

The New York Times

Opinion

LETTERS

December 25, 2020

The Trials of Teaching in the Pandemic

To the Editor:

Re “[U.S. Faces a New Crisis: ‘An Extreme Level of Teacher Burnout’](#)”
(news article, Dec. 1):

Where does the expectation that educators can provide “normal schooling” under pandemic conditions come from? Teachers are professionals, not magicians. And education has always been about relationships, not content.

The person who decided that teachers can work effectively with students in person and online at the same time doesn’t understand how learning works. Learning happens when teachers and students establish trust, forge connections and make meaning together.

On top of that, the anxiety and uncertainty of Covid calls for teachers to be a steady, reassuring presence.

Let’s stop expecting teachers to do the impossible. Swivel cameras are not the answer, and Zoom is not a classroom.

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The writer is a psychologist and educational consultant.