

# The critical aspects of education research planning

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According to the United States Government's " National Directions in Education Research Planning," educational research planning must emphasize focus and selectivity in curriculum design and " concentrate on those areas that the public and profession believe are important as well as those that will become important," to render education practical for student's future lives outside of the classroom. Student learning is the touchstone issue and there must be " a particular but by no means exclusive emphasis on the challenges presented by ever-growing diversity and inequality. " (Timpane, 1998)

Additionally, the selection of specific areas of inquiry for teachers, through the use of objective research, must be clear enough to " build strategies consisting of related projects executed over time. " The candidates for the " short list of research priorities seemed rather obvious: continued focus on reading and language learning; expanded attention to mathematics; the dynamics of teacher performance and effectiveness in schools and classrooms; and new emphasis on technology and telecommunications, international studies, and learning in family, community, and workplace settings.

Peer planning amongst teachers was also deemed critical in preparing students for the future in a practical fashion, given research-based statistical support as to its effectiveness. (Timpane, 1998) Individuals involved in educational research and improvement are able, by fulfilling these objectives of specificity and focus " to add more value to their own work and to the joint endeavor of learning.

When an educational goal can be clearly stated and is future focused, educational progress becomes based on ideas that have a clear applicability to student's lives and futures, and also can be " validated by well-designed, well-executed research," focused objectives are more easily " translated into success by well-qualified professionals" with clarity for students and teachers. (Timpane, 1998) Within every school or classroom, there is always a tension between creating a flexible and responsive community of individual learners and adhering to focused, validated, objective standards determined by outside professional sources.

But even though standards cannot nor should not be rigidly applied, having a research based blueprint for how a district should operate is key to ensure that the " ideology of associational action and local democracy on the one hand" and " an adherence to essentially rational-bureaucratic approaches to planning and implementation" is kept in a state of balance, and students are adequately prepared to move on into a new educational community and teachers have a network of professional resources, guides, and support structures upon which they can shape their educational objectives and plans. (Chaskin, 2005)