



Consortium for Research on
Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation

www.createconference.org

CREATE

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The vision of the Consortium for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (CREATE) is improved student learning, development, and achievement in PK-12 schools, institutes of higher education, and other educational



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Marco Muñoz, Ed.D.

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As we are getting closer to the due date for submission of proposals, I would like to welcome the great group of colleagues across the nation that already submitted their proposals and encourage the colleagues that are planning on submitting to do so before the deadline (June 1, 2009). The opportunity to exchange ideas with other researchers and evaluators is one of the primary benefits of attending and/or presenting at the National Evaluation Institute in Louisville (October 8-10, 2009). I am hoping that during and after the conference you will take the initiative to make connections and build relationships with other professionals focused on improving our educational system.

In this Newsletter, you will find great articles from Doris Redfield and Joseph Murphy. Dr. Redfield writes about the pre-conference workshop (Thursday morning, October 8, 2009): the hot topic of formative assessment. Formative assessment is a particularly complex topic because there is some misunderstanding about what it is or how it should or should not be used. One point is clear: effective formative classroom assessment serves an informing and action-oriented function. We will continue to deepen our understanding about formative assessment in the workshop with Dr. Redfield.

As organization, we need to strike a great balance among teaching-embedded formative assessment, classroom assessment, benchmark assessment, and our annual state tests (particularly if the state test is instructionally sensitive--another issue for further discussion). The bottom line is to develop our pre-service and in-service teachers in the area of assessment literacy as expressed in our treasured Student Evaluation Standards (Joint Committee, 2003).

Dr. Murphy writes about the achievement gap. He reminds us how achievement gaps in education have important consequences for individuals and for the nation as a whole. In particular, he emphasizes that gaps are associated negatively with measures of educational attainment, employment opportunities, and earnings. However, his message is also about hope as he argues that the Black-White tests score gap does not appear to be an inevitable fact of nature and—more importantly, there are strategies that we can actually put into action. More to learn from Dr. Murphy at the conference!

As you can see, these are very exciting times for CREATE. As a professional organization, CREATE is becoming stronger every year. We have instituted a strong program committee, a high-quality Newsletter. Currently, we are in the process of exploring an on-line journal, revising our bylaws, and examining opportunities for attracting funding to expand our CREATE services. More importantly, we have signed a contract with the University of North Carolina at Wilmington to start consolidating our CREATE processes and services in one office. We are moving from good to great!

If you have an item that you would like the Board of Directors to consider, please contact me. We have a Board meeting after the conference. We will also have our regular business meeting during the conference and the membership drives the agenda. I welcome your input and hope to get the opportunity to see each of you in October (8-10) at our annual meeting in Louisville, Kentucky.

Formative Assessment: Informing or Informant?

Doris Redfield, Ph.D.
Edvantia, Inc.

H. L. Menken once observed, “For every complex problem, there is a solution that is simple, neat, and wrong.” Unfortunately, much the same can be said about education solutions that involve the use of assessments.

Assessment itself is a complex issue with technical, political, and emotional aspects. Discussions about formative assessment, in particular, can be complicated by the fact that there is not universal agreement about what it is or how it should or should not be used. Is formative assessment’s primary purpose to inform teachers, students, and parents about important next steps in instruction and learning? Or is it to assess what students have already learned or achieved and hold someone(s) accountable?

Evaluation and Assessment

For the purposes of this discussion, assessment is treated as a subset of evaluation. Here, evaluation is viewed as pertaining to programs and processes, whereas assessment is viewed as pertaining to students’ performance or response to instruction.

Summative vs. Formative Assessment

Typically, the evaluation of the impact of an educational program or process includes student assessment results. But what kind of results: formative or summative? The answer depends on how the results are used. If we are interested in program impact, student assessment results would be treated *summatively* because they are being used to make judgments about the effectiveness of a particular program or process on student learning outcomes. Assessments of student learning administered by state education agencies are used *summatively* to determine the extent to which schools are achieving adequate yearly progress (AYP) or similar markers of success. Such results are inadequate for guiding the fine-grained instructional decisions made daily by classroom teachers, but they inform the need for system and program modifications.

Assessments are used *formatively* when they guide day-to-day instruction and are not used for accountability purposes at any level. That means they are used to inform planning and next steps but do not contribute directly to students’ grades, appraisals of teacher effectiveness, school accountability, or other accountability measures.

Benchmark/Interim Formative Assessments and Classroom Formative Assessments

Benchmark assessments, sometimes referred to as interim assessments, are assessments that can be used in multiple ways. For example, a teacher may administer a benchmark or interim exam to assign individual student grades for a unit or course of study. In this case, the test results are being used *summatively* relative to the students concerned. However, the results might also be used by the teacher as a tool for modifying curriculum delivery. When this happens, the teacher is using the collective results *formatively* to modify an instructional program or process.

School districts and state education agencies sometimes administer benchmark or interim assessments and use the results to “flag” areas that may require additional programmatic or instructional attention prior to administration of end-of-year or end-of-course state accountability tests.

When benchmark/interim exams are used in this way, they are being used *formatively* at the program or system level. While the results may provide teachers with a gross level of instructional guidance for individual students, they are inadequate for tailoring daily instruction to the learning needs of individual students.

Formative Classroom Assessment

Assessment is but one aspect of an effective system for learning, and classroom formative assessment is an aspect of high-quality instruction. The Council of Chief State School Officers defines classroom formative assessment as “a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students’ achievement of intended instructional outcomes” (Redfield, Roeber, Stiggins, & Philip, 2008). This definition indicates that classroom formative assessments are, indeed, part of instructional strategy and not “tests,” per se. Formative classroom assessment results (which may take the form of teacher observations during instruction) are intended to provide real-time feedback to teachers and students so that quick action can be taken to close the gap between current and desired student performance.

Characteristics of Effective Formative Classroom Assessment

Effective formative classroom assessment serves an “informing” function. Its key characteristics are as follows:

1. Teachers are clear about the progressive instructional and learning steps that lead to student success relative to a particular learning goal.
2. Learning goals and the criteria for successful performance are clearly communicated to students.
3. Students are provided with evidence-based feedback about their performance relative to the learning goals and criteria for success.
4. Students are taught and expected to engage in self- and peer assessment to help them think about their learning.
5. The classroom culture is one in which students are bona fide partners in the learning process. (McManus et al., 2008)

References

- McManus, S., et al. (2008). *Attributes of effective formative assessment* [A work product prepared for the Formative Assessment for Teachers and Students (FAST) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) of the Council of Chief State School Officers]. Retrieved from <http://www.ccsso.org/publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=362>
- Redfield, D., Roeber, E., Stiggins, R., & Philip, F. (2008). *Building balanced assessment systems to guide educational improvement*. [A background paper developed for the Council of Chief State School Officers National Conference on Student Assessment, Orlando, FL]. Retrieved from <http://www.ccsso.org/content/PDFs/OpeningSessionPaper-Final.pdf>
- Dr. Redfield is president and CEO of Edvantia, Inc., an education research and development corporation with offices in West Virginia and Tennessee. A nationally recognized authority on education assessment, research, and evaluation, she has authored nearly 200 published articles, books, presentations, and reports.*

2009 National Evaluation Institute
“Pre-Conference Workshop”

October 8, 2009
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon

Doris Redfield, Ph.D.
Edvantia, Inc.

***“Leadership for Formative Classroom Assessment:
What Does it Mean? Why Does it Matter? How Can it Happen?”***

Comprehensive assessment systems, balanced assessment systems, and formative assessment are terms on the minds and lips of most everyone engaged in the education enterprise: policymakers, practitioners, and researchers. This interactive workshop will help leaders at all levels - state, district, school, classroom, and higher education – to better understand the “what, why, and how” of designing and implementing formative assessments. Particular emphasis will be given to supporting the development and use of classroom assessments that are integrated into the instructional process and serve student learning. Workshop activities will promote common understandings and meaningful exchange among workshop participants and provide opportunities for them to think through the “next steps” to take in their respective roles and contexts.

Dr. Doris Redfield is a nationally known authority on education assessment, research, and evaluation. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to her role as Edvantia's chief executive officer.

In addition to having a rich background in the world of research and assessment, Redfield has applied her skills as a psychometrist, psychologist, and teacher in the K-20 arena. Other experiences include tenure as chief of research, evaluation, and assessment for the Virginia Department of Education; consultant to the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) on assessment issues; visiting scholar at the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST); senior associate at the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), with national agenda development and oversight responsibilities in the areas of assessment, school reform, and technology; and professor of educational psychology (psychometrics, research, tests and measurements, and human learning & development) at Western Kentucky University.

Redfield is the author of nearly 200 published articles, books, presentations, and reports, including *Critical Issues in Large-Scale Assessment* and *Handbook for Professional Development in Assessment Literacy*, both published by CCSSO. She also coauthored *Scientifically Based Research: A Guide for Education Publishers and Developers* and authored a parallel guide for educators, *An Educator's Guide to Scientifically Based Research*.

Her expertise has been tapped by numerous boards and advisory groups. Currently, Redfield serves as a member of West Virginia's Technical Advisory Committee for Assessment and Accountability. She also serves as board chair of the Knowledge Alliance, a national organization that advocates for high quality educational research and the dissemination of findings in ways that are useful to practitioners and policymakers. Redfield's doctorate is in educational psychology from the University of Arizona. She majored in measurement/research/evaluation and minored in learning/development.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS for the 2009 NEI

Ronald Ferguson, Ph.D.

Dr. Ronald Ferguson is an MIT-trained economist whose work over three decades has focused on economic, social and educational challenges in urban America. Issues of racial and ethnic inequality have been a central focus. He joined the faculty at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government in September 1983, after teaching at Brandeis and Brown Universities.

For the past decade, Dr. Ferguson's research has focused on racial achievement gaps, appearing in publications of the National Research Council, the Brookings Institution, the U.S. Department of Education, the Educational Research Service and various other books and journals. He is the creator and director of the Tripod Project for school improvement and the faculty co-chair and director of the Achievement Gap Initiative (AGI) at Harvard (www.agi.harvard.edu). The AGI is a university-wide endeavor that also reaches beyond Harvard and brings together researchers, policy makers and practitioners to work on school improvement, parenting, and youth culture to help raise achievement and narrow gaps. He is the author most recently of the book, *Toward Excellence with Equity: An emerging vision for closing the achievement gap*, December 2007, from Harvard Education Press.

Joseph Murphy, PhD.

Joseph Murphy is associate dean and professor of education at Vanderbilt University, Peabody College of Education. His work is in the area of school improvement, with special emphasis on leadership and policy. He has authored or co-authored 15 books and two major monographs in this area and edited another 12 books. His most recent authored volumes include: "Understanding and Assessing the Charter School Movement" (2002), "Leadership for Literacy" (2004), "Connecting Teacher Leadership and School Improvement" (2005), "Preparing School Leaders: An Agenda for Research and Action" (2006) and "Turning Around Failing Schools: Leadership Lessons from the Organizational Sciences" (2008). He has also published more than 200 articles and book chapters on school improvement and leadership.

Murphy directed the development of the ISLLC Standards for School Leaders and chaired the research panel that produced the revisions to those standards-ISLLC: 2008. He led the CCSSO team that developed the specifications with ETS for the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA). He is also one of the co-creators of the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED).

Dan Stufflebeam, Ph.D.

Dr. Stufflebeam retired in 2007 as Distinguished University Professor at Western Michigan University (WMU). Following graduate school, he began his university career in 1963 as Director of The Ohio State University (OSU) Test Development Center. In 1965 the Test Development Center was converted to the OSU Evaluation Center in order to address the nationwide need for advancements in educational evaluation. He directed The Evaluation Center at OSU until moving it to WMU in 1973. He then directed The Evaluation Center at WMU through August, 2002. He chaired the Phi Delta Kappa National Study Committee on Evaluation that produced the classic, 1971 text, *Educational Evaluation and Decision Making*. He founded the national Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, chaired it during its first 13 years, and was the principal author of the original Joint Committee standards for program evaluation and personnel evaluation. He was also the founding director of the federally-supported, national Center for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Education (CREATE). In 2002, he designed WMU's Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Evaluation, which enrolls students across a wide range of disciplines and service areas and form throughout the world.

Besides his contributions to the development and advocacy of the evaluation profession, Dr. Stufflebeam developed one of the first models for systematic evaluation, the CIPP Model for Evaluation (Context, Input, Process, and Product). His publications, which include 18 books and about 100 journal articles and book chapters, have appeared in eight languages. He has earned many recognitions including the CREATE inaugural Jason Millman Award (1997).

The Leadership Challenge and the Achievement Gap

Dr. Joseph Murphy, Vanderbilt University

Racial equality is still a dream—and will remain a dream as long as blacks learn less in school than whites and Asians (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2002).

Over the last decade, considerable attention has been devoted to the achievement gap problem in our nation's schools. Educational researchers are portraying learning differentials between minority students and white youngsters as well as between children from lower- and higher-income homes. More importantly, considerable research efforts have been headed toward exploring the causes of the problem as well as particular strategies to help us reduce the achievement gap issue.

A careful reading of scholarship in this area offers up a series of cautions that educational policy makers and other leaders are advised to attend to in their efforts to address racial, ethnic, and social class gaps in school performance. As educators, we need to make sure to examine the importance of achievement gaps not only for individuals, but for the larger society. From my perspective, we need to examine the achievement gap problem with some cautions; I have found to be important to classify the set of cautions in four broad domains: (a) understanding gap data; (b) interpreting data; (c) efforts to close gaps; and, (d) outcomes of gap-closure work.

Achievement gaps in education have important consequences for individuals and for the nation as a whole. Gaps are associated negatively with measures of educational attainment, employment opportunities, and earnings. Achievement gaps damage the economic and social fabric of society, undermine civil rights and social justice for a growing segment of the population, and destroy the principles of democracy.

Going forward naively, however, will do no one any good. It should be clear that closing gaps will be arduous work. Yet there is a real sense of hope here as well. A moral ground swell has materialized around the achievement gap problem, one that supplements the press for action resulting from the changing economic and social conditions of a post-industrial world. Across the spectrum, we have discovered that the Black-White tests score gap does not appear to be an inevitable fact of nature (Jencks & Phillips, 1998). We know that academic abilities are not simply inherited aptitudes, but are subject to change

through a broad range of social and educational interventions. We also have some fairly impressive examples of places that are tackling the problem effectively, by using cooperative learning, small class sizes, pre-school programs, and extended time for learning delivered by great teachers.

The achievement gap requires a well-thought approach to resolve it. Schools do not create the achievement gap and cannot close it by themselves. This requires a society-wide solution, a partnership between schools and community groups.

Jencks, C. & Phillips, M. (1998, September-October). America's next achievement test. *The American Prospect*, 40, 44-53.

Thernstrom, A., & Thernstrom, S. (2002). Schools that work. In J.E. Chubb & T. Loveless (Eds.), *Bridging the achievement gap* (131-156). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

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in the
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We welcome articles associated with educational evaluation and accountability. We prioritize articles presented at the annual National Evaluation Institute. Articles should be sent in electronic format and should be approximately two pages in length (singled spaced), Times New Roman, font 12.

Submit to: marco.munoz@jefferson.kyschools.us
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Proposal Form
2009 National Evaluation Institute
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October 8 - 10, 2009
The Brown Hotel • 335 West Broadway
Louisville, KY

We prefer that proposals be submitted electronically to www.createconference.org.
If, for reasons beyond your control, you cannot submit it electronically, we will accept your proposal
by fax at 502-485-6255.

Proposals must be received by June 1, 2009.

Name and Title of Presenter: _____

Affiliation: _____

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Name and Title of Co-Presenter*: _____

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*You may include another page to list additional co-presenters

I.
Circle the type of presentation.

- a. Paper
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Presenters will be notified of their proposal’s acceptance in
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REGISTRATION OPTIONS	On or before 8/1/09	After 8/1/09	Graduate Student (Include copy of Student ID)
Pre-Conference ONLY <i>Thursday, October 8, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Lunch included.</i> • Does NOT include conference registration.	___ \$200	___ \$225	___ \$100
Conference & CREATE membership ONLY*	___ \$200	___ \$225	___ \$100
CREATE membership ONLY*	___ \$60	N/A	___ \$50
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COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE: Conference Registration, Pre-Conference Workshop, and CREATE membership*	___ \$300	___ \$325	___ \$150
Multiple Participants Discounted Fee—DEDUCT \$25 PER PERSON • 4 or more conference registrations submitted at once. • Discount does NOT apply to “Pre-Conference ONLY” option. • Please complete a separate registration for each participant and mail all registrations together.	___ -\$25/person	___ -\$25/person	N/A
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**National Evaluation Institute
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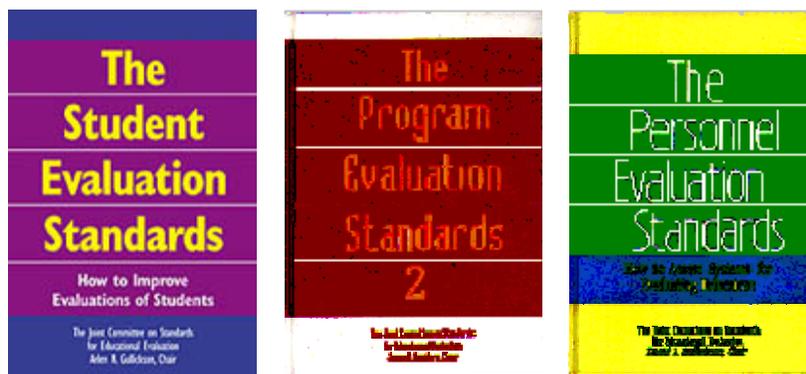
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