



EPEC Update

Education Policy and Evaluation Center
University of Georgia

Impacting education
policy and improving
the quality of
education through
research and
evaluation

November 19, 2007

Volume 1, Issue 4

EPEC Updates

EPEC Affiliated Faculty Meeting Held 11-15-07

Thanks to all who attended the Affiliated Faculty Meeting. A brief review of topics covered included:

- EPEC faculty position openings. Please see the EPEC web site, coe.uga.edu/EPEC, for more information on the Mixed Methods position.
- The Program Evaluation Group (PEG) is working with the state Department of Education on a project to develop a summative teacher performance system. Dr. Harnish extended an invitation to faculty with educational performance review experience and/or expertise to collaborate with PEG on the project.
- EPEC representatives were scheduled to meet with UGA directors for state and federal relations on Friday November, 16 to share EPEC's vision and goals. Input was sought from affiliated faculty members concerning issues they wanted to communicate to these resource personnel.
- Task Group Update: Handouts were presented listing current active groups, members, and descriptive information outlining their purposes and products. Page 3 lists the Task Groups and coordinator contact information. Jean Bowen is available to assist in the search for funding opportunities. She encourages faculty to think in terms of "interdisciplinary" in preparing funding requests because this often strengthens the proposals.
- EPEC personnel are available to assist faculty in the development of policy briefs.
- EPEC Vision: Andy Horne encouraged faculty to share their vision of EPEC. Below is the document containing the emerging goals developed by members of the affiliated faculty and Center staff based on the discussion from this meeting.

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Goals of the Georgia Education Policy and Evaluation Center : (beyond policy and evaluation core principles and goals)

To promote an intellectual culture in the College of Education, one that strongly values research, and to create forums to do so

To unleash faculty members' creative potential

To build the College capacity for research, both quantitative and qualitative

To encourage meaningful research by graduate students, such that they will become stewards of their disciplines

To foster interdisciplinary research, both within the College and across the University.

Policy Impact News

No Child Left Behind Update

The November 9, 2007 PEN Weekly NewsBlast and the November U. S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for a Competitive Workforce (ICW) newsletter report that No Child Left Behind reauthorization will most likely not take place before the end of this year. The PEN NewsBlast references a November 3, 2007 Time Magazine article regarding NCLB re-authorization entitled, *NCLB Re-Authorization, Where's It Going? Nowhere!* in which U.S. Senators Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), the top lawmakers on the Senate Education Committee, are reported to be putting off re-authorization of the No Child Left Behind Act. The ICW newsletter identifies two issues that are contained in the discussion draft of the new legislation which are problematic for some. They are as follows:

- Use of additional measures of achievement (e.g., graduation rates, drop-out rates, college enrollment rates) in concert with reading and math assessments to provide multiple indicators of student learning. The newsletter presents the following two sources to illustrate both sides of the debate:

The National Education Association's (NEA) "[Support Grows for Multiple Measures in NCLB](http://www.nea.org/esea/supportmultimeasures.html)" available at: <http://www.nea.org/esea/supportmultimeasures.html>

[Testimony by Dianne Piche, Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights](http://www.uschamber.info/cwp/notice-description.tcl?newsletter%5fid=18172697), September 10, 2007 Hearing House Education & Labor Committee available at: <http://www.uschamber.info/cwp/notice-description.tcl?newsletter%5fid=18172697>

- Reforming pay and performance structures for teachers to tie salaries to student achievement and improved student performance. The ICW newsletter provides readings to describe both sides of the issues. These can be accessed by typing the following address into your browser: <http://www.uschamber.info/cwp/notice-description.tcl?newsletter%5fid=18172697>

The College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007

The **College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007** passed the House on 10-23-2007 and was referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions on 10-30-2007. This bill is the Third Higher Education Extension Act of 2007; it amends the Higher Education Extension Act of 2005 to extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965 through April 30, 2008. A brief summary of the Bill is posted at the link below and states that, "The College Opportunity and Affordability Act will continue this Congress' year-long effort to make college more affordable and accessible. This bill would reform our higher education system so that it operates in the best interests of students and families, while boosting our competitiveness and strengthening our future."

<http://edlabor.house.gov/publications/20071109COAASummary.pdf>

The full text of the draft is available at:

<http://edlabor.house.gov/bills/HEAReauthorizationText.pdf>

Excerpts from the PEN Weekly NewsBlast are the property of Public Education Network, <http://www.PublicEducation.org>

EPEC Activities

Policy Research Group

The Policy Research Group is providing technical assistance to selected Georgia counties with regard to student assignment policies.

The Policy Research Group, in concert with the Education Law Consortium, is planning a conference for Friday, April 18, 2008 entitled "The State of School Finance in Georgia: Findings, Issues, and Controversies."

A new University-level Child and Family Policy Initiative Advisory Committee is being convened by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Dr. DeBray-Pelot will serve as the College's representative.

Program Evaluation Group

IES Grant Application Package was submitted 10-26-07 to examine postsecondary outcomes for dual enrolled high school students.

Evaluations for the Reading First Program and Supplemental Education Services are ongoing for the Georgia Department of Education.

The teacher performance system project is underway as reported on page 1.

Resources for Review

Reading Policy, Politics, and Processes

This new book, edited by Mengli Song, *American Institutes for Research* and Tamara V. Young, *North Carolina State University*, is a new offering from **IAP- Information Age Publishing, Inc.** The past decade saw heightened policy activism in the field of reading at both the federal level and across virtually all 50 states. Initially sparked by disagreements about methods for teaching children to read, the so-called "reading wars" stirred heated debates on a variety of issues: levels and trends of reading achievement, pedagogy, standards and assessment, and education equity, among others. As the most significant research endeavor in the area of state reading policy to date, this cross-state comparative study sheds light on the multifaceted nature and the intricacies of the policy processes in reading, and in education in general. The findings of this study bear important implications for both policy actors and education professionals. This study also makes a substantial contribution to policy research in education by demonstrating how theoretical frameworks and analytic methods that have not been fully utilized in education could serve as powerful tools for exploring educational policy processes. For more information, go to: <http://www.infoagepub.com/products/content/p47102389ef975.php>

Doing What Works website

The www.dww.ed.gov site describes this new resource as follows: Doing What Works (DWW) is an exciting new website sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education that is dedicated to helping educators identify and make use of effective teaching practices. DWW is led by the Office of Planning, Evaluation & Policy Development (OPEPD) at the U.S. Department of Education. OPEPD relies on the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education (IES) (and occasionally other entities that adhere to standards similar to those of IES) to evaluate and recommend practices that are supported by rigorous research. Type the web address above into your browser for more info.

Verizon Literacy Program Self-Assessment Tool (VLP-SAT)

Available exclusively on Thinfinity.org, the VLP-SAT assists program staff, including administrators, teachers and volunteers, in improving instruction and assessment that result in measurable literacy achievement for students across the life span. The VLP-SAT, developed by the National Center for Family Literacy with support from the Verizon Foundation, provides standards that identify literacy practices linked to desired learner outcomes. Programs rate their implementation by comparing their current practices to examples of research-based strategies.

Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported By Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide

This Guide seeks to provide educational practitioners with user-friendly tools to distinguish practices supported by rigorous evidence from those that are not. Copy and paste the following address into your web browser for more information: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/evidence_based/evidence_based.asp

National Assessment of Title I: Final Report

This two-volume report, and Summary of Key Findings, presents findings from the congressionally mandated National Assessment of Title I on the implementation and impact of the program. Volume I contains key findings on the implementation of the program under No Child Left Behind, and Volume II presents a report on follow-up findings from Closing the Reading Gap, an evaluation of the impact of supplemental remedial reading programs on achievement of 3rd and 5th grade students. For more information, copy and paste the following address into your web browser: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20084012/index.asp>

Active Task Groups*

Finance

Cathy Sielke, csielke@uga.edu

Dropout Prevention

Elizabeth DeBray-Pelot, edebray@uga.edu

School Choice

Sheneka Williams, smwill@uga.edu

School Readiness

Cindy Vail, cvail@uga.edu

Violence Prevention

John Dayton, jdayton@uga.edu

Qualitative Research

Melissa Freeman, freeman9@uga.edu

Pending Groups

Assessment/Testing

Jonathan Templin, jtemplin@uga.edu

School Reform

Gayle Andrews, gandrews@uga.edu

Adolescent Literacy

Post-Secondary (K-16; College)

*Through a small internal grant, EPEC is facilitating collaboration and program development among faculty through task groups.

EDUCATION POLICY AND EVALUATION CENTER

University of Georgia
College of Education
570 Aderhold Hall
Athens, GA 30602

Phone: 706-542-4631

Fax: 706-542-4669

www.coe.uga.edu/epec

Dr. Andy Horne
Interim Director
706-542-4107
ahorne@uga.edu

Dr. Elizabeth DeBray-Pelot
Associate Director
for Policy
706-542-6249
edebray@uga.edu

Dr. Dorothy Harnish
Associate Director
for Evaluation
706-542-4690
harnish@uga.edu

Dr. Sheneka Williams
Policy Research Fellow
706-542-3830
smwill@uga.edu



About EPEC

Policy Research Group

The Policy Research Group within EPEC aims to provide resources to faculty seeking to share the results of their research studies with the policy community in the state. Dr. Elizabeth DeBray-Pelot (edebray@uga.edu), Associate Director, and Dr. Sheneka Williams (smwill@uga.edu), Policy Research Fellow, are available to faculty to assist with writing policy briefs for prospective posting on the Center website and distribution to state policymakers.

The Policy Research Group is currently soliciting faculty members' working papers for posting on the Center website. These are generally papers that have been submitted to a scholarly journal for review or have been presented at a conference. The PRG is also interested in talking to faculty conducting policy-related research that could be featured in the policy section of the website.

Program Evaluation Group

The Program Evaluation Group within EPEC offers rigorous program evaluation, technical assistance, data collection, and information analysis for a variety of public and private stakeholder agencies, foundations, and institutions on local, state, national, and international levels. PEG core staff, under the direction of Dr. Dorothy Harnish, is comprised of professional staff skilled in carrying out multiple projects utilizing various research methods to assess the need for educational programs and their impact and effectiveness.

EPEC Staff:

Penny Rabon, Administrative Associate II, prabon@uga.edu
G13 Aderhold Hall
706-542-4631, 706-542-4669 (EPEC Fax #)
Contact Penny to schedule G14 Conference room for meetings.

Tracy Elder, Program Coordinator III, telder@uga.edu
570E Aderhold Hall
706-542-3846

Grace Thornton, Research Professional III, gthorn@uga.edu
150 Rivers Crossing/G25 Aderhold Hall
706-542-9068/706-542-7236

Jana Thompson, Research Professional III, jthomps@uga.edu
G25 Aderhold Hall
706-542-6334

Scott Pollack, Research Professional III, scottp@uga.edu
570H Aderhold Hall
706-542-7262

COE Dean's Office Support Staff:

Jean Bowen, Interim Grants Development Specialist, jsbowen@uga.edu