

What Works Clearinghouse

What Works Clearinghouse

w-w-c.org

Archived Information

U.S. Department of Education

*Student Achievement and School Accountability
Conference*

Breakout Session: Scientifically Based Research

October 2002

What Works Clearinghouse

Educators and Policymakers Need Better Evidence

- **Demand and a desire for improvement based on what works**
- **Many claims about what works**
- **Few resources to sort through what works**

Result: More than ever, evidence from high quality scientifically based research is needed by educational practitioners and policymakers.

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Claims, Claims, Claims: An Example

Not on the Same Page. Some Educators Say XXXXX Math Books Are Great Teaching Tools, but Many School Systems Refuse to Use Them — *Washington Post*

An Evaluation of Selected Mathematics Textbooks. “After having looked closely at these materials, my ranking from first to last is Prog A, Prog B, Prog C, with Prog D a distant last.” — *Prof. of Mathematics.*

School officials say new math ads (sic) up to education.

“Call it what you want — new-new math, fuzzy math, constructivist math — the new approach to teaching arithmetic is spreading across the region and across the country.” — *online news source, Philadelphia region.*

Do the numbers add up? “Websites for both advocates and critics of the new math have cropped up. Parents in Texas sued over the use of new math curriculum in their district, while in California, districts tried new math and later scrapped the approach when test results did not improve.” — *same as prior.*

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Help in Sorting Through the Claims: What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)

Claims are made by researchers, program and product providers, policymakers, educators, parents, etc. The WWC has been created to help decision-makers.

- **A new federal initiative (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement)**
- **An ongoing public resource that will assess and report scientific evidence on “*What Works?*” in education in multiple topic areas**
- **Systematic review processes will be used to report on the quantity, quality, and relevance of evidence, and magnitude of effects of specific educational interventions**

What Works Clearinghouse

Who We Are

Primary Contractors

- ◆ American Institutes for Research
- ◆ Campbell Collaboration

Subcontractors

- ◆ Aspen Systems
- ◆ Caliber Associates
- ◆ Education Quality Institute
- ◆ Missouri University
- ◆ University of Pennsylvania

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What We Will Provide

- ◆ **Clear standards for evaluating claims about scientific evidence**
- ◆ **Scientifically based authoritative evidence regarding the impact of policies and practices**
- ◆ **A central source of information on who can help**
- ◆ **A clear strategy and momentum for improving educational policies and practices**

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Goals and Principles

◆ Goals:

- Provide accessible, high quality information on evidence of effects
- Improve methodologies and resources for answering critical questions
- Promote use of research in educational decision making
- Involve key constituents in the process, products, and strategy for improvement

◆ Principles:

- Scientific excellence
- Independence
- Collaboration
- Transparency in processes and standards
- Openness to critical appraisal and improvement

WWC Activities

◆ Activities

- **Conduct and Publish Reviews of Evidence**
 - ◆ **Establish standards of excellence for causal inference**
 - ◆ **Create and use a respected Technical Advisory Group (TAG)**
 - ◆ **Select topics**
 - ◆ **Conduct reviews**
 - ◆ **Refine and expand standards**
- **Build awareness and use of WWC products and approaches**
 - ◆ **Communication and collaboration**
 - ◆ **Evaluator registry**
 - ◆ **Online system**

Selection of Topics for Review

◆ Elicit nominations

- Website, What Works Network, Public presentations, Education experts

◆ Prioritize

- Educational and national importance
- Adequate research available

◆ Select and organize

- Detailed plan for each year
- Long-term plan for five years of WWC

◆ Ensure flexibility

- Off-topic reviews
- Special request reviews

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WWC Products and Services

- ◆ **On-line Registries: (a) educational interventions, (b) approaches and policies, (c) test instruments, and (d) evaluator**
- ◆ **Additional Reviews**
- ◆ **Website**
- ◆ **Presentations and Publications**
- ◆ **What Works Network**
- ◆ **Special Projects and Partnerships**
- ◆ ***Annual State of What Works in Education***

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Working Together to Promote Evidence Based Practice and Policy

- ◆ How can the WWC work with you to meet your needs?
 - Information to share with your constituents
 - Registry of evaluators
 - How else?
- ◆ How can you help the WWC?
 - Information needs of constituents (review topics)
 - Form and communication of products
 - How else?

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Key Dates

◆ Standards

- Public forum: Mid-November, 2002
- TAG review: October-December, 2002
- Final: January, 2003

◆ Communication and Collaboration

- Website operational:
 - ◆ Information website: October, 2002
 - ◆ Full website with registries: Mid-April, 2003

◆ Registries

- First reviews completed: Spring, 2003
- Evaluator registry operational: Mid-April, 2003
- Studies registry operational: Mid-April, 2003

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