

AERO Spring Conference 2012 Compilation of Table Discussions

What are some key ideas sparked today?

1. The importance of involving the community in the research project
2. Boards should engage in open discussion to foster trust and facilitate collaborative relationships (e.g., EDI).
3. Well-being & mindfulness
4. Teachers should go through the process—more so than training and workshops; Teachers need to understand how research is important, e.g., action research - observe students – check if it is working.
5. Culture: (i) influences everything, (ii) can be fragile & resilient—need to respect it, (iii) Importance of all cultures learning about other cultures.
6. Relationships: Setting up meetings with key people to learn about their expectations and roles, understand multiple perspectives, ensure consistency in findings, share and learn from one another, prevent duplication, foster trust, build better relationships, create sustainability and continued relationships

What new things have you learned at the sessions and from the keynote presentations?

1. The funding and length of time needed to plan collaborative projects—how do we make it work in an environment that places high expectations for immediate results?
2. There needs to be a very conscious and continued effort to close the gaps in the collaboration process—it starts with a feeling of “ownership” in the project
3. How can we work with the schools to encourage parent feedback (i.e., surveys of parental engagement etc.)
4. Need to avoid duplication of research (e.g., FDK) in schools—it leads to depletion of resources
5. The realization that everyone is working on their own studies (silos)—there is need for greater collaboration
6. It is an exciting time to be in research in the school board right now. – There is a big focus on research.
7. There is the option to add local questions pertinent to your school board in the EDI. How many people are aware of this? How would you arrange to have this happen?

How will you share what you learned today?

1. **At the office:** (i) coffee talk, (ii) debrief sessions with department, (iii) possibility for the development of a Knowledge Forum on the AERO website where we can post the research we are working on to avoid duplication, foster ideas, and discuss with others?
2. **Conference:** (i) follow-up with presenters, (ii) network post-conference
3. Coming to the AERO Spring Conference in itself is a valuable tool to build networking opportunities and having meaningful conversations.

What can you do to optimize collaboration and networking?

1. Need to actively seek out networking opportunities that would maximize your chances of finding “like-minds” (i.e., attend conferences)
2. Encourage ownership on part of the project participants
3. Have a single person identified as the point-of-contact for all members of the collaborating group
4. Schedule collaboration efforts into your day---make a conscious effort
5. Relationships and maintenance of those relationships are crucial for successful collaborative projects.

Resources:

1. Toronto District School Board – Aboriginal Education Website

“The TDSB Aboriginal Education Centre offers a range of services for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and their families. The Centre utilizes a holistic approach to enhance the overall achievement of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students throughout the TDSB.”

www.tdsb.on.ca/aboriginaleducation

2. Ontario Education Research Exchange (OERE) Website

“The Ontario Education Research Exchange (OERE) aims to support Ontario educators in their quest to develop evidence-based practices. We work with education researchers across Ontario as well as Ontario based education organizations, such as teachers’ federations, school boards, and the Ministry of Education, to bring you relevant and practical Ontario developed research summaries.”

<http://oere.oise.utoronto.ca>

3. E-BEST - Hamilton-Wentworth DSB – “Bottom Line Actionable Messages” (BLAMS)

“Bottom Line Actionable Messages are brief reviews of the literature, undertaken in response to an inquiry from an educator or administrator within our school district. They are not systematic reviews, but an attempt to gather the best, most relevant evidence within the time available.”

http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/e-best/?page_id=205

4. Evaluating Evidence about Educational Programs – KNAER (EEEP) Project

The EEEP project is a collaboration between researchers from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) and the Association of Educational Researchers of Ontario (AERO). With funding from the Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research (KNAER), we have worked together since mid-2011 to develop a framework for evaluating evidence about educational programs. The purpose of this project is to increase the capacity of Ontario school boards to use evidence to inform their decision-making, especially about educational programs for students with special education needs.

<http://www.aero-aoce.org/eeep.html>