



SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

Volume 1, Issue 2, June 2011

Department of Educational Leadership, Western Illinois University

Editors' Message

We hope your semester is going well. The first issue of *Spotlight on Research* was well-received by colleagues in the Educational Leadership department, school administrators, and, of course, graduates from our Educational Leadership programs. We are excited to introduce you to our second issue. This issue features doctoral dissertation abstracts that address topics ranging from school consolidation, school culture, collective teacher efficacy, to co-teaching in inclusive education.

Dr. David Gilliland's dissertation explored an "emotional and sometimes contentious issue," school consolidation, and looked into its influence on student discipline, school transportation costs, expenditures per student, and student performance.

Dr. Diane Schumacher's dissertation, framed within Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, teacher efficacy, and collective efficacy, explored the relationship between collective teacher efficacy and student achievement utilizing a sample of Iowa elementary schools.

School culture plays a critical role in school improvement. Dr. Robert Dyer's dissertation examined how school culture was addressed in principal preparation programs. Using survey and interview data, he compared both nationally recognized programs and non-nationally recognized programs in their emphasis on school culture.

Following the requirement of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), the Iowa Department of Education introduced the Consultative (Co-Teaching) Model to better serve students with disabilities in the general education setting. Dr. Lonna Anderson's dissertation evaluated the level of implementation of the Co-Teaching Model in Iowa high schools.

We are delighted to share with you our doctoral dissertation research studies and hope you find them useful for your profession. Again, feel free to share these publications with your colleagues or to contact us or the authors about their research. We would be happy to hear from you.

Dr. Bridget Sheng (Editor)
Dr. Donna McCaw (Associate Editor)
Dr. Lloyd Kilmer (Associate Editor)

SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

The Effects of Consolidation on Illinois School Districts

*Author: David D. Gilliland, Superintendent,
Stockton Community School District #206*

Abstract

A mixed-methods design was utilized to seek answers and analysis to both quantitative and qualitative research questions. *Ex post facto* research was utilized to explain differences in student discipline, student achievement as measured by 8th-grade ISAT scores, expenditures per pupil, transportation costs, curriculum, extracurricular and co-curricular participation, and leadership before and after consolidation.

Data were collected from all 60 school districts that have consolidated in Illinois since 1990. A correlated *t*-test was performed on the pre- and post-consolidation data to determine statistical significance. The data analyzed in this study indicated statistically significant findings in the areas of discipline, achievement, transportation

costs, and expenditures per pupil when comparing pre- and post-consolidation data. In addition, the qualitative portion of the study provided deep and rich detail about curriculum, extracurricular and cocurricular participation, and leadership in school districts after consolidation.

Practical Application

Board members, community members, teachers, administrators, students, and state policymakers will be able to utilize the data from this study to assist in making informed decisions about an emotional and sometimes contentious issue in Illinois.

Citation

Gilliland, D. (2008). *The effects of consolidation on Illinois school districts* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations Database (Publication No. AAT 3338888).

Collective Teacher Efficacy and Student Achievement

*Author: Diane Funke Schumacher, Principal,
Northeast Community School District*

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a significant relationship between collective teacher efficacy and student achievement and if collective teacher efficacy makes a significant contribution in explaining student achievement beyond socioeconomic status. The conceptual basis for this study is Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, teacher efficacy, and collective efficacy.

Fifty-six elementary schools in eastern Iowa were randomly selected to participate in this study. Goddard's 12-item Collective Teacher Efficacy Scale was utilized to measure the construct of collective teacher efficacy. Student achievement is measured by the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills reading comprehension and math subtests. Socioeconomic status was determined by the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced priced lunch.

The results of this study demonstrated that collective teacher efficacy was significantly

SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

correlated to student achievement in reading and math. When controlling for the effects of low socioeconomic status, there did not exist a significant relationship between collective teacher efficacy and reading achievement; however, though nonsignificant, the trend is positive and the adjusted R^2 is greater than what it would be with one predictor in the model. When controlling for the effects of low socioeconomic status, there is a significant positive relationship between collective teacher efficacy and math achievement at the elementary level.

Practical Application

This study contributes to other research studying the relationship between collective teacher efficacy and student achievement. Implications for school administrators are discussed as well as recommendations for further research in this area.

Citation

Funke Schumacher, D. (2009). *Collective teacher efficacy and student achievement* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations Database (Publication No. AAT 3355838).

A Comparative Study of the Teaching of School Culture in Selected Principal Preparation Programs in Illinois

*Author: Robert D. Dyer, Superintendent,
LaGrange Highlands School District #106*

Abstract

Using a mixed-methods approach, the study compared how school culture is addressed in eight principal preparation programs in Illinois. Four of the selected programs were nationally recognized and four were not. For the qualitative portion, course syllabi were examined along with textbooks for all required courses. Interviews were also conducted with the assigned faculty to determine the emphasis placed on culture. Quantitatively, graduates of the eight programs were surveyed to determine their perception of how much emphasis was placed on culture and their opinion on the appropriateness of that emphasis.

Results of the study show no significant difference between program types when it comes to the topic of school culture. While nationally recognized programs utilize standards more in course planning and requirements, both place the same emphasis

on the topic. Survey results from the graduates of the two program types showed no statistically significant difference in how much emphasis they felt their programs placed on school culture, and no statistically significant difference on how much emphasis graduates felt *should have been placed* on school culture.

Practical Application

This study can assist Educational Leadership programs that wish to align more with professional standards as well as to focus on the proficiencies practicing principals feel are most significant in relation to school culture.

Citation

Dyer, R. D. (2008). *A comparative study of the teaching of school culture in selected principal preparation programs in Illinois* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations Database (Publication No. AAT 3338879).

SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

Analysis of the Implementation of a Special Education Consultative Co-Teaching Model in Iowa High Schools

Author: Lonna Anderson, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Dunlap Community School District #323

Abstract

The Iowa Department of Education introduced the Consultative (Co-Teaching) Model in 2006 as one means for fulfilling the NCLB requirement that all students be taught by highly qualified teachers. This study examined the level of implementation of the five components of this model by Iowa high schools and the teacher and administrative factors influencing this implementation. Student achievement levels among high and low implementing schools were analyzed to determine the effect of the implementation of the Co-Teaching Model on high schools' ability to meet performance targets.

A survey instrument was used to collect quantitative data. Written comments from survey participants and focus group interviews with special and general education co-teachers provided qualitative data. Quantitative results indicated, and qualitative data supported (to a lesser extent), that Iowa high schools were implementing four of the five components of the Co-Teaching Model: (1) philosophy, (2) individual prerequisites, (3) professional relationships, and (4) classroom dynamics. The fifth component, external supports, was the least implemented component.

Pearson's correlation analyses found teacher and administrative factors were significantly

correlated with the implementation of the Co-Teaching Model. Separate independent *t*-tests were applied to 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 ITED (Iowa Tests of Educational Development) achievement data. Results indicated that the implementation level of the Co-Teaching Model did not influence the reading comprehension and math achievement of 11th-grade students with disabilities. Sample size and early implementation may have limited the power to detect statistical significance.

Practical Application

The significance of the study will assist local, state, and national education leaders as they lead the implementation of inclusive practices and strive to meet state and federal performance goals.

Results will assist the Iowa Department of Education and the Great Prairie Area Education Agency in planning for statewide and area professional development to support co-teachers.

Citation

Anderson, L. (2008). *Analysis of the implementation of a special education consultative co-teaching model in Iowa high schools* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations Database (Publication No. AAT 3338878).

