
AERA SIG on School Indicators and Profiles NEWSLETTER

April 2000

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Tidings from the Chair

By Rolf Blank, SIG Chair

Greeting from the land of cheery cherry blossoms, many meetings, and major traffic tie-ups!
(Washington, DC that is!)

AERA Annual Meeting 2000:

We look forward to seeing all SIG: SIP members at the Membership Meeting/Special Panel session on Wed evening, April 26, 6:15 pm, as well as the SIG paper session at 12:25 on Friday, 4/28. Peter Prowda, our SIG Program Chair has done an excellent job of putting together two sessions that are timely, address important topics, and are worth your effort to attend. Our membership meeting will also have some tasty appetizers and refreshments courtesy of our SIG healthy budget! Plan to join us! For more on the sessions, see below. Many thanks also to Leslie Lawrence, our highly efficient Sec-Treasurer, and to Barbara Clements, our very capable Newsletter editor.

News from Capitol Hill:

Accountability for states and districts is a major focus of the various bills proposed for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Senate education

committee recently approved a "Straight-As" plan that would allow districts in 15 states to receive most federal funds with little annual reporting for five years when they would report on gains in achievement. The Administration (with the support of many chief state school officers) views this plan as moving away from the effective progress that has been made with Goals 2000 and Title I toward annual accountability reporting of school improvements based on state standards and assessments.

News from CCSSO:

In January, 20+ state education agencies sent teams of staff to a Workshop hosted by CCSSO on Issues in Accountability. The workshop featured state specialists sharing information on their accountability systems and methods of reporting. Five issues were emphasized: Purposes and Design of Reports, Using Web-based Reporting, Rationale for Selecting Indicators, Using Disaggregated Data, and Reporting Trends using Performance Levels. CCSSO will be putting together a "Portfolio of Proceedings and Materials" from the Workshop. We thank the many SIG members who were presenters, session chairs, and discussants. The annual CCSSO report, State Education Indicators with a Focus on Title I, 1999, is out in print and on the web (<http://www.ccsso.org> under Publications). It provides links from each state profile to the state's own report.

News from NCES:

The National Center for Education Statistics has moved "uptown"! As of the end of March most of the Center is now located at 1990 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006-5651. However, don't worry. Most of us now deal with NCES through their excellent, user-friendly Website! Check it out! For Metro users, you will now need to take the Blue line to Farragut West to get to NCES in person.

SIG Website:

We again thank the Wisconsin Center for Education Research (at the University of Wisconsin-Madison) and the Center Director, Andrew Porter, for hosting our SIG:SIP website. Our CCSSO web expert, Marty Bush, does the updating of the SIG website, and she has done an excellent job. Please send comments and suggestions about the SIG website to Rolf Blank, SIG:SIP Chair at <RolfB@ccsso.org>.

SIG Elections:

Normally, the SIG has held elections in "even years." However, at the annual meeting this year, with your permission, we will not hold any elections (because we did last year). Our SIG By-laws call for each officer to have a two-year tenure in their position. Last year we held special elections for three of our four offices (Program Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, and Newsletter Editor). The current occupants (Peter Prowda, Leslie Lawrence, and Barbara Clements) have agreed to a second year. Also, if agreeable to the membership, I will continue as SIG Chair for a third year (the maximum allowed by AERA). Please let me know if you would like to run for one of the offices because normally this is the year we would have our

biennial "regular elections."

I look forward to seeing all of you in New Orleans!

SIG: SIP Program at AERA 2000

Business Meeting and Invited Panel, Wed., April 26, 6:15 to 7:45 pm

Chair: Rolf Blank, CCSSO

Program Chair: Peter Prowda, CT Department of Education

Secretary/Treasurer: Leslie Lawrence, CTB

In addition to the business portion, Rolf, Leslie and Pete will have scoured New Orleans for the best wine, soda, cheese, and crackers that the SIG can afford.

Panel: School Profiles Wanted; School Profiles Provided, Wed., April 26, 6:15-7:30 pm

Moderator: Cindy Prince, National Education Goals Panel

Panelists: Dennis Cheek, RI Department of Education; Criss Cloudt, TX Education Agency; Craig Jerald, *Education Week*; Kathy Rosenberger, MD Department of Education

Reactor: Paula Girouard, MA Department of Education

Synopsis: Dennis, Cathy and Criss will present their state profiles. Craig will discuss what parents want in a profile and politely critique the presented profiles. Profile presenters will respond. Cindy will keep things in perspective and invite audience participation.

Paper Session: Advancements in Indicators for School Profiles, Fri., April 28, 12:25-1:55

Chair: Ellen Forte Fast, Connecticut Department of Education

Discussant: Barbara Clements, Evaluation Software Publishing, Inc.

Papers:

- An Electronic Monitoring, Reporting and Data-Based Decision-Making System for Indicators of Youth Violence and Drug Use in Utah. Catherine Callow Elwell (presenter), Margaret M. Lubke, Daniel Robertson, Brad Althouse, Rebecca Gonzolas, Utah State University.
 - Student Achievement and State Defined School Accreditation Status: A Report Card Study. Jerry G. Mathews (presenter) and Gerald Halpin, Auburn University.
 - A Record-linking Process for Tracking Dropouts. Bobby Franklin, Louisiana Department of Education.
 - Developing and Using Curriculum Indicators in School Reports and Profiles. Rolf Blank (presenter) and Jennifer G. Manise, CCSSO.
 - Using Effect Size as a Descriptive-Comparative Method Applied to Mandated High-Stakes Testing: A Longitudinal Perspective. Richard Hofmann, Miami University
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California Department of Education Revising Its Academic Performance Index Similar Schools Ranks

By Barbara S. Clements

It happens every time, it seems. As soon as you release data, someone determines that the data are all wrong. The California Department of Education (CDE) recently released its Academic Performance Index for schools, including similar schools ranks. The similar schools ranks were based on participation rates in the free- and reduced-price lunch program. After the data were published, many school districts reported to the CDE that the published rates were incorrect for about half of the schools in California. As a result, CDE has removed the similar schools ranks from its Internet site, and will recalculate these ranks in April. For more information on this topic see <http://www.cde.ca.gov/psaa>.

University of Minnesota Releases Second Yearbook on Accountability

By Mark L. Davison

The Office of Educational Accountability at the University of Minnesota is about to release its second Yearbook. The Yearbook reviews Minnesota's progress on assessment, accountability, and reporting during the past year, and it contains a compendium of statewide data on the measures included in Minnesota's accountability system. The citation of the Yearbook is as follows: "1999 Minnesota Education Yearbook: The Status of Pre-K-12 Education in

Minnesota." Minneapolis, MN: Office of Educational Accountability, College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota. Our address is: Office of Educational Accountability, College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota, 113 5th St., S.E., Suite B-1, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

Colorado Legislature Passes Bill Requiring School Report Cards

By Barbara S. Clements

In late March, the Colorado Assembly passed Senate Bill 186. This education reform bill requires that every school in the state be assigned a report card grade of A-F based on student performance and improvement in academic achievement. The grade will be based on student performance on the Colorado Student Assessment Program. The baseline assessment year will be the 2000-01 school year. For more information, you can see Senate Bill 186 at <http://www.leg.state.coi.us/pubhome.nst>.

Interesting Websites

The Tennessee Valley Educators for Excellence has links to the State Department of Education school report cards and state accountability indicators for states in the Tennessee Valley, including Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee. (<http://www.tvee.org>)

Jack MacDonald of CCSSO relates that Standard and Poors now offers School Evaluation Service Profiles. Information about their software can be found that Standard and Poors website. (<http://standardandpoors.com/school/main.htm>)

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