

Reviews of Collections of Programs, Curricula, Practices, Policies, and Tools: Evaluated According to Evidence

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This collection originated as part of the Results for Kids: Resources library of The IDEA Partnership, which transferred early contents to NIRN in 2009.

Schoolwide and Districtwide Programs, Curricula, Practices, and Policies

A Literature Review of School Practices to Overcome School Failure

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris, France. (2012).

B. Faubert.

“The mission of the OECD is to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. . . . This paper is concerned with school failure, understood as the failure of schools and the school system to provide the appropriate level of, and adequately defined services for, all students to be successful. In this definition, school failure includes all policy and practice within schools and classrooms (i.e., pedagogy, school leadership, professional learning, etc.). . . . This review examines literature (in the English language) on in-school practices for overcoming school failure. The purpose is to answer two general questions: (a) what are the policies and practices that help reduce school failure and improve equity, and (b) what is the empirical evidence of their impact on reducing school failure and improving equity? . . . This was done by assessing the design of the study and its methodology for the degree of systemacy in the research process and rigour.” The table on page 19 provides a classification of policies and practices supported by empirical research to reduce school failure.

[Full text – A Literature Review of School Practices](#)

A Place to Learn: Lessons from Research on Learning Environments

Institute for Statistics, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),

Paris, France. (2012). J. Bernard.

This report “presents a comprehensive review of research on learning environments from multiple perspectives, broadly grouped as those that focus on the physical conditions, psychosocial environment and/or organizational climate of classrooms, schools and other learning spaces. . . . From the over 300 sources reviewed during the preliminary search, 91 background references and 58 studies were selected

from such diverse disciplines as educational philosophy, cognitive psychology, evolutionary biology and architecture. . . . In-depth descriptions of selected state-of-the-art research methods and tools are provided, along with numerous examples of their application in different parts of the world. The general conclusions and recommendations offered in light of the collected findings are intended to assist learning communities, particularly those in countries with limited resources, with a practical framework for creating and sustaining safe, healthy, equitable and inclusive environments that foster effective learning.”

[Full text – A Place to Learn](#)

A Win-Win Solution: The Empirical Evidence on School Vouchers

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, Indianapolis, Indiana. (2011).

G. Forster.

"This report collects the results of all available empirical studies using the best available scientific methods to measure how school vouchers affect academic outcomes for participants, and all available studies on how vouchers affect outcomes in public schools. Contrary to the widespread claim that vouchers do not benefit participants and hurt public schools, the empirical evidence consistently shows that vouchers improve outcomes for both participants and public schools. . . . Ten empirical studies have used random assignment, the gold standard of social science, to examine how vouchers affect participants. Nine studies find that vouchers improve student outcomes, six that all students benefit and three that some benefit and some are not affected. One study finds no visible impact. None of these studies finds a negative impact. Nineteen empirical studies have examined how vouchers affect outcomes in public schools. . . . The benefits provided by existing voucher programs are sometimes large, but are usually more modest in size. This is not surprising since the programs themselves are modest — curtailed by strict limits on the students they can serve, the resources they provide, and the freedom to innovate."

[Full text – A Win-Win Solution](#)

Academic Achievement: Publications and Resources

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (Continuing Collection).

“The WWC review of academic achievement interventions examines the evidence of the effectiveness of curricula and practices designed to improve students’ overall school achievement. Items reviewed are intended to improve outcomes in: (a) general academic achievement; (b) mathematics achievement; (c) progressing in school; (d) reading achievement; (e) science achievement; and (f) writing achievement. Grade/Age Range --PreK–12. Population: All.” Contents cover Intervention Reports, Single Study Reviews, Practice Guides, Reference Resources, and Multimedia.

[Full texts – Academic Achievement](#)

AMLE Research Summary: Assessment (middle level education)

Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE), Westerville, Ohio. (2012).

R. M. Capraro, M. F. Roe, M. M. Caskey, D. Strahan, P. A. Bishop, C. C. Weiss, & K. W. Swanson.

“Based on the work of many scholars, assessment is defined as a process for documenting, in measurable terms, the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs of the learner. Although this definition of assessment is rather straightforward, the process of assessment in the classroom is complex. At the classroom level, teachers must decide which specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs warrant assessment; at what point and for what specific purpose they should be assessed; and which tools might best accomplish these classroom-based assessments. This research summary addresses two forms of assessment, formative and summative.”

[Full text -- Assessment](#)

Are Bad Schools Immortal? The Scarcity of Turnarounds and Shutdowns in Both Charter and District Sectors

Thomas B. Fordham Institute, Washington DC. (2010). D. A. Stuit.

This study “finds that low-performing public schools — both charter and traditional district schools — are stubbornly resistant to significant change. After identifying more than 2,000 low-performing charter and district schools across ten states, analyst David Stuit tracked them from 2003-04 through 2008-09 to determine how many were turned around, shut down, or remained low-performing. Results were generally dismal. Seventy-two percent of the original low-performing charters remained in operation — and remained low-performing — five years later. So did 80 percent of district schools.” States covered in this study are: Arizona, California, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin. State profiles are included.

[Full text, summary, and state profiles -- Are Bad Schools Immortal?](#)

Changing School District Practices (pertains to student-centered learning)

Students at the Center, A Jobs for the Future Project, Boston, Massachusetts. (2012).

B. Levin, A. Datnow, & N. Carrier.

“What would it take to move districts toward student-centered learning? And how much of this work is occurring in U.S. school systems? While there is evidence of student-centered practices in some schools and classrooms, student-centered approaches are not predominant, especially system-wide. To understand the work that school districts are doing to support student-centered learning, the authors reviewed research about high-performing school districts, and examined the scope of commonly defined student-centered practices in school districts.” Their findings are delineated in this report.

[Full text and executive summary – Changing School District Practices](#)

Class Size and Student Achievement: Research Review

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2005).

"Reducing class size to increase student achievement is an approach that has been tried, debated, and analyzed for several decades. The premise seems logical -- with fewer students to teach, teachers can coax better performance from each of them. But what does the research show? Some researchers have not found a connection between smaller classes and higher student achievement, but most of the research shows that, when class size reduction programs are well-designed and implemented in the primary grades (K-3), student achievement rises as class size drops." This report reviews findings of 19 studies that met the Center for Public Education's standards.

[Full text -- Class Size and Student Achievement](#)

[Summary -- At a Glance](#)

Class Size: What Research Says and What It Means for State Policy

The Brookings Institution, Washington DC. (2011). G. J. Whitehurst & M. M. Chingos.

"There are a small number of variables in American K-12 education that are both thought to influence student learning and are subject to legislative action. Class size is one. Others include human resource policies, funding levels, curriculum, days/hours of instruction, and testing and accountability. Advocates for legislation on any of these topics are likely to appeal to research evidence as support for their position. That is appropriate and desirable as long as: (a) the evidence is of high quality, (b) it is relevant to the legislative action under consideration, (c) conflicting evidence isn't ignored, and (d) alternative courses of legislative action are similarly evaluated and compared. . . . (This paper examines) what the research says about whether class-size reduction has a positive impact on student learning and, if it does, by how much, for whom, and under what circumstances. Despite there being a large literature on class-size effects on academic achievement, only a few studies are of high enough quality and sufficiently relevant to be given credence as a basis for legislative action."

[Full text -- Class Size: What the Research Says](#)

Comparability of State and Local Expenditures Among Schools Within Districts: A Report From the Study of School-Level Expenditures

Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development. U.S. Department of Education. (2011).

R. Heuer & S. Stullich.

"The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) required each school district receiving Title I, Part A, ARRA funds to report a school-by-school listing of per-pupil education expenditures from state and local funds for the 2008–09 school year to its state education agency and required states to report these data to the U.S. Department of Education. . . . A new report analyzing school-level spending and teacher salary data documents that schools serving low-income students are being shortchanged because many school districts across the country are inequitably distributing their state and local

funding. This first-time ever national data collection on school-level expenditure data -- required by the ARRA and submitted by over 13,000 districts for the 2008-09 school year -- reveals that many high-poverty schools receive less than their fair share of state and local funding, leaving them with fewer resources than schools attended by wealthier students. Indeed, more than 40% of schools that received federal Title I money to serve disadvantaged students spent less state and local funding on teachers and other personnel than schools that did not receive Title I money at the same grade level in the same district."

[Full text – Comparability of State and Local Expenditures](#)

[Also see ED Data Express](#) -- A U.S. Department of Education website designed to improve the public's ability to access and explore high-value state-level education data.

Compendium of Key Studies of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

Center on Education Policy (CEP), Washington DC. (2012). N.Kober, M. Ayazi, & E. Davaney-Graham.

This compendium "summarizes the findings of major studies of the implementation and effects of NCLB conducted by various organizations and agencies. The summaries are very brief — most of them one page per study — and have been categorized by topic. . . . CEP included studies that met the following criteria: (a) were published in 2005 or later, after states, districts, and schools had become familiar with the law's requirements and implementation was well underway; (b) had a national or regional scope or included evidence from multiple states and/or school districts, rather than being focused on a single state or one or two districts; (c) were conducted by a research organization, government agency, university, national organization with a research division, or scholars with expertise in NCLB issues; (d) were based on data collected through well-established research methods rather than being primarily opinion pieces; (e) focused on a significant policy issue or outcome of NCLB; and (f) could be accessed free of charge, at least in summary form, on the Web." Summaries of findings are presented in nine topical sections. An index of the studies is also available.

[Full text – Compendium of Key Studies](#)

[Scroll to "Organization of the Compendium" to click for summaries in nine topical sections and the index]

Comprehensive School Reform: Middle and High School

Best Evidence Encyclopedia (Continuing Collection). Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland.

"This review summarizes evidence on comprehensive school reform (CSR) models in grades 6-12. Comprehensive school reform models . . . typically include the following elements: (a) innovative approaches to instruction and curriculum used in many subjects throughout the school; (b) extensive ongoing professional development, and coaches or facilitators in the building to help manage the reform process; (c) measurable goals and benchmarks for student achievement; (d) emphasis on parent and community involvement." Programs are rated as (a) very strong evidence of effectiveness; (b) moderately strong evidence; (c) moderate evidence; and (d) limited evidence.

[All reviews -- Comprehensive School Reform: Middle and High School](#)

[Also see – Comprehensive School Reform: Elementary](#)

Connection Collection (a database on school-family-community connections)

National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools, SEDL, Austin, Texas.
(Continuing Collection).

"The SEDL National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools creates bridges between research and practice, linking people with research-based information and resources that they can use to effectively connect schools, families and communities. . . . For this database, the staff examined a broad body of literature related to school-family-community connections, including journal articles, books, reports, conference papers and proceedings, and literature reviews. The database currently includes 395 entries. . . . Both empirical and non-empirical types of literature are included. Empirical literature includes research and evaluation studies. Non-empirical literature includes conceptual and theoretical pieces, practice-based works, policy-oriented items, and literature reviews. The criteria for including items in this collection were the relevance of the study to family and community connections with schools, the soundness of methodology, and the implications of the study for the field."

[To search the Connection Collection](#)

[Click at the left for search options and tips]

Consolidation of Schools and Districts: What the Research Says and What It Means

National Education Policy Center, University of Colorado, Boulder. (2011).
C. Howley, J. Johnson, & J. Petrie.

"This policy brief has five goals: (a) to explain what consolidation is and what it entails; (b) to describe what proponents expect from consolidation; (c) to synthesize the several strands of evidence related to both the experience and the results of consolidation; (d) to state the major research findings; and, finally, (e) to offer recommendations based on the findings. . . . The review of research evidence detailed in this brief suggests that a century of consolidation has already produced most of the efficiencies obtainable. Research also suggests that impoverished regions in particular often benefit from smaller schools and districts, and they can suffer irreversible damage if consolidation occurs. For these reasons, decisions to deconsolidate or consolidate districts are best made on a case-by-case basis. While state-level consolidation proposals may serve a public relations purpose in times of crisis, they are unlikely to be a reliable way to obtain substantive fiscal or educational improvement."

[Full text – Consolidation of Schools and Districts](#)

CSRQ Center Report on Education Service Providers

Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (CSRQ),
American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2006).

"Education service providers (ESP) provide a comprehensive approach to whole school improvement, including administrative services. . . . (This is) a first-of-its-kind, scientifically based, and consumer-oriented review of the effectiveness and quality of seven widely implemented ESP models. The **seven** ESP models reviewed in this report are: (a) Edison Schools; (b) Imagine Schools; (c) The Leona Group L.L.C.; (d) Mosaica Education; (e) National Heritage Academies (NHA); (f) SABIS Educational Systems, Inc.; and (g) White Hat Management (HOPE Academies)."

[Full text -- CSRQ Center Report on Education Service Providers](#)

CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models

Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (CSRQ),
American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (Updated in 2006).

This report "provides a scientifically based, consumer-friendly review of the effectiveness and quality of 22 widely adopted elementary school comprehensive school reform (CSR) models. Each model is profiled and rated in the following categories: (a) evidence of positive effects on student achievement; (b) evidence of positive effects on additional outcomes; (c) evidence of positive effects on family and community involvement; (d) evidence of a link between research and model design; (e) evidence of services and support to schools to enable successful implementation. . . . Together, the reviewed models represent a significant portion of the total number of schools implementing elementary school CSR models."

[Overview -- CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models](#)

CSRQ Center Report on Middle and High School Comprehensive School Improvement Models

Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (CSRQ),
American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2006).

This report "provides a scientifically based, consumer-friendly review of the effectiveness and quality of 18 widely adopted middle and high school comprehensive school reform (CSR) and schoolwide improvement models. Each model is profiled and rated in the following categories: (a) evidence of positive effects on student achievement; (b) evidence of positive effects on additional outcomes; (c) evidence of positive effects on family and community involvement; (d) evidence of a link between research and model design; and (e) evidence of services and support to schools to enable successful implementation. . . . The reviews are intended to clarify options, not to point to or endorse 'best buys' from among the 18 models reviewed."

[Full text -- CSQR Center Report on Middle and HS Comprehensive School Reform Models](#)

[Also see – CSQR Reports Database and Model Registry Search](#)

Designing School Improvement to Enhance Classroom Climate for All Students

Center for Mental Health in Schools at the University of California, Los Angeles. (2011).

“Everyone agrees that schools should ensure a positive school climate. Less agreement exists, however, about what this means and how to accomplish it. This is especially so when the call is for developing a safe and supportive environment that also is nurturing and caring and that provides all students with an equal opportunity to succeed. Equity concerns are heightened when schools are viewed using the lens of how they interface with students who are struggling academically, acting out, and experiencing conflictual relationships with school staff and peers. . . . This report draws on recent literature to briefly (a) discuss the construct of school climate and (b) outline ways to approach improving school climate that account for the full range of students enrolled in school. “

[Full text – Designing School Improvement to Enhance Classroom Climate for All students](#)

Early Implementation of Public Single-Sex Schools: Perceptions and Characteristics

Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, U.S. Department of Education. (2008).

Prepared under contract by RMC Research Corporation, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

C. Riordan, B. J. Faddis, M. Beam, A. Seager, A. Tanney, R. Dibiase, M. Ruffin, & J. Valentine.

The evaluation questions addressed by this study are: "(a) What is currently known about the effects of single-sex schooling on student achievement and other outcomes?; (b) What is known about the causes of those outcomes?; (c) What are the characteristics of public single-sex schooling?; (d) What are the contextual, instructional, and behavioral practices unique to single-sex schools?; (e) What perceived benefits or disadvantages are associated with single-sex schooling?; and (f) What studies, including research questions and methodology, would be most appropriate to advance the knowledge base in this field? To address these questions the study includes a systematic review of the literature available in 2004, a survey of public single-sex schools, and a preliminary exploratory observational study of a subsample of currently operating public single-sex schools. The observational study was designed to yield three types of descriptive information about single sex schools: the schools' demographic characteristics; the professional characteristics of the teachers and principals; and the teachers' and principals' perceptions of the school characteristics. Both the survey and the observations were confined to those single-sex schools that were operational as of fall 2003."

[Executive summary & click for full text -- Early Implementation of Public Single-Sex Schools](#)

Effects of Teacher Professional Development Gains in Student Achievement: How Meta Analysis Provides Evidence Useful to Education Leaders

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). (2009). R. K. Blank & N. de las Alas.

“CCSSO was awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation to conduct a meta-analysis study with the goal of providing state and local education leaders with scientifically based evidence regarding the effects of teacher professional development on improving student learning. The analysis focused on completed studies of effects of professional development for K-12 teachers of science and mathematics. The meta analysis results show important cross-study evidence that teacher professional development in mathematics does have significant positive effects on student achievement. The analysis results also confirm the positive relationship to student outcomes of key characteristics of design of professional development programs.

[Full text – Effects of Teacher Professional Development Gains](#)

[Also see related papers on this page]

Efficacy of Schoolwide Programs to Promote Social and Character Development and Reduce Problem Behavior in Elementary School Children

National Center for Education Research, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, and the Division of Violence Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2010). Prepared by the Social and Character Development Research Consortium.

"The Institute of Education Sciences and the Division of Violence Prevention in CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control collaborated to conduct a rigorous impact evaluation of programs aimed at improving students' behavior. For this evaluation, such programs were termed Social and Character Development (SACD) programs. Seven programs were evaluated, and all were coherent in that their activities were integrated and logically organized based on a theory of action (that differed among the programs), school-based in that they were implemented in the schools by school personnel, and universal in that they were to be implemented for all students in all elementary classrooms in a school. This report provides the results from the evaluation of the seven SACD programs on one cohort of students as they moved from third through fifth grades starting in fall 2004 and ending in spring 2007. The evaluation examined the effects on these students of the seven programs, together and separately, after 1, 2, and 3 school years and also estimated the impact on students' growth in social and character development over the 3 years." The seven programs in the study are (a) Academic and Behavioral Competencies Program; (b) Competence Support Program; (c) Love In a Big World; (d) Positive Action; (e) Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies; (f) the 4Rs Program (Reading, Writing, Respect, and Resolution); and (g) Second Step.

[Full text & executive summary-- Efficacy of Schoolwide Programs to Promote SACD](#)

Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association (NSBA), Alexandria, Virginia. (2011).
C. Dervarics & E. O'Brien.

"Most of the public knows that school boards do things like set the budgets, establish school boundaries and set school policies. But does school boards' work affect student achievement? The higher media visibility of teachers and principals in the push for better learning, while important, has led some to question whether school boards matter. From a research perspective, it's a complex question. Isolating what makes an effective board – that is, one that impacts student achievement -- involves evaluating virtually all functions of a board, from internal governance and policy formulation to communication with teachers, building administrators, and the public. But the answer is: Yes, they do. In this research brief, NSBA's Center for Public Education looks at indicators of school board effectiveness. From this research, it is clear that school boards in high-achieving districts exhibit habits and characteristics that are markedly different from boards in low-achieving districts."

[Full text – Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards](#)

[Click at the right for the summary, reference list, and related resources]

Emerging Evidence on Improving High School Student Achievement and Graduation Rates: The Effects of Four Popular Improvement Programs

National High School Center, American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2006).
Summarized by C. H. Hirlihy & J. Quindt of MDRC.

"The National High School Center released methods for improving low-performing high schools based on some of the most rigorous research currently available in the school reform arena. This research brief identifies lessons learned as well as key practices used to strengthen high schools and is based on evaluations of four widely used high school improvement programs (conducted by MDRC, a nonpartisan, nonprofit research firm) – (a) Career Academies, (b) First Things First, (c) Project GRAD, and (d) Talent Development. . . . While all schools included in the four evaluations are low-performing -- compared to other schools in their districts, State, and against national norms -- some were facing extreme challenges. . . . Together, these four interventions are being implemented in more than 2,700 high schools across the country, and various components of these models are being used in thousands more schools."

[Full text -- Improving High School Student Achievement and Graduation Rates](#)

Encouraging Meaningful Parent/Educator Collaboration: Review of Recent Literature

Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE),
Direction Service, Eugene, Oregon. (2011). T. Hedeem, P. Moses, & M. Peter.

“The body of literature on collaboration in family/school relationships has continued to grow. . . . Complementing well-known work in this area, researchers have undertaken rigorous study of the complex dynamic between schools and families and published their work in a variety of outlets — some of which are inaccessible to educators and families who might benefit from the findings therein. This document synthesizes findings from a number of recent academic studies and policy publications. Among the highlights is the idea that ‘involvement’ may be too narrow a term to encapsulate the range and depth of partnerships that support students’ success.”

[Full text – Encouraging Meaningful Parent/Educator Collaboration](#)

[Also see – Literature on Dispute Resolution in Special Education: Annotated Bibliography](#)

Enhancing the Participation of Students with Disabilities in Comprehensive School Reform Models

Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (CSRQ),
American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2006).

"Many of the models reviewed in the CSRQ Center Elementary Report have features that address the needs of students with disabilities. Therefore, it is hoped that this report will heighten awareness of these features as a way for educators to continue to include a diverse range of students in school improvement and reform initiatives. Second, the descriptive information provided in this report can help educators review individual models to determine the model's inclusiveness of a broad range of students, including those with disabilities. Finally, model developers may find the recommendations useful as they continuously improve their models and seek to accommodate the needs of a diverse range of students." The report sets forth 22 model descriptions, with findings on evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations. The methodology used for rating this evidence is explained in Appendix A.

[Full text -- Enhancing the Participation of Students with Disabilities](#)

[Scroll down. On the same page, see “Questions That Educators Can Ask About the Participation of Students with Disabilities in School Reform and Improvement Models.”]

Evaluation of the Comprehensive School Reform Program Implementation and Outcomes: Fifth Year Report

Policy and Program Studies Service, Office of the Deputy Secretary, U.S. Dept of Education. (2010).
Prepared by WestEd, San Francisco, and COSMOS Corporation, Bethesda, Maryland.

The Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Program "is one approach to help low-performing K–12 public schools meet State performance standards. CSR emphasizes two major concepts. First, the approach mandates that school reform should be comprehensive in nature, strengthening all aspects of school operations — curriculum, instruction, professional development, parental involvement, and school organization. Second, CSR should involve the use of scientifically based research models. . . . (The study) involved a survey of 500 CSR schools and 500 comparison schools, case studies of 30 sites, and analyses of student achievement in all schools receiving CSR funding in 2002. . . . This is a study of average

achievement gains in schools that received CSR grants, irrespective of the models these schools chose to use. . . . (This fifth and final report shows that) the federal CSR program did not yield comprehensively reformed schools. . . . Schools receiving CSR awards made little progress in implementing more than just a few of the legislatively mandated components and were largely indistinguishable from non-CSR schools that were similar in baseline achievement and demographics." Three recommendations from the U.S. Department of Education are included.

[Full text -- The Evaluation of CSR Program Implementation and Outcomes](#)

[On the same page, see "Achieving Dramatic School Improvement: An Exploratory Study" for findings from 11 initially low-performing CSR schools that were able to make dramatic changes in academic performance]

Expanding Time for Learning Both Inside and Outside the Classroom: A Review of the Evidence Base

Child Trends, Washington DC. (2012).

Z. Redd, C. Boccanfuso, K. Walker, D. Princiotta, D. Knewstubb, & K. Moore.

"This report synthesizes what is known about the effectiveness of school and program interventions that aim to address deficiencies and inequities in academic achievement and educational attainment by expanding learning opportunities for students both inside and outside of school. . . . (Chapter 1 provides) background on the educational system in the United States and the need for improving the system to better support optimal achievement and attainment outcomes. . . . (Chapter 2 examines) the available literature on models in which districts or schools either expand the length of the day that young people must be in school or expand the number of days in the school year. . . . (Chapter 3 summarizes) the effects of social intervention programs that expand learning opportunities outside of the school day by providing at least one academic component as a part of their regular program offerings. . . . It focuses on 'what works' based on findings from rigorous evaluations. . . . (Chapter 4 offers) a set of conclusions and recommendations."

[Executive summary and full text – Expanding Time for Learning](#)

[Click under Resources]

Guide to Evaluation Products (for evaluating educators' effectiveness)

National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ),

Learning Point Associates, Naperville, Illinois. (Continuing Collection).

"Like building a puzzle, developing an educator evaluation system requires multiple pieces that must be placed together in a purposeful way to create a holistic evaluation system. This guide can be used by states and districts to explore various evaluation methods and tools that represent the 'puzzle pieces' of an evaluation system. The guide includes detailed descriptions of more than 75 educator evaluation tools that are currently implemented and tested in districts and states throughout the country. Details for each include: (a) research and resources; (b) information on the educator and student populations assessed; and (c) costs, contact information, and (d) technical support offered. This information was gathered through a scan of educator evaluation literature and through conversations with multiple state education agency personnel, evaluation developers, universities, and non-profit organizations that focus on issues of educator quality and evaluation." You can search evaluation products in ten topics.

[Search the Guide to Evaluation Products](#)

[Also see the TQ Resource Library \(Publications Database\)](#)

High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools: Research Review

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2005).

Prepared by Caliber Associates, Fairfax, Virginia.

"What common qualities, attributes, and conditions characterize high-performing, high-poverty schools? This research review identifies such features. The literature used for the review focuses on impact studies and meta-analyses. Additional considerations are explained in the rubric. The practices described in the findings are composed of a sustained focus on multiple factors: (a) a culture of high expectations and caring; (b) a safe and disciplined environment; (c) a principal who is a strong instructional leader; (d) committed and able teachers; (e) a curriculum focused on academic achievement and focuses on basic skills; (f) increased instructional time; (g) ongoing diagnostic assessment; (h) parents as partners in learning; (i) continual training and self-improvement of the teaching staff; and (j) staff teamwork and collaboration."

[Full text -- High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools](#)

[Click at the right for the summary, reference list, and related resources]

High-Stakes Testing and Effects on Instruction: Research Review

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2006).

R. Mitchell

"In an effort to uncover the issues associated with high-stakes tests, this research review focuses solely on this venue and its effects on instruction. Although there are many articles on high-stakes testing, only a few qualified for consideration because most did not report empirical research. . . . Research does not give us the definitive answers we seek; rather it provides us with tools to arrive at our own conclusions. Keeping this in mind, (the author has) selected research that is rigorous about the following topics:" (a) research on the effects of testing; (b) the general public's support of high-stakes testing; (c) attitudes of teachers and counselors toward testing; (d) attitudes of students toward testing; (e) high-stakes tests as educational policy; (f) 'teaching to the test': harmful or not?; and (g) tests, assessments, and student learning."

[Full text – High-Stakes Testing and Effects on Instruction](#)

[Click at the right for the summary, reference list, and related resources]

Housing Costs, Zoning, and Access to High-Scoring Schools

Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, Washington DC. (2012). J. Rothwell.

"While the connections between the real estate market and school performance have been widely studied, this is the first nationwide report to estimate the actual costs associated with living near a given public school. Likewise, while zoning has been studied intensely, this is the first national report to link

zoning data with school test score data. This paper proceeds as follows. The first section surveys academic research on educational achievement with an emphasis on the relative effects of schools and families in shaping educational outcomes. A methodology section provides a summary of data sources and defines the main variables measured. The paper then examines differences in school test score performance among different racial/ethnic/income groups, how these differences vary across metropolitan areas, and implications for educational outcomes. Subsequent findings explore potential explanations for school inequality, including large gaps in housing costs, which are correlated with exclusionary zoning laws. The paper concludes with a brief discussion of public policy implications.”

[Full text – Housing Costs, Zoning and Access](#)

How Good Are Your Teachers? Trying to Define Teacher Quality

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2009).

What makes an effective teacher? We all know one. But ask us to describe a good teacher’s qualities and the answer is likely a vague ‘You know it when you see it.’ The same dilemma occurs in teacher quality research. . . . What we don’t know is exactly what makes that teacher effective. Any one single indicator of teacher quality—for instance, something like years of experience—rarely yields a strong correlation. With Race to The Top creating a stronger emphasis on teacher effectiveness, the question of teacher effectiveness is becoming more acute. Thankfully, recent research has given more insight into whether the characteristics we’ve been requiring have any correlation. It also highlights the combinations of characteristics that seem to reliably predict a quality teacher.” This resource cites research that addresses variables in teacher quality.

[Full text – How Good Are Your Teachers?](#)

[Click at the right for the reference list and related information]

Incentives and Test-Based Accountability in Education

The National Academies Press, Washington DC. (2011).

Committee on Incentives and Test-Based Accountability in Public Education, National Research Council. M. Hout & S. W. Elliott (Eds).

This book “reviews and synthesizes relevant research from economics, psychology, education, and related fields about how incentives work in educational accountability systems. The book helps identify circumstances in which test-based incentives may have a positive or a negative impact on student learning and offers recommendations for how to improve current test-based accountability policies. The most important directions for further research are also highlighted. . . . Education researchers, K-12 school administrators and teachers, as well as graduate students studying education policy and educational measurement, will use this book to learn more about the motivation of educators and students. Education policy makers at all levels of government will rely on this book to inform policy discussions about NCLB and state accountability systems.”

[Read the full text online – Incentives and Test-Based Accountability](#)

[Also available for purchase]

Increasing Educational Productivity: Innovative Approaches and Best Practices

Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. (2011).

“To help states meet the challenge of doing more with less and to protect public schools from counterproductive cutbacks, Education Secretary Arne Duncan released promising practices on the effective, efficient, and responsible use of resources in tight budget times. Building off of this work, the Office of Innovation and Improvement has compiled additional information to help schools, districts, and states increase educational productivity. . . . These strategies seek to invest in what works, make better use of technology, reduce mandates that hinder productivity, pay and manage for results, take advantage of existing opportunities, and make short-term investments for long-term results. Guiding these strategies are two underlying principles: putting student learning first and protecting the neediest children and communities.” This information has been pulled from a variety of resources, in particular the work of leading thinkers in the field.

[Full text – Increasing Educational Productivity](#)

Is High School Tough Enough?

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2012),

“The Center for Public Education decided to examine the research behind effective curricular strategies for promoting high school rigor. This paper, then, does not look at new state high school graduation requirements or state assessments. Instead, it focuses on strategies commonly used by districts to strengthen the high school curriculum -- (a) advanced placement courses, (b) higher-level math courses, (c) dual enrollment programs, and (d) early college high schools. These are certainly not the only curricular strategies capable of toughening up the high school curriculum. However, each strategy has a strong following that, in most cases, ensures that local school boards will be talking about them – either currently or in the near future.”

[Full text – Is High School Tough Enough?](#)

[Click at the right for the summary, reference list, and related resources]

Learning From Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning – Final Report of Research Findings

Center for Applied Research & Educational Improvement, University of Minnesota, & the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. (2010).

K. S. Lewis, K. Leithwood, K. L. Wahlstrom, & S. E. Anderson.

This report is the result of a “six-year study funded by the Wallace Foundation to identify the nature of successful educational leadership and to better understand how such leadership can improve educational services and student learning. . . . (Five types of evidence are covered.) One type is evidence from qualitative case studies. . . . The second type of evidence derives from large-scale quantitative studies of leadership effects on schools and students. . . . A third type of evidence derives from studies (also large-scale and quantitative) focused on the effects of specific leadership practices. . . .

A fourth type derives from studies of leadership effects on student engagement. . . . Finally, a different but quite compelling sort of evidence about leadership effects derives from research on leadership succession. Unplanned principal succession, for example, is a common source of adverse effects on school performance.” The three major parts of the report discuss findings on (a) what school leaders do to improve student achievement; (b) districts and their leaders -- how they foster school improvement and student learning; and (c) state leadership and relationships with districts.

[Full text -- Learning from Leadership](#)

[Also see – The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning \(The Wallace Foundation\)](#)

Measuring Student Engagement in Upper Elementary Through High School: A Description of 21 Instruments

Regional Educational Laboratory at SERVE Center, University of North Carolina at Greensboro. (2011). J. Fredricks, W. McColskey, J. Meli, B. Montrosse, J. Mordica, & K. Mooney. Distributed by the Institute for Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

“Researchers, educators, and policymakers are increasingly focused on student engagement as the key to addressing problems of low achievement, student boredom and alienation, and high dropout rates. The report describes the results of a literature review to identify available instruments. The 21 instruments identified are described according to what is measured, their purpose and use, and the technical information available on their psychometric properties. It describes what the studies reported in terms of reliability, validity, and uses without examining the quality of the studies themselves.”

[Full text – Measuring Student Engagement](#)

Middle Grades: 15 Actions Your State Can Take to Maximize Young Adolescents’ Readiness for Grade 9 – and College and Careers

The Progress of Education Reform, Education Commission of the States, Denver, Colorado. (2009).

“In most states, the considerable policy focus on high schools in recent years has not trickled down to a focus on the middle grades. . . . Although research on best practices in the middle grades is less plentiful than research on other grade levels (i.e., early learning, high school), there is growing awareness of the need for states to shift attention to what happens in the middle grades if meaningful high school reform is to be realized. This issue of *The Progress of Education Reform* highlights key findings from recent research and publications on improving student success in the middle grades — and identifies actions states can take to translate these findings into sound policy.” References are numbered in the text and listed as End Notes.

[Full text – Middle Grades](#)

[Select 2009 and click on the third title – The Progress of Education Reform: Middle Grades]

On the Clock: Rethinking the Way Schools Use Time

Education Sector, Washington DC. (2007). E. Silva.

“As schools across the country struggle to meet the demands of the federal No Child Left Behind Act and their state accountability systems, educators are searching for ways to raise student achievement. Increasing numbers of school and district leaders are turning to one of the most fundamental features of the public education system: the amount of time students spend in school. . . . This report examines both the educational and political dimensions of time reform. It presents the findings of a wide range of research on time reform, discusses the impact of various time reforms on the life of schools and beyond, and makes recommendations for policymakers about how to best leverage time in and out of school to improve student achievement.”

[Summary – On the Clock](#)

[Download the full report at the end of the page]

Organizing Instruction and Study to Improve Student Learning: IES Practice Guide

Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (2007).

H. Pashler (Panel Chair), P. M. Bain, B. A. Bottge, A. Graesser, K. Koedinger, M. McDaniel, & J. Metcalfe.

“This guide reflects an expert panel's consensus on some of the most important principles to emerge from research on learning and memory. The guide draws on the best available evidence and expertise to provide teachers with specific strategies for organizing instruction and students' studying of material to facilitate learning and remembering, and for helping students use what they have learned in new situations. The guide includes a set of concrete actions relating to the use of instructional and study time that are applicable to subjects that demand a great deal of content learning, including social studies, science, and mathematics. Along with seven recommendations for teachers, the panel also indicates the quality of evidence that supports each recommendation.”

[Summary and full text – Organizing Instruction and Study](#)

[Also see – Doing What Works: How to Organize Your Teaching](#)

Organizing Schools to Improve Student Achievement: Start Times, Grade Configurations, and Teacher Assignments

The Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution, Washington DC. (2011).

B. A. Jacob & J. E. Rockoff.

“Education reform proposals are often based on high-profile or dramatic policy changes, many of which

are expensive, politically controversial, or both. In this paper, (the authors) argue that the debates over these ‘flashy’ policies have obscured a potentially important direction for raising student performance — namely, reforms to the management or organization of schools. By making sure the ‘trains run on time’ and focusing on the day-to-day decisions involved in managing the instructional process, school and district administrators may be able to substantially increase student learning at modest cost. In this paper, (the authors) describe three organizational reforms that recent evidence suggests have the potential to increase K–12 student performance at modest costs: (a) starting school later in the day for middle and high school students; (b) shifting from a system with separate elementary and middle schools to one with schools that serve students in kindergarten through grade eight; and (c) managing teacher assignments with an eye toward maximizing student achievement (e.g. allowing teachers to gain experience by teaching the same grade level for multiple years or having teachers specializing in the subject where they appear most effective).” According to the National Education Policy Center, “This report carefully reviews high-quality empirical evidence from the last several years.”

[Full text and policy brief – Organizing Schools to Improve Student Achievement](#)

[Click at the right]

[Also see the review by the National Education Policy Center \(2011\).](#)

Parental Involvement and Student Achievement: A Meta-Analysis

Harvard Family Research Project, Cambridge, Massachusetts. (2005). W. H. Jaynes.

“Although much research has focused on the importance of parental involvement in children's education, conducting meta-analyses to determine the overall impact of parental involvement on the student population remains only a recent enterprise. . . . (The author) conducted a meta-analysis to determine the overall effects of parental involvement on K–12 students' academic achievement and to determine the extent to which certain expressions of parental involvement are beneficial to children. The meta-analysis drew from 77 studies, comprising over 300,000 students. Of the 77 studies, 36 included data only from secondary schools, 25 consisted of data only from elementary schools, and 16 possessed data for both elementary and secondary schools. Two reviewers used in this study rated the overall quality of the studies as a 2.3 on a 0.0 (lowest) to 3.0 (highest) scale.”

[Full text – Parental Involvement and Student Achievement](#)

Recent State Action on Teacher Effectiveness: What’s in State Laws and Regulations

Bellwether Education Partners, Boston, San Francisco and Washington DC. (2012). S. Mead.

“During the 2010, 2011, and 2012 legislative sessions, a combination of federal policy incentives and newly elected governors and legislative majorities in many states following the 2010 elections sparked a wave of legislation addressing teacher effectiveness. . . . In an effort to help policymakers, educators, and the public better understand how this flurry of legislative activity shifted the landscape on teacher effectiveness issues

— both nationally and at the state level — Bellwether Education Partners analyzed recent teacher effectiveness legislation, regulation, and supporting policy documents from 21 states that took major legislative or regulatory action on teacher effectiveness in the past three years. . . . This expanded analysis includes nearly all states that took major legislative action on teacher effectiveness over the past three years. . . . (The report) scores each state’s teacher effectiveness legislation and/or regulations against 13 criteria.”

[Full text – Recent State Actions on Teacher Effectiveness](#)

School Choice: Publications and Resources

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), Institute of Education Sciences,
U.S. Department of Education. (Continuing Collection).

The WWC review of school choice interventions examines the effect of different education models and school types on student achievement. Items reviewed are intended to improve outcomes in: (a) language arts; (b) mathematics achievement; (c) reading achievement; (d) staying in school. Grade/Age Range -- Elementary through High School. Population: All.

[To access School Choice](#)

School Climate Research Summary 2010

National School Climate Center, New York City. (2010).

"Over the past two decades, researchers and educators have increasingly recognized the importance of K-12 school climate. This summary builds on the National School Climate Center’s 2009 school climate research summary and details how school climate is associated with and/ or promotes (a) safety, (b) healthy relationships, (c) engaged learning and teaching, and (d) school improvement efforts. With a few exceptions, the citations represent empirical studies that have been published in peer-reviewed journals."

[Full text -- School Climate Research Summary](#)

[Click under "Recent Research and Practice"]

School Improvement by Design: Lessons from a Study of Comprehensive School Reform

Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), a coalition of 7 leading research institutions. (2009).

“CPRE Michigan’s Study of Instructional Improvement (SII) was a 13-year (1996-2009), multi-method, large scale quasi-experiment that sought to understand the impact of three widely-disseminated comprehensive school reform (CSR) programs on instruction and student achievement in high-poverty elementary schools: (a) the Accelerated Schools Project; (b) America’s Choice; and (c) Success for All. The study also followed a set of closely matched comparison schools. Each of these school reform programs sought to make ‘comprehensive’ changes in the instructional capacity of schools, and each was being implemented in schools in diverse social environments. Each program, however, also pursued a different design for instructional improvement, and each developed particular strategies for assisting

schools in the change process. In order to better understand the process of whole-school reform, SII developed a program of research to examine how these interventions operated and to investigate their impact on schools' instructional practice and student achievement in reading and mathematics. The research program had three components: (a) a longitudinal survey of 115 schools (roughly 30 schools in each of the three interventions under study, plus 26 matched control schools); (b) case studies of the three interventions under study; and (c) detailed case studies of nine schools implementing the interventions under study (plus 3 matched control schools)."

[Full text – School Improvement by Design](#)

[Scroll down and click on the title under Products]

School Organization and Governance: Publications and Resources

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (Continuing Collection).

"The WWC review of school organization and governance examines how schools organize staff, students, and resources affects learning. The impact of changing the governing structures of schools is also examined. Items reviewed are intended to improve outcomes in (a) mathematics achievement and (b) reading achievement. Grade/age range – All. Population: All." Resources include Single Study Reviews and Practice Guides.

[To access School Organization and Governance](#)

School Reform and Improvement Database

Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, Learning Point Associates. Naperville, Illinois. (Through 2009).

The Center's database "includes almost 5,000 citations and abstracts of screened, high-quality research reports, articles, and studies on school reform and improvement from scholars throughout the United States. As a school administrator, you can find research on school finance models, optimal resource allocation for school improvement, whole district reform strategies, teacher retention, and tested strategies for school reform. As a teacher, you can find research on best practices and research/field tested curricula." (This Center ceased operating in 2009 but the database remains fully available.)

[Search the School Reform and Improvement Database](#)

[Click on the Subject Index at the right to search by topic]

Student Motivation: An Overlooked Piece of School Reform (six papers)

Center on Education Policy (CEP), Washington DC. (2012). A. Usher & N. Kober.

"This series of papers examines topics related to students' academic motivation, a critical but often overlooked aspect of education. The summary paper, *Student Motivation: An Overlooked Piece of School Reform*, pulls together research findings from the six background papers, each of which includes a brief overview of research findings, examples of current programs and policies, and implications for

the future, offering a more in-depth look at specific themes surrounding student engagement, including: (a) why motivation is important and how it might be defined and measured; (b) whether rewarding students can result in higher motivation; (c) whether students can be motivated by goal-setting; (d) the role of parental involvement, family background, and culture; (e) strategies schools might use to motivate students; and (f) nontraditional approaches to motivating otherwise unenthusiastic students. The appendix outlines four major dimensions of motivation and how they are defined by major scholars in the field.

[Full texts of six papers – Student Motivation](#)

Teacher and Leader Effectiveness: Publications and Resources

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (Continuing Collection).

“The research reviewed for this topic focuses on classroom management tactics, retention and incentive strategies, and instructional techniques designed to help teachers and school leaders improve student outcomes. Items reviewed are intended to improve outcomes in (a) general academic achievement; (b) mathematics achievement; (c) reading achievement; (d) science achievement; and (e) teacher retention. Grade/age range – elementary through high school. Population: All.” Resources include Single Study Reviews, Practice Guides, and Multimedia.

[Full texts – Teacher and Leader Effectiveness](#)

[Also see – Teacher Incentives: Publications and Resources](#)

Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: Research Review

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2005).

“Schools and their communities have always sought out the best teachers they could get in the belief that their students’ success depends on it. But what we know instinctively still leaves some big questions, especially for those in charge of hiring, training and retaining a qualified teaching force. To begin with, how do you define a good teacher? What characteristics do you look for? Given all the factors related to student performance, how much impact can we expect from teachers? And finally, if teachers are so important to student learning, how can we make sure all students receive the benefit of good teachers? In this overview, the Center looks at research that seeks to answer these questions.”

[Full text – Teacher Quality and Student Achievement](#)

[Click at the right for the summary, reference list, and other details]

The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2010).

"Student physical activity may help improve academic performance including academic achievement (e.g., grades, standardized test scores); academic behavior (e.g., on-task behavior, attendance); and

factors that can positively influence academic achievement (e.g. concentration, attention, improved classroom behavior). This report is a literature review that examines the existing research on the relationship between school-based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance. It spans 23 years of research and includes 50 studies (out of 406 articles that were examined to determine their match with the inclusion criteria). The majority of the studies in this review report that physical activity was positively related to academic performance. Most importantly, adding time during the school day for physical activity does not appear to take away from academic performance."

[Full text – Association Between School-Based Physical Activity and Academic Performance](#)

[Summary](#)

Also see [OSEP's 2011 report](#) -- Creating Equal Opportunities for Children and Youth with Disabilities to Participate in Physical Education and Extracurricular Activities

The Condition of Education 2012

National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. (2012).

S. Aud, W. Hussar, F. Johnson, G. Kena, E. Roth, E. Manning, X. Wang, J. Shang, & L. Notter.

"The Condition of Education 2012 summarizes important developments and trends in education using the latest available data. The report presents 49 indicators on the status and condition of education, in addition to a closer look at high schools in the United States over the past twenty years. The indicators represent a consensus of professional judgment on the most significant national measures of the condition and progress of education for which accurate data are available. The 2012 print edition includes indicators in three main areas: (a) participation in education; (b) elementary and secondary education and outcomes; and (c) postsecondary education and outcomes."

[Access the 2012 report and related materials.](#)

[To access all Condition of Education reports](#)

The Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in School Accountability Systems: Interim Report

National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (2012).

H. Harr-Robins, M. Song, S. Hurlburg, C. Pruce, L. Danielson, M. Garet, & J. Taylor.

"The Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) has a congressional mandate to conduct a national assessment of how well the IDEA is achieving its purposes (IDEA 2004, P.L. 108-446, Section 664[b]). As part of the national assessment of IDEA, this study is intended to provide policy-relevant information about the education of students with disabilities (SWDs) by examining their inclusion in school accountability systems, the use of school practices that may relate to

their educational outcomes, and SWD’s achievement in relation to school accountability status. . . . The purpose of this interim study report is to present descriptive information on school-level accountability, AYP performance, and school improvement status of schools accountable for SWD subgroup performance under Title I of the ESEA, as well as schools not accountable for SWD subgroup performance. The final study report will explore the relationships between accountability for this student subgroup and school practices and student outcomes.”

[Full text – The Inclusion of Students with Disabilities](#)

The Principal Perspective

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2012).
J. Hull.

“What impact do principals actually have on a school? Can they turn schools around? If so, what do they do to achieve such success? These are important questions, but until recently there has been very little research done on the principal’s role. Fortunately, that has begun to change due to increased accountability and more data on the effect of principals. . . . Recent studies have examined the relationship between principals and student outcomes, and attempted to identify what characteristics and qualifications are needed to be an effective principal, whether that’s providing staff with the resources and support they need, hiring and retaining the best talent, setting expectations for instruction, or simply gaining more experience.” This report reviews findings of these studies.

[Full text – The Principal Perspective](#)

[Click at the right for the summary, reference list, and other information]

The Ripple Effect: A Synthesis of Research on Principal Influence to Inform Performance Evaluation Design

Quality School Leadership Brief, American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2012).
M. Clifford, E. Behrstock-Sherratt, & J. Fetters.

“This brief draws upon research literature on principal effectiveness and policy documents created by scholars and national organizations concerned with principal professional practice and its effects. Research on principal effectiveness was located through a keyword search of electronic catalogs, including ERIC and EBSCO. In addition, the researchers asked nationally recognized leadership scholars to recommend research studies for inclusion in the review. The researchers specifically sought meta-analyses of research studies that identified principal knowledge or behaviors influencing student learning and teacher instructional decisions. Articles were screened for their relevance, quality, and scholarly rigor as determined by the transparency of methods and peer review process. . . . The researchers also reviewed and analyzed policy documents, produced by national policy entities, which define principal effectiveness and principal professional standards. Effectiveness definitions and standards were reviewed, and a typology emerged.”

[Full text – The Ripple Effect](#)

Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools: IES Practice Guide

What Works Clearinghouse, Institute for Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (2008). R. Herman (Panel Chair), P. Dawson, T. Dee, J. Greene, R. Maynard, & S. Redding.

“The goal of this practice guide is to formulate specific and coherent evidence-based recommendations for use by educators aiming to quickly and dramatically improve student achievement in low-performing schools. Although schoolwide reform models exist, most assume a slow and steady approach to school reform. They do not seek to achieve the kind of quick school turnaround examined in this practice guide. That is not to say that schools using a packaged schoolwide reform model could not experience dramatic and quick results. Often the differentiating factors are the intensity of the turnaround practices and the speed of putting them in place. . . . The guide includes specific recommendations and indicates the quality of the evidence that supports the recommendations. It also describes how each recommendation can be carried out.”

[Full text – Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools](#)

[Also see – Doing What Works: Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools](#)

Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making: IES Practice Guide

What Works Clearinghouse, Institute for Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (2009). L. Hamilton (Panel Chair), R. Halverson, S. S. Jackson, E. Mandinach, J. A. Supovitz, & J. C. Wayman.

“This guide offers five recommendations to help educators effectively use data to monitor students’ academic progress and evaluate instructional practices. The guide recommends that schools set a clear vision for schoolwide data use, develop a data-driven culture, and make data part of an ongoing cycle of instructional improvement. The guide also recommends teaching students how to use their own data to set learning goals. . . . The recommendations reflect both the expertise of the panelists and the findings from several types of studies, including studies that use causal designs to examine the effectiveness of data use interventions, case studies of schools and districts that have made data-use a priority, and observations from other experts in the field. The research base for this guide was identified through a comprehensive search for studies evaluating academically oriented data-based decision-making interventions and practices.” Evidence ratings reflecting the panel’s judgment of the validity of existing literature to support a causal claim are (a) strong, b) moderate, and (c) low.

[Full text – Using Student Achievement Data](#)

[Also see – Doing What Works: Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making](#)

What Leads to Positive Change in Teaching Practice?

National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), United Kingdom. (2012). S. Maughan, D. Teeman, & R. Wilson.

This “study aims to review the huge body of evidence that is available about the factors that lead to

positive change in teaching practice, in order to draw conclusions about: (a) the different forms of support that are most likely to encourage teachers to change their practice; (b) if there is evidence about how changes in practice impact on student outcomes; and (c) whether there are forms of support that represent particularly good value for money. The authors also aim to highlight any inconsistencies or gaps in the evidence that may benefit from further research. The report focuses primarily on literature from the UK and abroad, published in English, dating from 2006 to ensure a timely evidence base. However, where there are gaps in evidence that could be filled by high profile earlier literature, these are drawn on for completeness of discussions. (The authors) reviewed 132 items of literature, and selected 49 of these for the second stage of review at which we considered them in more detail. Sixteen items were then selected for inclusion in the final review. Following the initial study, comments were collected on the draft report from experts in the field. These comments led to amendments to the report as well as the inclusion of additional studies. Five studies were added at this stage.”

[Full text – What Leads to Positive Change in Teaching Practice?](#)

What Research Says About the Value of Homework: Research Review

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2007).

The lack of unequivocal connections between homework and learning, combined with strong opinions both for and against homework, may spur policymakers to take a closer look at the issue. As this review will show, the research suggests that homework may benefit some students under certain conditions. Older students appear to benefit more than younger students, for example. Although the link between parent involvement in homework and student learning is far from clear, students from lower-income households may not have as much support at home as those from more affluent families; as a result, homework may not be a valuable learning experience for them. Specific types of homework can be very beneficial to students with learning disabilities, however. Some research also suggests that homework has nonacademic benefits, such as helping children establish routines, develop study skills, and take responsibility.”

[Full text – What Research Says About the Value of Homework](#)

[Click at the right for the summary (At a Glance), reference list and other details]

Why Rural Matters 2011-2012: Statistical Indicators of the Conditions of Education in the 50 States

The Rural School and Community Trust, Washington DC. (2012).

“This the sixth in a series of biennial reports analyzing the contexts and conditions of rural education in each of the 50 states and calling attention to the need for policymakers to address rural education issues in their respective states. While it is the sixth in a series, this report is not simply an updating of data from earlier editions. On the contrary, from one report to the next, we have deliberately altered the statistical indicators and gauges to call attention to the variability and complexity of rural education. Our intent in these reports is not — as it is in many state-by-state analyses — to compare states in terms

of their differing rates of progress toward an arbitrary goal. Rather, the intent is (a) to provide information and analyses that highlight the priority policy needs of rural public schools and the communities they serve, and (b) to describe the complexity of rural contexts in ways that can help policymakers better understand the challenges faced by their constituencies and formulate policies that are responsive to those challenges." State-by-state results are included.

[Full text – Why Rural Matters 2011-2012](#)

Works in Progress: A Report on Middle and High School Improvement Programs

Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center, American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2005).

"This report provides information on nearly 100 programmatic approaches that help to address a dozen key issues facing middle and high schools. . . . It is intended to help education consumers at the district and school levels make evidence-based decisions about how to improve outcomes for middle and high school students." Throughout the text, evidence is briefly summarized for a large number of nationally known programs in comprehensive school reform, other schoolwide programs, academic models, middle grades education, transition to high school, and various other categories. All of these models are listed in the Appendix. They are also described individually, with evidence, beginning on page 77 of the report,

[Full text -- Works in Progress](#)



This information is an attempt to gather wide-ranging information in one place, to convey what others have accomplished, and to make valuable resources readily accessible. Information is presented in the language of the developer, publisher, distributor, or author to the maximum possible extent. The National Implementation Research Network has no ownership of contents described in this library. Nor does NIRN make claims about any models, curricula, strategies, tools, products, or papers that are annotated. Links to evidence are provided, so that you can decide whether the evidence is convincing and the material is relevant to your context. Some collected reviews are developed and distributed by a U.S. Government agency. Otherwise, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of any U.S. Government agency, and no endorsement should be inferred.
