Writing to Read

New Report Encourages Using Writing to Strengthen Reading

New master’s program highlights collaboration with urban schools
This year marks a milestone in the history of Peabody College as we celebrate our 225th anniversary. The college’s lineage dates to the founding of a small academy in 1785 on what was then the western frontier.

Needless to say, much has happened since then, but we still think of ourselves as having something of the pioneer spirit. Whether we are advancing discoveries in educational neuroscience (p. 9) or establishing a new IES-funded national research center (p. 10), Peabody faculty members tend to be at the forefront of educational change.

The Developing Effective Schools Center joins the National Center on School Choice (p. 6) and the National Center of Performance Incentives (p. 4) as central to our research investigations of major school reforms. Peabody faculty members also are involved with Tennessee’s Race to the Top grant and are leading a consortium of eight Tennessee universities in developing a teacher performance assessment based on California’s PACT.

While some have ratcheted up criticism of education schools and the teachers they produce, efforts like Peabody’s indicate that leading colleges of education are best positioned not only to contribute highly skilled teachers and school leaders but also the information needed to guide policymaking. With regard to teachers, we are enthusiastic about our new partnership with local schools to prepare middle school math, science and literacy teachers (p. 2).

Finally, this fall we welcome our second class of Hubert H. Humphrey Fellows, a group of distinguished educators from around the globe (p. 16). They offer but one example of Peabody’s growing international influence—yet another educational frontier we are thrilled to encounter.

Camilla P. Benbow
Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development
One goal of the new degree is recruiting and retaining excellent teachers who will continue teaching in MNPS schools after they graduate.

Students will attend the program tuition-free but must agree to teach in MNPS schools for three years following graduation. All students also will teach in project-affiliated MNPS schools while completing 30 hours of coursework over two years.

The program will focus on improving instruction and student outcomes, changing assessment practices, and creating communities of reflective, committed teachers to foster systemic improvement.

Coursework will be supported by on-site coaching and mentoring from Peabody faculty. Every semester students will participate in a seminar that will address urban issues and provide a setting for discussing classroom instruction.

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools serve more than 76,000 students in Nashville and Davidson County.

To learn more about Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools, visit http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/mnps.xml

SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR AT NO. 1 FOR VANDERBILT PEABODY COLLEGE

Peabody College of education and human development was ranked as the best graduate school of education in the nation by U.S. News & World Report for the second consecutive year.

In rankings released in April, Peabody programs in Administration/Supervision and Special Education also were named No. 1 in the nation. Also ranked were Peabody programs in Education Policy (No. 4), Elementary Education (No. 5), Higher Education Administration (tied at No. 6), Educational Psychology (No. 7) and Curriculum/Instruction (tied at No. 9). With its overall No. 1 score of 100, Peabody was 9 points ahead of its nearest competitor.

"We are exceptionally pleased to retain the first place ranking," said Camilla Benbow, Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development at Peabody. "It confirms the quality of our people and programs, and it adds weight to our efforts to strengthen education for all learners."

The annual graduate school rankings are based on surveys of more than 1,200 programs and 12,400 academics conducted in fall 2009. Individual program rankings were based on ratings from academic experts.

PEABODY PROFESSOR PART OF $10 MILLION MATHEMATICS RESEARCH CENTER

Improving math instruction for elementary and middle school children experiencing problems with fractions is the focus of a $10 million grant from the Institute of Education Sciences, a research branch of the U.S. Department of Education.

Lynn Fuchs, Nicholas Hobbs Professor of Special Education and Human Development, is among the collaborators in the new Center on Improving Mathematics Instruction for Students with Mathematics Difficulties, to be administered by the University of Delaware.

Fuchs will work with Nancy C. Jordan, professor of education in Delaware’s School of Education, and Robert Siegler, professor of cognitive psychology at Carnegie Mellon University. The researchers will partner with local school districts, including Metro Nashville Public Schools, to conduct the research.

The five-year project, set to begin Sept. 1, focuses on understanding how students learn fractions concepts, how to explain individual differences in development and ways to enhance understanding and performance.

"Research is showing that students have a lot of problems understanding rational numbers," Jordan said. "Understanding of fractions is very important for learning algebra, which is considered a gateway skill for success in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines."

The center will implement a multidisciplinary approach involving cognitive psychologists, special educators, math educators and educational psychologists.

Fuchs’s research for more than 30 years has focused on assessing the efficacy of mathematics and reading interventions for students with learning disabilities and understanding the student characteristics associated with responsiveness to those interventions.

"I hope to design interventions that promote better mathematics learning, specifically in the area of fractions, for students with learning disabilities," Fuchs said. "The goal is for these interventions to be usable in real school settings."

Siegler has spent his career studying the development of mathematical and scientific thinking in children ages 4 to 14, while Jordan conducts research on math learning difficulties.
There is no greater door to opportunity in this country than access to a quality education,” said Hilary Pennington, director of education policy, secondary success, at the Gates Foundation.

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY AND MATHEMATICA RESEARCHERS TO EVALUATE TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND

Peabody College researchers, in partnership with Mathematica Policy Research, have won a five-year, $7.9 million contract from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to conduct a national impact evaluation of the federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program.

As more money is invested in pay for performance programs across the nation, there is urgent need to better understand the effectiveness of these programs and what elements may constitute an optimal incentive system,” Matthew Springer, director of the National Center on Performance Incentives and one of the principal investigators on the study, said. “The Mathematica-Vanderbilt partnership will rigorously assess a range of performance pay models that will be implemented under the TIF program so we can expand our understanding of what is popular, and potentially important, education reform.”

TIF supports performance-based teacher and principal compensation systems in high-need schools. Created by Congress in 2006, the program was expanded and supported with an additional $200 million through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Rigorous evaluation of the program is required under ARRA.

For more information about the National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt, visit www.performanceincentives.org.

Lynn and Douglas Fuchs were named “revolutionary educators” by Fortune Magazine.

Elizabeth Dykens, professor of psychology, was appointed director, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development.

Stephen N. Elliott, Dunn Family Chair in Educational and Psychological Assessment, received appointments as fellow, American Educational Research Association member, Educational Testing Services Visiting Research Panel; and director of research and scientific practice, Society for the Study of School Psychology.

Stella Flores, assistant professor of public policy and higher education, was named a National Academy of Education/ Spencer Fellow.

Lynn and Douglas Fuchs, Nicholas Hobbs Chairs in Special Education and Human Development, were included in Fortune Magazine’s list of 14 Revolutionary Educators.

Ellen B. Goldring, Patricia and Rodes Hart Chair in special education, was selected as an American Educational Research Association fellow.

Craig Anne Hefflinger, professor of human and organizational development, was awarded the Lifetime Invisibles Child Award by Tennessee Voices for Children.

Brian Heusser, assistant professor of the practice, will serve as a U.S. Embassy Policy Specialist in Higher Education for 2010-2011.

Robert Jiménez, professor of language, literacy and culture, received the Joyce Morris Article Award from the History of Reading Interest Group of the International Reading Association.

Craig Kennedy, professor of special education, was named associate dean for research.

Kevin M. Leander, associate professor of language and literacy, was a 2009-10 fellow for “Immigration and the American Experience” of the Robert Penn Warren Center. Leander also was one of 20 faculty members from all universities selected to participate in a study tour of Israel sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League and other nonprofits.

Rich Lehrer, Frank W. Mayborn Professor, received the Excellence in Education Award from the University at Albany, State University of New York.

Mark W. Lipsay, research professor of human and organizational development and director, Peabody Research Institute, was appointed by Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen to the Governor’s Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

Christopher P. Loss, assistant professor of public policy and higher education, was appointed fellow, Teagle Foundation National Forum on the Future of the Liberal Arts. He also received the 2010 Peabody Award for Excellence in Class-room Teaching.

Michael K. McLendon, associate professor of public policy and higher education, was awarded a Social Science Research Council fellowship for his work on “Teaching the Write Way.” McLendon presented the Edward Douglas White Lectures at Louisiana State University.

Valma McBride Murray, Belts Professor of Education and Human Development, was appointed director, Board for Children, Youth, and Families (BCYF), National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine.

Laura R. Novick, associate professor of psychology, was appointed to a National Research Council committee examining learning and teaching in the sciences at the undergraduate level.

Kimberly J. Paulsen, associate professor of the practice of special education, was elected “president-elect” of the Tennessee Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

Deborah Rowe, associate professor of early childhood education, was awarded the Dina Feliceisen Research Award from the International Reading Association for her article, “The social construction of intentionality: Two-year-olds and adults’ participation at a preschool writing center,” in the journal, Research in the Teaching of English (2008, 42(4)).

Susan Saegeg, professor of human and organizational development, received the 2009 Award for Distinguished Leadership, American Psychological Association Committee on Socioeconomic Status.

Sharon Shields, professor of the practice of human and organizational development, and Heather Smith, associate professor of the practice of human and organizational development, are serving as education consultants for the interactive PBS Web series, Fizzy’s Lunch Lab. The program was nominated for a Daytime Emmy Award.

Marybeth Shin, professor of human and organizational development, was named chair of the Department of Human and Organizational Development. Shin also received the 2010 Social Policy Education Book Award from the Society for Research on Adolescence for her book with Hirokazu Yoshikawa, Toward Positive Youth Development: Transforming Schools and Community Programs. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Matthew Springer, assistant professor of public policy and education, was named a fellow in education policy to the George W. Bush Institute.

William L. Turner, Belts Professor of Human and Organizational Development, delivered the keynote address at the American Family Therapy Academy annual meeting in June. His address, “Light in the Shadow: Finding Solutions to Disparities in Mental Health Services,” focused on implementation strategies for children’s mental health programs in minority and low-income communities.

Sandra L. Barnes
The National Center on School Choice, a research consortium based at Peabody College, has recently updated its website to provide better and more extensive access to more than 100 research papers, journal articles and books on school choice.

A key feature is a searchable database that allows users to look for articles based on familiar keywords, authors’ names, and types of school choice, from charter schools to vouchers to magnet schools. The findings have spurred the collection of additional data for continued analysis.

Ellen Goldring, Patricia and Rodes Hart Professor of Education Policy and Lead-ship, was a principal investigator on the project.

As the school choice movement continues to gather steam and monies are poured into new options, research on choice is expanding to assess whether the movement is accomplishing what it aims to do, the researchers said. It is important, Goldring and her colleagues contend in the report, to look inside “the black box” to see what is actually happening in the schools.

The researchers learned that in schools where teachers reported that they have high expectations for achievement, believe it is important for all students to do well, and emphasize challenging work and completing assignments, students experienced higher gains than those in schools with less focus on academic achievement.

Further, students had lower achievement gains where teachers reported greater instructional innovation. This finding suggests innovation for its own sake may not be the best strategy for improving student achievement.

It is equally important, the researchers reported, to examine not just achievement effects but organizational and instructional conditions in charter and traditional public schools. The idea is to get to the key question: Does choice lead to the types of innovations hoped for by its founders? As a next step, the researchers plan to continue the research by gathering measures of school effectiveness to understand what conditions foster academic growth and achievement gains.

Mark Berends, professor of sociology at the University of Notre Dame, was lead author for the report. In addition to Goldring, co-authors were Marc Stein, assistant professor of education at Johns Hopkins University, and Xia Cravens, assistant professor of the practice of education policy at Vanderbilt.

The report, “Instructional Conditions in Charter Schools and Students’ Mathematics Achievement Gains,” was published in May in the American Journal of Education.

The center’s new resources are available online at www.vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice.

The center is funded by a six-year, $13.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences.

The center’s new resources are available online at www.vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice.

Performance pay programs designed by teachers, for teachers have been found to offer small incentives to a larger number of teachers, new research indicates.

“We found that when teachers design performance pay programs they tend to be egalitarian, offering everyone a little bit of money,” Matthew Springer, director of the National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt University and a co-author of the new research, said.

The study drew data from Texas public schools participating in the Governor’s Educator Excellence Grants Program, or GEEG. GEEG was a three-year program that distributed $10 million per year in non-competitive federal grants to 99 high-performing campuses serving low-income students. It was the nation’s largest state-funded performance pay program when it was launched in 2005.

Under GEEG, participating schools were required to design their own incentive pay plans, using broad guidelines set by the Texas Education Agency. “Because the guidelines required that teachers play a significant role in the design and implementation of their school’s plan, the GEEG program represents a unique opportunity to explore optimal incentives from the employer and the employee’s perspective,” Lori Taylor, assistant professor at the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, said. “The evidence strongly suggests that teachers prefer relatively weak incentives.”

In most participating schools, over 80 percent of teachers received some sort of bonus.

“The GEEG incentive plans systemati-cally offered smaller awards to a higher proportion of teachers than was obvi-ously intended by the state education agency,” Taylor said. “Intriguingly, weak incentives were more common in situations where one would think stronger incentives would be more effective at changing behavior.”

The researchers also found that even weak incentives had a positive impact on teacher retention. Teachers who received no award were more likely to leave their jobs than those who received an award, while awards of $3,000 reduced turnover among the recipients to roughly half the rate observed before the GEEG program.

“If we assume that award recipients were more effective in the classroom than non-recipients - which might be a relatively strong assumption - then the evidence suggests that even weak incen-tives achieved the objectives of employ-ers,” Springer and Taylor said. “The GEEG program increased retention of those teachers that schools particularly wished to retain.”

The research was conducted under a grant from the Texas Education Agency.

For more information on the National Center for Performance Incentives and to access the report, visit www.performanceincentives.org.
FAMILY INTERVENTION MAY REDUCE RISK FOR DEPRESSION IN PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Cognitive behavioral intervention for families may help prevent depression in parents with a history of depression and in their 9- to 15-year-old children, new research has found. The study is the first to test this kind of program for families with a depressed parent.

"Depression is a significant public health problem, affecting over 16 percent of Americans in their lifetimes. One of the most potent risk factors for developing depression is having at least one parent with a history of depression," Bruce Compas, Patricia and Rodes Hart Professor of Psychology and Human Development and lead author of the new research, said. "This makes the prevention of depression in families with a history of the disorder a high priority. We are excited that we have encouraging evidence that working directly with parents with depression and their children can reduce the risk for emotional and behavioral problems in these children."

The results were published in the December issue of the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology.

"Depression is a significant public health problem, affecting over 16 percent of Americans in their lifetimes."

The researchers, in collaboration with a team of colleagues at the University of Vermont headed by Rex Forehand and Gary Keller, compared the impact of a family group cognitive behavioral intervention for parents and their children with that of a written program that parents and children studied on their own. One hundred eleven parents with either current or past depression and 155 9- to 15-year-old children of those parents participated in the study. The researchers focused on that age group because depression is known to increase in early to mid-adolescence and because the participating children needed to be old enough to learn the coping skills taught in the intervention.

The cognitive behavioral intervention was delivered to small groups of families in 12 sessions. Parents and children participated together in the program, which was designed to educate families about depression, increase their awareness of the impact of stress and depression on daily life, help families recognize and monitor stress, help the children and their parents develop good coping skills to manage stress and improve parenting skills.

In the written program, families were mailed written materials about many of the same topics described above, with separate materials provided for parents and for children. The families were also sent a schedule for reading the materials. The researchers found the cognitive behavioral intervention had significant benefits for parents and children over the written program. Approximately nine percent of the children participating in the intervention experienced a major depressive episode within the 12 months following the study, as compared to almost 23 percent of those participating in the written program. Forty percent of the parents in the intervention group experienced a major depressive episode during that time as compared to 56 percent of the written group.

The greatest benefits occurred 12 months after the study, indicating the children and their parents had time to practice and use the skills they had learned. The findings build on those of a study published in the June 2009 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association by Vanderbilt psychologist Judy Garber that found a cognitive behavioral program helped teens at risk of depression, but did not have benefits for those who had a currently depressed parent.

The family intervention offers a new tool for helping these families by simultane-ously addressing the parent’s and the child’s depression risks.

"We have heavily encouraging evidence from two studies conducted at Vanderbilt that we may be able to reduce the incidence of depression and other mental health problems in children at high risk," Compas said.

The research was supported with grants from the National Institute of Mental Health.

DEPRESSION IN FAMILIES

Differences in language circuits in the brain linked to dyslexia

Children with dyslexia often struggle with reading, writing and spelling, despite getting an appropriate education and demonstrating intellectual ability in other areas. New neurological research has found that these children’s difficulties with written language may be linked to structural differences within an important information highway in the brain known to play a role in oral language.

The findings were published in the June 2010 issue of Cortex.

Vanderbilt researchers Sheryl Rimrodt and Laurie Cutting and colleagues at Johns Hopkins University and Kennedy Krieger Institute used an emerging MRI technique, called diffusion tensor imaging (DTI), to discover evidence linking dyslexia to structural differences in an important bundle of white matter in the left-hemispheric language network. White matter is made up of fibers that can be thought of as the wiring that allows communication between brain cells; the left-hemispheric language network is made up of bundles of these fibers and contains branches that extend from the back of the brain (including vision cells) to the front parts that are responsible for articulation and speech.

"When you are reading, you are essentially saying things out loud in your head," Cutting said. "If you have decreased white matter integrity in this area, the front and back part of your brain are not talking to one another. This would affect reading, because you need both to act as a cohesive unit."

Rimrodt and Cutting used the DTI technique to map the course of an important white matter bundle in this network and discovered that it ran through a frontal brain region known to be less well-or-ganized in the dyslexic brain. They also found that fibers in that frontal part of the tract were oriented differently in dyslexia.

"Finding a convergence of MRI evidence that goes beyond identifying a region of the brain that differs in dyslexia to link-
The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) has awarded $13.6 million over five years to fund the Developing Effective Schools Center (DESC), a national research and development center located at Peabody, joining the National Center on Performance Incentives and the National Center on School Choice. Smith will serve as principal investigator and director of the new center.

"Prior attempts to reform high schools have often failed because they did not sufficiently address the contexts of the districts and the schools in which they were implemented. Our goal is to design a model where researchers, developers, and school and district practitioners co-design methods of transferring effective practices from one school to another." By combining the unique talents of developers, researchers, and local practitioners in the process of designing, implementing, revising and assessing the effectiveness of interventions, the center’s focused program of research can overcome many of the challenges inherent in designing and scaling up interventions. Among the challenges are:

- lack of teacher buy-in and participation
- inadequate attention to the organizational context in which the practices are to be implemented
- conflicts between designs and other district programs

"The center will be uniquely positioned to address the persistent research-to-practice gap," according to Smith. "Collaboratively designing, implementing and revising tailored interventions across two large urban districts will inform the development of design tools that can help districts transfer effective practices from currently effective to less effective schools."

The DESC has plans to use value-added models to identify high schools that are effective at improving student achievement in English/language arts, mathematics and science among traditionally low-performing subgroups of students. They also will look at ways those schools are reducing the likelihood that students drop out before graduation. Of interest, as well, is how they are increasing traditionally low-performing student enrollment in advanced courses.

Researchers will use a combination of interviews, surveys and observations to uncover what the effective high schools in two large urban districts are doing that contributes to their success and distinguish them from less effective high schools in the same district. The center will work to involve district leaders and participants from both the effective and less effective high schools to collaborate on the design and implementation of a process to support the transfer of effective practices from effective schools to less effective schools in their districts.

The next step will be to implement this process in six less effective high schools in two large urban districts and evaluate this implementation. An assessment and analysis of the impact of the intervention designs will follow with a focus on sustaining those practices once the project has ended. "By the conclusion of the center’s work, we will have developed, implemented and tested new processes that other districts will be able to use to scale up effective practices within the context of their own goals and unique circumstances," according to Smith.

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**Scaling up Effective Schools**

**Peabody selected for new $13.6 million national center**

Identifying and developing a process for transferring key elements that make some high schools in large urban districts more effective at improving outcomes for low- and minority students, as well as English language learners, is the focus of a new national center at Vanderbilt’s Peabody College.

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) has awarded $13.6 million over five years to fund the Developing Effective Schools Center (DESC), a national research and development center on scaling up effective schools.

The center’s goal is to identify programs, practices, processes and policies that make some high schools more effective at reaching certain students. The center also will develop ways to transfer those methods to less effective schools in the same districts. Florida State University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Education Development Center, headquartered in Newton, Mass., are partnering with Vanderbilt in the project.

This is the third national research center funded by IES, a research arm of the U.S. Department of Education, to be located at Peabody, joining the National Center on Performance Incentives and the National Center on School Choice.

"We have universal agreement that schools are in need of reform, and there are innovative programs that have been shown to improve student outcomes," said Camilla P. Benbow, Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development. "The problem is that these successes often occur under particular conditions that are challenging to replicate across a range of schools. This new center will help educators figure out how to extend promising reforms to help more students."

"Despite ambitious reforms over the past three decades, high schools today have shockingly low rates of student retention and learning, particularly for students from traditionally low-performing subgroups," said Thomas Smith, associate professor of public policy and education at Peabody. Smith will serve as principal investigator and director of the new center.

"Prior attempts to reform high schools have often failed because they did not sufficiently address the contexts of the districts and the schools in which they were implemented. Our goal is to design a model where researchers, developers, and school and district practitioners co-design methods of transferring effective practices from one school to another."

By combining the unique talents of developers, researchers and local practitioners in the process of designing, implementing, revising and assessing the effectiveness of interventions, the center’s focused program of research can overcome many of the challenges inherent in designing and scaling up interventions. Among the challenges are:

- lack of teacher buy-in and participation
- inadequate attention to the organizational context in which the practices are to be implemented
- conflicts between designs and other district programs

"The problem is that these successes often occur under particular conditions that are challenging to replicate across a range of schools. This new center will help educators figure out how to extend promising reforms to help more students."
Although reading and writing have become essential skills for almost every job, the majority of students do not read or write well enough to meet grade-level demands. A new report co-authored by Vanderbilt University researchers Steve Graham and Michael Hubert finds that while the two skills are closely connected, writing is an often-overlooked tool for improving reading skills and content learning.

"While writing is important in its own right, the evidence clearly shows that writing supports reading and reading development. Increasing how often students’ write has positive benefits on their development as readers..." said Graham, Currey Ingram Chair in Special Education and Literacy, and Michael Hubert, who is also the 2010 Carnegie Corporation of New York and published by the Alliance for Excellent Education. It was released in April and is available at www.all4ed.org/files/WritingToRead.pdf and www.carnegie.org/literacy.

"As the recent findings from The Nation’s Report Card in reading demonstrate, nearly 70 percent of the nation’s eighth graders fail to read at a proficient level," Bob Wise, president of the alliance and former governor of West Virginia, said. "Poor reading and writing skills not only threaten the well-being of individual Americans, but the country as a whole. Ensuring that adolescents become skilled readers and writers is not merely an option for America—it is an absolute necessity. As Writing to Read demonstrates, instruction in writing not only improves how well students write, but it also enhances students’ ability to read a text accurately, fluently and comprehensively."

Writing to Read is part of a series of Carnegie Corporation of New York-funded reports intended to reengineer literacy instruction across the curriculum to drive student achievement. The initial report, Time to Act: An Agenda for Advancing Adolescent Literacy for College and Career Readiness, and corresponding reports were published in September 2009. Writing to Read is an extension of this work and provides practitioners with research-supported information about how writing improves reading while making the case for researchers and policymakers to place greater emphasis on writing instruction as an integral part of school curriculum.

"In an age overwhelmed by information, the ability to read, comprehend and write in other words, to organize information into knowledge—must be viewed as tantamount to a survival skill," Vartan Gregorian, president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, said. "As Americans, we must keep our democracy and our society from being divided not only between rich and poor, but also between those who have access to information and knowledge, and thus, to power—the power of enlightenment, the power of self-improvement and self-assertion, the power to achieve upward mobility, and the power over their own lives and their families’ ability to thrive and succeed—and those who do not."

The report, Writing to Read: Evidence for How Writing Can Improve Reading, was commissioned by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and published by the Alliance for Excellent Education. It was released in April and is available at www.all4ed.org/files/WritingToRead.pdf and www.carnegie.org/literacy.

The report carefully notes that writing practices cannot take the place of effective reading practices and calls for writing to complement reading instruction, stating that such type of practice supports and strengthens the other. With lower-achieving students, an important key to success is providing ongoing practice and explicit instruction.

Writing to Read builds on the ideas presented in a 2006 Alliance report also co-authored by Graham, Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High School Literacy (www.all4ed.org/files/WritingNext.pdf). In both publications, meta-analysis is used to collect, categorize and examine experimental and quasi-experimental data. Writing to Read marks the first meta-analysis examining the effects of different writing practices on students’ reading performance.

Hebert is a post-doctoral fellow at Peabody College.

The Alliance for Excellent Education is a Washington, D.C.-based national policy and advocacy organization that works to improve national and federal policy so that all students can achieve at high academic levels and graduate from high school ready for success in college, work, and citizenship in the 21st century. For more information, visit www.all4ed.org.

Carnegie Corporation of New York is a philanthropic foundation created by Andrew Carnegie in 1911 to do “real and permanent good in this world.”

Reporting for this article was contributed by Melanie Moran and by Jason Amos of the Alliance for Excellent Education.

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Performance incentives reform from multiple perspectives, including economic, legal, political, psychological and social; the development and design of pay-for-performance programs and policies; and case studies of performance pay and teacher retention programs in several states and abroad.

The book is divided into three sections: examinations of teacher compensation reform from multiple perspectives, including economic, legal, political, psychological and social; the development and design of pay-for-performance programs and policies; and case studies of performance pay and teacher retention programs in several states and abroad.

"Collectively, the chapters that comprise this volume provide the foundation for understanding many of the historical and current issues associated with teacher pay reform," Springer wrote.

Specific topics addressed include the political positions of the two primary teachers associations, the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, on compensation reform; legal issues; what policymak- ers are missing regarding performance incentive systems; how to design a program that rewards teachers based on student achievement; challenges for public schools; stud- ies of programs in Texas, North Carolina, Arkansas and Florida; a comprehensive review of teacher incentive policies in developing countries, and more.

The book’s contributors include researchers from Duke University, Economic Policy Institute, Harvard University, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, National Bureau for Economic Research, RAND Corporation, SAS Institute, Texas A&M University, University of Arkansas, University of Chicago, University of Minnesota, University of Missouri-Columbia, University of Virginia and Vanderbilt University.


For more information about the Na- tional Center on Performance Incentives and additional research on performance incentives, visit www.performanceincentives.org.

Schools under Surveillance: Cultures of Control in Public Education— Torin Monahan and Rodolfo D. Torres, eds.; Rutgers University Press, 2009

Many school systems have extensive surveillance, monitoring and discipline programs in place to protect students. But are students any safer as a result? What is the cost of these measures in terms of student well-being? These questions and others are investigated in Schools under Surveillance: Cultures of Control in Public Educa- tion, released last fall by Rutgers University Press.

"People tend to think of surveillance in terms of Big Brother, so they don’t necessarily see the many forms of monitoring, identification and control in our lives," Torin Monahan, the book’s co-editor and associate professor of human and organizational development and medicine, said. "In this book, we are examining the many different manifestations of surveillance and is- sues of power and control in schools.

Monahan’s co-editor is Rodolfo Torres, professor of political and urban studies at the University of California, Irvine. Many schools have intensive surveil- lance and control systems, in the form of closed circuit televisions, metal detectors, armed and barred wire and armed, uniformed police officers known as school resource officers. The book raises the question of whether such intensive security and monitoring are necessary, and the negative impact they may have on students.

"Any measures taken to protect chil- dren are seen as sacrosanct, but there is no discussion of the ramifications on students of being constantly surveilled; of, for example, waiting outside of their school for more than an hour to pass through a metal detector," Monahan said. "One of the things that we found interesting is that schools are really some of the safest places for children to be—significantly safer than when they are on the streets or at home, and schools were safe long before the latest security programs were implemented."

The book may be ordered at Rutgers press.rutgers.edu/acatalog/Schools_Under_Surveillance.html.

"We tried hard to provide an honest, scholarly, systematic treatment of topics that are long overdue and frequently needed by users of observational mea- surement methods," Yoder said.

The observational methods described can be applied in both single-subject and group-design studies. The authors guide students in how and when to use both methodologies. They also provide practi- cal exercises and electronic media files of a sample observation session to code with multiple behavior sampling methods.

Topics covered include: (a) improving measurement of generalized character- istics through direct observation and the generalizability theory, (b) develop- ing coding schemes and designing or adapting coding manuals, (c) determin- ing sampling methods and metrics for observational variables, (d) training observers and assessing their agree- ment, (e) performing sequential analysis on observational data, and (f) assessing the validity of observational variables.

Yoder, professor of special education and a long-time Vanderbilt Kennedy Center investigator, is the past director of the VKC Observational and Quantita- tive Methods Core (now the Statistics and Methodology Core). He has consult- ed with VKC researchers on single-sub- ject and group-design studies for over 20 years. He has conducted methodological studies, including simulation studies relevant to sequential analysis, and written methodological and measurement articles and chapters. He con- tinues to use observa- tional measurement in his own research on early communication in children with develop- mental disabilities.

Frank Symons is associ- ate professor of educa- tional psychology at the University of Minnesota where he directs the Observational Methods Lab. He, too, has published a wide variety of methodological articles and co-edited a book on the applica- tion of direct observational research methods in research on individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. He is a graduate of the Developmental Disabilities Research Training Program, a VKC-administered program funded for over 50 years by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.
For the second year, Peabody College and Vanderbilt are hosting a group of international scholars through the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program.

This year’s Fellows (pictured above) are a distinguished group of educators from Bahrain, Chad, Cote d’Ivoire, India, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Palestinian National Authority and Philippines.

The group includes experts in school evaluation and data analysis, supervision and administration, school reform, program evaluation, educational advocacy, cognitive development, curriculum design, safety and preparedness, human resource development, science education, and information and communications technology.

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