Partnership for Early Education Research (PEER) Research Agenda Workshop, Part 2

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Introductions
What we’ve been doing

• Organized results from first agenda setting workshop
• Applied for a new grant from Institute of Education Sciences
• Developed website and communication structures
• Developing data sharing agreements and supports for protecting data
• Planning to fund research agenda
Brainstormed Research Topics

- Disparities
- Compensation
- Family & Community Services
- Kindergarten Entry & Transitions
- Education Policy
- Teacher Training & Professional Development
- Absenteeism
- Social-Emotional and Non-Cognitive Skills
- Hiring & Retention
- PEDS
- Data Systems & Data Use
- Quality
- Parents & Families
- Special Needs
- Dual Language Learners
- Pedagogy & Curriculum
Two Categories of Research

• Original research involving the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data
  – “Original” research
  – Data could be quantitative or qualitative

• Research involving the review and/or synthesis of existing evidence
  – Literature reviews
  – Meta-analyses
Various Goals of Research

• To contribute to our existing knowledge
  – Basic and “bench” science
  – *How does our research address gaps in the scientific literature?*

• To determine whether something happened or the extent to which it happened
  – Summative evaluation research
  – *Was what we did effective?*

• To guide practice and/or policy for improving outcomes
  – Formative evaluation, continuous improvement, performance management
  – *How do we use evidence to adjust practices and policies in real time?*
Reseachable questions

• **What is a researchable question?**
  – Reasonable
  – Appropriate
  – Answerable
  – Specific

• **Where do researchable questions come from?**
  – Questions, concerns, and values of stakeholders
  – Important issues in the field or research literature
  – Professional standards or guidelines
  – Views and knowledge of those with content expertise
PEER’s Initial Research Questions

Aim 1: To understand children’s school readiness as measured by the Connecticut Kindergarten Entrance Inventory (KEI).

- What is the overall performance of children on the Connecticut KEI?
- Are there group differences in performance for gender, socio-economic status (SES), English as a second language status, and race/ethnicity?
- Are there district differences in performance?
Aim 2: To understand the use of assessment tools in the preschool setting.

– Are there district and setting differences in how formative assessment tools are used in preschool?
Aim 3: To understand which teacher- and school-level factors predict kindergarten performance.

- How do the teacher factors such as level of education, certification, number of years of teaching at the current level, and number of total years of teaching predict kindergarten performance?
- How do school factors such as class size, teacher-child ratio, and SES predict kindergarten performance?
Research agendas

• **What is a research agenda?**
  – Identifies research priorities and questions for group
  – Is coherent
  – Leads to rigorous and relevant research that is actionable
  – May include current or future projects

• **What does a research agenda look like?**
  – Linear
  – Topical
Example: Coherent, linear research agenda

• **Topic:** High school graduation
• **Research questions:**
  – What are the high school dropout rates for key subgroups of students?
  – What are the effects of alternative high school programs on students’ degree completion and graduation?
• **Studies:**
  – Descriptive study of high school dropout rates for key subgroups
  – Descriptive study of re-enrollment rates in traditional high schools and education trajectories of re-enrollees
  – RCT of the impact of alternative programs for degree completion on high school graduation
Example: Coherent, topical research agenda

- **Topic:** Mathematics learning
- **Research questions:**
  - What is the impact of grade 8 students’ access to algebra I on their math achievement?
  - How do students with disabilities perform in math?
- **Studies:**
  - RCT of the impact of student access to algebra I in grade 8
  - Descriptive study of math education practices for students with disabilities
  - Descriptive study of math performance patterns for students with disabilities
Research Topics Discussion

[Instructions]
Topic Caucus

[Instructions]
Generate Research Questions

[Instructions]
Next Steps

Research Agenda:
• We will refine research agenda based on today’s information

• We’ll seek your feedback (and feedback from partners not here) on agenda questions

Other areas:
• Invite some practitioners from school and center-based ECE programs to complete a survey about assessment practices

• Secure funding to support the research agenda of PEER

• Organize an ECE conference for spring 2016
Thank You!

Visit PEER at:

http://peer.yale.edu

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http://www.relnei.org/publications/