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# AERA SIG on School Indicators and Profiles NEWSLETTER

November 1999

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In this issue . . . .

Indicators and Accountability: A Report from DC  
Proposed SIP Program at AERA 2000  
Special Thanks to AERA Reviewers  
CCSSO Workshop on "Issues in Accountability"  
Interesting Web Sites

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## Indicators and Accountability: A Report from DC

*By Rolf Blank, SIG Chair*

In Washington, the Congress is still trying to pass a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, including funding for Title I, by far the largest K-12 federal education program. In all of the plans I have seen, accountability systems and reporting play an important part of the obligations of states and districts. The Department of Education and many lawmakers continue to support the current system of accountability tied to state content standards and aligned state assessments.

At CCSSO, we are getting ready to release our 1999 State Education Indicators report, which includes state assessment results and trends. This is the third year of the new version of our report that focuses on Title I Indicators. This year we have a section that reports on Statewide Accountability Information, summarizing the states with statewide programs and how they compare to Title I reporting. If you would like a 50-state summary of the information we have collected, send me an email ([rolfb@ccsso.org](mailto:rolfb@ccsso.org)).

In January, CCSSO (with support from the USED) is sponsoring an invited Workshop on Accountability for state education staff. Following is information that went out to state contacts in October.

SIG Business: Thanks to Peter Prowda for doing an excellent job of organizing the AERA SIG sessions! The program looks exciting! Thanks also to Leslie Lawrence for keeping track of dues and memberships as our Secretary-Treasurer, and we very much appreciate the work of Barbara Clements in putting together this Newsletter.

The SIG:SIP web site has a record of each of the newsletters that go out, as well as a list of your fellow members, and access to a number of resources on school indicators, profiles, and accountability reporting. The web site is at <http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/sipsig/>. You can look it up!

See you in New Orleans.

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## Proposed SIP Program at AERA 2000

*By Peter Prowda, SIG Program Chair*

We have submitted the following two sessions for the SIG to be given at the AERA Annual Meeting in New Orleans, April 24-28, 2000.

### **1. 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.

## **2. 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.

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## **A Special Thanks**

Pete Prowda, SIG Program Chair, would like to thank the following people who served as reviewers for the papers submitted to our SIG: Dale Carlson, Mark Davidson, John A. Freeman, Rich Hofmann, Jerry G. Mathews, Marie Miller-Whitehead, Mike Puma, Doris Redfield, Steve Schrankel, and Susanne Whitt. They each reviewed three papers, provided professional critiques, and, most importantly to me, got the reviews in on time. We received ten papers and accepted six. One accepted paper was withdrawn. Thanks for a job well done.

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# Issues in State Accountability: Making Informed Decisions about Accountability Reports

CCSSO Workshop scheduled for January 26-27, 2000, San Antonio, TX

**By Rolf Blank, CCSSO**

The CCSSO project on State Education Indicators and the CCSSO State Collaborative on Comprehensive Assessment Systems are inviting a team of two state education staff members from each state to participate in our special January Workshop on State Accountability Reporting. The Workshop will be held at the Homewood Suites in San Antonio, Texas. It will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 26, and continue through noon on Thursday, January 27.

The need for the Workshop has developed from our work with states in two projects.

The State Education Indicators Project is supported by funds to CCSSO from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The Project has two main goals:

1. to produce an annual report on a consistent, reliable set of indicators of the condition of K-12 education, including state assessment results and other indicators of Title I programs, and
2. to assist states with developing assessment and accountability systems that meet the requirements of Title I, including assessments aligned with state standards, reporting results according to state performance standards, and disaggregated data reporting.

From our work with all 50 states, we find that some states have not yet completed plans for an accountability system which meets these objectives.

The State Collaborative on Comprehensive Assessment Systems for Title I (SCASS CAS), also supported by U.S. ED funds and by states, has provided and shared support, assistance, and expertise to state education staff responsible for developing and implementing assessment and accountability systems to meet the Title I requirements. Consultants and researchers have worked with the collaborative, and several reports, guides, and other materials have been produced to assist states in developing and using assessments, standards, and reporting systems.

A state can send one team of two people, including a) a staff member responsible for accountability reporting in your state, and b) a staff member responsible for using

accountability information and data, such as the Title I director or the curriculum director.

Overarching concerns to be addressed at the workshop include:

- Minimizing exclusion of students.
- Utility of reports.
- Accuracy and reliability.
- Consistency of indicators and reporting.

Workshop Objectives:

- Purposes and design of reports.
- Rationale for selecting indicators.
- Using disaggregated data to address various needs.
- Reporting trends using performance levels.
- Using web-based reporting for different audiences.

The workshop agenda is being planned to emphasize three activities:

1. Presentation and discussion of state accountability models,
2. Suggestions and ideas from experts in accountability, and
3. Discussion among state teams that include staff working on accountability reports and staff that use, or could benefit from using data from accountability systems.

We encourage states to attend that have not completed development and implementation of their state accountability and/or assessment systems to meet Title I requirements.

We have invited the following states to address the objectives of the Workshop by sharing their accountability reports and systems: Connecticut, Louisiana, Maryland, Ohio, and Texas. We have also invited experts who have worked with states and districts on their accountability systems, federal officials, and staff from CCSSO and other organizations. Materials from presentations will be compiled and made available to states.

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## Interesting Web Sites

***Just for the Kids.*** Take a look at the web site of Just for the Kids. They are a research and data analysis organization that provides student achievement data analysis of Texas public schools. Their analysis supplements the information available under the Texas accountability system. (To see what a good school's data look like, choose Stonewall Jackson Elementary in

Dallas ISD, the elementary school attended by your Newsletter Editor many years ago.) Just for the Kids is currently analyzing each state's capacity to provide public information that documents student success in reaching high academic standards and shows the improvement potential of each school. They have critiqued the accountability systems in California, Florida, New York, North Carolina, Oregon and South Carolina. They may be in your state soon. (<http://www.just4kids.org>)

**Education Commission of the States.** ECS has created a prototype of an "issue site" called Performance-Based Accountability. This site already includes an Overview and Quick Facts about performance-based accountability (including information on standards, assessment issues, and management information systems), a listing (with links) of articles and references, and a Glossary. Other areas under development include Frequently Asked Questions, State Examples and Promising Practices, Technical Assistance, Tools & Links, and a way to evaluate a state's practices. (<http://www.ecs.org>)

**American Association of School Administrators, November Issue of the School Administrator.** AASA did a special issue on Accountability in November 1999. Some of the articles are only available to members; however, there is one article available that may be of interest to our SIG. Richard S. Brown has written an article called "Creating School Accountability Reports." This article contains a discussion on what parents most want to know about schools, and describes steps for making sure accountability reports meet the needs of various audiences. Editor Jay Goldman is interested in getting feedback on this issue, if you would like to contact him. (<http://www.aasa.org/sa/SAMNOV99.htm>)

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Suggestions for future SIG newsletters should be sent to Barbara Clements at [bclements@evalsoft.com](mailto:bclements@evalsoft.com). Thanks.

[Back to Sip:Sig Newsletters](#)