

**Subject:** CPRE In-sites, Issue #39 (October 2006)  
**From:** Kelly Stanton Fair <stantonk@gse.upenn.edu>  
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**To:** stantonk@gse.upenn.edu



## October 2006 In-Sites

### New From CPRE Researchers

#### **Capturing the Cumulative Effects of School Reform: An 11-Year Study of the Impacts of America's Choice on Student Achievement**

This article by Henry May and Jonathan A. Supovitz appears in *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* (Vol. 28, No. 3, pages 231–257). It presents the results of an 11-year longitudinal study of the impact of America's Choice comprehensive school reform (CSR) design on student learning gains in Rochester, New York. A quasi-experimental interrupted time series approach using Bayesian hierarchical growth curve analysis with crossed random effects is used to compare the annual gains in test performance of students attending America's Choice schools to those of students attending other Rochester schools and to those of students attending America's Choice schools before they adopted this CSR model. Findings reveal significant annual effects, which accumulate over time, in elementary and middle-grades reading and mathematics.

Click [here](#) to obtain a copy of this article.

### Recent Publications

#### **CPRE Presentations Offered at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting in San Francisco**

At the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) last April in San Francisco, many CPRE researchers delivered presentations. CPRE's recent work with high schools was featured in a session titled "Changing Times: How High Schools and External Improvement Organizations Work Together." Findings from CPRE-Wisconsin research on resource allocation and on teacher quality was reported in several sessions. CPRE has recently begun to study the measurement of school leadership for evaluation of large-scale programs, and a session addressed early findings. Several papers describing CPRE's ongoing research on comprehensive school reform, the Study of Instructional Improvement, were also presented.

To download copies of papers on these topics and other papers by CPRE researchers presented at the AERA meeting, click [here](#).

#### **A Multilevel Bayesian IRT Method for Scaling Socioeconomic Status in International Studies of Education**

This article by Henry May recently appeared the Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics (Vol. 31, No. 1), which publishes papers that develop original statistical methods useful for the applied statistician working in educational or behavioral research. Dr. May's article examines a new method for deriving a scale of Socioeconomic Status (SES) from international survey data using a multilevel Bayesian Item Response Theory (IRT) model.

To purchase a copy of this article, click [here](#).

## **The Black-White Achievement Gap: Do State Policies Matter?**

This article by Henry I. Braun, Aubrey Wang, Frank Jenkins, and Elliot Weinbaum, published recently in Education Policy Analysis Archives (Vol. 14, No. 8), addresses a longstanding issue in American education, the gap in academic achievement between majority and minority students. The article accumulates and evaluates evidence on the relationship between state education policies and changes in the gap, while addressing some of the methodological issues that have led to differences in interpretations of earlier findings. The authors found substantial heterogeneity among states in the types of policies they pursued, as well as in the coherence and consistency of those policies during the period 1988-1998. States' overall policy rankings correlate moderately with their record in improving Black student achievement but are somewhat less useful in predicting their record in reducing achievement gaps. State reform efforts are a blunt tool, but a tool nonetheless. The authors make recommendations for state policymakers, such as direct support of local reform efforts with proven effectiveness in addressing the experiences of students of different races attending the same schools.

To obtain a copy of this article, click [here](#).

## **Standards-Based Teacher Evaluation as a Foundation for Knowledge- and Skill-Based Pay**

A new CPRE Policy Brief by Herbert G. Heneman III, Anthony Milanowski, Steven M. Kimball, and Allan Odden has recently been published. The brief presents findings from the CPRE Teacher Compensation Group's research on knowledge- and skill-based pay conducted at four sites and using the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the competency model for evaluating teachers' knowledge and skills. Examined are the relationships between teacher evaluation scores and student achievement, teacher and administrator reactions to standards-based evaluation, the effects of such evaluation on teaching practice, and the impact of design and implementation processes. To address the promise and challenges of knowledge- and skill-based pay systems that the research reveals, the brief concludes with guidelines and caveats for using the systems.

To download a copy of this brief, click [here](#).

## **Scaling Up Instructional Improvement Through Teacher Professional Development: Insights From the Local Systemic Change Initiative**

This CPRE Policy Brief by Iris R. Weiss and Joan D. Pasley of Horizon Research, Inc. summarizes the findings of Horizon's evaluation of a major professional development program funded by the National Science Foundation: Local Systemic Change Through Teacher Enhancement. Now in its final stage, this program has trained 70,000 teachers working with an estimated two million students, mostly at the K-8 level, since its establishment in 1995. The brief examines the design, impact, and systemic support components of the initiative and discusses key challenges and successes. Although the impact on improving teachers' understanding of mathematics and science content was generally modest, the program succeeded in providing a large number of teachers with more high-quality professional development around mathematics and science than is typical, and individual local projects built considerable stakeholder and policy support for ongoing work in accordance with the program's vision.

To download a copy of this brief, click [here](#).

## **Books by Current and Former CPRE Researchers**

## **The Case for District-Based Reform**

Jonathan A. Supovitz

This volume by CPRE Senior Researcher Jonathan A. Supovitz will be published this month by Harvard Education Press. It examines comprehensive school reform in one representative district. In 1999, under the superintendency of retired Air Force major John Fryer, the Duval County (Fla.) school system set out to improve every school in the district. Over the next five years, the district achieved stunning results that have drawn nationwide attention.

Supovitz uses the unfolding story of Duval County to develop a sophisticated and thoughtful analysis of the role of the school district in enacting large-scale reform. Drawing on interviews, surveys, and extensive first-hand observation, Supovitz chalks a vivid portrait. His book weaves together seamlessly the account of leadership and change in one district with an investigation of the larger questions associated with this particular approach to school reform.

For more information and to order the volume from Harvard Education Press, click [here](#).

## **New Directions in Education Policy Implementation: Confronting Complexity**

Meredith I. Honig (Ed.)

This volume, published by State University of New York Press, features articles on education policy implementation by a number of distinguished scholars in the field, including CPRE researchers James P. Spillane and Heather C. Hill. Education policy implementation is defined in the volume as the complex product of the interaction among particular policies, people, and places. The contributors analyze past and present implementation research and show that current research builds on the past but also endeavors to provide more nuanced and rigorous explanations of implementation. They contend that researchers and practitioners can help improve education policy implementation by asking not only what works, but also what works for whom, where, when, and why.

For more information and to order the volume from SUNY Press, click [here](#).

## **New Directions in Teacher Pay**

Allan R. Odden and Marc Wallace

This new book on teacher compensation innovations was recently released. The volume was written by Allan R. Odden in cooperation with Marc Wallace, a renowned compensation consultant. Based on CPRE research and extensive technical assistance activities, the book both summarizes relevant research and provides a hands-on guide to state and district policymakers interested in teacher compensation innovation.

To request a copy of this volume, please e-mail [insites@gse.upenn.edu](mailto:insites@gse.upenn.edu).

For more information and to order the volume from SUNY Press, click [here](#).

## **Politics, Ideology, and Education: Federal Policy During the Clinton and Bush Administrations**

Elizabeth H. DeBray

In March 2006, Teachers College Press published this book by former CPRE researcher DeBray and featuring a foreword by Carl Kaestle. DeBray examines the politics of federal education policy during the two administrations through the lens of the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and illustrates the new dynamics of political interactions and policy formulations as they affect public education issues. The book describes the administrations' attempts to pass major education reform bills, examines changes in institutional relationships that left practitioner groups out of the policy process, shows how congressional leaders were able to compromise on key provisions, and analyzes the changed political and institutional environment in which education policy decisions will be made in the new century.

Click [here](#) to access ordering information from the publisher.

## Distributed Leadership

James P. Spillane

In January 2006, Jossey-Bass published a new volume by CPRE researcher Spillane. Distributed leadership is an exciting, new concept in education that concerns the ways in which leadership is exercised in everyday practice through communications and actions, and via others in the school community like teachers and parents. Spillane's book examines the distribution of leadership among administrators, specialists, and teachers in the school, and explains the ways in which leadership practice is stretched over leaders, followers, and aspects of the situation, including routines and tools of various sorts in the organization such as memos, scheduling procedures, and evaluation protocols. Spillane offers an overview of distributed leadership, a summary of research, examples of promising practice, and guidelines for the future.

Click [here](#) to access ordering information from the publisher.

## CPRE in the News

### CPRE and Spencer Foundation Sponsor Teacher Labor Market Meeting in Chicago

CPRE researchers joined researchers and policymakers from across the country in a meeting to discuss the teacher labor market and its future. The meeting was held July 31 to August 2 in Chicago. Institutional and economic aspects of the market were considered, and participants discussed such topics as the structure of the market (geographical, licensure, pay level, and diversity issues), attracting and retaining non-traditional candidates, staffing high-need schools and shortage subjects, and changing human resource management systems. Work began on crafting an agenda for future research on the market; participants suggested specific projects for CPRE to collaborate with others on work to improve the quality of teaching in the U.S.

### CPRE Establishes New Center on Continuous Instructional Improvement

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) has established a new Center on Continuous Instructional Improvement (CCII), a research center designed to address current issues in standards-based reform through a "cycle of improvement." The center, funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, is directed by CPRE's Susan Fuhrman. Widespread interest in various types of "formative assessment" or "assessment for learning" has focused attention on helping teachers and students gather and use information about progress and performance as a feedback mechanism to close the gap between existing understanding and desired knowledge. CCII and the Hewlett Education Program use the term "cycle of improvement" to characterize how instruction is continuously adapted through such information to meet students' needs, with an emphasis on a long-term, widespread adoption strategy. The cycle of improvement is intended to help both teachers and policymakers improve instruction by learning from experience and evidence. In its first planning year, the center will focus on surveying existing practices relevant to the cycle, meeting with researchers and stakeholders, developing a conceptual framework around the cycle, conducting exploratory case studies, and identifying major partners for the next phase of work: research partners, program developers, districts, states, and associations.

For more information about CCII, please visit CPRE's web site ([www.cpre.org](http://www.cpre.org)) and click on the CCII announcement found on the homepage.

### Fuhrman Appointed President of Teachers College, Columbia University; New Partners and Research Center at CPRE

Susan H. Fuhrman, CPRE's founder and Chair of its Management Committee, was recently appointed as the 10th President of Teachers College, Columbia University. Fuhrman assumed the presidency on August 1. For the past 11 years, Fuhrman was the Dean of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, where she was also the George and Diane Weiss Professor of Education. In the fall, Teachers College joined Northwestern University as partner institutions in CPRE, along with Penn, Harvard, Stanford, Michigan, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The new partners will play a significant role in a research center that CPRE has recently

established, the Center on Continuous Instructional Improvement (CCII), funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and designed to support a cycle of improvement in classrooms and throughout the education system, in schools, districts, and states.

## CPRE-Wisconsin Listserv

CPRE's office at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) sponsors a listserv for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers with an interest in school finance and teacher compensation. By subscribing to the listserv, you will be able to get the most up-to-date information on upcoming events, publications, research projects, and other related items of interest. Please go to the [CPRE-UW website](#) to subscribe or to see previous editions of the newsletter.

## CPRE on the World Wide Web

For more information about CPRE research, check out our websites:

[CPRE-University of Pennsylvania website](#)

[CPRE-University of Michigan website \(Study of Instructional Improvement\)](#)

[CPRE-University of Wisconsin-Madison website](#)

[CPRE-University of Wisconsin-Madison website \(School Finance\)](#)

[CPRE-University of Wisconsin-Madison website \(Teacher Compensation\)](#)

## Editors' Notes

CPRE In-Sites is now published on a bimonthly basis. As always, we appreciate your interest in CPRE research and welcome any comments or questions. Please e-mail us at [insites@gse.upenn.edu](mailto:insites@gse.upenn.edu).

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With the growing use of anti-spam filters, we have seen an increase in the number of returned e-mails when we send out this newsletter. If you think that you may have missed an issue of CPRE In-Sites, you can view previous newsletters at our website by [clicking here](#).

If you have a colleague who you think would be interested in this issue of CPRE In-Sites, please pass it along!

## CPRE In-Sites

Managing Editor  
Kelly Stanton Fair

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