

FOCUS on Research

Newsletter of the



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President's Message

Expanding the Diversity of Our Professional Networks

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I have had the fortunate opportunity to meet with and learn from many dedicated and talented educators and teacher educators in the U.S., Europe, and North Africa over the past year. What is strikingly clear in my experiences across these global contexts is a commitment to inclusive education and increasing our knowledge to serve individuals with disabilities. They, like many of us, are striving to improve children's and youth's equitable educational opportunities, improve assessment procedures for early identification and service delivery, improve practices at the universal level with the use of *Universal Design for Learning Guidelines*, increase use of *high-leverage practices*, and promote professional learning and use of *evidence-based practices* for students with disabilities, to name only a few priorities. These discussions have highlighted for me the importance and impact of special education research being conducted in the U.S. for a global audience of educators, children, youth, and families. Advancements in these areas and so many others on behalf of individuals with disabilities have been made possible with investments through the *National Center for Special Education Research*, U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services' *Office of Special Education Programs*, and many other agencies,

organizations, private foundations, and universities.

So, in the spirit of my President's Message for the CEC Division for Research Newsletter, I have been thinking about this global effort in terms of collaboration, networks, and diversity. I believe collaborations are at the heart of our work, and our work is enriched through collaborations with others from diverse perspectives and experiences. Collaborations with scholars around the world offer opportunities to challenge ourselves and each other to think about our research in new and deeper ways. For example, consider research efforts on behalf of students with disabilities who are English learners (e.g., Richards-Tutor & Solari, 2022) or multilingual learners (Brown & Aceves, 2022): What might we learn and share through collaborations with educational researchers in Morocco where many students begin primary education speaking an Amazigh language and then learn Arabic and French as the languages of instruction? Also consider research to understand and improve working conditions and experiences of the special education workforce (e.g., teachers, Cumming, Bettini, Brunsting, & Sharde, 2022; paraprofessionals, Fluhler et al., 2022): What might we learn and share

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White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy Memo on Ensuring Free, Immediate, and Equitable Access to Federally Funded Research



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As described in CEC-DR's *Open Science Briefs*, open-access publishing and open data are core open-science practices that aim to increase the transparency, accessibility, equity, and credibility of scientific research. *Open-access publishing* involves a variety of approaches (e.g., pre-printing, paying article-processing charges to make one's article open access in a traditional journal) for making research and scholarship freely accessible to all on the internet. Especially in applied fields like special education, making research and syntheses of research available for all research consumers, including practitioners, is an important first step in bridging the research-to-practice gap. *Open data*, or making data available to the extent it is ethically appropriate, provides many potential advantages, including increasing public trust in research (*Funk et al., 2019*) and permitting other researchers to explore novel research questions with the data set. However, *Cook et al. (2022)*

reported that most published articles in special education are behind paywalls, inaccessible to many practitioners, and data used in published research are seldom shared.

To promote open access to research reports and data, the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) issued a 2013 memo on "*Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research*." The memo stipulated that the direct results of federally funded scientific research, including peer-reviewed publications and digital data, are to be made publicly available. The memo charged federal agencies with over \$100 million in annual research and development expenditures to develop a plan to support increased public access. The 2013 OSTP memo suggested using a 12-month post-publication embargo period as a guideline for making research publicly available (i.e., publications and data should be made available within a year of publication).

On August 25, 2022, OSTP issued an updated memo on "*Ensuring Free, Immediate, and Equitable Access to Federally Funded Research*." "To promote equity and advance the work of restoring the public's trust in Government science, and to advance American scientific leadership" (p. 2), the 2022 memo updates the 2013 policy by

- Applying new requirements to *all* federal agencies funding research, not just those providing > \$100 million annually (federal agencies with annual research budgets of \$100 million or less are given 360 days to submit new or updated plans, whereas agencies with larger budgets must do so within 180 days). All federal agencies funding research must update their public access policies no later than December 31, 2025.
- *All publications* resulting from federally funded research are to be made freely available and publicly accessible by default in agency-designated repositories *without any embargo or delay after publication* (i.e., eliminating the previous 12-month embargo). Moreover, the definition of scholarly publications subject to this requirement has been *expanded beyond journal articles* to include "peer-reviewed book chapters, editorials, and

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White House's OSTP Memo ... (continued from page 2)

peer-reviewed conference proceedings published in other scholarly outlets that result from federally funded research" (p. 3).

- *Scientific data* underlying peer-reviewed scholarly publications resulting from federally funded research should be made freely available and publicly accessible by default *at the time of publication*, unless subject to limitations. Agencies' plans should outline policies for potential legal, privacy, ethical, technical, intellectual property, or security limitations, as well as limitations related to data-use agreements and stipulations of Institutional Review Boards. Moreover, federal agencies will (a) develop approaches and timelines for sharing federally funded scientific data not associated with peer-reviewed scholarly publications and (b) indicate specific online digital repositories where federally funded researchers should deposit relevant data, consistent with the federal agency's guidelines.
- Coordination among federal science agencies in developing plans and policies outlined in the memo is expected and will be facilitated by the National Science and Technology Council Subcommittee on Open Science.

The Higher Education Leadership Initiative for Open Scholarship (HELIOS) issued an *analysis of the OSTP memo*. We concur with their conclusion that this is a significant win for open scholarship. Not only will this memo augment the number of open publications and data in special education, but it may also foster a research culture that expects a high degree of openness, expand tools and supports for engaging in open practices, and clarify best practices for open-access publishing and data sharing. The memo and policies emanating from the memo should benefit the scientific enterprise generally but are perhaps especially important in fields like special education in which research findings can and should inform practice directly. Although updated policies are not required to be enacted until the end of 2025, the memo points to the importance of special education researchers seeking federal funding to understand and apply open

practices such as open-access publishing and data sharing in their proposals and research (see CEC-DR's *Open Science Briefs* for some initial resources). Of course, as with many policy initiatives, the devil will be in the details of these forthcoming policies, and CEC-DR will be monitoring the development of new policies and guidelines put forth by federal agencies funding education research, such as the Institutes for Education Sciences. ■

Diversity Spotlight



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COVID-19 and Emergent Bilingual Students with Disabilities

COVID-19 has created enormous challenges for schools that serve students with disabilities. The switch to remote learning has not been easy, to say the least, as inequities already haunting education differentially shaped the way families experienced remote learning. For instance, immigrant families of children with disabilities have struggled to receive quality services that attend to their language and individual needs of their children. In this regard, the latest article from María Cioè-Peña, assistant professor at Montclair State University, could not be more opportune and more important. Titled "Computers Secured, Connection Still Needed: Understanding How COVID-19-related Remote Schooling Impacted Spanish-speaking Mothers of Emergent Bilinguals with Dis/abilities," Dr. Cioè-Peña's study demonstrates how technology during remote learning was both a burden and a utility for Spanish-speaking immigrant students with disabilities and their families. The study underscores the need for policy, practice, and research approaches to account for the interacting barriers experienced by emergent bilingual students with disabilities. You can read Dr. Cioè-Peña's article at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15348431.2022.2051036>. ■

CEC-DR Families Research Spotlight Featured Article

Guofeng Shen

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Céline Chatenoud



Delphine Odier-Guedj

Chatenoud, C., & Odier-Guedj, D. (2022). *Fostering family–school–community partnership with parents of students with developmental disabilities: Participatory action research with the 3D sunshine model. The School Community Journal, 32(1), 327–356.*

The value of family–school–community partnership has been recognized and emphasized in policy and educational studies for the past four decades. Research indicates there are positive impacts on children’s educational outcomes and well-being. Despite legislation and documented benefits associated with students’ academic and educational success, effective family–school–community partnerships are difficult to achieve and sustain, especially when there is a demographic disconnect between families and educators. There is a need for research to address innovative actions that promote diversity within family–school–community partnerships. A first step in this agenda involves collaborations among researchers and educational professionals, family members, and others within the community aimed at identifying existing barriers followed by developing and implementing new strategies.

To this end, Chatenoud and Odier-Guedj (2022) conducted a participatory action research (PAR) study aimed at operationalizing a model that “brings together various bodies of research knowledge from specialized and non-specialized school settings that are often exploited in silos when it comes to producing desired changes in the

field of practice” (p. 329). This model, the 3D Sunshine Model, contains three dimensions. The first dimension consists of structural parameters and includes six specified activities undertaken with family members (e.g., determining and meeting the needs of families; connecting family, school, and community; and obtaining and monitoring services and supports). The second dimension consists of fundamental partnership principles (e.g., trust and respect, equality and equity, communication). The third dimension consists of interactional contextual factors that account for the diversity of educational contexts such as frequency and intensity, time, and space. This third dimension helps in developing professional sensitivity while accepting unique individual qualities of parents, rather than assuming conformity to school practices.

The researchers tested the 3D Sunshine Model in vivo within three specialized schools in Montreal, Canada, serving adolescents with developmental disabilities. Participants were 25 families and all school staff ($n = 150$). Family member participants represented diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Professional participants represented classroom teachers; subject teachers (physical education, arts, music); special education teachers; support staff, including paraprofessionals; therapists; and social workers and other resource personnel.

The PAR project was designed with the school community as co-enquirers, within four cycles of inquiry. Each was based on four phases: plan, act, observe, and reflect. The first cycle, operationalizing the 3D Sunshine Model, drew a portrait of the current family–school–community partnership practices while identifying issues raised. In the second cycle, participants collaborated to develop activities promoting family–school–community partnerships that addressed issues which emerged in the first cycle. The third cycle focused on knowledge mobilization in which participants disseminated activities developed within the second cycle. The fourth cycle was conceived more as political, aimed at advocating for family–school–community partnership through public forums and media channels.

The results from the first action cycle regarding family–school–community partnership activities

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“revealed that little was done in the participating schools to engage parents as part of the school community beyond the basics provided to meet their child’s needs” (p. 349). Regarding the second dimension, the researchers found that the “invitations extended to parents are largely unidirectional and parents’ voices are rarely taken into account” (p. 349). The knowledge gained in interactional contextual factors (the third dimension) “suggests a need not only to rethink the activities offered, the means deployed, and the application of partnership principles, but to also to create a shared interactional story that is helpful for explicitly communicating the expectations of parents and professionals” (p. 349).

The contributions of this study to the current literature are two-fold. First, family and professionals were

meaningfully included throughout the research, which served to build bridges based on “what seemed relevant or less relevant and usable in their daily lives, not based on ideas coming from the researchers themselves” (p. 351). The study is one of the first utilizing PAR and the 3D Sunshine Model to explore the family–school–community partnership. Second, the 3D Sunshine Model framework was utilized in helping families and professionals mobilize new knowledge while developing a common language fitting their cultures and practices, which supports the implementation of evidence-based practices within their “daily routines and work culture” (p. 351). The authors are commended for elevating diverse family and professional voices within family research to better understand activities and strategies that serve to enhance equitable and trusting family–school–community partnerships. ■



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through collaborations with educational researchers and practitioners in Ireland who are exploring innovative models of professional development to promote inclusive practices? These collaborations are one way to expand our scholarly networks.

Another way to expand our reach and networks is by sharing our research with global audiences and/or developing new research partnerships across contexts. The CEC Division of International Special Education and Services (*DISES*) has a long history of global collaborations and networking. Then, when the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic required we shift to new ways of engaging, we became more adept with digital communication platforms. This resulted in the rise of virtual conferences that removed traditional barriers of conference costs and time away and allowed special education and other education scholars to come together and share ideas like never before. By expanding the diversity of our professional networks both within the U.S. and globally, I believe we can continue to think deeply about how we serve individuals with disabilities and their families through our educational systems, policies, and practices. ■

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