

# Peeps from EEPS

American Enterprise Institute  
Thomas B. Fordham Institute

Spring Issue | Volume 3 | April 2014

## Shameless Plugs from Your Sponsors

Recent work and upcoming events (p. 2)

## Learning about Education

Recent research from Cohort 3 (p. 4)

## Updates from Previous Cohorts

Read about Cohorts 1 & 2 (p. 7)

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## What is EEPS?

The **Emerging Education Policy Scholars (EEPS)** program brings up-and-coming scholars to our nation's capital to meet with education-policy experts and to share and brainstorm exciting new directions for K-12 education research. The program's goals are twofold:

- 1) To foster an opportunity for talented, promising scholars to connect with other scholars in their field, as well as to introduce them to key players in the education policy arena
- 2) To expand the pool of talent and ideas from which the education policy arena currently draws

*The program is generously supported by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.*

## Greetings from Fordham and AEI

*Feel free to contact Matt Richmond ([mrichmond@edexcellence.net](mailto:mrichmond@edexcellence.net)) or Sarah DuPre ([Sarah.DuPre@aei.org](mailto:Sarah.DuPre@aei.org)) with any questions.*

It's only been three months since our last meeting, but a lot has happened over that time. In this newly designed newsletter, you'll read all about your colleagues' new jobs, research, and babies(!) in the coming pages. We've also included information about the work occurring at Fordham and AEI, toward which some of you are contributing.

Our newest goal for the EEPS program is to build bridges across the various cohorts, now that we have a solid core of members. That's why you'll see on page 7 that we included updates from our veteran EEPS.

Many of you also participated in our cross-cohort happy hour, at the Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP) conference in San Antonio. We were happy to convene the group off-site and plan to have more opportunistic social gatherings in the future!

As a friendly reminder, remember to block off June 23-24 for our next meeting. We're hard at work inviting panelists and finalizing the agenda; we think you'll be really pleased with what we have in store. Stay tuned for more information on that front, but until then, have a great spring!

June  
23-24

Next Meeting, Cohort 3

## Upcoming Events

JOIN US ON

MAY

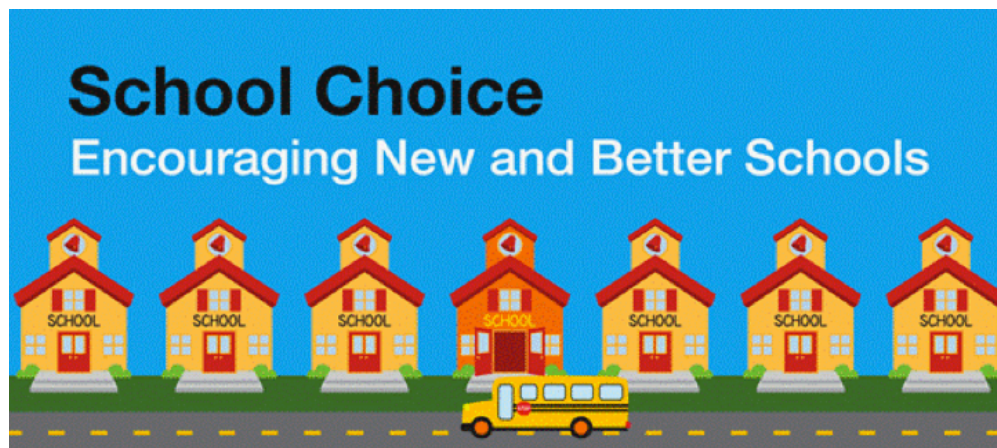
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3:00–4:00 pm EST

The Future of Conservative Education Policy: Remarks from Representative Todd Rokita

Education policy has been a focal point of the Obama administration's domestic agenda. With the 2014 mid-term elections just around the corner, many are now looking for the Republican response to the federal role in K–12 schooling. Rep. Todd Rokita (R-IN), chairman of the US House Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee, has been a leader in producing conservative education reform policies on Capitol Hill from the Student Success Act, which significantly rewrote No Child Left Behind, to bills supporting greater school choice.

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## School Choice: Encouraging New and Better Schools

Editor Michael Q. McShane

*Michael Q. McShane is a research fellow in education policy studies at AEI (and a member of EEPS, Cohort 2).*

Private-school choice programs have had a limited effect on the American education landscape. While voucher, education savings-account, and tuition-tax-credit programs have been successful in filling excess capacity in existing private schools, they have not led to widespread scaling of high-quality school models or to the creation of new, high-quality schools.

Why has this happened? How can the market be structured to better encourage a vibrant supply-side response?

This collection of papers offers one of the most in-depth and serious looks at how school choice works and in what capacities. Leading education thinkers and practitioners contributed to a series of studies that explore how policy, practice, and research can better facilitate and support vibrant school choice marketplaces.

(Anna Egalite, fellow member of Cohort 3, contributed one of the papers, entitled “[Choice Program Design and School Supply](#).”)

To download the PDF of each paper, visit

<http://www.aei.org/papers/school-choice-encouraging-new-and-better-schools/>

## Cohort 3: UPDATES

**Allison Atteberry** recently accepted a tenure-track position at the University of Colorado–Boulder, beginning in Fall 2014. Along with coauthor Andrew McEachin, Allison has been working on a series of papers related to summer learning loss. She and McEachin recently received a Spencer Grant to support work on that topic as it pertains to school accountability. She has recently presented two papers at AEEP: one on the impact that teacher reassignment within schools has on student achieve-

ment and another on the impact that Virginia's Teacher Incentive Fund grants have on student achievement.

**Anna Egalite** is working as one of the senior researchers on a six-year evaluation of the Louisiana Scholarship Program. She's been busy presenting preliminary results of the program's first year impacts at numerous academic conferences across the country and incorporating feedback from reviewers in preparation for the

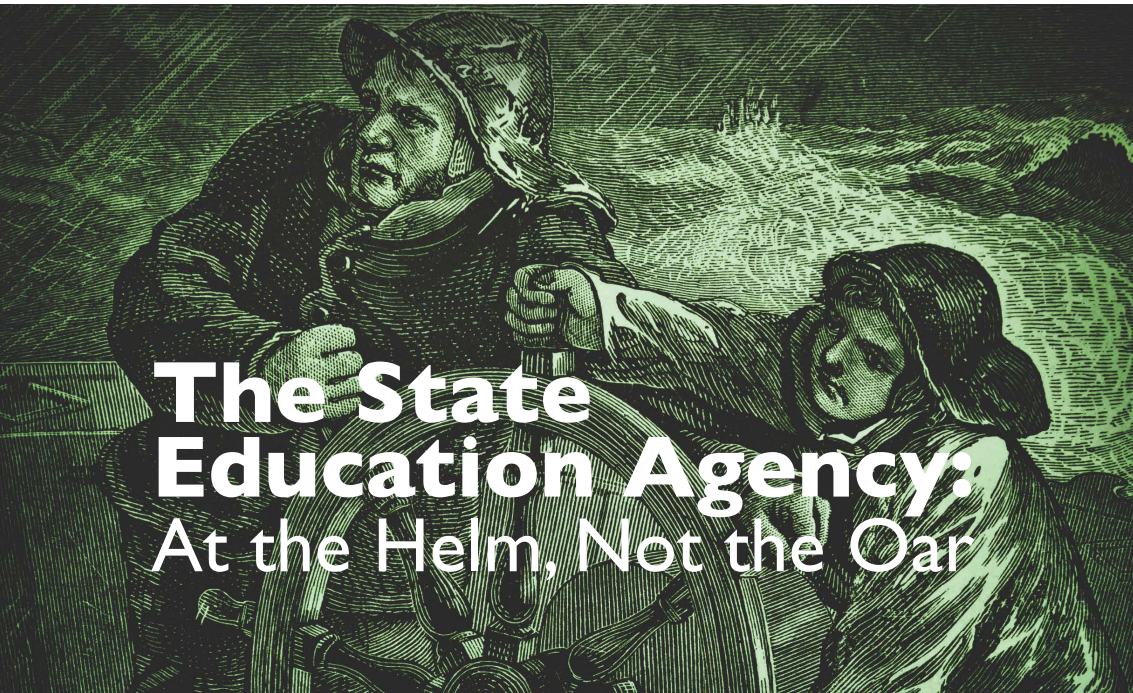
release of the first batch of evaluation reports. In July, she will begin work as a post-doctoral fellow in the Kennedy School at Harvard.

**Brent Evans** has spent his winter and spring teaching undergraduates the Economics of Human Resources and master's students Enrollment Management at Vanderbilt. In between figuring out what he is supposed to be teaching said students, he has been continuing his research on MOOCs,

Advanced Placement credit, and financial aid policy. He is also helping to design an experimental study of a computer based placement and remediation tool for community college math placement.

**Brooks Bowden** recently defended her dissertation, “Estimating the Cost-Effectiveness of a National Program that Impacts High School Graduation and Postsecondary Enrollment.” She will graduate in





# The State Education Agency: At the Helm, Not the Oar

## The State Education Agency: At the Helm, Not the Oar

By Andy Smarick and Juliet Squire

*Andy Smarick is a partner at Bellwether Education Partners and a Bernard Lee Schwartz senior policy fellow with the Fordham Institute. Juliet Squire is an associate partner with Bellwether.*

SEAs were not built—nor are they really competent—to drive sweeping reforms and initiatives in K–12 education. Despite the best efforts of talented, energetic leaders, SEAs will never be able to deliver the reform results that their states need. This paper suggests a new governance approach, organized around the “4 Cs”: Control (returning SEAs

to their core functions of control), Contract (contracting with organizations better equipped to do the work), Cleave (leave tasks outside a SEA’s core competencies to other entities), and Create (encourage state leaders inside and outside of government to create new entities).

To download the PDF, visit

<http://www.edexcellence.net/publications/the-state-education-agency-at-the-helm-not-the-oar>

May and stay on at Teachers College for the coming year to continue her work at the Center for Benefit-Cost Studies of Education. She expects to have reports or papers out this year on applying the ingredients method to multi-site programs, an examination of the cost-effectiveness of Reading Partners, the cost of remediation assessment at community colleges, and the return on investment for school-based socio-emotional learning programs.

**Cuky (Maria) Perez** recently presented a study at AEEP about how tracking of English learners limits their access to highly qualified teachers. She is also very excited to have finished the collection of unique data that will allow her to provide some of the first evidence on the impact of air pollution on student achievement and attendance.

**Daniel Araya** is currently assistant research director on the FLOK (Free/

Libre Open Knowledge) Project in Ecuador. The project’s mandate is to develop policy and planning designed to enable open knowledge systems in support of new models of political economy in Ecuador. He is also a research fellow in learning and innovation with I-CHASS, at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA). He has recently served as editor for the books *Smart Cities as Democratic Ecologies* (2014, Palgrave)

and *Higher Education in the Global Age* (2013, Routledge).

**Jeffrey W. Snyder** continues to work on his dissertation investigating the factors helping and hindering social service collaborations with schools under different governance arrangements. He has a forthcoming article in the *American Journal of Education* that uses an experimental survey to explore ways different school performance data formats may influence public satisfaction. Also from these

## Upcoming Events

JOIN US ON

June

25

(Tentative date)

**On the Rocketship: A Conversation with Richard Whitmire**

Richard Whitmire is a veteran journalist and former editorial writer for *USA Today*. His new book (due for release on June 9th), *On the Rocketship: How Top Charter Schools are Pushing the Envelope*, examines the rise and expansion of leading charter school network Rocketship, revealing the “secret sauce” that makes a successful program. The book explores how Rocketship started and the difficulties encountered as it expands. The narrative then shifts to the national picture, exploring how high-performing charter schools are changing the education landscape in cities such as Denver, Memphis, and Houston.

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# Recent Upcoming Research

## The Influence of Applied STEM Coursetaking on Advanced Math and Science Coursetaking

Michael A. Gottfried

This work has been supported by the National Science Foundation and is forthcoming in the *Journal of Educational Research*. Advanced math and science coursetaking is critical in building the foundation for students to advance through the STEM pathway – from high school to college to career. To invigorate students' persistence in STEM fields, high schools have been introducing applied STEM courses into the curriculum as a way to reinforce concepts learned in traditional math and science classes and to motivate students' interests in a long-term pursuit of these areas. This study examines the role of taking applied STEM courses early in high school on taking advanced math and science courses later in high school. The results suggest a positive link between early applied STEM coursetaking and later advanced math and science coursetaking – one that is delineated by specific type of applied STEM course and by individual-level characteristics. The findings of this study thus support policymakers and practitioners' efforts to expand the STEM curriculum beyond traditional subjects. Continuing to do so may be one way to expand the number of students persisting in STEM.

## English Language Learner Classmates and the Classroom Social Skills of Students with Disabilities

Michael A. Gottfried, Morgan S. Polikoff (Cohort 2)

One current EEPS and one former EEPS have joined forces on an NIH grant to examine the role of classroom context for students with disabilities in early elementary school. This forthcoming paper will appear in *Teachers College Record* and evaluates if combining English Language Learners (ELL) and students with disabilities in the same kindergarten classroom has an effect on the social skills of those students. This agenda is critical for two key reasons. First, though both groups are increasingly found in the general education classrooms due to policy and demographic changes, little is known about the effects that one high-needs group might have on other high-needs students. Second, examining social skills is important, as developing strong social skills development at the start of schooling can have lifelong ramifications. Using a national large-scale sample of kindergarten students, the results show a positive effect of having a greater number of ELL classmates on the social skills outcomes for students with disabilities. On the other hand, the number of students with disabilities does not relate to the social skills outcomes for ELL students.

data, an under-review piece highlights how different goals for education similarly influence public satisfaction (both with former EEPS Andrew Saultz). Another project, forthcoming in *Educational Researcher*, describes philanthropic granting in K-12 education and finds greater sums converging into non-traditional educational organizations (e.g. charter schools).

**Katharine Stevens** has continued her work on teacher management

policy, filing a successful Freedom of Information Law request for the past five years of decisions for New York City teacher due process proceedings. She is currently seeking support to produce a report analyzing how these behind-closed-doors proceedings define the minimum level of competence required of public school teachers. She's also developing a website on teacher workforce management ([www.theteachersweneed.com](http://www.theteachersweneed.com)) which she aims to have up in the next several

months. Finally, she published an op-ed based on her dissertation research in the *New York Daily News*, "Firing Teachers: Mission Impossible," which has 894 views and 128 LinkedIn posts to date.

**Lindsay Page** will continue on at the University of Pittsburgh in the upcoming academic year, transitioning to the position of assistant professor of research methodology and research scientist at the Learning Research and

Development Center at Pitt. She recently had a paper published in JPAM on summer counseling interventions to mitigate summer melt (co-authored with Ben Castleman, UVA, and Korynn Schooley, Fulton County Schools). In addition, she has a book on summer melt (co-authored with Ben Castleman) that will be published in the fall by Harvard Ed Press.

**Meghan McCormick** was recently awarded an American Psychological

## Private School Choice in Developing Countries: Experimental Results from Delhi, India

Anna J. Egalite, Patrick J. Wolf, Pauline Dixon

Anna just completed a chapter for the *Handbook of International Development and Education* describing an experimental evaluation of a targeted school voucher program in East Delhi, India that she conducted with Drs. Patrick Wolf (University of Arkansas) and Pauline Dixon (Newcastle University). This randomized controlled trial is just the third random assignment voucher study to be conducted in India and showed significant positive impacts of the program on students' English language skills (equivalent to an additional 4.5 months of learning after two years in the program). These effects were particularly pronounced for girls.

## Parents as Participants: Policy Design to Inform and Empower

Lesley Lavery

An article from Lesley's dissertation "[Parents as Participants: Policy Design to Inform and Empower](#)," has just been released online in *American Politics Research*. In the study she presents the results of a survey experiment designed to illuminate nuances in the relationship between policy information, attitudes, and evaluation. Parents of children attending Seattle public schools identified for improvement under the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) are exposed to basic, context-specific, policy information on a randomized basis and then asked to complete an attitudinal survey. Treatment parents are significantly more likely than control group peers to report familiarity with NCLB and correctly identify the policy status of their own child's school. This increased depth of policy understanding enables treatment parents to bring evaluations of their child's educational experience, policy, and government into alignment. Research findings demonstrate the potential for crafting policy that encourages informed opinions and political participation. Lesley hopes to continue to explore the relationship between policy information and delivery, and policy and political attitudes and their related behaviors.

## Applying the Lessons of Behavioral Economics to Improve the Federal Student Loan Programs: Six Policy Recommendations

Brent Evans, Angela Boatman (Cohort 2), Adela Soliz

With two colleagues, Brent has written a white paper for the Lumina Foundation in preparation for the possible reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. The paper is entitled "[Applying the Lessons of Behavioral Economics to Improve the Federal Student Loan Programs: Six Policy Recommendations](#)." They suggest several ways to easily improve the framing and delivery of student loans to resolve issues of loan aversion and students making poor repayment decisions.

## Job Openings

### Principal Researcher

American Institutes for Research

AIR is seeking a Principal Researcher with expertise in program evaluation to play a lead role in our State and Local Evaluation Center in Chicago, IL. The position offers the opportunity to apply strong qualitative or quantitative research skills toward conducting client-focused work and making an impact as part of a collaborative team of interdisciplinary experts. Click [here](#) for more.

### Senior Advisor, Educator Effectiveness

Education Northwest

Seeking a Senior Advisor as a core research- and technical -assistance team member on projects related to educator effectiveness and human-capital development. Provides analytic assistance and capacity-building support to policy-makers and practitioners in region. Click [here](#) for more.

### Research Fellows

American Enterprise Institute

AEI Education is hiring two new Research Fellows. The first will study early-childhood-education issues as AEI expands to the pre-K space and will report directly to AEI education director Rick Hess. The second fellow will join the Center on Higher Education Reform (CHER) to study higher-education issues and will report to CHER director Andrew Kelly. Candidates should have at least a master's degree; a PhD in public policy, political science, econ., or related discipline is preferred. Click [here](#) for more.

Foundation Elizabeth Munsterberg Koppitz Graduate Student Fellowship to fund her dissertation research during her final year of doctoral studies, as well as a 2014–15 NAEd/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship. Her dissertation, entitled "Insights into Social-Emotional Learning and Achievement: An Approach for Strengthening Causal Inference," examines how, for whom, and under what circumstances the social-emotional learning program "INSIGHTS into Children's Tempera-

ment" improved math and reading achievement among urban racial/ethnic minority kindergarten and first grade students.

**Michael Gottfried** continues to work in the area of economics of education and educational policy, as it pertains to issues spanning from cradle to career. Currently, one area of his research pertains to early schooling, looking at peer effects as well as the effects of prekindergarten

care and kindergarten entry age. At the same time, he is also interested in how to strengthen the STEM pipeline between K-12—college—career. His next goal is to find an intersection between all of these areas of interest. Stay tuned!

**Patrick Denice** is pressing on in his doctoral work in sociology, and working as a research analyst at CRPE at the University of Washington. His current projects include a look at how

common enrollment systems (like SchoolChoice in Denver) are affecting enrollment patterns and performance outcomes across school districts, an examination of how school districts in WA state hire and support their principals (which he presented recently at AEEP and AERA), and a project examining whether older workers respond to labor market conditions in their decision to pursue additional postsecondary education.



## An Examination of the Efficacy of INSIGHTS in Enhancing the Academic and Behavioral Development of Children in Early Grades

Meghan McCormick, Erin O'Connor, Elise Cappella, Sandee McClowry

Meghan McCormick and her co-authors have a paper coming out in the *Journal of Educational Psychology* in the next two weeks entitled “An Examination of the Efficacy of INSIGHTS in Enhancing the Academic and Behavioral Development of Children in Early Grades.” They used a cluster randomized trial to evaluate the effect of the INSIGHTS into Children’s Temperament intervention on urban racial/ethnic minority students’ math and reading achievement during kindergarten and first grade. They find causal evidence for the impact of the program on math and reading achievement. There was also correlational evidence to suggest that improvements in behaviors and sustained attention were mechanisms to explain the impacts of the program on achievement outcomes. Impacts were sizable and suggest reductions in achievement gaps based on national trends. They discuss a host of implications for this work given recent efforts to integrate social-emotional learning into instruction in elementary school settings, and expansion of federal and state policies that fund these programs.

## Have You Joined the Google Group?

If not, you could be missing out on EEPS event announcements, job postings, opportunities to work with colleagues, as well as meticulously diagrammed instructions for the [secret EEPS handshake](#).

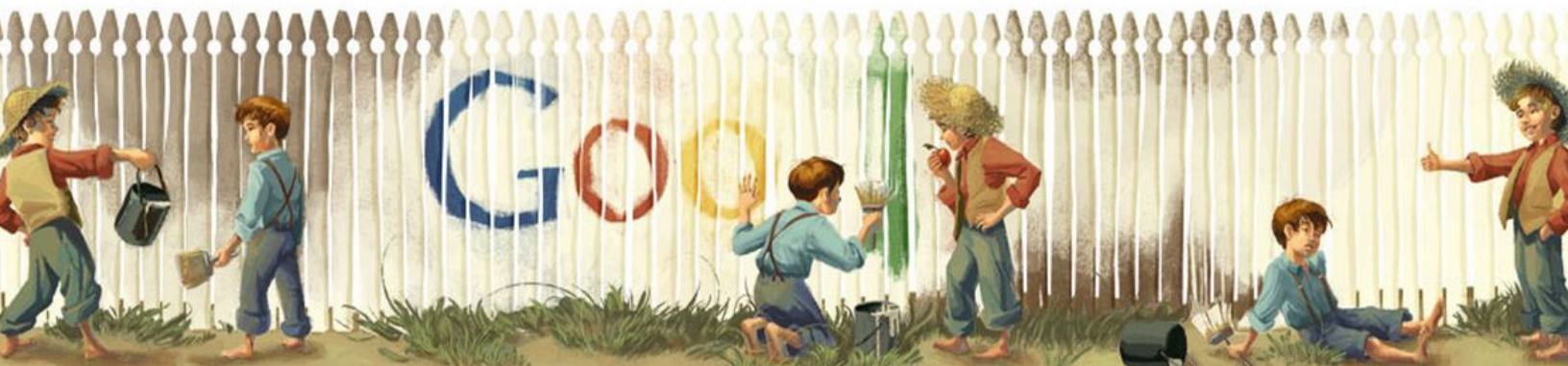
In order to avoid spam in your inboxes, the only direct emails you will receive from us in the future will be official EEPS correspondence. All unofficial messages (happy-hour invitations, job postings, requests for

expertise, etc.) will go through the group. EEPS are encouraged to take advantage of this resource by posting their own research and other work projects, questions, ideas, announcements, etc. Over time, we hope that this group will help facilitate collaborations within and across cohorts, as well as help everyone stay in touch.

If there is anything we can do to improve functionality or improve your experience more generally, please let us know!

### To Join

1. Visit <http://groups.google.com/group/EEPScholars>
2. Click on “Apply for Membership,” while signed into the account you’d like to use
3. Fill out the short form (we recommend receiving emails as a “daily summary” or one email per post)
4. Click “Apply to join this group”



**Peter Goff** has been working on several projects, including a collaboration with fellow EEP, Randall Clemens. Goff and Clemens are developing and applying a methodological framework to leverage qualitative research methods within experimental and quasi-experimental research designs. This framework should help qualitative researchers support causal claims, expanding the influence of such work among policy makers and practitioners. His most recent paper, investigating the impact

of leadership coaching, was accepted for publication in the *Journal of Educational Administration*. Goff’s work in the area of human resource management continues to develop, with several studies underway, including an examination of how teacher-class assignment can impact instructional practices. His crowning achievement in the last several months was a successful negotiation with a governing board in Wisconsin for the release of teacher and principal application data

collected in 300 districts from January through August of 2014 - stay tuned for a bevy of research using these data in the near future!

**Randall F. Clemens** continues to work on projects related to three themes: pathways to college and career for low-income teenagers; the uses of qualitative research for public policy; and innovative research methods. He is completing a book, *Using Social Media for Qualitative Research*

(w/ Sage, 2015). In the fall, he will begin writing his next book, *Unequal Access: Understanding Culture, Concentrated Poverty, and Pathways to College*. Expanding upon previous work regarding policy-relevant research, he will also present an invited paper at ASHE’s annual conference. Since the last meeting, he and his wife bought a house and, in July, expect to present “findings”—via baby announcement—from a collaborative project.

# Veteran EEPs: Updates

Cohorts 1 and 2

## Congratulations!

Three cheers for gainful employment

### LAKE FOREST COLLEGE



**Michael Hartney**

Assistant Professor of Politics  
Politics Department

### MIAMI UNIVERSITY



**Andrew Saultz**

Assistant Professor of  
Educational Leadership  
College of Education,  
Health & Society

## Publications

In the soon-to-be published piece “Instructional Alignment as a Measure of Teaching Quality,” (*Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*) **Morgan Polikoff** (Cohort 2) and coauthor Andrew Porter use data from the Gates Foundation’s Measures of Effective Teaching project to investigate the relationship of teachers’ instructional alignment (to standards and assessments) with teacher quality, measured via value-added models, classroom observations, and student surveys. Finding very weak relationships, they discuss the implications for new multiple-measure teacher-evaluation systems as they’re rolled out in the states.

**Carolyn Sattin-Bajaj** (Cohort 1) has a new book being published by Harvard Education Press this fall. *Unaccompanied Minors: Immigrant Youth, School Choice, and the Pursuit of Equity* takes a close look at the experience of immigrant students and their families with

NYC’s mandatory high-school choice program. *Unaccompanied Minors* identifies a series of barriers that impede the promotion of equity through the choice policy and includes recommendations for action at the district, school, community, and individual family levels.

**Hella Bel Hadj Amor** (Cohort 1) and coauthors recently received the Hawaii Educational Research Association’s Distinguished Paper Award for their piece, “[Ethnicity-Related Achievement Gaps—A Longitudinal Study From Hawaii](#).” While helping to focus attention on ethnicity-related disadvantage, NCLB’s definition is problematic in Hawaii, where Native Hawaiians have been historically disadvantaged but practically ignored for NCLB purposes. This paper uses a superior method for estimating gaps between Native Hawaiians and their white peers’ reading performance, concluding with related policy implications.

## Collaboration: Fordham & AEI

Some examples of Fordham and AEI working with past cohorts, since early 2013: **Michael Hansen** (Cohort 1), “[Right-sizing the Classroom: Making the Most of Great Teachers](#)”; **Matthew Chingos** (C1), “[When Teachers Choose Pension Plans: The Florida Story](#)”; **Michael Q. McShane** (C2), “[The Lay of the Land](#)”; **David Stuit** (C1), “[School Choice or Red Herring?](#)”; **Deven Carlson** (C2), “[Accountability and the Common Core: A Story of Opportunities and Challenges](#)”; **Morgan Polikoff** (C2), guest blogged on “[Rick Hess Straight Up](#)”; **Arnold Shober** (C1) & **Michael Hartney** (C1), “[Does School Board Leadership Matter?](#)”; **Angela Boatman** (C2), “[Beyond Ready, Fire, Aim: New Solutions to Old Problems in College Remediation](#).”

**Seth Gershenson** recently received an Early Career Research Grant from the W.E. Upjohn Institute for a project entitled “The Effect of High-Stakes Accountability Policies on Teacher Absences,” which he will begin in May of 2014. Other current research projects include analyses of the distribution of students’ summer learning rates and of differences across demographic groups in the out-of-school study time of high school students.

**Shaun Dougherty** has recently entered into a contract with several colleagues at UCONN and the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering to perform an evaluation of Connecticut’s full day state-funded pre-kindergarten program. He also submitted a paper to AERJ examining the impact of accountability pressure on student achievement on test standards that are weighted heavily on high-stakes tests. He continues his work on applied STEM interven-

tions by presenting research on the impact of math acceleration policies in middle school, and the effects of career and technical education on high-school graduation outcomes at SREE, AEF, and AERA.

Since January, **Lesley Lavery** has been caring for her now almost four month old baby and preparing her file for pre-tenure review.

**Tracey Weinstein** recently accepted a position as director of policy and

innovation for StudentsFirst. She will be defending her dissertation in late May at which point she will be heading to Sacramento to join the Students-First team. In addition to wrapping up her doctoral studies, Tracey has been busy traveling to both AEF and AERA to present her dissertation work which examines both the implementation and early impacts of a standards-based, multiple-measure teacher evaluation system piloted in the Los Angeles Unified School District.



Banner photography by [Dion Hinchcliff](#)