

Wisconsin Education Research Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes



Thursday, October 17, 2013
9:00am to 4:00pm

Wisconsin Center for Education Research: Room 259
1025 West Johnson Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Jared Knowles presents about the DPI Dropout Early Warning System (DEWS):

- An indicator system to give individual students entering grades 7, 8, and 9 a risk score for their likelihood to graduate on-time with their cohort
- Deployed to all schools in the state through WISEdash
- Discussed project development, project constraint, and future plans for working on the project
- http://wise.dpi.wi.gov/wise_dashdews

Items to take back to DPI:

- Think about learning more about how schools are using the system. How can this be measured?
- Provide more advice about interventions for each of the “malleable areas” of the DEWS for students in middle grades.
- Consider looking closely at the schools and student groups for which the system is historically the least accurate.
- Consider whether the logic of DEWS as a system that identifies individual students has an implied bias toward special treatment of individual students as a remedy (and a bias against school wide and community remedies).
- Consider whether some types of special treatment might be stigmatizing or counter productive
- Consider the situation of the large number of middle schools having large percentages of students identified at risk
- Investigate how lists of at risk students identified by schools are different from DEWS (adding some students not identified by DEWS and not identifying some students on the DEWS lists)
- Investigate whether DEWS saves the time of middle school staff or duplicates local efforts (redundancy)

- Note that DEWS provides descriptive rather than value-added data, for example, who and how many students are at risk (descriptive) rather than how many are at risk compared to predictions based on student characteristics (value added)
- **Eric Camburn, Associate Professor at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research presents about Early Indicator Systems:**
 - Systems are focused on adolescents, undergoing incredible transitions emotionally, cognitively, emotionally, physically, and socially
 - Placed in institutional settings that are increasingly impersonal-schools are becoming more diffuse and anonymous
 - Course failures? Key to a broader set of indicators beyond academics
 - PERS lab at Stanford working on a project in MPS... Psychological coping and root cause (Rudy Ruiz)

Items to take back to DPI:

- Go out and get use cases for how schools are using DEWS, find ideas about possible uses and ways it's used
- Can find information about redundancy
- Understand focus groups about data consumption and ease of use
- Survey research leveraging DEWS as a series of items
- Better guidance about course failures
- What about a school report to contextualize the data about share of students at risk?
- What about impact of school wide factors above and beyond the student factors?
- What can we do to prompt the conversation?

Paul Moberg, Research Professor UW Madison Population Health Institute, Safe and Supportive Schools

- School surveys are relatively inexpensive, and relatively reliable
- Schools prefer census to sample
- Being over surveyed is a concern
- Concern over misuse of results

YRBS every two years (<http://ssp.wi.gov/files/ssp/pdf/yrbs11execsumm.pdf>)

Online YRBS for use in Wisconsin schools, voluntary for schools, instant response to schools http://ssp.wi.gov/ssp_oyrbsindex

- Core questions from YRBS
- Also additional questions
- Need permission from school districts
- Questions are in a bank of validated and reliable tested data
- Online surveys need computer time and this is a logistical problem

- Parental permission policies are tricky, consent waiver from parents and notification only
- Surveys are anonymously... Not linked to WSN
- State surveys
- WISH (<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/>)
- SHOW (<http://www.med.wisc.edu/show/survey-of-the-health-of-wisconsin/35828>)
- County health rankings (<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/wisconsin/2013/rankings/outcomes/overall/by-rank>)
- Family health survey (<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/stats/familyhealthsurvey.htm>)

Presented oYRBS data from the Safe and Supportive Schools (S3) project with DPI.

Items to take back to DPI:

- Consider further training of local districts in accessing health and safety data for their own schools and communities
- How do we get this data into staff hands to frame their conversation? How do we empower staff to use this and link it to things they have?
- How do we screen earlier for these outcomes to intervene on them?
- How do we use data to get community to engage with this in multiple avenues?
- How do we push the oYRBS much more?
- How do you get measures that effectively evaluate behavior? Measures need to do this?

Jack Jorgensen, Associate Dean Partnerships and Outreach Services UW Madison, Education Research Network Update

Update on the progress of establishing a match-making and research translation service for schools, districts, and education researchers at UW-Madison.

Funds have been committed, and Jack and Rich Halverson (Professor in ELPA) will be serving as co-directors of this beginning in January 2014.

Looking for a name for this entity and starting on a communication plan now

Items to take back to DPI:

- How can we do collaborate with UW and match UW to schools and districts to address their research questions?