



Corporate Capability Statement



EPI International
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Introduction to the Educational Policy Institute

The Educational Policy Institute is part of EPI International, an international organization dedicated to the study of educational opportunity. Four organizations reside under the EPI International banner:

- ❖ Educational Policy Institute (US), a non-profit organization based in Virginia Beach, Virginia;
- ❖ EPI Canada (CAN), a for-profit subsidiary of the Educational Policy Institute based in Winnipeg, MB;
- ❖ EPI Australasia (AUS), a for-profit organization governed by the Educational Policy Institute based in Melbourne, Australia;
- ❖ EPI Consulting (US), a for-profit US subsidiary of the Educational Policy Institute which conducts client-based services commensurate with the mission of the parent organization, based in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Founded in 2002 by Dr. Watson Scott Swail, an internationally-known researcher, EPI provides research design and management, program evaluation, policy analysis, and technical assistance to policymakers, agencies, institutions, organizations, and other stakeholders in the educational and public policy arena. Our clients include Lumina Foundation for Education, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the National Council on Disability, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). In addition, the Educational Policy Institute has conducted contract work for several US states and Canadian provinces, as well as nonprofit organizations, school districts, and postsecondary institutions.

EPI research focuses primarily on the issues related to educational opportunity throughout the education continuum, from early childhood education to graduate and professional studies, including adult education and workforce development. Specifically, EPI focuses on academic preparation for, access to, and success through postsecondary education, since the global society increasingly demands skill sets that require learning and training past compulsory school. Because of the competitive international economic environment, EPI is also committed to research, which measures the quality of education these students receive.

In January 2010, EPI Consulting, the small business subsidiary of the Educational Policy Institute, qualified as an US Department of Education ED-SAT contractor. Under this Streamlined Acquisition Tool contract, the Educational Policy Institute is pre-qualified to perform contracts for the Department in the areas of Research and Assessment Design, Data Collection, and Analysis.

The Educational Policy Institute is a member of the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation's (OECD) Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) forum, the American Evaluation Association, serves as an endorsing partner of the Data Quality Campaign, and is a proud sponsor of the We Promise Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making dreams come true for children who struggle with severe illnesses and tremendous hardship.

More information about the Educational Policy Institute is available on our website at www.educationalpolicy.org.

Capabilities

The Educational Policy Institute is capable of providing services in the categories of program evaluation, policy analysis, research design and management, data services, professional development, and retention consulting:

PROGRAM EVALUATION

EPI conducts evaluations of programs at both the K-12 and postsecondary levels. This evaluation work includes evaluation design, implementation, and analysis, and includes the development and use of surveys, interviews, focus groups, and data analysis. EPI's work in this field includes both formative and summative evaluations, including impact evaluations to determine the utility of programs and strategies on student learning and progress. EPI's evaluation team includes researchers from around the world, who are matched to specific projects based on prior experience and expertise. EPI is currently named as a primary grant program evaluator for the School District of Osceola County (Florida), Howard County Schools (Maryland), and Milwaukee Public Schools (WI).

POLICY ANALYSIS

EPI conducts policy and trend analyses on a variety of educational issues related to educational preparation, matriculation to postsecondary studies, and postsecondary success. EPI policy briefs address issues such as federal and state/provincial policies and institutional/school policies and practices. In addition to these efforts, we also conduct reviews of related research, legislation, and literature.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

EPI designs and directs small- and large-scale research projects to answer questions that help us better understand the education system, how students learn, and how we can improve systems and strategies to improve the education process. This work, conducted for philanthropies, state/provincial agencies, federal governments, and organizations, is done to expand our knowledge through broad dissemination.

EPI's work in this area includes the design and implementation of experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental studies, formative and summative research, survey development, site-based research, including focus groups, interviews, and document retrieval/review, and data collection and analysis. Our research team has extensive experience in data analysis using all major statistical programs, including SPSS, SAS, Excel, and Access. EPI's staff and consultants include some of the best researchers from around the world.

DATA SERVICES

EPI provides data services for organizations in the form of data collection, warehousing, and dissemination. EPI has developed numerous surveys and administered these instruments to a large number of students, and also has the internal capacity to build data tools and warehouses to store and retrieve data in a timely fashion.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EPI conducts conferences, workshops, and webinars and writes books, articles, and guidebooks for the development of education professionals. This work emanates from EPI's mission to move research to practice.

CONSULTING

Through our research expertise, we provide a solid foundation of empirical support for our partners and clients. Some of the areas include professional development, benchmarking, change management, leadership development, team building, and policy development. EPI assists institutions in the planning and implementation of new programs to improve student retention, complete with diagnostics and analysis of current conditions and practices.

Experience

PROGRAM EVALUATION

EPI works with K-12 and postsecondary institutions to evaluate efforts to improve student success, conducting process and outcome evaluations for its clients. EPI is currently named as a primary grant program evaluator for the Brevard Public Schools (FL), School District of Osceola County (Florida), Davis School District (Utah), Howard County Public School System (MD), and Milwaukee Public Schools (WI), and is on the consultants' list of the State of South Carolina Education Oversight Committee and the South Carolina Department of Education.

Recent examples of evaluation projects are provided below.

K-12 EVALUATION PROJECTS

- ❖ **Evaluation of the Teacher Immersion Residency Teacher Quality Partnership Grant (2009-2014), Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia.** EPI serves as the external evaluator for this grant to improve the quality of teaching in high-needs schools in southeastern Virginia. This initiative builds on successful teacher residency models that

recruit candidates with undergraduate degrees in high-need content fields, immerse them in an induction program housed in an urban school, provide them mentoring and instruction founded on research, and continue to offer professional development during the early years of their careers. As part of its evaluation of this initiative, EPI will assess project outputs, short-term outcomes, and long-term outcomes using a mixed methods evaluation design that includes data collection through teacher interviews and focus groups and classroom and program observations, as well as analysis of student achievement, graduation, and personnel data. *Contact:* Dr. Sharon Judge, Project Director, Old Dominion University, Darden College of Education, Norfolk, VA 23529 (757-683-3938; sjudge@odu.edu).

- ❖ **Evaluation of the Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy (2009-11), Pittsburgh Public Schools.** EPI was contracted by Pittsburgh Public Schools to plan and execute an evaluation of the implementation process and early impacts of the Pittsburgh Science & Technology Academy (www.pghscitech.net), a new 6-12th grade school that is the product of three years of planning and research. Using scientifically-based research methods and measures EPI will provide program evaluation services focused on 1) the program in practice relative to its goals, design, and program theory, 2) the impact of design and process on the overall and the daily experience of students and staff, 3) preliminary impact on student motivation and achievement and, 4) preliminary impact on the ability of the program to attract and retain students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. *Contact:* Sam Franklin, Pittsburgh Public Schools, 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Room 312, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 (412-622-3786, Sfranklin1@pghboe.net).
- ❖ **Evaluation of Let's Talk about Leadership and Learning Professional Development Initiative (2009-10), School-University Research Network, College of William and Mary.** EPI serves as the external evaluator for this state-funded Improving Teacher Quality regional initiative that seeks to improve the quality of administrator and teacher dialogue on evidence-based adolescent literacy strategies. This program will coach school administrators to conduct classroom observations to collect specific data on use of literacy strategies and to provide specific and formative feedback to teachers to support instructional improvement. Among its tasks, EPI will collaborate with project staff on the development of data collection instruments, analyze data, and produce interim and summative reports. *Contact:* Dr. Jan Rozzelle, Executive Director, School-University Research Network, College of William and Mary, P.O. Box 8795, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795. (757) 221-2336, mjrozz@wm.edu.
- ❖ **Evaluation of the Newport News Teaching American History Initiative (2009-2014), Newport News Public Schools.** EPI serves as the external evaluator for the Newport News (VA) Teaching American History grant, awarded in 2009. This initiative includes the use of vertically aligned professional learning teams in addition to intensive professional development in American history content and pedagogy led by a team of history professionals from regional universities and museums. EPI's work includes the development and administration of a teacher knowledge assessment, focus groups, review of teacher team products, and analysis of student achievement data. EPI also

advised on the program design during the application phase. *Contact:* Ms. Sybil Young, Teaching American History Project Director, Newport News Public Schools (757-591-4902; Sybil.Young@nn.k12.va.us).

- ❖ **Evaluation for Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant (2009-2013), Lawrence County School District, Monticello, MS.** EPI serves as the external evaluator for this initiative, which seeks to unite early childhood services, schools, mental health, juvenile justice and law enforcement in a common cause to promote the healthy development of children and youth in the context of violence-prevention and drug-free schools and communities for Lawrence and Jones Counties. EPI is developing survey instruments, overseeing the collection of field data, and analyzing and reporting data in response to GPRM measures and project-level objectives. As part of this evaluation, EPI is conducting monthly technical assistance visits with project staff and an annual three-day site visit as part of the implementation evaluation. *Contact:* Lindsey Blackledge, Project Director, Lawrence County School District, 346 Thomas E Jolly Drive, Monticello MS 39654 (601-587-2506; lblackledge@lawrence.k12.ms.us).
- ❖ **Evaluation of Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program (2009-11), School Board of Osceola County, Florida.** EPI will evaluate the Innovative Support for Transitions and Educational Preparation (I-STEP), a School Board of Osceola County, Florida program supported by an Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program grant awarded from the US Department of Education. This pilot project, implemented at four high schools and their feeder schools, provides transitional supports to reduce 8th and 9th grade retentions and increase the number of students who pass the FCAT in the 10th grade. As part of its evaluation, EPI will collect, analyze, and report data on program implementation and impact, including the effectiveness of I-STEP strategies to meet program goals and benchmarks. *Contact:* Teresa Stone, Grants Management, School District of Osceola County, 817 Bill Beck Boulevard, Kissimmee, FL 34744-4495 (407-870-4058, Ext. 65109; stoneter@osceola.k12.fl.us).
- ❖ **Texas High School Project Evaluation: Expansion of Scope (2009), Texas Education Agency (TEA).** EPI was contracted to assist TEA with the development of a plan to expand the scope of work of the Texas High School Project (THSP) Evaluation to include additional grantees as well as funds provided by the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF). As part of the project, EPI will conduct a review and analysis of the original evaluation request for proposal, the incumbent evaluator's redacted response, and MSDF funding priorities, and will interview various stakeholders at several funding organizations to assess interests and priorities. *Contact:* Megan Parry, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress Avenue Austin, TX 78701 (Megan.parry@tea.state.tx.us).
- ❖ **Evaluation of the Hampton GEAR UP Program (2008-14), Hampton City Schools, Virginia.** EPI is the evaluator of the Hampton City Schools (VA) GEAR UP partnership grant, awarded in July 2008. This six-year initiative supports improvements in academic rigor, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) career exploration, and parent involvement, and an expansion of the district's AVID tutoring program for a double cohort of students in two high-poverty middle schools. Project responsibilities

include survey development, data analysis, technical assistance, and preparation of annual and biennial evaluation reports. *Contact:* Dr. Donna Woods, Executive Director of Secondary School Leadership, Hampton City Schools, 1 Franklin Street, Hampton, VA 23669. (757-727-2006, dwoods@educationalpolicy.org).

- ❖ **Development of Evaluation Framework for the Teaching with Primary Sources Program (2008-09), The Library of Congress.** The Library of Congress's Teaching with Primary Sources program works with a national consortium of schools, universities, libraries, and foundations to help teachers use the Library's vast collection of digitized primary sources to enrich their classroom instruction. As part of this contract, EPI will formulate and test metrics for the program to evaluate the effectiveness and ultimately the impact of program methods and content, including curriculum, pedagogy, and delivery modes, on teacher knowledge and practice. EPI also will assist Library of Congress staff in the management of the piloting of teaching materials, especially teacher-created lesson plans, in preparation for a summative evaluation of the Teaching with Primary Sources program to be conducted in 2009. *Contact:* Ms. Vivian Awumey, Educational Resources Specialist, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave., S.E., Washington, DC 20540-1300 (202-707-8740, vawu@loc.gov).
- ❖ **Summative Evaluation of Adolescent Literacy Professional Development Initiative (2008), School-University Research Network, College of William and Mary.** EPI prepared the final evaluation report for the SURN Collaboratories, a one-year teacher professional development initiative coordinated by the School-University Research Network and funded through a NCLB Title II Improving Teacher Quality grant. The goal of this initiative was to improve adolescent literacy across core subjects in high-poverty middle schools across southeastern Virginia through the consistent use of highly effective instructional strategies and the development of both administrator and teacher leadership capacity. EPI analyzed data collected through surveys, interviews, classroom observations, student assessments, and lesson reviews. *Contact:* Dr. Jan Rozzelle, Executive Director, School-University Research Network, College of William and Mary, P.O. Box 8795, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795 (757-221-2336; mjrozz@wm.edu).
- ❖ **Formative Evaluation of the King Faisal Foundation's University Preparatory Program, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (2008), Amideast.** This program, initiated in September 2007, is intended to prepare Saudi and other students for the academic rigor of the new Al Faisal University (Riyadh). EPI staff conducted an eight-day site visit, which included focus groups with students and faculty. *Contact:* Ms. Leslie Nucho, Vice President, AMIDEAST, Washington, DC. (202) 776-9624, lnucho@amideast.org.
- ❖ **Reading First Evaluation (2007-08), Iowa Department of Education.** EPI conducted an evaluation of Iowa's statewide Reading First Program, a federally-sponsored program which targets students from kindergarten through the third grade. In addition to developing case studies of ten of the state's best-performing schools, this evaluation included univariate and multivariate statistical analyses of school-level student achievement data. Specific statistical methods included Hierarchical Linear Regression

- (HLR), Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), and chi-square analysis. *Contact:* Carlene Lodermeier, Division of PK-12 Education, Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E 14th St., Des Moines, IA 50319 (515-292-9041, carlene.lodermeier@iowa.gov).
- ❖ **Evaluation of Reading First Supplemental and Intervention Materials (2006-07), North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.** EPI conducted an evaluation of Reading First supplemental and intervention materials, a project that included a review of over 60 products from vendors across the US the aim to provide supplemental instructional support to students between the grades of K-3 with reading deficiencies. *Contact:* Bill Frazier, Reading First Special Projects Consultant, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, NC (919-807-3585, bfrazier@dpi.state.nc.us).
 - ❖ **Impact Analysis of the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) (2005), KIPP Foundation.** EPI conducted an impact evaluation of the KIPP Schools using school-level Stanford 9 and Stanford 10 (SAT) data supplied by the KIPP Foundation for its analysis. KIPP, an acronym for the Knowledge Is Power Program, are tuition-free, open-enrollment, college preparatory, public schools, serving high-need communities. The study found that 5th-grade cohorts at KIPP schools posted substantially greater academic gains on the SAT than what is considered normal, a finding consistent with prior research on KIPP schools. *Contact:* Steve Mancini, Public Affairs Director, KIPP Foundation, (415) 531-5396, smancini@kipp.org.
 - ❖ **Formative Evaluation of the Prudential Foundation New Jersey Youth Initiative (2003-04), Prudential Foundation of New Jersey.** EPI evaluated three educational outreach programs including the ASPIRA of NJ program, the Boys and Girls Club of Newark, and the Princeton-Blairstown project. Project included the development, administration, and analysis of a student survey and parent survey. The study was underwritten by the Prudential Foundation of New Jersey. *Contact:* William Colon, Executive Director, ASPIRA of New Jersey, 390 Broad St., 3rd Floor, Newark, NJ 07104. 973-481-2522, williamcolon@optonline.net.

POSTSECONDARY EVALUATION PROJECTS

- ❖ **Evaluation of Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant (2008-2013).** EPI was contracted by Ohio Dominican University as the evaluator of its Title III, Part A, Strengthening Institutions grant. Title III grants support institutions of higher education serving low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible institutions. Ohio Dominican is using its grant award to improve its freshman retention rate and to improve its overall retention rate of African American students. As part of the grant evaluation, EPI will conduct quarterly focus groups with faculty, students, administrators, and staff, and will prepare a final summative evaluation report. *Contact:* James Caridi, Vice President for Student Development and Dean of Retention, Ohio Dominican University, Columbus, OH. (614) 251-4595, caridij@ohiodominican.edu.

- ❖ **Evaluation of the NACME Scholars Program (2006-07), National Action Council on Minorities in Engineering.** EPI completed a formative evaluation of NACME’s Block Grant Scholarship Program. In addition to analyzing institutional data on student retention and achievement, EPI conducted site visits and case studies of three participating institutions — Florida International University, the University of California, San Diego, and the University of Missouri-Rolla (recently renamed the Missouri University of Science & Technology) — to explore student enrollment, retention, and graduation performance, as well as the support structures that these institutions have implemented for scholarship recipients. Sources of data include interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders, policy and program documents, and institutional data. EPI’s work on this evaluation involved web-based data collection from all institutions participating in the program, as well as interviews, focus groups, and data analysis. *Contact:* Dr. Daryl Chubin, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Washington, DC. (202-326-6785, dchubin@aaas.org).

POLICY ANALYSIS

EPI has conducted policy and trend analyses on a variety of educational opportunity issues, including academic preparation, postsecondary access and success, financial aid, and demographic changes. Our clients have included federal and state/provincial governments as well as independent agencies. Recent examples of our work in policy analysis are provided below.

K-12 POLICY ANALYSIS PROJECTS

- ❖ **Study of District Practices in the Evaluation of Professional Development Initiatives in the State of Alabama (2009), Southeastern Regional Educational Laboratory / Alabama State Department of Education.** Under subcontract to the Southeastern Regional Educational Laboratory, EPI is conducting a study of eight mid-sized Alabama school districts to identify the type of evidence on impact used in selecting and evaluating professional development initiatives. As part of our work, EPI staff will prepare an annotated bibliography of descriptive studies on processes of district-level evaluation of professional development, conduct interviews with the state deputy superintendent responsible for professional development, district superintendents and instructional leaders, and prepare a descriptive report. *Contact:* Dr. Wendy McColskey, SERVE, 336-315-7432.
- ❖ **Improving Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities (2006-07), National Council on Disability.** EPI and the American Youth Policy Forum conducted a joint evaluation and policy analysis of the impact of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) on the academic outcomes of students with disabilities and state development of infrastructure and professional development. As part of this research project, EPI conducted case studies of the ten most populous states; work included interviews with state agency administrators, descriptive analyses

of state-level achievement data and graduation and drop-out rates, state policy analysis, review of the capability of state data collection and management systems to track and provide public accountability for outcomes of students with disabilities, and a review of state-level teacher preparation programs, recruitment, and professional development in support of improved academic outcomes. *Contact:* Dr. Martin Gould, Director of Research and Technology, National Council on Disability, 1331 F. St., NW, Washington, DC 20004 (mgould@ncd.gov; (202) 272-2112).

- ❖ **Analysis of the Pathways to College Framework and the No Child Left Behind Act (2005), Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) and the Pathways to College Network.** EPI prepared a formal briefing describing how the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Pathways Framework could be partnered when developing and evaluating comprehensive programs for schools interested in preparing children not just for the next grade, but for the next steps in their educational careers. The paper laid out the conditions under which the Pathways Framework can be most effective and how those conditions relate to NCLB.
- ❖ **Improving Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities I (2004), National Council on Disability.** EPI and the American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) prepared a report for the National Council on Disability to assist policy leaders and stakeholders in identifying, disseminating, and aligning evidence-based outcome producing practices with the Federal Government's commitment to leaving no child behind in the attainment of a free appropriate public education. This paper was prepared as a precursor to a more detailed analysis that EPI and AYPF conducted on behalf of NCD in 2006/07 that provided additional input and recommendations to Congress and the Administration. The paper, entitled *Improving Educational Outcomes for Students with Disabilities*, was published by NCD in May 2004. *Contact:* Ms. Betsy Brand, Director, American Youth Policy Forum, 1836 Jefferson Place, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 775-9731, bbrand@aypf.org.

POSTSECONDARY POLICY ANALYSIS PROJECTS

- ❖ **Evaluation of the European Union Centres Programme in the Industrialised Countries (2010),** The Evaluation Partnership Limited/The European Union. In partnership with The Evaluation Partnership Limited, EPI will contribute to an international evaluation of the European Union (EU) Centres initiative. This international initiative, spanning the US, Canada, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore, aims to promote a greater understanding of the European Union, its institutions, and policies through the establishment of a network of EU Centres in universities providing information and educational activities. Currently, there are 26 EU Centres in 8 industrialized countries, including 10 in the US and 5 in Canada. The international evaluation will assess the extent to which the Centres meet their specific objectives. It also will examine the desirability/feasibility of continuing the initiative and make recommendations for possible revision of the format, including geographical spread and number of Centres in the network, type of measures, and improvements in the management and financial

framework. For this evaluation, EPI will act as a local consultant in Canada and the U.S. Dr. Watson Scott Swail, EPI President, will personally lead site visits to EU Centres across the U.S. and Canada and contribute to the final evaluation report. *Contact:* Andrea Kobilsky, The Evaluation Partnership Limited, 83 Baker Street, London, United Kingdom W1U 6AG (+44 (0) 20 7034 7026; Andrea.Kobilsky@evaluationpartnership.com).

- ❖ **Study of Higher Education Statutory and Regulatory Requirements in Canada (2009), DeVry, Inc.** EPI was contracted to conduct a provincial-level study of statutory and regulatory requirements to confer online and on-site undergraduate and graduate degrees in Canada. To conduct this study, EPI reviewed government materials and interviewed experts in each province to gain an accurate account of the regulations and requirements for operation as a degree-granting institution.
- ❖ ***Measuring Up 2008, A Midwestern Perspective on the National Report Card (2009), Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC).*** EPI was contracted to assist MHEC with this biennial report that examines in depth how member states of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact fare individually compared to each other (intra-region), and collectively relative to other parts of the country (inter-region) in the categories of higher education preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits, and learning.
- ❖ **Return on Apprenticeship Training Investment—Apprentices and Training Institutions (2006-07), Canadian Apprenticeship Forum.** EPI was contracted by the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum to develop an understanding of the issue of costs and benefits of apprenticeship training in Canada from the perspective of all stakeholders involved in apprenticeship training, including employers, apprentices, training deliverers, and society. As part of this research project, EPI administered a survey of apprentices in union / industry training centres and in “private” Training Delivery Agents (TDA); collected and analyzed cost/benefit data; and produced a final report for the client.
- ❖ ***Beyond the 49th Parallel, The Affordability of Public University Education (2006).*** A follow-up to Dr. Watson Scott Swail’s 2004 report on the affordability of university education in Canada and the United States, this report updates the data by two years, includes data on loan remission and tax credits, and, crucially, ranks all fifty states and ten provinces using six different measures of affordability as well as a composite, overall affordability ranking.
- ❖ ***A World of Difference: A Global Survey of University League Tables (2006).*** This EPI publication made a significant contribution to international higher education studies by demonstrating the lack of agreement about what constitutes “quality” in postsecondary education. The report showed that while many countries have tried to emulate US News and World Report’s attempt to rank universities, the lack of agreement about what constitutes “quality” in higher education has led to a multiplicity of different – and perhaps conflicting – standards in league tables.

- ❖ ***Is More Better? The Impact of Postsecondary Education on the Economic and Social Well-Being of American Society (2005)*, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.** EPI prepared an issue paper that examined the economic and non-economic impacts of higher education on individuals and society as a whole.
- ❖ ***Global Higher Education Rankings (2005)*.** This report represented the first systematic and rigorous exploration of the affordability and accessibility of higher education within an international comparative context. The rankings gathered available, comparable data on student costs, resources, and opportunities in terms of higher education from 15 nations, including Canada and the United States.
- ❖ ***Changes in Tuition Policy: Natural Policy Experiments in Five Countries (2004)*, Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation.** This international study reviewed tuition and fee policy changes and strategies in five countries and nine jurisdictions. The purpose of the review was to gain insight into the impact of various tuition policies around the world in terms of enrolment, participation, and tuition pricing.

OTHER POLICY ANALYSIS PROJECTS

- ❖ ***National Disability Policy: A Progress Report (2009)*, National Council on Disability (NCD).** NCD is required by Section 401 (b) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, to submit annually to the President and Congress a report entitled *National Disability Policy: A Progress Report, hereinafter referred to as the Progress Report*. EPI and its subcontractor, Daniels & Associates, have been contracted to provide an overview of the status of the quality of life for people with disabilities in the United States based on input from people with disabilities, and to identify the emerging trends that should point the way for future government disability policy.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

EPI has experience designing and directing small- and large-scale research projects to answer questions that help us better understand the education system, how students learn, and how we can improve systems and strategies to improve the education process. This work, conducted for philanthropies, state/provincial agencies, federal governments, and organizations, is done to expand our knowledge through broad dissemination.

K-12 RESEARCH PROJECTS

- ✦ ***Missouri Students and the Pathways to College (2006-07)*, Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority.** EPI conducted a qualitative analysis of data collected from focus groups with students on the topic of postsecondary access. The published report presents analysis of a series of over 30 focus groups conducted in Missouri with 7th, 9th, and 11th-grade students and concerns their attitudes toward college and the future.
Contact: Quentin Wilson (formerly of MOHELA), President & CEO, ALL Student Loan, 6701 Center Drive West Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90045 (qwilson@allstudentloan.org).

- ✦ **Latino Students and the Educational Pipeline (2005), Lumina Foundation for Education.** Using SPSS, EPI analyzed quantitative data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) in order to document the progress of Latino students from eighth grade to the workforce. The study included a multiple regression analysis of the major factors that impede the road to a bachelor's degree for Latino students. The final report, entitled *Latino Students & the Educational Pipeline*, was published in April 2005. *Contact:* Dr. Tina Gridiron Smith, Program Officer, Lumina Foundation for Education, Indianapolis, IN (317-951-5344, tsmith@luminafoundation.org).
- ✦ **The Role of Counseling in Increasing Academic Opportunity in Missouri (2005), Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority.** This report, written for the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority (MOHELA), presents findings from a review of counseling literature and a focus group conducted by EPI of high school counselors in Missouri. The report documents the challenges that Missouri counselors perceive as most important concerning their role in expanding educational opportunity in the state. The report also includes proposed solutions from Missouri counselors. The conclusion provides a brief summary of how the information in the report addresses the distribution of educational opportunity in the state and goes on to provide a summary table of the challenges and possible solutions. *Contact:* Quentin Wilson (formerly of MOHELA), President & CEO, ALL Student Loan, 6701 Center Drive West Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90045 (qwilson@allstudentloan.org).

POSTSECONDARY RESEARCH PROJECTS

- ✦ **Postsecondary Graduation Rates Study (2008-09), Imagine America Foundation.** Using statistics from the US Department of Education, EPI will analyze the graduation rates of students attending postsecondary institutions. This study will examine the extent to which graduation rates for institutions can be predicted within certain ranges of student body demographics, and will determine whether certain types of institutions have graduation rates that are significantly above those expected rates. As part of this project, EPI will prepare a detailed literature review of the factors associated with postsecondary student drop-out, persistence, and degree attainment. *Contact:* Jenny Faubert, Manager of Marketing and Project Development, Imagine America Foundation, 1101 Connecticut Ave. N.W. Suite 901, Washington, DC 20036 (jennyf@imagine-america.org; 202.336.6743)
- ✦ **Measuring the Effectiveness of Student Aid (MESA; 2005-09), Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation.** The MESA Project is a 4-year, \$4 million research project being run by EPI with the collaboration of the Queen's University School of Policy Studies and Acumen Research. The project, funded by the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, aims to measure the impact and cost effectiveness of bursaries for low-income students on access to and persistence in postsecondary education. The groundbreaking project is the first major research project in Canadian history to link both student aid administrative data and survey data to investigate the long-term

effects of grants. It is also the first to attempt to link these data with major Statistics Canada databases such as the Enhanced Student Information Systems (ESIS) tax filer data from the Longitudinal Administrative Database (LAD). The research program also has a randomized field trial component, which directly tests the effects of extra grants on persistence of students from low-income families. Approximately 30 working papers will be produced, as well as three annual reports, and eleven “final” reports (one for each Canadian province and a final national report). *Contact*: Andrew Parkin, Director, Research and Program Development, Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, 1000 Sherbrooke Street West, Suite 800, Montreal Quebec, H3A 3R2, Canada (514-985-0026, aparkin@bm-ms.org).

DATA SERVICES

EPI provides data services for organizations in the form of data collection, warehousing, and dissemination. EPI has developed its own longitudinal data management system—the EPI Data Analysis System, or EPI-DAS—for use with large-scale evaluation projects. This customized database server and associated computer information system facilitates data collection from web-based users and batch data loads (both new and migrated data). EPI-DAS enables individual student unit record data (namely: student demographic data, programs and support services participation and levels data, and performance data such as course grades and standardized test scores) to be loaded directly into the system using a web-based user interface or uploaded using Excel/.CSV spreadsheets. EPI-DAS is a versatile system that facilitates data collection, descriptive analysis, and reporting. Its utility of the system lies in its capacity to track individual student data over time, thus allowing for both cross-sectional and longitudinal data analyses. Data can be exported from EPI-DAS in the form of .CSV spreadsheets for uploading into statistical software programs such as SPSS.

EPI database and web application servers run Microsoft Windows Server 2008 for the operating system, SQL Server 2008 as a database engine, ASP.net for the application foundation and Internet Information Services 7 as the web server engine. The server used to host client data is continually monitored and updated for security, backed up daily and provides greater than 99% uptime. Data integrity processes are in place to validate received program data. The web application is secured with industry best practices, and complies with all privacy requirements, including FERPA. EPI also provides data migration services to relocate data files from current vendor’s data warehouse to the EPI data server.

- ❖ **Kentucky Postsecondary Education Comprehensive Affordability Analysis (2006), Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education.** EPI was subcontracted by JBL Associates to conduct a study of high school and college students for the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. This included the development of two survey instruments, the administration of these surveys to over 5,000 students at over 40 schools/institutions, and the analysis of these data. This was part of a larger project that EPI participated in that evaluated the cost of postsecondary education in Kentucky. *Contact*: F. Diann

Donaldson, Director of Administrative Services, Council on Postsecondary Education, 1024 Capital Center Drive, Suite 320, Frankfort, KY 40601 (502-573-1555).

- ❖ **California Trends in Student Aid: 1994-95 to 2003-04 (2006), EdFund.** This analysis documented all available financial aid provided to students attending California institutions for a 10-year period, and included the collection of data from the US Department of Education, the government of California, and public and private California institutions.

- ❖ **Trends in Student Aid – Florida 1997-98 to 2001-02 (2002-03), Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.** EPI conducted a study of financial aid in Florida. The study involved the development and administration of an in-depth survey of all colleges and universities in the Commonwealth of Florida. Institutions were asked to submit specific data on financial aid programs (institutional, state, and federal) for five years. EPI developed a special spreadsheet for this project that allowed for the aggregation of all data. The final report provided detailed aggregate and institutional level data with relevant analysis and discussion, as well as a web-based supplement for additional data. *Contact:* Mr. Pat Dallet, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), Florida Legislature, 111 West Madison, Room 312, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1475 (850-488-7703, dallet.pat@oppaga.fl.gov).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As part of our commitment to public service, we have produced several large conferences and seminars both in collaboration with other organizations as well as independently. EPI has also produced Recent or upcoming examples of conferences and training events organized by EPI are listed below.

- ❖ **Two-Day Student Success Workshop (August 18-19, 2009), University of Wisconsin System.** Dr. Watson Scott Swail planned and conducted a two-day workshop for all 14 universities within the University of Wisconsin system. Four representatives from each University's multicultural affairs office were brought together in Madison, Wisconsin to learn more about student retention and success, share best practices, and create logic models to move forward. EPI is currently working with the UW system to provide follow-up to the System through 2010. *Contact:* Christine N. Navia, Ph.D, Equity and Diversity Planner, University of Wisconsin System Administration, (608) 263-7876, cnavia@uwsa.edu.

- ❖ **Summer Institute on Student Success.** EPI hosts an annual five-day institute for postsecondary practitioners and administrators on student access, retention, and graduation. The Institute provides information on two-year, four-year, and proprietary institutions, all who share the challenge of serving students, especially those who are first-generation or historically underrepresented at the postsecondary level. The 2008 institute was held at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA. (2008 -)

- ❖ **Student Success Workshops.** These one-day workshops for postsecondary practitioners and administrators focus on why students leave; the cost-benefit factor of student success; defining an institutional initiative; best practices in increasing student retention and success; and strategies for campus change. The 2008 workshops were held in New Orleans, LA; Austin, TX; Denver, CO; San Francisco, CA; Chicago, IL; Boston, MA; Washington, DC; Atlanta, GA; Columbus, OH; and Vancouver, BC. (2008 -)
- ❖ **The International Student Retention Conference.** EPI will host its fourth annual retention conference in New Orleans, LA, in May 2009. This annual conference convenes an interdisciplinary group of researchers and institutional administrators, staff, and faculty who share a commitment to improving the success of students in postsecondary education. Keynote addresses by international leaders in the field of student retention, sessions presented by researchers and practitioners in which the latest research and best practices are shared, and plentiful social opportunities to discuss common solutions with peers are the hallmarks of this conference. (2006 -)
- ❖ **Retention 101 Retreats.** The Educational Policy Institute hosts two biannual workshops for postsecondary professionals in the US and one in Canada. These 2.5 day workshops are designed for higher education administrators and other stakeholders to discuss retention issues, intervention planning, implementation, and monitoring. The 2008 Retention 101 retreat will be held in Tucson, AZ. (2005 -)
- ❖ **Quality 2006 Conference: Innovations in Quality Measurement in Post-Secondary Education: Beyond Inputs and Outputs.** EPI and the Department of Economics at McMaster University jointly hosted a conference on quality assessment in post-secondary education. The conference was held in Hamilton, Ontario, on April 7th and 8th, 2006 and brought together approximately 130 stakeholders, including researchers, government officials, and key decision-makers.

RETENTION CONSULTING

EPI is a national leader in the field of student retention in higher education and now sponsors **studentretention.org**, a research-based center to study issues and disseminate information to college administrators, faculty, and other stakeholders regarding student retention and persistence. At the heart of **studentretention.org** is a web-based, institutional assessment system, currently in development, that will enable retention stakeholders at colleges and universities to assess their institutions' status and ability with regard to serving students and, ultimately, to keep students on course to completing their degree. Examples of projects and publications related to postsecondary student retention and success are provided below.

- ❖ **The Effective Practices in Student Success (EPSS) Database (2007-).** Since January 2007, EPI has been collecting peer-reviewed information about programs and strategies that help students succeed and persist to degree at postsecondary institutions across the US, Canada, and beyond. The EPSS is part of a larger effort by EPI to provide useful information to practitioners that, in turn, will improve practices on campuses. The EPSS

differs from other databases in that only programs that have exhibited and documented success in retaining students toward graduation. The database also allows anyone who uses the tool to provide their own rating as to the utility of the information. EPSS serves as a vital resource for campus professionals seeking to improve student retention and success. The project was funded in part by the Texas Guaranteed.

- ❖ **The Institutional Student Retention Assessment (ISRA) (2005-).** The ISRA is a web-based self assessment for institutions of higher education developed by EPI with funding from the Lumina Foundation for Education. The ISRA is intended to help an institution assess its status with regard to serving students and, ultimately, keep undergraduate students on course to degree. The ISRA queries campus-based stakeholders about their current use of resources, retention strategies and programs, institution-wide characteristics, and policies and practices in the following areas: Institutional Context, Recruitment & Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Services, Academic Services, and Teaching & Learning. By entering this information into a web-based system, stakeholders will participate in a process which produces a report illustrating their institution through the lens of student retention.
- ❖ EPI provides retention consulting and support for institutions and organizations, working directly with administrators, staff, and faculty to assess current institutional efforts to increase student retention and achievement and provide support in planning, implementing, and monitoring the effects of new strategies and programs. Clients have included **Palm Beach Community College, Texas Guaranteed, and the National Court Reporters Association.**
- ❖ studentretention.org publishes a bimonthly retention newsletter titled “**Student Success;**” the first two issues were released in the winter of 2006 and are available for viewing online. Designed with the practitioner in mind, the newsletter provides useful information on retention strategies, interviews with campus officials who have had success increasing retention rates, and other program information.
- ❖ studentretention.org provides a series of annual awards in student retention practice. These awards are highly publicized in email distribution, the Student Success newsletter, and through an advertisement in the Chronicle of Higher Education. Award winners are publicly recognized and receive a cash award of \$500. In addition, EPI/studentretention.org honors an individual each year for his or her commitment to student retention and success. The first award will be given this May at the Retention 2006 conference.

Leadership

DR. WATSON SCOTT SWAIL, PRESIDENT & CEO

Dr. Swail is the President and Chief Executive Officer of The Educational Policy Institute. Widely respected in the area of college opportunity research, Dr. Swail has published extensively in national journals and publications. Recent publications include "Latino Students and the Educational Pipeline," "The Affordability of Higher Education," and "Higher Education and the New Demographics." He has been published in *Phi Delta Kappan*, *Change*, and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



Dr. Swail serves on a number of national advisory committees, including technical review panels for the major U.S. longitudinal and cross-sectional surveys sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. As well, he has recently conducted projects for the Canada Millennium Scholarship Program related to postsecondary access in Canada.

Prior to establishing EPI, Dr. Swail served as the Founding Director of The Pell Institute and Vice President of the Council for Opportunity in Education in Washington, DC. He previously served as senior policy analyst with SRI International and associate director for policy analysis with the College Board. While with the Board, Dr. Swail co-directed the *Trends in College Pricing* and *Trends in Student Aid* reports released in the U.S. each fall. He is a former technology teacher and taught at Victor Wyatt School in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and also at Benjamin Syms Middle School in Hampton, Virginia.

In addition to his research and writing, Dr. Swail teaches educational policy and research at The George Washington University in Washington, DC, where he received his doctorate in educational policy. He earned his Master's of Science from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, and Bachelor's of Education from the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Dr. Swail serves on the research advisory board of the National Action Council on Minorities in Engineering (NACME) and also on the Board of Directors of the Student Resource Services in St. Louis. Dr. Swail is listed in the 2007-08 Who's Who in American Education.

Below is a selection of Dr. Swail's publications that illustrates the range of his experience.

- ❖ Swail, W. Scott and Lawrence E. Gladieux. (2006). *California Trends in Student Aid: 1994-95 to 2003-04*. Rancho Cordova, CA: EdFund.
- ❖ Swail, W. Scott, Chubin, Daryl E., Malcom, Shirley M., and Kathryn Grogan. (2005). "Education and Human Resources in the FY2006 Budget." In *AAAS Report XXX: Research and Development FY2006*. Washington, DC: American Association for the Advancement of Science.

- ❖ Swail, W. Scott, Cabrera, Alberto F., Lee, Chul, and Adriane Williams. (2005). *Latino Students & the Educational Pipeline*. Stafford, VA: Educational Policy Institute.
- ❖ Swail, W. Scott. (2004). *The Affordability of University Education*. Stafford, VA: Educational Policy Institute.
- ❖ Swail, W. Scott, Perna, Laura, and Kenneth Redd. (2003). *Retaining Minority Students in Higher Education: A Framework for Success*. Ashe-ERIC Higher Education Report, Volume 30, No. 2.
- ❖ Swail, W. Scott. (2001). "Educational Opportunity and the Role of Pre-College Outreach Programs." In *2001 Outreach Programs Handbook*. Washington, DC: The College Board.
- ❖ Swail, W. Scott and David Roth. *Certification and Teacher Preparation in the United States*. (2000). Honolulu, HI: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.
- ❖ Gladieux, Lawrence E., and W. Scott Swail. (1999). *The Virtual University and Educational Opportunity: Issues of Equity and Access for the Next Generation*. Washington, D.C.: The College Board.
- ❖ Galloway, Fred J., and W. Scott Swail. (1999). *Institutional Retention Strategies at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Their Effects on Cohort Default Rates: 1987 – 1995*. Washington, DC: Sallie Mae Education Institute.

MS. PATRICIA MOORE SHAFFER, VICE PRESIDENT, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Patricia Moore Shaffer is the Vice President, of Research and Development at EPI. Prior to joining EPI, Patricia has held positions in several formal and informal educational institutions in the United States and Canada, serving as a school district administrator, university faculty member, and museum educator and administrator. An expert planner and facilitator, she brings considerable skill in the development of program logic models; formative and summative program evaluation; and organizational policy development, analysis, and planning. Her leadership in collaborative program planning had contributed to several pioneering educational initiatives, including a Governor's Academy in career and technical education (VA); an innovative preschool initiative, which piloted several innovative delivery strategies, including use of public, private, faith-based, and military providers and blended classrooms serving subsidized and full tuition students (VA); and an on-line school multimedia initiative in strategic partnerships with private multimedia developers, national publishing firms, a national cable communications network, and a large school district (ON).



Ms. Moore Shaffer has an extensive background in teacher professional development. During the past ten years, she has planned and implemented several single- and multi-year professional development programs for K-12 teachers, including a federally funded Teaching American

History initiative. Most recently she served as an external evaluator for the College of William and Mary's School-University Research Network (SURN), where she worked with two SURN teacher professional development initiatives focused on differentiated instruction, instructional leadership, and research-based instructional strategies to improve student content literacy in middle schools across 25 school districts in southeastern Virginia. Her academic research has focused on transfer of professional learning to instructional practice.

Ms. Moore Shaffer earned a Masters in Curriculum Studies from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto and a Bachelors in Visual Arts from Brock University, with a minor in Classical Archaeology. She is a doctoral candidate in the Educational Policy, Planning and Leadership program at the College of William and Mary, with research interests in evidence-based practices in K-12 education and the evaluation of teacher professional development.

DR. AMAURY NORA, SENIOR RESEARCH SCHOLAR

Dr. Amaury Nora is a Professor and Director of the Center for Student Success at the University of Texas at San Antonio and holds a cross-appointment as Senior Research Scholar at EPI. He was formerly held a faculty position at the University of Texas at Houston. Dr. Nora has served as consultant to the American Council of Education, the Ford Foundation, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, U.S. Department of Education, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and reviewer for the National Research Council. He has published numerous book chapters and articles in refereed journals, has served on the editorial boards of various scholarly journals, and assumed the role of Editor for *The Review of Higher Education* in January 2004. Dr. Nora holds an Ed.D. in Higher Education from the University of Houston.



Professor Nora's research focuses on student academic achievement, pre-college and collegiate psychosocial factors impacting adjustment to college and student persistence, access to higher education for diverse student populations across different types of institutions, academic and social experiences influencing cognitive as well as non-cognitive student outcomes, and theory building and testing. His inquiries have contributed to the development of theoretical perspectives related to traditional lines of research on college persistence and have helped to focus on research related to minorities in both two- and four-year institutions.

DR. DAVID LOPEZ, SENIOR RESEARCH SCIENTIST

Dr. Lopez has been affiliated with EPI since 2008. Most recently, he worked on EPI's Reading First evaluation contract on behalf of the Iowa Department of Education.

Dr. Lopez holds a Ph.D. in Social Psychology (Social Cognition) from Kent State University, and completed a two-year post-doctoral fellowship (1993-1995) in Lifespan Developmental Psychology and Multivariate Statistics at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development and Education in Berlin, Germany.



Dr. Lopez has worked as an educational consultant on a variety of federally-funded research projects focusing on K-12 systemic reform issues, including regional technical assistance needs, curriculum reform, teacher quality, pre-K school readiness, and improving student achievement. His research experience includes laboratory experiments, random assignment and control studies, large sample surveys, instrument design and validation (including the parallel development and validation of multiple language versions of assessment tools), training intervention studies, and program evaluations (formative and summative). He has an active publication record with over 85 peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations.

Dr. Lopez has extensive training and experience in a wide variety of multivariate analytic techniques involving complex datasets, including sampling techniques (including propensity score matching), hierarchical linear regression, hierarchical linear modeling, log-linear regression, structural equation modeling, means and covariate structures modeling, multi-level modeling, growth curve modeling, factor analyses, discriminant function analyses, and commonality analyses.

Dr. Lopez has conducted research and evaluation work on behalf of the Department of the Navy -and currently holds an Active Security Clearance (Secret) from the Department of Defense.

Summary List of Clients & Funders

Below is a comprehensive list of EPI's past and present clients and funders.

Alfred P. Sloan Foundation	KIPP Foundation
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)	Lawrence County School District
American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF)	Library of Congress
Amideast	Lumina Foundation for Education
ASPIRA of New Jersey	Midwestern Higher Education Compact
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority (MOHELA)
Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF)	National Action Council for Minority Engineers (NACME)
Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF)	National Council on Disabilities (NCD)
Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN)	National Court Reporters Association (NCRA)
College of William & Mary, School- University Research Network	Newport News Public Schools
Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE)	North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)
Council for Education Policy Research and Improvement (FL)	Ohio Dominican University
Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE)	Ohio College Access Network (OCAN)
DeVry, Inc.	Ohio Dominican University
EdFund	Old Dominion University
The Evaluation Partnership Limited/The European Union	Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL)
Florida Council on Education Policy, Research, and Improvement (CEPRI)	Palm Beach Community College
The Ford Foundation	Pew Hispanic Center
Government of New Brunswick	Pittsburgh Public Schools
Government of Ontario	School Board of Osceola County, Florida
Hampton City Schools	SEED School of Maryland
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)	SERVE/Southeastern Regional Educational Laboratory
Imagine America Foundation	Social Development Canada
Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP)	Texas Education Agency
Iowa Department of Education	TG – Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation
Kaplan Higher Education	University of Wisconsin System
Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education	US Department of Education
	Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE)

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