



IOWA EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION ASSOCIATION
2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

DOES HIGH SCHOOL
NEED TO BE REFORMED?
RESEARCH BEHIND THE HEADLINES

DECEMBER 8, 2006
SHERATON HOTEL
IOWA CITY, IOWA
<http://www.ierea.org>

*Pearson Educational Measurement welcomes the
Iowa Educational Research and Evaluation Association
to our town!*

Enjoy the 2006 conference.

WELCOME FROM THE IEREA PRESIDENT AND THE CONFERENCE PLANNING CHAIR

This year's conference marks a return to Eastern Iowa, and we are very glad you could join us in beautiful downtown Iowa City. Our conference theme regarding high school reform is very timely and we are fortunate to have national, state and local experts to help us unravel the intricacies of what people mean when they speak of reforming our schools. Use this time to listen, learn and to grow in your understanding of, not just your point of view on the matter, but the viewpoints of others as well.

Dr. Tom Houlihan is arguably the nation's expert on high school reform. He is a former executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers, and a former senior policy advisor to the governor of North Carolina. Dr. Houlihan not only brings national expertise regarding high school reform, but also considerable knowledge and experience as a teacher, principal and superintendent. Dr. Houlihan's presentation will help your circumspection as you grapple with high school reform.

After Dr. Houlihan's keynote address, three local researchers will share their research and perspectives relative to high school reform. Dale Monroe, superintendent of Anamosa public schools, will facilitate a look at Iowa's "Promising Schools," which includes the schools' perspectives. Dr. Jim Sconing from ACT will review trends in education as they relate to college readiness and will try to help answer the question of whether Iowa's graduates are indeed ready. Ray Morley from the Iowa Department of Education will share his work on dropout rate reduction in Iowa.

All of these sessions, including our poster presentations, refreshments and lunch, provide the opportunities we all need to grow professionally, particularly as it relates to our understanding of the reform movement. We hope you have a wonderful time and will stick around for our distinguished research award presentation. Have a wonderful conference.

Sincerely,

Jim Janssen, President IEREA

Jon S. Twing, Conference Planning Chair

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

8:00 - 9:00 A.M. REGISTRATION
 Prefunction Area Mike Szymczuk, Treasurer IEREA

9:00 - 9:10 A.M. WELCOMING REMARKS:
 Dean A Jim Janssen, President IEREA

9:10 - 10:15 A.M. KEYNOTE ADDRESS:
 Dean A **High School Reform - From Rhetoric to Reality**

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Tom Houlihan

Presiding: Jim Janssen, President IEREA

One of the hottest topics in education today relates to the push for high school reform. Bill Gates has stated that "today's high schools are obsolete." Foundations and the federal government are pouring millions of dollars into small schools and other types of structural redesign. Yet, the results of these investments are mixed.

Dr. Houlihan's keynote presentation will provide an overview of the key issues impacting high schools today and will focus on the structural vs. instructional component of reform, and what research highlights as important factors in improving student performance.

Dr. Tom Houlihan recently completed a 5-year term as executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers. Dr. Houlihan previously served as senior education advisor to Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr. of North Carolina. With a background as a teacher, high school principal and superintendent, Dr. Houlihan is the first educator to attain cabinet-level status in a North Carolina governor's administration.

10:15 - 11:30 A.M.

POSTER SESSION 1 - JOHNSON

High stakes testing and test preparation: Examining teacher beliefs and practices

Emily R. Lai and Kris Waltman, University of Iowa

ABSTRACT: In the current accountability context, the validity of the inferences we draw from standardized achievement test scores assumes critical importance. Threats to validity, including test-preparation practices that constitute construct-irrelevant variance, have been discussed broadly in the literature (Haladyna and Downing, 2004; Haladyna, Nolen, and Haas, 1991; Killian, 1991; Mehrens and Kaminski, 1989; Moore, 1994; and Popham, 1991, among others). In this study, teacher beliefs about and reported use of various test-preparation practices are examined using survey and interview methodology. In addition, the effects of various teacher-level and school-level factors on teacher beliefs and practices are explored.

How prepared for college are they? Student perceptions of their high school college preparation experience

Kimberly J. Fara, Iowa State University

ABSTRACT: This pilot study examined three students' perceptions of high school preparation and transition to college. Students were interviewed and provided transcripts to validate perceptions of first year college success. Interviews focused on high school courses taken (including dual-credit courses), differences between high school and college, and perceptions of college success.

10:15 - 11:30 A.M. Poster Session 1: Johnson (continued)

Relationships between the pattern of higher-level mathematics and science courses taken and test scores on ACT for high school seniors and ITED for high school juniors

Xiaoping Wang and Shawn Snyder, Iowa Department of Education

ABSTRACT: Two years of student level data were used in this study to examine the relationship between high school student performance on ACT and ITED and the pattern of the higher-level mathematics or science courses taken by these students. The data lead to the conclusion that the students who took at least one of the target courses performed better on their tests than their peers who did not take any such courses. The juniors who took three of the target courses and the seniors who took five such courses performed significantly better on the tests than the students who took fewer of these courses.

Pressure felt by teachers to increase test scores in reaction to NCLB: An investigation of related factors

Joann L. Moore and Kris Waltman, University of Iowa

ABSTRACT: This study utilized questionnaire data to explore factors associated with Iowa teachers feeling pressured to increase test scores in response to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Teachers reported that pressure was significantly related to school climate, changes made to curriculum, and use of particular test preparation activities.

Participants in upward bound and talent search programs: High school achievement and preparation for college

Florence A. Hamrick and Mack C. Shelley, II, Iowa State University

ABSTRACT: Using NELS:88 data, this study documented high school achievements in math, English, and science by Upward Bound, Talent Search (or similar programs) students. UBTS participation was associated with higher High School grades and more High School math, English, and science units than among comparable non-participants. Multi-level analyses of school and student/family characteristics will also be reported.

10:15 - 11:30 A.M. Poster Session 1: Johnson (continued)

Program effectiveness and curriculum competencies of the leisure, youth and human services division at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) serving the need for the leisure employment market

Jonell Pedescleaux, University of Northern Iowa

ABSTRACT: This quantitative study evaluated the effectiveness of the Leisure, Youth and Human Services (LYHS) curriculum at UNI. The study focused on the perception of the LYHS alumni, and professionals/employers in the leisure related fields on the skills and educational development needed for employment in the leisure profession.

The effects of differentiated instruction on gifted middle school students

Barbara Pestka and James O'Connor, Lin-Mar Community School District and Graceland University

ABSTRACT: We examined the effects of differentiated instruction on attitudes and achievement in eighth-grade classes for gifted students. Results of this study showed that gifted students mastered content regardless of differentiation. However, attitude toward learning social studies was highest when differentiation strategies were used.

Preservice science teachers understanding about scientific terms

Hakan Akcay, University of Iowa

ABSTRACT: The main purpose of this study was to find out preservice science teachers' beliefs about scientific terms that were suggested by the NSES and consist of: science, technology, society, scientific literacy, constructivism, inquiry, research, and biology. The study raises questions concerning the teacher education programs. It is appropriate that teacher education programs assess their effectiveness.

11:30 A.M. - 12:15 P.M. INVITED PRESENTATION - DEAN C AND D

Promising Schools and Their Efforts to Improve Instruction

Speakers: Oattie Maxey, Aaron Stecker, and Kris Hellweg,

Kennedy High School, Cedar Rapids

Nathan Marting, Bob King and Angie Larson,

Midland High School, Wyoming

Al Lampman, Tony Burns, Deb Pfalzgraf, Bette Michel and Mary Meier,
East High School, Waterloo

Presiding: Dale Monroe, Anamosa School District

Iowa's "Promising Schools" are members of a national network of comprehensive school improvement research. The Center for International Leadership identified ten central findings that are used as a platform for improvement activities. These findings include Culture of High Expectations and Support, Data-Driven Decisions, Accountability, Articulated Curriculum, Rigorous and Relevant Instruction, Personalized Learning, Professional Learning Communities, Partnerships, School Climate and Leadership. To join the "Promising Schools" network, a school must demonstrate that it meets the criteria to be a proven or promising model of success. All schools must commit to making strides toward providing a more rigorous and relevant curriculum for all students. All are required to identify and submit examples of curriculum and best practices or programs that have been used to improve student learning. Today's presentation will feature three of the twenty Iowa Schools selected to be a part of this national network. They will be sharing their stories and the strides they have made toward exploiting the ten central findings for improved instruction.

12:15 - 1:15 P.M. LUNCH - DEAN A AND B

1:15 - 2:30 P.M. POSTER SESSION 2 - JOHNSON

Test-centered vs. Learning-centered:

An examination of factors potentially related to school focus

Sarah Hagge and Kris Waltman, University of Iowa

ABSTRACT: The extent to which teachers within a school agree that their school is more interested in improving test scores than in improving overall student learning varies considerably across schools. This study was conducted to better understand how schools differed with respect to this continuum of school focus. Correlational analyses were used to explore relationships between and among various school-level and teacher-level variables hypothesized to be related to the test-centered vs. learning-centered continuum. In addition, descriptive statistics were used to explore the differences among groups of schools that differed the most along this continuum.

Discrepancies between test scores from high-stakes and low-stakes contexts: An investigation of the effects of school-level characteristics and test-preparation practices

Yuki Nozawa and Kris Waltman, The University of Iowa

ABSTRACT: One concern regarding testing for accountability purposes is that the resulting scores might be higher than they should because of particular actions that took place in the school. This study investigated whether the potential existence of score inflation can be explained, in part, by school-level characteristics and/or test-preparation practices.

1:15 - 2:30 P.M. Poster Session 2: Johnson (continued)

Evaluating computer-delivered scorer training and scorer performance for scoring constructed responses

Paul Nichols and Cindi Kreiman, Pearson Educational Measurement and Mayuko Kanada, University of Minnesota

ABSTRACT: This study compared the scoring of constructed responses under three different conditions: traditional, online training, or distributed. The effect of online training was assessed by comparing the performance of scorers in the traditional condition to the performance of scorers in the online condition. The effect of distributed scoring was assessed by comparing the performance of scorers in the online training condition to the performance of scorers in the distributed condition. Scorers were compared on both the reliability of the scoring procedure (agreement between readers' scores) and the validity of score interpretation (agreement between readers' and experts' scores). Whereas there was a suggestion of a pattern in the data, this study found no consistent statistically significant differences in validity or reliability between distributed scoring and traditional local scoring.

U.S. American students experience with and orientation toward international diversity in a midwestern comprehensive university setting

Olga Kostareva and Sangmin Kim, University of Northern Iowa and Winona State University

ABSTRACT: To develop a better understanding of the role of international students in the process of campus internationalization as perceived by American students. This study investigated the amount and nature of interactions between non-international and international students at a Midwestern comprehensive university and measured the attitudes of domestic students toward internationally diverse cultures and people.

1:15 - 2:30 P.M. Poster Session 2: Johnson (continued)

Degrees of association in NCLB data

Bruce Rogers, University of Northern Iowa

ABSTRACT: The overall purpose of this study is to investigate methods and comparisons that could be used in any school district to analyze properties of their data. The particular purpose of this study is to investigate degrees of association between selected variables in NCLB data.

Iowa's 98th% confidence interval for AMOs: A Bayesian analysis

John Denbleyker and Shuqin Tao, University of Iowa

ABSTRACT: The paper addresses the extent to which Iowa's Department of Education use of the 98 percent confidence interval obscures the true level of proficiency for students in selected schools and districts for AYP purposes. A Bayesian analysis is utilized to calculate the posterior probability that the true proportion proficient meets or exceeds the achievement objective.

The cost of dropping out of school in Iowa

James R. Veale, Statistical/Research Consultant and Educator

ABSTRACT: The poster will consist of a review of the costs of dropping out of school, including an update of the 2002 study for the Iowa Association of Alternative Education, a 2004 analysis by the Iowa Legislative Services Agency (fiscal services), and a 2003 DMACC/CIETC study, as well as information regarding programs such as alternative schools that contribute to a reduction in the dropout rate in Iowa.

1:15 - 2:30 P.M. Poster Session 2: Johnson (continued)

The impact on phonological awareness using a synthetic phonics program with at-risk kindergarten students

Laurie A. Wenger and James O'Connor,
Cedar Rapids school district and Graceland University

ABSTRACT: At-risk kindergarten students had very low phonological awareness scores and had shown little progress in this area over the school year. Jolly Phonics, a systematic synthetic phonics program, was implemented for fourteen weeks. There was a significant increase in the phonological awareness skills of the students in the study.

The use of forgiveness education with at-risk adolescents attending an alternative school

Suzanne Freedman, Ph.D., University of Northern Iowa

ABSTRACT: This poster will illustrate the use of a Forgiveness Education program to help at-risk adolescents deal with the unfairness and injustices in their lives. The forgiveness education was based on Enright et al's. (1991) 20-unit model of forgiveness and occurred in a regular classroom context over a typical quarter (eight weeks) in an alternative high school. The forgiveness education intervention will be described and the effectiveness of the intervention will be illustrated.

2:30 - 3:15 P.M. INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Dean C

The State of Education in the State of Iowa: Are We Making Progress?

Speakers: Jim Sconing, ACT

Presiding: Frank Hernandez, Iowa State University

One of the current trends in education is to ensure that all high school graduates have the opportunity to go to college, if they so desire. To what extent are the students in Iowa ready for college? Using data from students in Iowa, we evaluate the trends in student readiness for the state across a period of ten years. Of particular interest are the course-taking patterns and the changes in these patterns across time. Also of interest is a comparison with surrounding states that have a greater level of state involvement in setting high school graduation requirements.

Dean D

Mission Zero Dropoffs: Different Echoes

Speakers: Ray Morley, Iowa Department of Education

Presiding: Xiaoping Wang, Iowa Department of Education

Zero dropout is achievable if everyone including children, youth, families, school teachers, school administrators, city managers, county supervisors, etc, contribute to the process. Zero dropout presently exists in many of our communities. The road to the future is bright because we know the pathways. Students have something to say about how success can be achieved. The echoes of the voices of students and research-based recommendations offer solutions to challenges that prevent high schools from achieving zero dropout. So, the new totally successful high school in Iowa communities will be...

3:15 - 3:30 P.M. PRESENTATION OF 2006 IEREA DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH AWARD
Dean A Kris Waltman, University of Iowa

CLOSING REMARKS
Jon Twing, Pearson Educational Measurement

3:30 - 4:00 P.M. BUSINESS MEETING
Dean A

SPECIAL THANKS

The IEREA Council would like to thank and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the following individuals who helped review and select this year's poster presenters.

Corey Drake - Iowa State University
Troyce Fisher - Iowa State University
Joanne Marshall - Iowa State University
James Scharff - Iowa State University

Special thanks is extended to the individuals who reviewed and selected this year's winner of the Distinguished Research Award.

Lee Tack - Iowa Department of Education
Kris Waltman - University of Iowa
Jon Twing - Pearson Educational Measurement

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