Use of Research Evidence Under ESSA: Implications for States

An American Youth Policy Forum Discussion Group

October 17-18, 2016
Washington, DC
Assess the requirements and opportunities to incorporate research evidence into policy and practice under ESSA;

Discuss the challenges and limitations states may face in conducting, acquiring, or using research evidence under ESSA;

Examine the relationships that may affect the implementation of these requirements;

Collectively generate strategies to better incorporate research evidence into all of our work; and

Identify remaining questions and considerations for the future.
Rules of Engagement

* Off the record discussion

* Listen, learn, engage

* Ask questions, share ideas

* Please tweet responsibly
Panel Session: ESSA Overview and Evidence-Based Provisions

* Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger  
  Director, Policy and Program Studies Service, U.S. Department of Education

* Emily Anthony  
  Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Department of Education

**Respondent:** Dr. Marty West, Associate Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education
USING EVIDENCE TO STRENGTHEN EDUCATION INVESTMENTS

OCTOBER 2016

EMILY ANTHONY
EVIDENCE IN ESSA

- “Evidence-based” interventions in Titles I, II, IV, VI
- Defines “evidence-based” as having 4 levels
  - Strong evidence
  - Moderate evidence
  - Promising evidence
  - Evidence that demonstrates a rationale
- Higher levels of evidence required for select competitions & school improvement funds (1003)
- Education Innovation and Research program, Pay-for-Success initiatives, program evaluations, pooled evaluation authority
EVIDENCE GUIDANCE

- **Background**
  - Non-binding, non-regulatory guidance
  - Applies to all programs in ESSA
  - Use in conjunction with program-specific guidance
  - Designed to support SEA/LEA/ partner use of evidence
    - Part I: Strengthening the Effectiveness of ESEA Investments
    - Part II: Guidance on the Definition of “Evidence-Based”
    - Informs ED’s technical assistance materials for consistency

- **Available:**
PART I: STRENGTHENING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ESEA INVESTMENTS
5 STEPS FOR DECISION-MAKING

1. Identify Local Needs
2. Select Relevant, Evidence-Based Interventions
3. Plan for Implementation
4. Implement
5. Examine and Reflect
PART II: THE DEFINITION OF “EVIDENCE-BASED”
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Look at the entire body of research, not just one study
- Focus on important outcomes
- The relevance of evidence matters
- Use more rigorous evidence (e.g. strong or moderate) if available
- WWC can be used to find evidence on the effectiveness
- If not in WWC, look for studies of equivalent quality
4 LEVELS OF EVIDENCE

Tiered approach to evidence – reflects that the amount and rigor of evidence varies; not one size fits all

1) Strong evidence
2) Moderate evidence
3) Promising evidence
4) Demonstrates a rationale
## SUMMARY CRITERIA BY LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strong Evidence</th>
<th>Moderate Evidence</th>
<th>Promising Evidence</th>
<th>Demonstrates a Rationale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study Design</strong></td>
<td>Experimental study</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental study</td>
<td>Correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias</td>
<td>Provides a well-specified logic model informed by research or evaluation</td>
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<td><strong>WWC Standard</strong></td>
<td>Meets WWC Evidence Standards without reservations (or is the equivalent quality)</td>
<td>Meets WWC Evidence Standards with or without reservations (or is the equivalent quality)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>Favorable Effects</strong></td>
<td>Shows a statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect of the intervention on a student outcome or other relevant outcome</td>
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<td>Shows a statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect of the intervention on a student outcome or other relevant outcome</td>
<td>Relevant research or an evaluation that suggests that the intervention is likely to improve a student outcome or other relevant outcome</td>
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<td><strong>Other Effects</strong></td>
<td>Is not overridden by statistically significant and negative (i.e., unfavorable) evidence from other findings in studies that meet WWC Evidence Standards with or without reservations (or are the equivalent quality)</td>
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<td>Is not overridden by statistically significant and negative (i.e., unfavorable) evidence from other findings in studies that meet WWC Evidence Standards with or without reservations (or are the equivalent quality)</td>
<td>An effort to study the effects of the intervention, ideally producing promising evidence or higher, will happen as part of the intervention or is underway elsewhere</td>
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<td><strong>Sample Size and Overlap</strong></td>
<td>Includes a large sample and a multi-site sample, overlapping with populations and settings proposed to receive the intervention</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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RELEVANT GUIDANCE & REGULATIONS

- Published Guidance
  - Preparing, training, and recruiting high quality teachers and principals (Title II)
- Forthcoming Guidance
  - Early learners and student support and academic enrichment (Title IV)
- Forthcoming Regulations
  - Accountability, state plans, and data reporting
NEXT STEPS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- New IES [Find What Works](#) Tools
- Regional Educational Laboratories
- Comprehensive Centers
- State Support Network
FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Main ESSA Web Page: [www.ed.gov/ESSA](http://www.ed.gov/ESSA)
- ESSA Resources, including link to the Notice, Fact Sheet, and other ESSA resources: [http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html)
- Email Inbox: [ESSA.Questions@ed.gov](mailto:ESSA.Questions@ed.gov)

Contact Information: [Emily.Anthony@ed.gov](mailto:Emily.Anthony@ed.gov)
Panel Session: Opportunities and Challenges for States

* Massachusetts Department of Education
  * Carrie Conaway, Associate Commissioner
  * Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner
* Tennessee Department of Education
  * Nate Schwartz, Chief Research and Strategy Officer
  * Rita Fentress, Director of School Improvement
* Michigan Department of Education
  * Alisande Henry, Special Assistant to the Superintendent
  * Karen Ruple, Manager, MI Excel Statewide System of Support

Respondent: Tom Brock, Commissioner, Institute of Education Sciences
Group Discussion
Panel Session: Guide for Implementing Evidence-Based Provisions for Title I Improvement

* John Hughes  
  Deputy Director, Florida Center for Reading Research

* Laurie Lee  
  Researcher, Florida Center for Reading Research
Group Discussion
Panel Session: The Utility of Research-Practice Partnerships

* Paula Arce-Trigatti
  Director, National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships

* Steve Fleischman
  Chief Executive Officer, Education Northwest
National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships (NNERPP)

NNERPP is made possible by generous funding support from the William T. Grant Foundation, Spencer Foundation, Laura and John Arnold Foundation, Wallace Foundation, and Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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<td><strong>Steering Committee</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Kemple</td>
<td>Research Alliance for NYC Schools</td>
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<td>Kylie Klein</td>
<td>UChicago Consortium on School Research</td>
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<td>David Stevens</td>
<td>Education Northwest</td>
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<td>Ruth López Turley</td>
<td>Houston Education Research Consortium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Wentworth</td>
<td>Stanford-San Francisco Unified Partnership</td>
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<td>Tonya Wolford</td>
<td>School District of Philadelphia</td>
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RICE | KINDER
INSTITUTE FOR URBAN RESEARCH
Historical Flow of Research Knowledge

Practitioner

Researcher
Historical Flow of Research Knowledge

- “Research to practice gap”
Historical Flow of Research Knowledge

- “Research to practice gap”
- “One-way street”
Enter: Research-Practice Partnerships in Education
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- Improves the research to practice gap
- Creates a “two-way street” for transfer of knowledge
Enter: Research-Practice Partnerships in Education

- Shifts how the work is done:
Enter: Research-Practice Partnerships in Education

- Shifts how the work is done:
  - Practitioners and researchers work together, to develop, conduct, interpret, and implement research
Enter: Research-Practice Partnerships in Education

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  - This kind of research has the potential to be more timely, relevant, and seen as trustworthy by practitioners
Enter: Research-Practice Partnerships in Education

• Shifts how the work is done:
  • Practitioners and researchers work together, to develop, conduct, interpret, and implement research
  • This kind of research has the potential to be more timely, relevant, and seen as trustworthy by practitioners
    • Which increases its likelihood of being used
Examples of research-practice partnerships

• Several cities currently have a place-based RPP:
  • Baltimore (Baltimore Education Research Consortium)
  • Chicago (UChicago Consortium on School Research)
  • Houston (Houston Education Research Consortium)
  • New Orleans (Education Research Alliance for New Orleans)
  • New York City (Research Alliance for New York City Schools)
  • San Francisco (Stanford-San Francisco Unified School District Partnership)

• There are also numerous research alliances within 10 Regional Education Laboratories (RELs) across the U.S
Opportunities for RPPs in ESSA

• Distinct focus on using “evidence-based research” to inform decisions

• RPPs are already set up to do this:
  • Extend research capacity of a district or state education agency
  • Can serve as an independent voice providing recommendations based on research

• With respect to the 4th tier of evidence in ESSA, can help provide the “ongoing evaluation” piece
  • Moreover, research produced by RPPs is already focused on local problems of practice

• More common to find partnerships at the local level
  • ESSA creates opportunity to expand state-level RPPs
  • Or create a network of local-level RPPs…
A Vision...
A Vision...
A Vision…

In some cases, there may be limited or no communication across partnerships.
A Vision...

In some cases, there may be limited or no communication across partnerships.

In other cases, there may be unnecessary or inefficient replication of efforts.
NNERPP is a hub that *connects* partnerships
NNERPP is a hub that *connects* partnerships
NNERPP: Objectives

- Develop and share best practices
- Produce comparative research and facilitate cross-partnership collaborations
- Synthesize research findings and build knowledge
- Advance policies and system reforms
Our goal:

Improve outcomes for students everywhere
How research-practice partnerships can help states and districts implement ESSA’s evidence provisions

Steve Fleischman
Education Northwest
October 18, 2016
About Education Northwest

- **Education Northwest** is a regionally based nonprofit that works throughout the nation to create strong schools and communities.

- Our **mission** is to improve learning by building capacity in schools, families, and communities through applied research and development.
Federal Projects Supporting Education Stakeholders

REL Northwest
- Strengthen evidence use via applied research and technical assistance

Northwest Comprehensive Center
- Support capacity building for SEAs
Evidence? Again? Why?

then

NCLB = “scientifically-based research”
experimental and quasi-experimental

now

ESSA = “evidence-based” interventions
4 evidence tiers

Evidence matters.

WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE

REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY PROGRAM
USED Non-Regulatory Guidance: Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments

- Evidence use process
- Evidence standards and selection
Better Evidence, Better Choices, Better Schools: State Supports for Evidence-Based School Improvement and the Every Student Succeeds Act
8 Recommendations

Based on Better Evidence, Better Choices, Better Schools: State Supports for Evidence-Based School Improvement and the Every Student Succeeds Act report issued by The Center for American Progress
1. Define roles in the policy implementation process and create a theory of change
2. **Support** the use of evidence clearinghouses to **identify promising approaches**, rather than creating new state-approved lists.
3. Encourage **robust decision-making** processes
4. Help ensure high-quality services from improvement providers
5. Promote and provide frequent, accurate, and timely communication
6. Partner with intermediaries to promote and support effective implementation
7. Facilitate effective implementation in districts, schools, and classrooms
8. Promote continuous improvement and collective learning
RPP Roles in ESSA evidence use: Important Intermediaries

3: Encourage robust decision-making
7: Facilitate effective implementation
8: Promote continuous improvement
Discussion
Factors that influence decision-making in education

Which approaches have Tier I, II, or III evidence supporting their use?

Research and evaluation evidence

Which approaches are viewed favorably by teachers, principals, and other expert practitioners?

Practitioner experience and judgments

Context, organizational actors, and circumstance

Which approaches best fit the local context based on a robust needs assessment?

Stakeholder preferences and values

Which approaches do stakeholders, such as parents and business leaders, prefer and value?

Source: Adapted by authors from Rob Briner, David Denyer, and Denise Rousseau, "Evidence-Based Management: Concept Cleanup Time?", Academy of Management Perspectives 23 (4) (2009): 19–32.
Breakout Discussion
Facilitated Discussion

Respondents:
* Ruth Neild
  Institute of Education Sciences
* Carrie Heath Phillips
  Council of Chief State School Officers

Facilitator:
* Jim Kohlmoos
  Principal, EDGE Consulting LLC
Closing Reflections and Next Steps