



CREATE *Newsletter*

CONSORTIUM FOR RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND TEACHER EVALUATION

www.createconference.org

The mission of CREATE shall be to provide a forum for the presentation, discussion and dissemination of personnel and program evaluation research, policy, and practice in education; provide an international mutual assistance network of personnel engaged in educational evaluation research, policy, and practice; and, provide a professional organization for persons engaged in educational evaluation.

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Message from the President

Welcome from Karen Wetherill, CREATE President!

Mark your calendars!

How exciting to join our colleagues in CREATE in beautiful Orlando, Florida for this year's National Evaluation Institute, October 4-6, 2007! For those of you who were able to attend last year's annual conference in Dallas, you will remember our theme, "Expanding Research and Promising Practices in Personnel, Program and Student Evaluation." This year's theme "**Improving Teaching and Learning Through Evaluation**", promises to yield thoughtful and thought-provoking presentations and conversations among a great group of colleagues. The collaborative study of issues in educational accountability and teacher evaluation undertaken at our conference will lead to our collective understanding and commitment to the field's current and future role in education.

Thanks to our active board and program planning committee, we have an outstanding Millman Award winner, Robert Marzano. We also have some very remarkable speakers, including Andy Porter from Vanderbilt University. This year's conference will provide a valuable opportunity to showcase the Joint Committee's evaluation standards celebrating our affiliation with this work. In addition, the revitalization of the Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education (JPEE) has resulted in a special issue for CREATE which features papers from our conference presenters.

I always look forward to our conferences, arriving to celebrate our field and friendships. I always leave with a renewed sense of commitment, a broadening perspective about issues and solutions for education, and a greater awareness of the arenas in which we can and do influence others about our work. I am always rejuvenated to pursue deeper and more meaningful connections with my colleagues. On behalf of the CREATE Board of Directors, I am asking you to join us in inviting and welcoming past and new attendees to our fall conference and communicate with all our continued commitment to the value and needed influence of this organization.

Inside

- 2 **Validity of Inferences from Test-Based Educational Accountability systems**
- 3 **Site Chosen for 2007 NEI and Call for Proposals**
- 4 **Millman Award Winner and Keynote Speakers**
- 5 **District-University Partnership Model**
- 6 **Leadership as Accountability for Learning**
- 7 **Registration Information**

CREATE is an international group committed to improving the evaluation of educators and educational programs.

Validity of Inferences from Test-Based Educational Accountability Systems

Robert L. Linn

Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing
University of Colorado at Boulder

Most states introduced some form of test-based accountability to make inferences about the effectiveness of schools prior to the enactment of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2001. The state accountability systems varied along a number of dimensions, including the grades and subjects where assessments were administered, the reporting of student achievement results, the use of school report cards, and the sanctions or rewards for schools based on the student achievement results. They also differed in terms of the degree that accountability decisions relied on current status, progress, or a combination of the two. While most states using progress indicators relied on changes in performance of successive cohorts of students (e.g., 4th graders in 1999 vs. 4th graders in 2000) to evaluate progress, a few states used a longitudinal approach to track the achievement of individual students from one grade to the next.

Test-based educational accountability systems are intended to distinguish between schools that are effective and ones that are ineffective. Valid inferences about school quality based on student performance on tests, however, depend on the defensibility of the causal interpretation that differences in student test performance are due to differences in the effectiveness of instruction.

NCLB emphasizes the importance of using “scientifically based research” in making decisions about instructional programs and the Institute of Education Sciences has made it clear that the randomized controlled trials are “the gold standard” for making causal inferences about the effectiveness of alternative programs. Ironically, the NCLB accountability system leads to causal inferences about school quality based on evidence that does not satisfy the tenets of scientifically based research. As was discussed above, there are many explanations other than differences in school quality or the effectiveness of instructional programs that can lead one school to meet its AYP targets while another school does not. School accountability results simply do not provide “direct evidence of the effects of instructional practice” (Raudenbush, 2004a, p. 128).

Students are not randomly assigned to schools. Moreover, neither instructional staff nor instructional programs are randomly assigned to schools. In addition to the lack of randomization, current accountability systems have serious limitations with regard to the data that are available about instructional practices, teacher characteristics, and student characteristics other than student test

scores and some student demographic data such as gender, race/ethnicity, indicators of economic disadvantage, disability status, and English language proficiency.

Valid inferences about school effectiveness require more than student achievement test results. At a minimum, information is also needed about student and teacher characteristics and about instructional practices and uses made of instructional materials. Raudenbush (2004b) has argued that “to be successful, accountability must be informed by other sources of information, and, in particular, information on organizational and instructional practice” (p. 37). Even with such additional information, causal interpretations would be difficult to defend and subject to challenge. They would be on much firmer ground, however, than is possible without the additional information about school organization and instructional practice in the schools being held accountable.

Accountability system results do not need to be used to make causal inferences or to provide the sole basis for sanctions to be of value. Accountability results are valuable as descriptive information about schools. They can raise questions about school quality that can be pursued by the collection of information about school organizational characteristics, teacher characteristics and instructional practice.

Closing gaps in achievement among racial/ethnic subgroups and between economically disadvantaged students and their more affluent peers is clearly an important goal of NCLB. Closing gaps is also critical to achieving greater equity in education. Measuring achievement gaps needs to involve more than the tracking of the percentage of students in various subgroups who score above a single cut score such as the score needed to be proficient on a state assessment.

References

Raudenbush, S. W. (2004a). What are value-added models estimating and what does this imply for statistical practice? *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics*, 29(1), 120-129.

Raudenbush, S. W. (2004b). Schooling, statistics, and poverty: Can we measure school improvement? The ninth annual William H. Angoff Memorial Lecture. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Editor's Note:

The extended version of Dr. Linn's article will appear in the forthcoming Special Issue of the *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education* associated with the CREATE Conference in Dallas (July 6-8, 2006).

SITE CHOSEN FOR 2007 NATIONAL EVALUATION INSTITUTE

The meeting site for the 2007 National Evaluation Institute will be the **Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida** (866-864-9996 or 407-996-9840). Located just 12 minutes from Orlando International Airport, this beautiful 1,334 roomed hotel offers the best in dining, including seven restaurants and lounges, recreation and entertainment. During your stay you'll be within minutes from Universal Orlando, SeaWorld, a 17-acre shopping and entertainment complex and world-class shopping at Florida Mall and The Mall at Millenia.



For those interested in food and entertainment, Orlando offers Walt Disney World Resort, Shingle Creek Golf Club (a 7,213-yard championship course), and CityWalk. This complex is filled with hip, big-name clubs and restaurants sure to please anyone.

Seeking Sponsors for Orlando and Beyond

Putting on a conference such as the National Evaluation Institute (NEI) is a monumental task, both in terms of effort and resources. CREATE seeks to ensure that participants and presenters at the NEI have the optimal experience in terms of quality of presentations, key-note speakers, accommodations, services, equipment, meeting rooms, and opportunities for networking and relaxing. Sponsors are key players in providing these opportunities.

If you or your organization would like to participate as a sponsor for The 2007 National Evaluation Institute, or if you are interested in sponsoring a future NEI, please contact

Robert J Rodosky, at robert.rodosky@jefferson.kyschools.us at your earliest convenience. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

CREATE
The Evaluation Center
Western Michigan University
4405 Ellsworth Hall
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5237 USA
(269) 387-5895

Contributors

Submit your research for the CREATE Newsletter! Send your work to Sandra Horn (Sandy.Horn@sas.com) or Marco Muñoz (marco.munoz@jefferson.kyschools.us) for consideration. Articles should be in electronic format. Submissions of more than two pages may be serialized.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Consortium for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (CREATE) requests proposals for papers and panels to be presented at the 16th annual National Evaluation Institute (NEI) **from October 4 through 6, 2007**, being held at The Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando, Florida. **“Improving Teaching and Learning Through Evaluation”** is the theme of the Institute.

By offering a supportive and stimulating work space, by providing exposure to a wide range of methodologies, and by disseminating the collective expertise of practitioners and researchers from around the nation, the NEI provides a forum for those who are engaged in the use of evaluation and assessment for the benefit of education. Attendees will come away with new contacts, fresh perspectives, and a renewed heart for the difficult, but increasingly important work of educational evaluation in this era of high-stakes accountability.

The Institute solicits a range of papers that address topics and related questions in complementary strand areas. The purpose of the Institute is to disseminate information about the theory, research, and best practices of evaluation in the areas of educational accountability; program, personnel, and student assessment; educational policy; school and classroom practices; and technology as these areas influence school and program effectiveness, student learning, and staff performance in schools and colleges.

Proposals should follow the outline and instructions provided in our website. Proposals will be judged on potential value to the audience, relevance of the topic to the theme, and overall quality. Proposals must be received before **May 31, 2007**. We prefer that proposals be submitted electronically to **www.createconference.org**. If you do not have Internet access, proposals may be faxed (502-485-6255) or e-mailed to: (robert.rodosky@jefferson.kyschools.us) Dr. Robert J. Rodosky, Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools.

Notifications of acceptance status will be sent by the end of June. All presenters and their co-presenters who submit proposals must agree to: a) register for the Institute, b) be at the Institute to deliver the paper/presentation, and c) have the presentation description printed in the Institute program. The Institute will provide presenters with an overhead projector, screen, and/or digital projector (for laptop connection).



2007 National Evaluation Institute Keynote Speakers

Andrew C. Porter



Andrew Porter is the Patricia and Rodes Hart Chair of Educational Leadership and Policy and director of the Learning Sciences Institute at Vanderbilt University. He has published widely on psychometrics, education policy, student assessment, education indicators, and research on teaching. His current work focuses on curriculum policies and their effects on opportunity to learn and student achievement. Currently, he has research support from the National Science Foundation (co-director, *System-Wide Change for All Learners and Educators*; principal investigator, *Longitudinal Design to Measure Effects of Math-Science Partnership Professional Development in Improving the Quality of Instruction and Science Education*); and the Wallace Foundation (principal investigator, *Develop and Test Education Leadership Performance Assessment*). He is an elected member and vice president of the National Academy of Education, member of the National Assessment Governing Board, Lifetime National Associate of the National Academies, and past-President of the American Educational Research Association. Websites: andyporter.org; Vanderbilt.edu/lisi.

Congratulations to our 2007 Millman Award Winner!

Robert Marzano



Dr. Robert Marzano is president of Marzano & Associates. He is the author of more than 20 books, 150 articles and chapters in books, and more than 100 curriculum guides and related materials for teachers and students in grades K-12. His works include *Classroom Management that Works*, *What Works in Schools*, *Classroom Instruction that Works*, and multiple other publications.

Over his 35 years in education, Marzano has worked in every U.S. state and a host of countries in Europe and Asia. The central theme of his work has been translating research and theory into practical programs and tools for K-12 teachers and administrators. In addition to his duties at Marzano & Associates, he is a senior scholar at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), an associate professor at Cardinal Stritch University, and vice-president of Pathfinder Education.

Marzano earned his B.A. degree in English at Iona College, his M.Ed. degree in reading and language arts at Seattle University, and his Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction at the University of Washington.

The Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education to Publish Issue on 2006 NEI

The *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education* is proud to announce the upcoming publication of a special issue 19 (1) on the 2006 National Evaluation Institute held last summer in Dallas, Texas. This issue, guest edited by Dr. Marco Muñoz and

Dr. Bob Rodosky, will include keynote addresses by:

Millman Award Winner, Dr. Bob Linn on “Validity of Inferences”

Dr. Sam Stringfield on “National and Local Data Bases to co-CREATE Education”

Dr. Veronica Thomas on “Cultural and Context Evaluation”

Additional research articles based on presentations by:

Dr. Geneva Price on “Principal Recruitment”

Dr. Florence Chang on “Character Education”

Judi Vanderhaar on “Principal Preparation and Student Achievement”

Dr. Diane Calhoun on “Cognitive Coaching Model”

Dr. Hussain Al-Fadhli on “Teachers' Expectancy and Efficacy”

Dr. Randall Shumacker on “Regression Discontinuity Design”

Finally, commentary on NEI discussions is provided by:

Dr. Lindy Crawford

Dr. Chris Gareis

This issue is scheduled for publication in April, 2007.

PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITY

If you would like your paper to be considered for publication in a special issue of the *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education* (JPEE), please submit a 5-page synopsis including the following sections: Introduction, Methodology, Results (or Findings), and Discussion. We will invite a select number of people to submit a full manuscript by September 1, 2007 for publication in a special issue of the journal. Send your synopsis for consideration to Marco Muñoz @ marco.munoz@jefferson.kyschools.us.

A District-University Partnership Model

Marco A. Muñoz, Jefferson County Public Schools
Paul A. Winter, University of Louisville

Today, in light of the NCLB legislation, most of the research studies will involve an experimental or quasi-experimental design because the primary question is about how well the program or services work. The NCLB legislation requires that only those strategies and methods proven effective by the standard of scientifically based research should be included in reforming schools. With this concept in mind, the overarching goal of establishing research partnerships is to match school and university needs and resources through collaborative initiatives.

In this discussion, it is relevant to understand that the needs of the two parties typically differ in important ways. School districts and universities differ in purpose, functions, structures, clientele, reward systems, rules, regulations, and ethos (Goodlad, 1988). School districts have an orientation toward action, while the university professors have a more reflective orientation; in fact, educational researchers have been accused of addressing theoretical research problems that have no direct impact on real-life educational research settings (Cuban, 1992; Finn, 1988). This has often been characterized as a research-practitioner dichotomy (Schlechty & Whitford, 1988).

On one hand, school districts need practical information that serves as the basis for establishing policies and procedures. However, highly sophisticated reports involving advanced statistical procedures and terminology may be of little use to school districts seeking to take practical actions. Professors, on the other hand, while interested in the practical consequences of their research, must be concerned with the theoretical and research implications of their investigations. A priority of professors in research institutions is publishing their studies in national and international refereed journals. The well-known adage relative to earning tenure and promotion in higher education is "publish or perish." Given these differing needs, what is a good approach for establishing a productive research partnership between school district officials and university professors?

The partnership began with JCPS initiatives to establish research contacts with professors at the UofL. JCPS officials from the district's Department of Accountability, Research, and Planning made several campus visits, meeting with groups of five to 10 professors at a time. These meetings resulted in preliminary matches between district research needs and professor research capabilities. Subsequently, professors and district personnel met at the district central office to plan and design research projects. The backward mapping (BM) methodology was used to frame and develop the key elements of the collaborative research model. BM starts with a specification of the desired endpoint and then works backwards to determine what must be done to answer research, evaluation, and/or policy questions (Munoz, 2005).

The first step of the model is to identify the purpose of the study. The purpose must include a common interest of both district administrators and university faculty. At the early stages of the study, it is important to identify the report's intended practitioner audience. The objective is to link theory (academicians) with the world of practice (school personnel).

The second step is the research design to be employed to answer research questions. It is important to remember the dual nature of the research design: (a) basic, descriptive design for the district officials; and (b) advanced, sophisticated design for preparation of the manuscript. Here, university faculty plays a major role.

The third step is instrumentation and data collection. At this stage, one must define the data needs. The instruments used need to serve the dual purpose of (a) collecting action-ready information for district officials and (b) collecting empirical data for further analysis by faculty. Faculty involved in the project must ensure the instruments' reliability and validity. In this sense, faculty takes the lead in developing the instruments, but in close collaboration with the school district. The school district takes the lead in collecting the data. The fourth step is analyzing and reporting the data. University faculty takes the lead in analyzing the data. Faculty and school district officials work together on reporting findings. In terms of reports, an executive summary from top administrators is the initial reporting procedure. At this stage, it is also important to develop a managerial report that contains more detailed information for the program managers; the language, should be kept practical. A technical manuscript with advanced statistical procedure is written for purposes of publication in refereed journals; this fulfills the faculty's need to publish.

The fifth and final step is following up study results. In this particular stage, school district officials play a major role. The use of findings is a major challenge. Empowering the district officials involved in the study is critical for success at this last stage of the research partnership.

There is a renewed interest in the concept of school district and university research collaboration for educational innovation and improvement (Johnston & Kirschner, 2005; Ravid & Handler, 2001; Zimpher & Howey, 2004). This article provided information about a research partnership between a school district and one university. The school district and the university established this research partnership to meet school and university needs and to share research resources. The research partnership described here has been further expanded to include doctoral students interested in conducting internships, particularly during the dissertation phase. These initiatives have the benefits of helping JCPS gain needed information to inform policy, providing research experiences for doctoral students, and helping practicing administrators become more data-driven decision makers.

Leadership as Accountability for Learning

Judi Vanderhaar, ABD, Marco Muñoz, Ed.D.
and Robert Rodosky, Ph.D.

School districts are finding it increasingly difficult to hire and retain qualified principals able of affecting the academic performance of all children. The shortage of public school administrators is becoming a crisis nationwide due to the lack of sufficient numbers of qualified applicants (Whitaker, 2001) and the massive retirements (Winter, Rinehart, & Muñoz, 2002). Enhancing administrator recruitment is an urgent task given the declining numbers of individuals willing to pursue the job (McAdams, 1998) and the increased responsibilities school reform programs place on administrators (Murphy & Beck, 1994). In the current era of high stakes accountability, school leadership preparation must play a central role in increasing student academic achievement. Consequently, many school districts and universities are focusing their efforts towards principal preparation training.

The purpose of our study was to examine the relationship between school principal preparation and student achievement in a large urban district. Since leadership is contingent on the setting, this study was framed by a concentration of poverty analyses. Multiple quantitative techniques were employed to construct a conceptual model of predictors of multiple student achievement measures. A central finding of this study was that the impact of both district and university driven principal preparation programs were mediated by the context in which leadership was exerted. Confirming previous research findings, student poverty, average teacher experience and previous test achievement were the strongest predictors of student achievement. With respect to impact of principal tenure, a positive significant correlation was found between number of years at the school location and student achievement. Principals between four and six years at their locations have the highest yearly gains. According to Fullan (2000), it takes about three years to achieve successful change in student performance in an elementary school; furthermore, depending on size, it takes about six years to do so in a secondary school.

This study generated a conceptual model in which poverty, teaching experience, prior achievement, number of years in school location, and principal preparation program predicted student achievement. Still, the limitation of the direct effects model is that it is not a comprehensive framework for viewing the principal's role in school effectiveness (Hallinger, Bickman, & Davis, 1996). The principal is both a dependent and independent variable; as a dependent variable, the principal is subject to the influence of other variable within the school and its environment, particularly the concentration of school poverty. Perhaps the most important implication for practice that emerges from this study is that school context should be an important consideration in preparation program designs (Marzano et al., 2005). Principals who will be placed in high poverty locations should be armed with the specific set of knowledge and skills

required to effectively lead in that context. Despite the clear national and state interest in principal preparation programs, many school districts are engaging in leadership initiatives that, although worthy, might detract from increasing academic achievement. Principal preparation programs that have a diminished focus on increasing academic performance should be re-defined. High-quality principal preparation programs can and should promote student academic achievement.

Job opportunities at University of North Carolina Wilmington~

Opportunity to join a 60-member faculty in a growing school of education recognized for quality and leadership at the local, state, regional and national levels. The Watson School (www.uncw.edu/ed) enjoys strong support from our Chancellor, Provost, Deans and from our 10-district university/school partnership.

UNCW is a dynamic and growing campus of the 16-campus UNC system situated on 640 acres in the historic port of Wilmington, five miles from the Atlantic Ocean. The University is rated as one of the top 10 public universities in the south by *US News and World Report*. Current enrollment is 11,500 undergraduates and 1,000 graduate students. UNCW and the Watson School value and reward undergraduate and graduate teaching, encourage and support faculty research and sustain a high level of service to public education and the profession. The school is accredited by NCATE and all programs are approved by the state of North Carolina. The WSE is housed in a new state-of-the-art education building.

The Watson School seeks applicants for a number of exciting positions which will begin in Fall, 2007 (excluding the Chair positions which will begin July 1, 2007). Of particular interest to CREATE members may be:

- **Associate or Full Professor to Chair the Department of Educational Leadership** beginning July 1, 2007.
- **Assistant or Associate Professor of Educational Research and Leadership** to join the Department of Educational Leadership in fall 2007.

Further information on these positions and others in the Watson School can be found at <http://www.uncw.edu/ed/jobs/>



**2007 National Evaluation Institute • October 4-6, 2007
The Rosen Centre Hotel
Orlando, Florida**

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Institution/Affiliation: _____ Title/Position: _____

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The Comprehensive registration fee includes: one evening reception, two breakfasts, one lunch, workshop materials, and also includes an individual CREATE membership for 2007-2008.

Continuing education Units will be offered for a small fee. Please check if you are interested.

		After (6/1/07)	
Comprehensive Registration	\$225	\$250	
Orlando Area Professional and Graduate Students	\$125	\$150	
Guest Rate*	\$25	\$35	

(*The guest rate is for the NEI participants' guests to attend the reception and meals)

Cancellation/Refund Policy: A 75 percent refund will be made for cancellations received before June 1, 2007. A 50 percent refund will be made for any cancellation between June 1 and June 30. No refunds will be made after June 30, 2007. Substitutions may be made at any time.

CREATE Membership Fee Only

Individual

Institutional

Student (Must show ID)

- 1 Year— \$ 60
- 3 Years—\$150

- 1 Year—\$175 (Up to Four Individuals)
- 3 Years—\$450 (Up to Four Individuals)

- 1 Year—\$45

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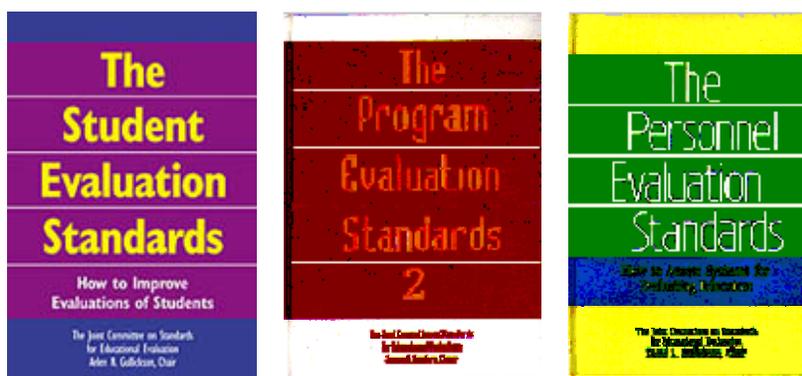
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