Leading for Learning in Early Childhood Education: a Multi-Level Challenge

Professional Association of Oregon School Administrators
Portland, 10/22/19

Steve Tozer
University of Illinois Chicago
Chicago Public Schools

“the worst school system in America.”

--U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett, 1987
2008-2014: 96th %ile in growth among all districts; 6 yrs. of growth for 5 yrs. grades 3-8

Reardon: “a real and sustained pattern of above average learning rates and performance Improvement.”
# 2001 ILxCPS v. CPS: Reading & Math

## Grade 3

### African American

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free/Reduced Lunch</td>
<td>ILlXCHI CHI ILlXCHI CHI ILlXCHI CHI ILlXCHI CHI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eligible</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>147</td>
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<tr>
<td>95% Confidence Interval</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combined Confidence Interval (+/-)</td>
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<td>Difference in Average Scale Scores</td>
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<td>-3.38</td>
<td>-5.78</td>
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<td>Free/Reduced Lunch</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Eligible</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>156</td>
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<tr>
<td>95% Confidence Level</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.86</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combined Confidence Interval (+/-)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difference in Mean Scale Scores</td>
<td>-2.8</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>-4.4</td>
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</table>

### Latino

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
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<th>Male</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free/Reduced Lunch</td>
<td>ILlXCHI CHI ILlXCHI CHI ILlXCHI CHI ILlXCHI CHI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eligible</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>153</td>
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<tr>
<td>95% Confidence Interval</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.47</td>
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<td>Combined Confidence Interval (+/-)</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difference in Mean Scale Scores</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
<td>-2.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Eligible</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td>95% Confidence Level</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>1.43</td>
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<td>Combined Confidence Interval (+/-)</td>
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<td>Difference in Mean Scale Scores</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
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<td>-1.82</td>
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### White

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<th>Male</th>
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<tr>
<td>Eligible</td>
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<td>158</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>156</td>
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<tr>
<td>95% Confidence Interval</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combined Confidence Interval (+/-)</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difference in Mean Scale Scores</td>
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<td>-1.49</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Eligible</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>106</td>
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<td>95% Confidence Level</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>1.14</td>
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<td>Combined Confidence Interval (+/-)</td>
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<td>1.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difference in Mean Scale Scores</td>
<td>-0.59</td>
<td>-0.86</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
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</table>

Pink= IL outperforms CPS
Tan= It’s a draw

- Grade 3
- Af Am, Latino, White
- Reading & Math
- Boys & Girls
- Eligible and not eligible for FRL
- CPS behind in 13 of 24 cells, ahead in none,
- So no green cells
- Next slide: Gr. 3, 5, 8, still in 2001
2001 ILxCPS v. CPS: Reading & Math

### Grade 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Math</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free/Reduced Lunch</strong></td>
<td>ILvCH</td>
<td>CHvIL</td>
<td>ILvCH</td>
<td>CHvIL</td>
<td>ILvCH</td>
<td>CHvIL</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Confidence Interval</strong></td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.83</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Difference Mean Scores</strong></td>
<td>-3.3</td>
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<td>-2.7</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
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### Grade 5

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Math</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Free/Reduced Lunch</strong></td>
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<td>ILvCH</td>
<td>CHvIL</td>
<td>ILvCH</td>
<td>CHvIL</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Confidence Interval</strong></td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Difference Mean Scores</strong></td>
<td>-4.5</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
<td>-5.0</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
<td>-4.9</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
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### Grade 8

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Reading</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Math</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>ILvCH</td>
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<td>CHvIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Confidence Interval</strong></td>
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<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.83</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Difference Mean Scores</strong></td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of 48 cells grades 3-5, CPS behind in 24, ahead in 1 (green).

Of 24 cells in grade 8, CPS ahead in 10 cells, behind in 1.
In 2012, of 72 cells in grades 3, 5, 8, CPS ahead in 62 cells, behind in none.
15-year Changes in Composite Math Attainment

55 Largest Illinois Districts

Median Percent of Students Scoring At or Above Statewide Norms

- Substantial Loss: 19 Districts
  - 2001: 55%
  - 2016: 40%

- Moderate Loss: 16 Districts
  - 2001: 58%
  - 2016: 51%

- About the Same: 16 Districts
  - 2001: 59%
  - 2016: 58%

- Substantial Gain: 4 Districts
  - 2001: 39%
  - 2016: 52%

Median Percent of Low-Income Enrollments

- Substantial Gain: 4 Districts
  - 2001: 36%
  - 2016: 57%

- Moderate Gain: 24 Districts
  - 2001: 25%
  - 2016: 49%

- About the Same: 16 Districts
  - 2001: 13%
  - 2016: 33%

- Moderate Loss: 16 Districts
  - 2001: 25%
  - 2016: 51%

- Substantial Loss: 19 Districts
  - 2001: 25%
  - 2016: 40%
4th Grade Reading Grew in All Chicago Sub-Groups, But Flat or Declining in the Rest of Illinois

Percent of Non-ELL Fourth Graders Scoring At or Above State of Illinois ISAT/PARCC Medians for READING/ELA: 2006 to 2017
8th Grade NAEP Reading in Chicago: 2009 through 2017
Average Scale Scores at the 25th, 50th and 75th Percentile of Charter and Non-Charter Scoring Distributions

UIC
Making Good on the Promise of Public Education
“Increases in math and reading achievement often double and quadruple the gains seen elsewhere.”

Chicago's gains also stand out in comparison to the state and the nation. A study by the Center for Urban Education Leadership at the University of Illinois at Chicago found that from 2001 to 2015, student growth in Chicago exceeded growth elsewhere in the state among all racial subgroups. On the National Assessment of Educational Progress . . . Chicago's trajectory has defied the declines reported in many other cities as well as the stagnating progress of the nation as a whole.

--Crain’s Chicago Business 6/15/16
• If we as a nation are serious about wanting to improve our schools, we should be studying how Chicago has made such progress.
• Chicago has worked to improve the recruitment, preparation, and support of principals. They have helped lift a city.
• Nowhere else have university professors and public school educators worked so closely to such good effect.
Want to Fix Schools? Go to the Principal’s Office:
New York Times March 10, 2017

There is no better place to see the difference that principals can make than Chicago.
The city’s teenagers now enroll in college at a rate only slightly below that in the rest of the country. Younger children have made big gains in reading and math, larger than in every other major city except Washington.
Chicago Has Been Making “An Extra Year of Progress” from 3rd to 8th Grade since at Least 2002 . . .

. . . But All New Value-Added Came Before the End of Grade 3
New Learning* Required to Meet National Growth Norms on the NWEA MAP

In most American schools, new learning slows down dramatically in the middle school years from Grade 5 through Grade 8.

From the end of Grade 7 to the end of Grade 8, new math learning in a typical American schools is less than a standard error; the same is true for new learning in reading and writing.

*Shown in NWEA “RIT” scores for math
Today’s purposes

• Using Chicago as a departure point, seek to learn from its successes while recognizing CPS challenges ahead
• Engage Oregon educators in thinking about early learning as a leadership challenge with specific problems of practice in organization and instruction
• Explore what we know about effective school leadership that leads organizational and instructional improvement for early learning in “high-need” schools (and what does “high need” mean?)
A Central Problem of Practice

- Socio-economic influences have systemically greater impact on student learning than in-school influences
- Some schools & districts show much greater success with in-school influences than others
- We are not learning from those outliers at scale
After Three Decades of Standards-Based School Reform, SES and ZIP Code Are Still Powerful Predictors of Achievement in American Public Schools . . .

Accessed and adapted from New York Times Upshot:
After Three Decades of Standards-Based School Reform, SES and ZIP Code Are Still Powerful Predictors Achievement in American Public Schools . . .

. . . But Growth in School Effectiveness Can Still Boost Achievement in Most Districts by between 0.75 and 2.00 or More Grade Equivalents
Eg, based only on demographics, students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC should be achieving at much lower levels than students in Simi Valley, CA.

Accessed and adapted from New York Times Upshot:
The only significant difference between achievement in Madison and Milwaukee is the 2 grade-equivalent difference between white populations.

Accessed and adapted from New York Times Upshot

What Happened in Chicago?

Research ongoing (alternative explanations?), BUT:

- Chicago’s 23-year investment in school leaders
- Theory/research on how principals improve schools
- Principals prepared and developed as P-12 leaders
- Sustained evidence that schools led by residency-based leadership programs are improving faster than system as a whole across range of metrics
“The School is the Unit of Change”

• “& the principal is the leader of that change”—CPS 2000
• 1996: New state law for CPS Principal Eligibility leads to “CPS Principal Competencies” (2005--common language established)
• 2001-2002: CPS partnerships with UIC, New Leaders lead to over 300 new principals
Chicago’s 23-year investment in school leadership: shared theory of action

Leadership builds organizational capacity through continuous improvement
Within-school Improvement of Student Learning (explicit theory of impact)

- Administrative Leadership
- Instructional Leadership TEAM
- Organizational Capacity (e.g.)
  - P-3 team;
  - Instr. Rounds;
  - Collab. routines
- Teaching/Instruction (e.g.)
  - Efficacy beliefs,
  - Productive struggle
- Student Engagement and Learning
  - e.g. early literacy

Cosner 2014; CCSR, 2006
What is School Organizational Capacity?


• School Leadership

• Professional Capacity

• Parent Community School Ties

• Student Centered Learning Climate

• Instructional Guidance
What Do Transformative Leaders Do?

• Leithwood: Lead vision, people and systems
• Not just instructional leaders, but organizational change agents
• How do we get such leaders for early childhood ed?
  – Next-generation preparation programs
  – Next generation principal development strategies
  – Leveraging TEACHER LEADERSHIP throughout
Your System . . . Any System . . . Is Perfectly Designed to Produce The Results You’re Getting

- Our current system of principal development reproduces educational inequity (look at the data)
- Our current systems of educational research fail to disrupt educational inequity at scale
- These results will continue until we disrupt the system of how we prepare and develop principals and other leaders for ECE
- Neither higher ed nor school districts alone can do it
Characteristics of Next-Generation Principal Prep/Development Programs

- Results-oriented focus on principal impact on schools
- Partnerships with districts that invest resources
- Highly selective admissions to structured cohorts
- Full time, intensively coached, site-based learning (residencies, internships)
- Integration of academic and practical learning
- Structured post-licensure support to accelerate early-career development and success
- (All of these established 100 years ago in medical ed)
Vision:
Inquiry into practice

What do highly effective principals do?

Can we teach other principals to do this?

Can we produce principals like this as a rule, at scale?
Central Problem of Practice: What would it take to produce transformative principals at scale? Subproblems include:

How do we select the right candidates?

How to integrate school-based & academic learning?

How do we assess formatively and summatively?
Starting points at UIC, 2002:
Four organizing principles

Primary outcomes: PreK-12 student as “the Client”

Partnership with Chicago Public Schools

Continuous improvement for school leadership

Data on progress and performance
Four core design elements

- Selective admissions: who will “deliver”?  
- 3 years of leadership coaching  
- 1-Year residency: partnership core  
- Practitioner inquiry in capstone study
Commitment to more disciplined improvement: 2012-present

- Program redesign and continuous improvement
- Research and measurement capacity
- Collaboration of faculty, coaches, district partner
- Carnegie Foundation as network partner
UIC program completers placed as school leaders since 2003

94% (UIC Principals & APs)
77% (UIC Principals)
15% (Illinois avg.)
Continuous Improvement/Encouraging results

• Improved school performance on CPS indicators
• 110 current CPS leaders at school & district level are UIC program grads: CEO, Principal Supervisors, Chiefs of ECE and Language & Culture, Principals, APs.
• National recognition: Council of Great City Schools, UCEA, Bush Institute, PBS, U.S. News, etc.
Is the Chicago example useful?

First, how many effective schools would you have to see to be persuaded of the educability of poor children? If your answer is more than one, then I submit that you have reasons of your own for preferring to believe that basic pupil performance derives from family background instead of school response to family background.

(Ron Edmonds, 1979)
What if you are already leading schools?

• **Theory and practice**: professional standards and research on how principals improve student learning in schools.

• **Instructional leadership**: creating systems and structures for teacher learning

• **Transformational leadership**: "reculturing" a school through teacher leadership

• **Cycles of Inquiry**: creating teacher teams and data systems

• **Adult learning** as the purpose of all of the above, including leaders as intentional about their learning
NAESP (2014) Leading Pre-K-3 Learning Communities: Self Assessment Tool

rate the degree to which each strategy is evident in your school or in your practice as school leader.

1--Not evident in my school/practice. (BOY, MOY, EOY)
2--Somewhat evident in my school/practice. (BOY, MOY, EOY)
3--Consistently evident in my school/practice. (BOY, MOY, EOY)
4--Consistently evident, with practices that elaborate upon or exceed expectations. (BOY, MOY, EOY)
NAESP Competency 4: Use Multiple Measures To Guide Growth in Student Learning

• Build understanding throughout the learning community of the various purposes and appropriate uses of different student assessments to improve teaching and learning.

• Support teachers in using multiple forms of assessments, along with observation, portfolios and anecdotal records, to guide student learning and growth all along the Pre-K-3 continuum.

• Support open and collaborative discussions about assessment data with parents and community.

• Share information about program effectiveness among schools and other providers.
NAESP Competency 5: Build Professional Capacity Across the Learning Community

• **Build principal professional knowledge** about what is age- and developmentally-appropriate.

• **Support ongoing, job-embedded professional learning** opportunities for teachers all along the continuum.

• **Support professional learning communities** that focus on authentic work.
The Key Leadership Challenge

- Learning to build organizational capacity for continuous improvement of instruction in every P-3 classroom
Next edge for improvement:
Leadership of high-churn urban schools
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>STABLE (median)</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
<th>HIGH CHURN (median)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3.4 times</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Truancy</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2.7 times</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Students</td>
<td>2%*</td>
<td>5 times</td>
<td>10%</td>
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High-Churn Schools as the Highest Need Schools

Where do we start? Lessons from Chicago include:

Early Childhood Education leadership

• Building organizational and instructional capacity
• Focus on literacy and mathematics learning
• Leadership learning for:
  – Early childhood education
  – Adult learning through teacher leadership
  – Cycles of inquiry and continuous improvement
A Short Bookshelf of Resources for Early Childhood Leaders (First, the Science)


Bookshelf: Organization and Leadership as Foundations for Learning


- **Dewey, J.** (1936) *Experience and Education*. Kappa Delta Pi.


Four Sources for Leadership Learning


• Wiliam, D. (2016) *Leading for Teacher Learning*
Steve Tozer

UIC Center for Urban Education Leadership
Dr. Shelby Cosner, Director

urbanedleadership.org

stozer@uic.edu