



Blueprint Reviews Now Available Online

Key Takeaway: NEPC provides analysis of Obama administration's research in support of its education blueprint

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BOULDER, CO (October 5, 2010) – Reviews presented last week in *The Obama Education Blueprint: Researchers Examine The Evidence*, a new book from the National Education Policy Center (NEPC), are now available for download at the [NEPC website](#). The book has been the subject of a congressional briefing and has led to considerable discussion within policy circles, and it remains available [for purchase](#).

As Congress and the Obama administration prepare to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), high-quality research is not informing the process. In May, the U.S. Department of Education released six research summaries in support of its “Blueprint for Reform” – its proposals for ESEA reauthorization. The NEPC reviews find that the research cited by the Department does not provide solid support for its proposals. The reviews offer a topic-by-topic examination, with analysis by top scholars.

“When No Child Left Behind was signed into law nearly a decade ago, it was a triumph of rhetoric over sound research,” said William J. Mathis, NEPC’s managing director and book co-editor. “With ESEA now up for renewal, our children and our nation require that we not make the same mistakes again. NEPC is committed to the idea that policy should be based on sound evidence. The reviews offered in this book will provide our elected officials with a clear understanding of what the research truly says about proposals in the Obama administration’s Education Blueprint.”

University of Colorado at Boulder Professor and NEPC director Kevin Welner noted, “while each review has its own specific findings, it is striking that strong overarching themes emerged from the individual reviews.” Each reviewer found, for instance, that the research she or he examined was of inadequate quality. Other themes include: • Key omissions, such as the Blueprint’s accountability system and the rationale for competitive grants, as well as an undeveloped explanation and support for intervention models – despite these being centerpieces of the administration’s education reform efforts; • A focus on problems, as opposed to providing research to support the Blueprint’s proposed solutions; • Extensive use of non-research and advocacy sources to justify policy recommendations; and • An overwhelming reliance, with little or no research justification, on standardized test scores as a measure of student learning and school success.

The reviews are as follows: • [Review of “College- and Career Ready Students,”](#) by Diane Ravitch and William J. Mathis • [Review of “Great Teachers and Great Leaders,”](#) by Paul Shaker • [Review of “A Complete Education,”](#)



by Beth Warren • [Review of “Meeting the Needs of English Learners and Other Diverse Learners,”](#) by Janette Klingner • [Review of “Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students,”](#) by Gene V Glass, W. Steven Barnett, and Kevin G. Welner • [Review of “Fostering Innovation and Excellence,”](#) by Clive Belfield

All six of these reviews are available at <http://nepc.colorado.edu/reviews-obama-administrations-six-research-summaries>, along with an introduction.

The book, edited by William J. Mathis and Kevin G. Welner of the University of Colorado at Boulder, is published by Information Age Publishing: <http://www.infoagepub.com/products/The-Obama-Education-Blueprint>

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The mission of the National Education Policy Center is to produce and disseminate high-quality, peer-reviewed research to inform education policy discussions. We are guided by the belief that the democratic governance of public education is strengthened when policies are based on sound evidence. For more information on NEPC, please visit <http://nepc.colorado.edu>.