



Center for the Study of Education Policy (CSEP)

- As usual, it has been a busy time in the Center! We were immersed in the work with the IL-PART initiative (the new U.S. DOE School Leadership grant), finalizing the Early Childhood Advisory Group (ECAG) recommendations, planning the Danielson Validation Project for PreK to Grade 3 teachers, mapping out sustainability strategies for the i3 Child Parent Center initiative, analyzing the results of a statewide RtI evaluation, and further supporting universities involved with the Evaluation Capacity Building Project for principal preparation programs, to name a few of the many initiatives in which we are working on right now. You can learn more about these initiatives on our web site at: <http://education.illinoisstate.edu/csep/initiatives/>
- In addition to the work of CSEP, Audrey Soglin (IEA) and Erika Hunt (CSEP) are leading the work of the P-20 Council Committee on Teacher and Leadership Effectiveness in strategies to develop a Diverse Learning Exchange for teachers and leaders, designed to address the growing diversity gap between teachers and students. For the most up to date information on the committee's work, see the materials for the October 29th meeting on the following site: <http://www2.illinois.gov/gov/P20/Pages/COMM5.aspx> The committee is next meeting on December 18th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. via the IEA V-Tel rooms at both the Springfield and Chicago locations.



Early Childhood Education

- **Early Childhood Community Schools Linkages: Advancing a Theory of Change:** [This publication](#) sets out a theory of change for aligning early childhood learning with elementary education. The Linkages Project was informed by the successful Perry Preschool and Abecedarian programs. To read more about the connections see the blog post [“Community School Collaborations – A Lifeline for Early Learning Success”](#) by Janet Brown, Senior Early Childhood Program Specialist and Kwesi Rollins, Director of Leadership Programs at the Institute for Educational Leadership.
- **Home Visiting:** Pediatrics, the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, has included a series of supplement articles that focus on home visiting and early childhood education for its November 2013 issues. Articles range from addressing toxic stress through home visiting and creating a national home visiting research network. Read more [here](#).
- **Bipartisan Legislation to Improve Early Education for America's Children:** Senator Tom Harkin, Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pension (HELP) committee introduced the [Strong Start for America's Children Act](#). The legislation

would expand access to high-quality early learning programs for children from birth to age five. The legislation focuses on creating a new funding stream to help states and communities improve and expand high quality, full-day preschool programs for four year olds; states would also have the flexibility to use a portion of the funds for infants and toddlers. Read more [here](#).

- **Inequalities Among America’s Youngest Children:** Research shows a child’s academic success is often shaped long before he or she steps into a kindergarten classroom. “Though they are growing up in a time of limitless possibilities, America’s infants and toddlers will be a generation marked by significant inequalities, with a disturbing proportion of them being born into families lacking the resources to promote their healthy development.” Read more [here](#).



K-12 Schools

- **Text, Talk, Act to Improve Mental Health (Creating Community Solutions):** “[Text, Talk, and Act on Mental Health](#)” is designed to engage high school and college students in particular, using technology that is ubiquitous in their lives. Results from the live polling questions will be tabulated almost instantly, so that people will be able to see how participants across the country responded. The discussion questions will provide a safe space for candid dialogue on mental health, one of the most crucial and misunderstood public issues we face. The process will also provide an opportunity for participants to discuss actions they can take to strengthen mental health on their campuses and in their communities.
- **Something to Say-Success Principles for Afterschool Arts Programs from Urban Youth and Other Experts:** Drawing on hundreds of interviews with young people, their families, leaders of exemplary programs and others nationwide, this report offers some answers, including 10 principles for developing effective programming. Click [here](#) to download the full report.
- **High Schools to Compete for \$100 Million in New Race to the Top-Style Contest:** The Obama administration announced a \$100 million competition for high schools to better prepare students for college and high-tech careers. The competition is a mix between the Race to the Top and Investing in Innovation programs and will be funded and run through the Department of Labor. Between 25 and 40 grants will be awarded next year for high schools that team up with colleges and employers. [Read more here](#).
- **Raising the Profile of Rural Schools:** The J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation has launched a new consortium to identify best practices, support innovations, and research national trends in rural education. [The Rural Opportunities of Idaho](#) has identified focus areas: higher education access; school finance; innovations in technology; recruiting high-quality educators; and rural charter schools. Read more [here](#).
- **Is it Better to Have a Great Teacher or a Small Class?** A new study put out by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute examines whether students are better off in a larger class if taught by an effective teacher. The full working paper will be available soon. Download the brief [here](#).

- **Leveling the Playing Field for Low-Income Students:** The United Way of the Bay Area and the Partnership for Children and Youth have released a [report](#) examining the ways poverty and education are inextricably linked and exploring how the Community Schools approach is creating new opportunities for low-income children and youth. [Download the full report here.](#)



Teacher and Leadership Effectiveness

- **Campaign Seeks to Recruit Top Students to Become Teachers:** The Department of Education in partnership with the Advertising Council, Microsoft, State Farm Insurance, Teach for America, the nation’s two largest teacher’s unions, and other educational groups unveiled a campaign aimed at recruiting a new generation of classroom teachers. The Teach Campaign uses spots and radio announcements that portray teaching as creative, invigorating, and meaningful. Read more [here](#).
- **Great Teachers Don’t Always Want to Become Principals:** Sam is a high-school government teacher in Washington D.C. who wanted to take on a leadership role in her school. Last year, she earned a master’s degree and an administration license in order to pursue a position as a principal or dean. Now, though, she has doubts about leaving the classroom. Sam’s dilemma , the seemingly conflicting desires of wanting to advance in her career while remaining a classroom teacher – is one that many teachers face. Read more [here](#).
- **Central Office Transformation Toolkit:** Commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, the Central Office Transformation Toolkit was developed by the Center for Education Leadership in partnership with Dr. Meredith Honig. The tools – Readiness Assessment, Creating Your Theory of Action, and Principal Instructional Leadership – are based on Dr. Honig’s research and CEL’s experience helping districts across the country improve how their central office leaders support better instructional leadership. A free copy of the toolkit is available for downloading [here](#).
- **Effective Teaching for Disadvantaged Students:** The Institute of Education Sciences presented findings from their new reported entitled “[Access to Effective Teaching For Disadvantaged Students](#)” that show students from low-income families have less access to effective teaching than their peers. The report examines access in 29 geographically dispersed school districts over the 2008-09 to 2010-11 school years. Read more [here](#).



Common Core Standards

- **TNTP Fixing Classroom Observations:** This report discusses the link between the Common Core Standards and new teacher evaluation systems, and proposes standards for classroom observations that would simplify current rubrics and provide more meaningful feedback for teachers. Read more [here](#).
- **Common Core Resources for Families:**
 - On their website, ISBE provides [resources for parents](#) such as an [overview on the Common Core](#) and frequently asked questions. ISBE, with the Illinois PTA, another Core Coalition member, also offers [parent guides](#) for each grade level for the Common Core in both English and Spanish.
 - As another resource for families, the Education Coalition of Macon County has put together the [Core Handbook for K-12](#), a quick guide to help keep students on track with the Common Core.

- **Common Core Resources for Educators:**
 - ISBE releases a monthly grade level specific newsletter called [Capture the Core](#) designed for teachers.
 - Student Achievement Partners has also developed [Your Grade at a Glance](#) for math teachers that details the mathematical content emphasized in the Common Core State Standards by grade level.



Higher Education

- **College Facilities As Living Laboratories for Sustainability:** This article in the Huffington Posts talks about sustainable practices by one two-year college within its facilities, operations, and curriculum. Sustainable practices has been bolstered by the efforts of several high-profile national associations such as the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) and Sustainability, Education, and Economic Development (SEED). Read the article [here](#).
- **Graduation Rate about Flat:** New figures show four and a half years after producing more degree-holders became a national priority, graduation rates remain stubbornly flat, according to a new analysis by the National Student Clearinghouse. The study found that the percentage of students who graduated within six years after starting toward either a four-year or a two-year degree is 54.1%, up only one-tenth of 1# from last year. Read more [here](#).
- **Teacher Prep Evaluation Depends on Better Longitudinal Data:** As teacher preparation programs come under increasing pressure to track the effectiveness of their graduates, a Data Quality Campaign report finds that fewer than half of the states provide annual data on teacher performances to colleges of education. And a new [policymaker's guide](#) maintains that most teacher evaluation systems do not measure many aspects that would be useful to improve teacher training programs.



Events and Opportunities

- **Coalition for Community Schools Webinar:** This webinar will highlight the Coalition for Community School's upcoming report, *The Convergence of Community Schools and Expanded Learning Opportunities*. The report captures what community schools are doing to implement various expanded learning opportunities (ELO) strategies. The webinar will highlight key findings of the report and a new ELO typology for leaders of both fields. Click [here](#) for more information.
- **Supporting Latino Infants and Toddlers in Policy and Practice (Webinar):** A list of presenters and audio from the webinar as well as the slides are now available on the Early Learning Council [webpage](#) of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development website.
- **Score edTPA:** Pearson is in need of Teacher Educators and Accomplished Teachers to score edTPA. Pearson is hiring teacher educators and accomplished teacher to score edTPA from a secure, private location such as home or office. Qualified candidates will complete training, and pass a qualification and then score edTPA assessments. Click here for an [application](#).

- **Call for PROPOSALS:** The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), Illinois Community College Board, Illinois State Board of Education, The Center Resources for Teaching and Learning, and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, in conjunction with the Illinois Early Learning Council's subcommittee on Higher Education Learning and Professional Development, are collaborating to offer the Early Childhood Education Preparation Program Innovation Grant. Through this grant your institution has an opportunity to apply for up to \$50,000 in grant funds to be used in 2014 to support program innovation and partnerships for early childhood educator preparation. Applications are due to IBHE by December 18, 2013. [Visit here to access the cover memo and grant application.](#)