



Research UPDATE

College of Education
Utah State University

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COE Sponsored Research Symposium
Monday, March 18, 2002

Conrad Katzenmeyer

Senior Program Director for Evaluation
Division of Research, Evaluation, and Communication
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Symposium and Luncheon: 12:00 to 1:30 PM, Walnut Room, Taggart Student Center
Doctoral Student Seminar: 10:30 to 11:30 AM in EDUC 487C. For details and to RSVP call Wendy at 797-1469.



Research and Statistics Colloquium
Thursday, March 21, 2002

Jeff Douglas, PhD

DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Symposium: 3:30 to 4:30 PM, Business Room 322
Refreshments served: 3:00 PM, Lund Hall Foyer

Sponsored by the Departments of Psychology and Mathematics and Statistics and by the COE Office of Research.

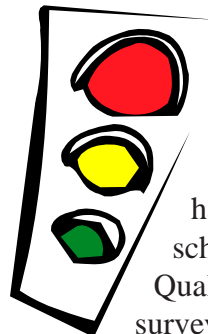
ALERT

The Center for the School of the Future is designing an online assessment system to monitor the social atmosphere of schools. ALERT (Analysis Linking Evidence of Response Trends) generates continuous counts of social and antisocial behaviors with an instantaneous reporting available online. Students engage the ALERT system on school computers at random times during their school day and respond to a few questions about what did or did not happen to them the day before. Data are collected on the CSF server, and daily and weekly reports are available to the school administration online. The Center is currently collecting pilot data in several schools along the Wasatch Front.

From the Associate Dean

Let me introduce you to the Center for the School of the Future. Established in 1996, the Center seeks to “*improve the quality and effectiveness of education through identifying, researching, and developing proven educational practices and supporting their dissemination and adoption in local circumstances.*” In other words, let’s see what works in education and get that information out to the people who need it. In this issue of the newsletter, we share with you several of the important and timely projects that Center staff are working on.

Carol Strong



A Report Card for Schools: Indicators of School Quality

The Center for the School of the Future has developed a new method of assessing school satisfaction: the Indicators of School Quality (ISQ) instrument. ISQ is a comprehensive survey system for school administrators to evaluate and monitor school improvement efforts. It summarizes the perceptions of parents, teachers, students, and other school staff regarding more than 30 crucial operations and characteristics of the school.

The truly unique feature of the ISQ is its reporting system. ISQ summarizes the seven core domains (parent support, teacher excellence, student commitment, administration, instructional quality, resource accessibility, and safety) by the four respondent audiences (parents, teachers, students, and non-teaching employees) in an exclusive format called Signal Analysis, which works on a traffic signal metaphor. Each domain and item is given a color grade based on the results of the survey. Green is better than yellow, which is better than red; and purple is reserved for exemplary practice.

In addition to measuring satisfaction, the survey asks

parents and teachers to order the seven domains, providing school administrators with an idea of how to prioritize school improvement strategies. ISQ reports also summarize the data at the item level and disaggregate data by important demographic variables. In addition, ISQ reports have a special format for expressing the results of longitudinal data.

The Center has conducted ISQ assessments in school districts across the state of Utah and in schools in several other states. Most participating schools conduct the ISQ annually, finding the data relevant to school improvement efforts and school reports.

High School Completion Study



The Center for the School of the Future was authorized by the Utah State Legislature and contracted by the Utah State Office of Education to conduct research into minority student graduation in this state. The mission of this study was twofold: first, to identify risk factors and successful programs and program characteristics that will improve graduation rates among students at risk of not graduating; and second, to summarize, across Utah's 40 school districts, the uniformity of tracking students and employing a common definition of dropout.

As part of this research, the Center conducted an exhaustive literature review, surveyed all 50 states on their best efforts in dropout prevention, again surveyed all 50 states on the use of gateway testing, interviewed all 40 districts in the state of Utah about student tracking and employing the national dropout definition, and conducted surveys and community forums in Utah's most diverse schools.

Research indicated that the core reasons students left school could be traced to academic success and social connectedness. In addition, data suggested that dropout reporting in Utah is unreliable. Recommendations to the state were to place an emphasis on literacy, to decrease coercive methods of

behavior management, and to plan ahead for remediating those students who fail the upcoming basic skills tests.

Prevention Plus Making Peaceability a Possibility

School violence is a growing problem in schools across the country. The Center for the School of the Future is actively taking a role to reduce violent acts in school through developing a program entitled, Prevention Plus: Making Peaceability a Possibility.

Prevention Plus is a school violence prevention program that focuses on helping youth develop appropriate behavior through positive praise, youth mentors, and non-coercive discipline. Staff members at the Center implement the program in schools here in Cache Valley and the surrounding areas. Some of the schools involved are River Heights, Millville, North Park, Park Elementary, Greenville, and Syracuse.

The CSF staff consult with the schools to determine their areas of need or where violence occurs. Then together, they determine which parts of the curriculum to implement. CSF staff, in addition to implementing the program, train school staff so they too can create a peaceful school environment.

Peaceability really is a possibility for our schools and the Prevention Plus is a curriculum that achieves that goal. For more information about the goals and objectives of this project, visit the web site for the Center for the School of the Future at www.csf.usu.edu.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Scholar-Researcher of the Year

Frank Ascione, PhD

Psychology Department

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