team.** I have to be very purposeful about building a team and fostering a positive culture.

I’m merging two staffs this year following the repurposing of my previous school.

—Justin Swope (@JustinSwope), Lee Elementary School, Springdale, Arkansas



**Ongoing supports.** The lingering effects of COVID-19 are yet to be felt in our school systems. The future of learning will require additional effort on social-emotional learning and supports for staff and students.

—Mandy Ellis (@mandyeellis), Dunlap Grade School, Dunlap, Illinois

**Demographic shifts.**

Changing demographics mean we need to look at how we do business.

—Kim Sampietro (@KimSampietro), Dayton School, Biddeford, Maine

**Money and perceptions.**

Long-term funding is an upstream problem. Also, staff perceptions about what their roles and responsibilities are.

—Garrett Dukette (@MrDinCanterbury), Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School, Canterbury, Connecticut

**Time management.**

Adjusting back to five normal days a week with full classrooms is going to take its toll. We need to simplify everything and determine what needs to be taken off teacher and staff plates before adding more, and we need to be empathetic, sensitive, and supportive to help every teacher reach their maximum capability with every child.

—Troy Barnes (@MOES\_Principal), Monocacy Elementary School, Frederick, Maryland

**Interventions.**

One of the upstream problems at our school is the response-to-intervention (RTI) process. I am proud to say we are moving forward. We have the process in place and are working on ownership and positive behavior.

—Stephanie Morrow (@smorrow\_morrow), Annie Belle Clark Elementary School, Tifton, Georgia

**Planning interventions.** Effectively planning and carrying out interventions is an upstream problem. The pandemic has made gaps in learning more prevalent.

—Aqila Malpass (@TeachOnPurpose), Rocky Ridge Elementary School, Hoover, Alabama