

FOCUS on Research

Newsletter of the Division for Research (CEC-DR)



President's Message

CEC Indy – A Great Example of Linking Research to Practice

David Lee, *Pennsylvania State University*

CEC in Indianapolis was a blast! Our host city lived up to its reputation as a friendly and beautiful place. We also likely set a record for the coldest CEC (at least the coldest that I can remember). The weather made attending sessions and sitting inside with friends and colleagues that much more appealing. There was very little slipping away for an extended lunch and walk near the water (i.e., Tampa)!

The Division for Research was very active in Indianapolis this year with 24 presentations and 25 posters. Betsy Talbot, Allison Bruhn, Sara McDaniel, and Brittany Sterrett presented at our Showcase Session on adapting evidence-based practices for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Naomi Zigmond spoke about research as detective work for the Kauffman-Hallahan-Pullen Distinguished Researcher Award address. Finally, Sara Powell delivered the 2018 Distinguished Career Researcher Award Recipient address on five essential components of mathematics instruction. The division also presented awards to faculty and students and honored the Division for Research Doctoral Scholars. We are very fortunate to have such talent in our field. It was a great week where research met practice!

Speaking of research to practice, I represented DR at a meeting in late November hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences. Over 50 education organizations attended the event to discuss ways to strengthen the link between research and practice. Prior to the meeting, IES conducted focus groups with teachers and surveyed members of professional organizations (CEC was included). There is no doubt that research to practice will continue to be a focal point moving forward in two ways. First, IES requires specific plans that outline how research findings will be disseminated to key constituents in the field for selected competitions. This makes absolute sense, as we need to get evidence-based practices into the hands of practitioners and support them as they use those practices. Second, a key finding of the survey of CEC members was that practitioners want to be involved in the research process—mainly in shaping the questions that are addressed. So, the research to practice issue is a two-way street. This team approach is a key to developing interventions that are needed, effective, and practical.

In closing, I return home from CEC tired, still a little cold, yet constantly amazed by our field. Have a great spring! ■

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Diversity Spotlight

Burke, M. M., & Goldman, S. E. (2018). Special education advocacy among culturally and linguistically diverse families. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 18*(1), 3–14.

The purpose of this pilot study was to examine the work of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) special education advocates who support CLD families of students with disabilities. The authors framed their work through a theoretical lens, recognizing the importance of social-cultural capital in special education advocacy. The authors' recommendations include the use of informal pathways to connect with CLD families and provide advocacy, as some families may hesitate to engage with formal service delivery systems. Further, the participants suggested that advocacy empowered CLD families to navigate the school system, and that advocacy training should include explicit ways to increase parent empowerment. Importantly, purposive sampling was used to recruit CLD advocates from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds, as well as having personal connections to disability. The development of the interview protocol was based on an extensive body of literature related to CLD families and special education advocacy; the interview protocols were also reviewed by CLD experts. Interviews with twelve CLD advocates revealed multiple supports and barriers while working with families. Over-

all, the study indicates that shared cultural, disability, and family experiences enabled CLD advocates to build rapport with and better support CLD families.

Shogren, K. A., Shaw, L. A., Raley, S. K., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (2018). Exploring the effect of disability, race-ethnicity, and socioeconomic status on scores on the Self-Determination Inventory: Student report. *Exceptional Children, 85*(1), 10–27.

The purpose of the current study involved examining the sensitivity of the *Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report* (SDI:SR) with students from across different disability groups and from diverse racial-ethnic backgrounds. Findings suggest that it is important to consider both disability status and racial-ethnic background when interpreting SDI:SR results, as consistent differences exist between White students with disabilities and their racially and ethnically diverse peers with disabilities, with White students scoring higher on self-determination; these differences were particularly apparent when considering free and reduced-price lunch status. Beyond its purpose, the strength of this article lies in the study's recruitment and sampling plan to include participants from diverse backgrounds, including socioeconomic status and environmental factors. This research highlights the importance of examining potential differences in diverse students' development and expression of self-determination in order to provide more appropriate special education supports. ■



CEC-DR Award Winners

Ann Turnbull: 2019 Kauffman-Hallahan-Pullen Distinguished Researcher Award

Dr. Ann Turnbull is the recipient of the CEC Division for Research 2019 Kauffman-Hallahan-Pullen Distinguished Researcher Award. Dr. Turnbull is a Distinguished Professor Emerita of special education at the University of Kansas. This award recognizes the critical importance of research in special education that has had a meaningful impact on the field. It honors individuals or research teams whose creation of a research base, as well as the work done to translate the research into practice, has resulted in more effective services or education for exceptional individuals.

As her nominators stated, “Dr. Turnbull ... not only created the foundation of research about families of

individuals with disabilities, but also has successfully translated her research into practice and policy.” Multiple sources of evidence support that claim: an extensive publication record of 35 books and more than 280 peer-reviewed articles; over 600 presentations and workshops delivered; the co-founding of the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas, an international hub of research on families of individuals with disabilities; the development of assessment measures and practices to support families; and the mentoring of the next generation of scholars seeking to improve the lives of families of individuals with disabilities through the Family Research Network of the Council for Exceptional Children. Dr. Turnbull's work has had a profoundly positive influence on the field of special education.

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Chad Rose: 2019 Distinguished Early Career Research Award

Dr. Chad Rose is the recipient of the CEC Division for Research 2019 Distinguished Early Career Research Award. He received his doctorate in 2010 in special education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is currently an associate professor of special education at the University of Missouri. This award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding scientific contributions in basic and/or applied research in special education within the first 10 years after receiving the doctoral degree.

Dr. Rose is one of the most promising young scholars in the area of bullying among students with disabilities. His work is theoretically based and gaining considerable recognition in the United States and internationally. He has been published extensively in top tier journals, such as the *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *Exceptional Children*, and *Remedial and Special Education*. He has also published multiple book chapters and makes numerous presentations yearly at national conferences. Additionally, he has been able to secure a highly competitive grant from the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Rose's scholarly accomplishments are particularly impressive in light of the service he provides to the fields of special and general education. He has been involved with national task forces and has received numerous awards such as the Alberti Center Early Career Award for distinguished scholarly contributions to the study of bully abuse and prevention.

Shawn Kent: 2019 Early Career Publication Award

Dr. Shawn Kent is the recipient of the CEC Division for Research 2019 Early Career Publication Award. Dr. Kent is a faculty member at the University of Houston. This award recognizes an outstanding research publication by an individual within the first five years of receipt of the doctoral degree.

Dr. Kent is recognized for his paper in the *Review of Educational Research*, "The relationship between component skills and writing quality and production across developmental levels: A meta-analysis of the last 25 years" (Kent & Wanzek, 2016). Drawing from current theories about how component skills and processes are related to writing quality and production, Dr. Kent synthesized literature on handwriting fluency, spelling, reading, and oral language, and how these components

are related to writing outcomes. From an initial pool of nearly 14,000 articles on these component skills and their relationship to writing, Kent retained 38 articles that met inclusion criteria for meta-analysis. He further assessed the extent to which relationships between these variables were moderated by student grade level or academic ability level. Results showed each component skill had a weak-to-moderate relationship to both writing quality and writing productivity; the only moderator analysis to yield significance showed that the relationship between reading and writing was significantly higher for younger students. The paper is noteworthy in that findings provide important information on relationships between key components underlying major writing theories and both student writing quality and writing production, for students with and without disabilities.

Kent, S. C., & Wanzek, J. (2016). The relationship between component skills and writing quality and production across developmental levels: A meta-analysis of the last 25 years. *Review of Educational Research*, 86, 570–601.

2019 Student Research Award Recipients

Through its student research awards program, the CEC Division for Research recognizes high-quality research conducted by students in the course of their undergraduate or graduate special education training program.

Qualitative Design – Sarah Ballard

Assistant Professor, Illinois State University

Advisor: Stacy K. Dymond, University of Illinois

Title: *Involvement of Students with Severe Disabilities in Specialized Health Care Procedures*

Abstract: The purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to understand how transition-age students with severe disabilities are involved in their specialized health care at school. Purposeful sampling resulted in nine cases and a total of 41 participants. A case was comprised of a transition-age focus student and the student's parent(s), special education teacher, school nurse, and classroom nurse or paraprofessional. Data sources were document reviews, observations, and interviews. Data analysis entailed using an iterative inductive coding approach for each individual case to identify patterns in the data followed by a cross-case synthesis using visual matrices to identify salient themes across cases. This process resulted in four themes depicting student involvement, which were (a) taking part in one's own health care procedures,

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(b) time to socialize, (c) posing a potential health risk to oneself, and (d) care received without opportunities to participate. The findings from this study highlight a need for improved attention to the promotion of self-care in specialized health care for this population.

Quantitative Design – Becca Cruz

University of California, Berkeley Joint Ph.D. program at San Francisco State University and University of California, Berkeley

Advisor: Janelle E. Rodl, San Francisco State University

Title: *Contextual Analysis of Special Education Disproportionality in One Urban School*

Abstract: Studies related to disproportionality of students from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds in special education have increasingly used complex statistical analyses to expand our understanding of the interplay of factors that may cause and maintain disparities, but these studies often focus on nationally representative datasets, which may be lacking in important contextual information related to sociodemographic and school characteristics at the local level. This study examined student- and school-level factors related to special education identification generally and in individual disability categories, as well as longitudinal patterns of placement for students who are racially and ethnically diverse within one large urban school district. Results showed that gender, race, socioeconomic status (SES), and suspension are all factors associated with special education identification, and that school-level structural factors attenuated the effect of race for some groups, which suggests that school composition and resources are important considerations for understanding risk of special education identification.

Single-Subject Design – John E. Romig, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, University of Texas at Arlington

Advisor: Michael Kennedy, University of Virginia

Title: *Improving Writing Instruction of General Education English Teachers for Students with Disabilities*

Abstract: National surveys of middle school teachers indicated they do not use high quality writing practices.

This study attempted to improve the use of modeling, an evidence-based writing practice, by providing teachers a professional development package designed using cognitive apprenticeship as a guiding framework. This single-case, multiple-baseline experiment found that all three teacher participants increased the quality of their modeling during writing instruction and maintained the improved instruction for the duration of the maintenance phase. Future research should examine whether this intervention can improve student writing outcomes.

Mixed Methods Design – Hannah Morris Mathews

Postdoctoral Associate, Boston University

Advisor: Michael Kennedy, University of Virginia

Title: *Vision as Professional Socialization in Special Education Teacher Preparation*

Abstract: In general education teacher preparation, researchers find that the extent and nature of pre-service experiences are associated with candidates' socialization into the knowledge, norms, and values of the profession. An important aspect of this process is *program vision*, the collective understanding of teaching put forth by a preparation program. Yet few investigations in special education examine program vision. Using surveys, interviews, and publicly available program documents from six teacher preparation programs, this study explored the role of program vision in the professional socialization of special educators. Survey findings highlighted similarities across programs regarding clarity of vision. However, based on interview data, candidates' conception of special education teaching was found to include three profiles consistent across candidates within a given program: Direct Instructor, Supportive Differentiator, and General Responder. Each profile was associated with unique roles and responsibilities. Findings highlight the importance of examining program vision as a tool for professional socialization.

For more information on CEC-DR awards or to self-nominate or nominate a colleague, please visit cecdr.org. The deadline for all award nominations/self-nominations is September 15, 2019. ■



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