Book Series

Current Perspectives on School/University/Community Research

Series Editors
R. Martin Reardon, East Carolina University; Jack Leonard, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Bryk (2015) referred to the discrepancy between the achievements to which reforms aspire and their outcomes as a chasm. Bryk envisaged the confluence of knowledge and the empirical warrants that together constitute practice-based evidence as offering a viable approach to dealing with high-leverage problems in education. Cooper and Shewchuk (2015) referred to knowledge mobilization as iterative, social processes involving interaction among two or more different groups or contexts (researchers, policymakers, practitioners, third party agencies, community members) in order to improve the broader education systems (p. 2).

This book series provides a platform for showcasing research on high-leverage problems in education. In particular, this series will highlight research in which knowledge mobilization among all three stakeholder groups in education (practitioners, researchers, and community members) is salient.

Books in this series:
- School-University-Community Collaboration for Civic Education and Engagement in the Democratic Project
- Learning to Read the World and the Word
- A Place Called Home
- Alleviating the Educational Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Integrating Digital Technology in Education
- Innovation and Implementation in Rural Places
- Making a Positive Impact in Rural Places
- Exploring the Community Impact of Research-Practice Partnerships in Education

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School-University-Community Collaboration for Civic Education and Engagement in the Democratic Project

R. Martin Reardon, East Carolina University; Jack Leonard, University of Massachusetts, Boston


The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools (2011) lamented the “lack of high-quality civic education in America’s schools [that] leaves millions of citizens without the wherewithal to make sense of our system of government” (p. 4). Preus et al. (2016) cited literature to support their observation of “a decline in high-quality civic education and a low rate of civic engagement of young people” (p. 67). Shapiro and Brown (2018) asserted that “civic knowledge and public engagement is at an all-time low” (p. 1). Writing as a college senior, Flaherty (2020) urged educators to “bravely interpret ... national, local, and even school-level incidents as chances for enhanced civic education and to discuss them with students in both formal and casual settings” (p. 6). In this eighth volume in the Current Perspectives on School/University/Community Research series, we feature the work of brave educators who are engaged in school-university-community collaborative educational endeavors. Authors focus on a wide range of projects oriented to civic education writ large—some that have been completed and some that are still in progress—but all authors evince the passion for civic education that underpins engagement in the democratic project.

Describing global trends in forced displacement in 2019, Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees declared that “we are witnessing a changed reality in that forced displacement nowadays is not only vastly more widespread but is simply no longer a short-term and temporary phenomenon”. At the end of 2019, almost 80 million people had been forced to leave the place they called home “as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order,” according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

This volume presents the concerted efforts of chapter contributors to alleviate the alienation of those who have been displaced and help them to feel at home in the country in which they have sought refuge. Chapter contributors highlight their endeavors specifically with Latino, Hmong, and African immigrants in the United States and Canada, as well as with a veritable united nations of immigrant identities in general. Endeavors oriented to making immigrants feel at home inevitably raise the vexed question of what it means to be a good member of a society—regardless of whether one is a veritable united nations of immigrant identities in general. Endeavors oriented to making immigrants feel at home inevitably raise the vexed question of what it means to be a good member of a society—regardless of whether one is a citizen.

Recent crises—whether policy-induced (e.g., family separation at the Mexico/U.S. border) or natural disaster-related (e.g., hurricanes in Florida and North Carolina and wildfires in California)—have galvanized the attention of the U.S. and international public on the plight of children who endure these traumatic events. The sheer enormity of such wrenching events tend to overshadow the trauma endured by many children whose everyday life circumstances fall short of affording them a safe, stable, and nurturing environment.

At the national level, three rounds of data collection spanning January 2008 through April 2014 constituted the National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV) that—according to Finkelhor, Turner, Shattuck, and Hambly (2013) in reporting on the 2011 round—assessed “a wide range of childhood victimizations” (pp. 614-615). Among many other findings, Finkelhor et al. concluded that “overall, 57.7% of the children and youth had experienced or witnessed at least 1 to 5 aggregate exposures (assaults and bullying, sexual victimization, maltreatment by a caregiver, property victimization, or witnessing victimization) in the year before this survey” (p. 619). According to the recent re-visiting of NatSCEV II by Turner et al. (2017), “almost 1 in 4 children and adolescents ages 5-15 in the United States lived in family environments with only modest levels of safety, stability, and nurturance, while about 1 in 15 had consistently low levels across multiple domains” (p. 8).

Adverse childhood events (ACEs) have both immediate and long-term impacts on children’s health and well-being (Banyard, Hambly, & Grych, 2017; Bowen, Jarrett, Stahl, Forrester, & Valmaggia, 2018; Walker & Walsh, 2015). Children do not shed their entanglement with ACEs at the schoolroom door. To highlight just one study, Jimenez, Wade, Lin, Morrow, & Reichman (2016) conducted a secondary analysis of a national urban birth cohort and found that experiencing ACEs in early childhood was “associated with below-average, teacher-reported academic and literacy skills and [more] behavior problems in kindergarten” (p. 1).

This fourth volume in the Current Perspectives on School/University/Community Research series brings together the perspectives of authors who are deeply committed to the integration of digital technology with teaching and learning. Authors were invited to discuss either a completed project, a work-in-progress, or a theoretical approach which aligned with one of the trends highlighted by the New Media Consortium’s NMC/CoSN Horizon Report: 2017 K-12 Edition, or to consider how the confluence of interest and action (Thompson, Martinez, Clinton, & Díaz, 2017) among school-university-community collaborative partners in the digital technology in education space resulted in improved outcomes for all—where “all” is broadly conceived and consists of the primary beneficiaries (the students) as well as the providers of the educational opportunities and various subsets of the community in which the integrative endeavors are enacted.

The chapters in this volume are grouped into four sections: Section 1 includes two chapters that focus on computational thinking/coding in the arts (music and visual arts); Section 2 includes three chapters that focus on the instructor in the classroom, preservice teacher preparation, and pedagogy; Section 3 includes four chapters that focus on building the academic proficiency of students; and Section 4 includes two chapters that focus on the design and benefits of school-university-community collaboration.


Innovation and Implementation in Rural Places
School-University-Community Collaboration in Education
R. Martin Reardon, East Carolina University; Jack Leonard, University of Massachusetts, Boston

This volume focuses on innovative school-university-community collaborations that are being implemented in rural places in the United States. A foundational belief that underpins the contributions to this volume is that rural communities contain within themselves the resources to promote and sustain vibrant educational endeavors. This belief has inspired a wealth of innovations that collectively offer a countervailing perspective to the view that global competitiveness is the preeminent goal of education, and that this goal is best served by “big education.” Since early last century, there has been a pervasive implicit, and sometimes explicit, assumption that rural places are bereft of the ability to educate children effectively. As
repeatedly witnessed in this volume, in collaboration with universities, schools in rural places and the communities that both sustain and rely on them can appropriately configure the educational environment to optimally nurture the intellectual growth of children.

The chapters in this volume are grouped into three parts that explore, in turn, the design features of innovative school-university-community collaborations, some novel approaches to such collaborations, and the contours of parental and community involvement in such collaborations. Chapters discuss both larger scale collaborations that involve many school districts across wide-spread regions, and smaller scale collaborations that involve intensive engagements among the educators and members of smaller communities, and offer theoretical insights into the collaborative process itself. As mentioned above, two narrative threads run through the chapters: that effective collaborations address goals and aspirations expressed by those who are privileged to live in rural America, and that effective collaborations are oriented to building on the strengths inherent in the social fabric of those rural communities.


Making a Positive Impact in Rural Places
Change Agency in the Context of School–University–Community Collaboration in Education

R. Martin Reardon, East Carolina University; Jack Leonard, University of Massachusetts, Boston


Following on from the preceding volume in this series that focused on innovation and implementation in the context of school–university–community collaborations in rural places, this volume explores the positive impact of such collaborations in rural places, focusing specifically on the change agency of such collaborations. The relentless demand of urban places in general for the food and resources (e.g., mineral and energy resources) originating in rural places tends to overshadow the impact of the inevitable changes wrought by increasing efficiency in the supply chain. Youth brought-up in rural places tend to gravitate to urban places for higher education and employment, social interaction and cultural affordances, and only some of them return to enrich their places of origin. On one hand, the outcome of the arguable predominance of more populated areas in the national consciousness has been described as “urban omnivorous”—a sense that what happens in urban areas is the norm. By implication, rural areas strive to approach the norm. On the other hand, a mythology of rural places as repositories of traditional values, while flattering, fails to take into account the inherent complexities of the rural context.

The chapters in this volume are grouped into four parts—the first three of which explore, in turn, collaborations that target instructional leadership, increase opportunities for underserved people, and target wicked problems. The fourth part consists of four chapters that showcase international perspectives on school–university–community collaborations between countries (Australia and the United States), within China, within Africa, and within Australia. The overwhelming sense of the chapters in this volume is that the most compelling evidence of impact of school–university community collaborations in rural places emanates from collaborations brokered by schools-communities to which universities bring pertinent
Exploring the Community Impact of Research-Practice Partnerships in Education

R. Martin Reardon, East Carolina University; Jack Leonard, University of Massachusetts, Boston


This volume explores the impact of research-practice partnerships in education (broadly conceived) on communities in which such partnerships operate. By invitation, some of the partnerships celebrated in this volume are firmly established, while others are more embryonic; some directly engage community members, while others are nurtured in and by supportive communities. Collectively, however, the eleven chapters constitute a range of compelling instances of knowledge utilization (knowledge mobilization), and offer a counter-narrative to the stereotypical divide between researchers and practitioners.

Educational researchers and educational practitioners reside in and are both politically supported and socially sustained by their local communities. The nesting of researchers’ and practitioners’ collaborative decision-making and action in the financial, social, organizational, and political contexts of the community—together with the intended and unintended outcomes of those decisions and actions—speaks to the essence of community impact in the context of this volume.

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