Chapter 12
The United Kingdom's Teaching and Learning Research Programme[1]

Andrew Pollard, Director, TLRP

In this chapter, we look at the United Kingdom's Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP), which aims to contribute new knowledge for the improvement of learning and aspires to improve the quality of the educational research that will be available in the future.

The Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) is the Economic and Social Research Council's largest research programme and provides coordination for over 500 researchers in some 60 project teams and over 20 initiatives of cross-programme thematic analysis across the United Kingdom. The first projects began empirical work in 2000 and the last project is presently expected to end in 2011. The total budget in the autumn of 2006 was some £37m and drew contributions from a wide range of UK government bodies.

The origins of the Programme can be traced to the mid-1990s when educational research was heavily criticised for being small scale, irrelevant, inaccessible and low quality. Whether or not these criticisms were entirely justified, researchers faced major challenges in demonstrating the value of investment in this field. Fortunately, thanks initially to the imagination and commitment of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, a new opportunity was created though TLRP.

TLRP's overarching strategy has been to support research which is of both high quality in social scientific terms and of high relevance in terms of policy and practice – to satisfy the criteria of "Pasteur's Quadrant". At the same time, considerable effort has gone into impact work, capacity-building across the field of educational research and in "bridging" between the worlds of researchers, policy makers and practitioners. Over time, we believe that a greater respect for, and understanding of, the complementary forms of expertise has been developing.

[1] TLRP researchers are extremely interested in sharing experiences and learning from those engaged in similar work in other countries internationally. Please see *www.tlrp.org/international* for details of some links and get in touch if you would like to develop an association with the Programme. In the first instance, please contact: Alan Brown, Associate Director, TRLP at alan.brown@warwick.ac.uk. Andrew Pollard can be contacted at a.pollard@ioe.ac.uk. A more extensive account of TLRP strategies and of some of the challenges and opportunities with which it has engaged is available at: *www.tlrp.org/dspace/handle/123456789/380*. This is the text of the Annual Educational Review Guest Lecture, 2005, by Andrew Pollard.

The success of the overall initiative is indicated by the steady growth of the TLRP budget (now almost four times greater than the initial figure), by the model of user-researcher collaboration set by the Programme, the eagerness of researchers to become involved and by the take up of findings by practitioners and public bodies. A recent independent review of TLRP concluded that the quality and relevance of the research was high (see *www.tlrp.org/manage/documents/NFER_Final_TLRP_Report_March_2005.pdf*). There are no grounds for complacency though and "evidence-informed policy and practice" remains beset by challenges. We do, however, feel that we have been making some progress.

Aims

TLRP's aims emphasise the positive contribution being made by research on teaching and learning. More specifically, they are:

- *Learning*: TLRP aims to improve outcomes for learners of all ages in teaching and learning contexts across the United Kingdom.
- *Outcomes*: TLRP studies a broad range of learning outcomes. These include both the acquisition of skill, understanding, knowledge and qualifications and the development of attitudes, values and identities relevant to a learning society.
- *Lifecourse*: TLRP supports research projects and related activities at many ages and stages in education, training and lifelong learning. The Programme is concerned with patterns of success and difference, inclusion and exclusion through the lifecourse.
- *Enrichment*: TLRP commits to user engagement at all stages of research. The Programme promotes research on teaching and learning across disciplines, methodologies and sectors, and supports various forms of national and international co-operation and comparison.
- *Expertise*: TLRP works to enhance capacity for all forms of research on teaching and learning, and for research-informed policy and practice. This work is the particular focus of the Programme's research capacity building strategy.
- *Improvement*: TLRP develops the knowledge base on teaching and learning and contributes to the improvement of policy and practice in the United Kingdom. The Programme works to maximise the impact of its research.

TLRP's overall development is driven by six key strategic commitments:

- User engagement for relevance and quality.
- Knowledge generation by project teams.
- Knowledge synthesis through thematic activities.
- Knowledge transformation for impact.
- Capacity-building for professional development.
- Partnerships for sustainability.

Because of the duration, scale and complexity of TLRP, these elements are managed simultaneously – for instance, with some projects being commissioned just as others

complete. However, as the Programme matures, there is also a progressive change in the balance of activity, with more emphasis being placed on knowledge synthesis, transformation and impact. Explicit strategies to underpin post-Programme *sustainability* are being developed in relation to capacity-building, the use of ICT to support research development in the field and the deepening of partnerships with cognate bodies.

User engagement for relevance and quality (*www.tlrp.org/users*)

Project teams work closely with practitioners and others in their research sites and also to link up with key national organisations with potentially "high leverage" for dissemination and impact activity. Such relationships are reflected in the membership of project "Advisory Groups".

The Directors' Team maintain links with high-leverage user organisations in each educational sector and in each part of the United Kingdom. TLRP also works directly with governments in each part of the United Kingdom to maximise the use of its research. TLRP has been represented by the Director on significant national bodies for the coordination of education research in Wales (Education and Training Research Liaison Committee of the National Assembly for Wales); England (National Education Research Forum and the Department for Education and Skills Schools Research Advisory Group); Scotland (Management Committee of the Applied Educational Research Scheme). The Programme has also sustained excellent links with senior government officials in Northern Ireland and presented at the 2005 conference on the restructuring of teacher education.

Knowledge generation by project teams (*www.tlrp.org/proj/index.html*)

In 2000, TLRP started by funding four networks of projects. A second phase brought in nine larger projects and this was followed by funding of twelve more. At the same time, focused funding initiatives have made specific provision for teams in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales – and for some high priority topics (such as widening participation in higher education and concerning technology enhanced learning). Additionally, there have been five different types of investment in capacity-building – ranging from fellowships, training to e-resource development. With researchers from a large number of universities actively involved, the responsibility is devolved but the Directors' Team provides critical friendship and encourages collaboration across projects.

Knowledge synthesis through thematic activities (*www.tlrp.org/themes*)

The Programme's strategy for thematic development is a major focus of work as the initiative matures. The portfolio of initiatives to add value through cross-Programme analysis includes: consultancies, thematic groups, thematic seminar series, conferences, workshops, thematic meta-tagging of outputs and sectoral reviews. A conceptual framework is used to organise and integrate this work.

Knowledge transformation for impact (*www.tlrp.org/pub/index.html*)

TLRP's impact strategy is a multi-level one, in which we try to produce research findings in forms which are tailored to specific audiences. We both produce many of our

own publications and also work extensively with user bodies to maximise impact. Outputs include "Research Briefings" (summarising findings), "TLRP Commentaries" (applying findings to contemporary issues), practitioner applications (classroom activities drawing on research), books (in two series with Routledge), journals (including many special issues), reports, etc. TLRP also uses an electronic repository and meta-tagging system called D-space. This has been adopted for deposition of all project publications and has significantly improved the availability of outputs via the Internet and major databases. Downloads from the website (*www.tlrp.org*) have considerably exceeded our expectations, with several TLRP Commentaries on public policy leading the way.

Such Commentaries are an interesting example of our approach. They are attractively designed in a glossy, four-colour A4 format and are designed to provide a concise and accessible evidence-informed commentary on a contemporary, up-to-the-minute issue. The timescale of this is important, for most research takes years from commissioning to publication. We wanted to find a "rapid response" vehicle which could present the unique insights of researchers into public discussion as it happens in our fast-moving democracy. Each Commentary is thus the product of a group of researchers and users working together in a very short timescale with editors, designers, printers and distributors standing by. Documents on Personalised Learning, Teaching and Learning, Science Education have been produced in this way and another on Neuroscience and Education is in production. Although such documents gloss the detail of the evidence-base, we have found them to have a considerable impact in highlighting key issues. For example, the English Department for Education and Science has recently published a document, "2020 Vision", setting out a new approach to the personalisation of teaching and learning in schools which is very consistent with the directions indicated by TLRP research. We certainly cannot claim cause and effect but it is evident that the contributions which the research programme makes have been considered seriously and many of the key themes which TLRP has been working on are reflected in the report – for instance, on pupil voice, learning how to learn, engaging parents and carers, new technologies, professional learning and researcher-practitioner partnerships.

TLRP's commitment to transforming and disseminating research knowledge in partnership with other bodies is an extremely important foundation for all our impact work. In particular, we have identified a small number of high-leverage user organisations in each educational sector and in each part of the United Kingdom. Key users, such as the General Teaching Council (England), the National College for School Leadership, the Learning and Skills Development Agency, the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education and Department for Education and Skills, have been extremely helpful in the dissemination of results through their communication systems. TLRP also works directly with governments in each part of the United Kingdom to maximise the use of its research. For instance, the Programme held its 2006 Annual Conference in partnership with policy makers in Scotland and this is to be followed up with the placement of Research Fellows bridging government departments and the Programme itself.

Capacity-building for professional development (*www.tlrp.org/capacity*)

Capacity-building is an intrinsic part of TLRP's work. Indeed, in all phases of TLRP funding, it has been a criterion for project selection, and this work is supported, monitored and reported on each year. Particular attention has been paid to skill and career development of contract research staff, with special events each year. Additionally, with

support from the Department for Education and Skills, TLRP has funded five Research Training Fellowships, which enable senior practitioners to study part-time for PhD's in association with TLRP projects.

From 2002-2005 the Programme's Research Capacity Building Network (RCBN) provided cross-Programme training services in the research methods which were felt to be particularly appropriate in the study of teaching and learning. Each included: research design issues, the use of large-scale data-sets, and the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. RCBN also initiated a journal, Research Capacity Building. A new strategy for capacity-building provision has been adopted for 2005-2008. This is based on an explicit attempt to embed processes for the development of research expertise within the social practices of educational researchers and is intended to complement other provision through the National Centre for Research Methods and Research Methods Programme. Additionally, there are close working relationships with the Applied Research in Education Scheme in Scotland and with relevant UK learned societies, such as the British Educational Research Association. A particular feature of TLRP's new provision is the promotion of a range of e-resources for research training which will be freely available to institutions and groups across the United Kingdom.

In short, the objective of TLRP's capacity-building work is to work *with* the academic community and to support the development of new forms of commitment and provision for the professional self-improvement of educational researchers.

Partnerships for sustainability

Despite its size, TLRP is still small in relation to the challenge and range educational research. It is also only expected to exist for a limited period. For such reasons, we have sought to develop close working relationships with other organisations. A least five different forms of partnership can be identified.

First, we seek expertise from which we can benefit. Such partnerships exist with the British Education Index (BEI) for electronic knowledge management, the Cambridge Centre for Applied Research in Education Technology (CARET) for development of an advanced ICT infrastructure, and Routledge for book and journal publications. Second, as indicated above, we work with key user organisations which are generous enough to promote TLRP work through their communications systems, and thus lend us some of their leverage as we attempt to maximise impact. Third, we work with partners where cooperation enables us to be more effective – for example, a recent TES special supplement was co-funded with National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) and Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA). Indeed, TLRP aspires to contribute to a series of sectoral reviews, developed in partnership with others. For example TLRP contributes to the Nuffield Foundation's 14-19 Review, and Esmee Fairbairn Trust's Primary Education. Similar work is undertaken with the Institute for Employment Research on work-based learning. Fourth, as indicated previously, we work where we can with the government bodies which help to form policy regarding education research within each country of the United Kingdom.

For some years too, TLRP has contributed to the work of the National Education Research Forum (NERF), through the membership of first Charles Desforges and, more recently, myself. This has been valuable both in the expression of support and reservation for particular initiatives, as appropriate. For example, TLRP has contributed actively to

discussions and development work on the establishment of a National Education Evidence Portal (NEEP).

Finally, we work with organisations which may, in due course, take on some of the resources, assets or commitments of TLRP into the future. Indeed, one of our informal goals is to "give everything away" by the end. The most important legacy organisations are seen as being among the professional research associations – and, in particular the British Educational Research Association (BERA). TLRP participants are active in membership and a number of key positions are held by colleagues who bridge both organisations. There are many areas on which cooperation is developing, including joint capacity-building activities and the possibility of eventual transfer of tools and components from of TLRP's IT infrastructure. On the capacity-building front, we are also very pleased to be working with the research committee of the University Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET). Other associations with which we have collaborated closely include the Society for Research in Higher Education (SRHE), with major contributions being made to their annual conferences.

Conclusion

TLRP represents a major opportunity for UK educational research. It aims to contribute new knowledge for the improvement of learning – but it also aspires to improve the quality of the educational research which will be available in the future.

We feel we have some successes – but we also experience many challenges and frustrations. For example, with such a wide range of aspirations, we find it impossible to follow up on all the opportunities which present themselves. In such a complex society too, it is extremely difficult to know how to focus our limited resources and track impact with precision. Most fundamentally, we struggle between the assumptive worlds of researchers, policy makers and practitioners in the knowledge of considerable differences in their daily experiences, cultures, priorities, accountabilities and incentivisation systems. Sometimes, things get lost and, to our eyes, opportunities are missed.

Overall though, TLRP has provided an opportunity for educational researchers in the United Kingdom to regroup after the critiques of the mid-1990s. The work produced now is generally well received and we believe that the research community is justified in being more confident in facing the future (though the plight of teacher-educators engaged in research is a rather different story). The policy climate is more open than it once was and, even allowing for some selectivity, there is greater respect for evidence. We feel that we have both benefited from such developments and contributed to them.

The Programme has recently been funded to take forward a more focused group of projects on Technology Enhanced Learning to 2011 and beyond, but its broad portfolio will end by mid-2008. Books and other publications will continue to emerge for some years. Additionally, UK leadership in knowledge creation in education will to be taken up by ESRC investment in a small number of Research Centres on more focused topics, whilst the capacity-building role of TLRP will be taken forward through the National Centre for Research Methods or other specific initiatives. The Programme will, therefore, pass the educational baton on to new forms of research organisation. We hope that these new research teams will benefit from a climate in which educational research is seen as an important contributor to high quality policy-making and professional practice in an open, democratic society.

Biography

Adrienne Alton-Lee is the Chief Education Adviser for the New Zealand Ministry of Education's Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) Programme. Her role is to strengthen the evidence-base informing policy and practice in education and to provide medium term strategic advice to government. Dr. Alton-Lee is a Fellow of the International Academy of Education. She was formerly a teacher, classroom researcher, Professor and an Associate Editor of *Teaching and Teacher Education*. She has published in leading educational journals including the *Harvard Educational Review,* the *Elementary School Journal,* the *International Journal of Inclusive Education* and the *American Educational Research Journal.*

René Bugge Bertramsen is the Deputy General Director for the Danish University and Property Agency within the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. Since 1999 he has been involved in reforms aiming at enhancing the quality of the Danish educational R&D system (such as the establishment of the Danish Pedagogical University – DPU – and the R&D centre Learning Lab Denmark). Mr. Bertramsen was responsible for the University Act of 2003 which gave Danish universities a new governance system, *i.e.* boards with external majority and employed rectors, deans and department heads. In 2006-2007 he was responsible for a merger process where government research institutes were integrated with the universities and a number of single-faculty universities were merged with larger multi-faculty universities, including the merger of DPU with multi-faculty University of Aarhus.

Robert Boruch, Professor, University of Pennsylvania (USA). Dr. Boruch is current co-chair of the Steering Group of the International Campbell Collaboration, and principal investigator for the Institute of Education Sciences What Works Clearinghouse, which is designed to be a central and trusted source of information on evidence about what works in education. Dr. Boruch is an elected Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Statistical Association, and the Academy for Experimental Criminology. He has received awards for his work on evaluation policy, randomised trials, and on privacy of individuals and confidentiality in social research. Dr. Boruch's academic background is in psychology, statistics, and mechanical engineering, with degrees from Iowa State University and Stevens Institute of Technology.

Satya Brink is currently Director, National Learning Policy Research, Human Resources and Social Development Canada. She and her team are responsible for developing evidence in support of policy development for lifelong learning for the Government of Canada. This work includes analysis on outcomes for each age group and type of education as well as the impacts of earlier learning on subsequent learning. In her previous post, she was responsible for research on human development based on two major Canadian longitudinal surveys. During this time she and her team produced a major body of evidence based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth which influenced major new initiatives of the Canadian government in support of children and their families.

Tracey Burns is a research and policy analyst for the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, OECD, Paris. Previous to this she worked on social determinants of health across the life-span with Charles Ungerleider & Associates in Vancouver, Canada. As a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of British Columbia, Dr. Burns led a hospital-based research team investigating newborn infants' responses to language. Tracey Burns holds a BA from McGill University, Canada and PhD from Northeastern University, USA. She is the recipient of various awards and honours, including the UBC Post-Doctoral Fellowship, a student-nominated university teaching award, and the American Psychological Association Dissertation Research Award.

Thomas D. Cook is the Joan and Serepta Harrison Chair in Ethics and Justice and Professor of Sociology, Psychology, Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University, where he is also a Faculty Fellow at the Institute for Policy Research. He has a BA from Oxford University and a Ph.D. from Stanford University. He is interested in causal methods for the social sciences and in the joint effects of neighborhoods, schools, peers and families on how young people develop socially and cognitively. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Margaret Mead Fellow of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. He has been awarded the Myrdal Prize for Science by the American Evaluation Association, the Donald Campbell Prize for Innovative Methodology by the Policy Sciences Organisation, and a Distinguished Research Scholar Prize of the American Psychological Association. He is the author or editor of 10 books and over 150 chapters and articles.

Jane Davidson is the Assembly Member for Pontypridd and former Deputy Presiding Officer for the National Assembly (Wales, United Kingdom). Since October 2000 she has been the National Assembly Education and Life-Long Learning Minister responsible for all aspects of education, training and lifelong learning. Educated at Malvern Girls' College, Birmingham University and the University of Wales, Jane has taught English, Drama and Physical Education. She is also an experienced youth worker and former Cardiff City Councillor. She was a member of the Arts Council for Wales and its Lottery Board, and Head of Social Affairs at the Welsh Local Government Association before her election to the Assembly. Jane has had a keen interest in education and youth work and is enjoying the challenges of the Education and Life-Long Learning portfolio.

Stephen Gorard holds the Anniversary Chair in Educational Studies at the University of York (United Kingdom), and directs the Centre for Research into Equity and Impact in Education. He is currently leading an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)-funded project promoting the use and understanding of randomised controlled trials in public policy (*http://trials-pp.co.uk/*), and was the originator of the ESRC's Research Capacity-building Network. He has published widely about the research process in social science, but his substantive work focuses on issues of equity, especially in educational opportunities and outcomes, and on the effectiveness of educational systems. Recent books include "Teacher supply: the key issues", "Adult learning in the digital age", "Overcoming the barriers to higher education", and "Schools, markets and choice policies".

David Gough is Professor of Evidence Informed Policy and Practice and Director of the Social Science Research Unit (SSRU) and its Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Coordinating (EPPI) Centre, Institute of Education, University of London, United Kingdom. Previously he worked at the University of Glasgow and Japan Women's University. He directs the Methods for Research Synthesis node of the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Node and research projects for the Department of

Education and Skills, the Teacher Training and Development Agency, the Social Care Institute of Excellence, and the Department for Work and Pensions. Dr. Gough is editor of the journal *Child Abuse Review* and associate editor of the journal *Evidence and Policy*.

Rebecca Herman, a principal research scientist at American Institute for Research (USA), specialises in setting standards for the quality of educational research and reviewing research based on those standards. As the project director for the What Works Clearinghouse, she is responsible for the US Department of Education's flagship project to identify effective educational programmes and practices. Dr. Herman was project director of the *Educators' Guide to Schoolwide Reform*. She provided congressional testimony and many invited presentations on this and related work. Dr. Herman holds an M.A. and Ph.D. in sociology from Johns Hopkins University.

Maria J.A. van der Hoeven is the Minister of Economic Affairs (Netherlands). Maria J.A. van der Hoeven was born in 1949. She was trained as a primary teacher and taught at schools of home economics and junior secondary commercial education. Thereafter she was head of the Adult Commercial Vocational Training Centre in Maastricht and of the Limburg Technology Centre. From 1991 to 2002 Ms. Van der Hoeven was a member of the House of Representatives for the Christian Democratic Alliance (CDA). She has held a variety of social and cultural posts. Ms. van der Hoeven served as Minister of Education, Culture and Science from 2002 until February 2007. She was appointed as Minister of Economic Affairs in early 2007.

David Hogan is currently Professor and Dean of the Centre for Pedagogy and Practice at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Between 2004 and 2006 he was Vice Dean for Research at CRPP. Prior to that he was Professor of Education at the University of Tasmania in Australia, and before that he held appointments as Assistant and Associate Professor at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He completed his PhD in the history of education at the University of Illinois in 1979. His current research interests focus on the intersections between research, policy and practice, pedagogical theory, curriculum theory and design, the design of knowledge management of innovation systems in schools, multi-level and longitudinal modeling of student outcomes, citizenship and education, and education and social theory.

Bill Kilgallon, OBE, has been the Chief Executive of the UK's Social Care Institute of Excellence since 2003. Prior to that he was Chief Executive of St Anne's Community Services from 1978 to 2002, an organisation he founded in 1971, which works with single homeless people and people with learning disabilities, mental health problems and alcohol and drug problems across Yorkshire and the North East. He was Chair of the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, the largest NHS Trust in the country from 1998-2002 and Chair of the Leeds Community & Mental Health Services NHS Trust from 1992-1998. Bill Kilgallon served as a member of Leeds City Council from 1979-1992 where he chaired the Social Services, Housing and Environment Committees. He has led independent inquiries, including one into alleged abuse in a local authority children's service and one into the management of an NHS hospital for people with learning disabilities.

Hannele Niemi is Professor of Education (1998-) and Vice-Rector for academic affairs at the University of Helsinki, Finland (2003-). She has been Professor of Education in Oulu, Turku and Tampere Universities (1987-1998). She has been a member of the Standing Committee of Social Sciences of ESF, the Council for Society and Culture in the Academy of Finland, and the Scientific Council of the University of Helsinki. She is a Steering Committee member of the British national research programme on teaching and

learning (TLRP). She was Director of the Finnish national research programme "Life as Learning" 2002-2006. Dr. Niemi has been Chair or a researcher in many national and international evaluation projects for development of educational research and teacher education. Her main research interest areas are teachers' professional development, moral education and technology-based learning environments.

Johnny Nilsson is the Former Secretary of State for Education in Sweden.

Andrew Pollard is Director of the Economic and Social Research Council's Teaching and Learning Research Programme (*www.tlrp.org*), the UK's largest coordinated initiative for educational research. As a teacher, his career started in Yorkshire primary schools and he has worked in teacher education or research at Oxford and Bristol Polytechnics and the Universities of the West of England, Bristol, Cambridge and London. He is presently based at the Institute of Education London. Andrew Pollard has published widely, including work on longitudinal ethnography and analysis of social factors in teaching and learning, learner perspectives, and resources for teacher education and school practitioners. He is at present working on an analysis of learning experiences through secondary education.

Rien Rouw is senior policy advisor at the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Department for General Strategic and Economic Advice). He is secretary of the Knowledge Chamber.

Tom Schuller is Head of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), OECD, Paris. Formerly Dean of the Faculty of Continuing Education and Professor of Lifelong Learning at Birkbeck, University of London, his latest books are *The Benefits of Learning: The Impact of Education on Health, Family Life and Social Capital* (RoutledgeFalmer, 2004) and *International Perspectives on Lifelong Learning* (edited with David Istance and Hans Schuetze, Open University Press, 2002).

Hans Stegeman is senior policy advisor at the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Department for International Policy). He is member of the OECD's Education Policy Committee.

Charles Ungerleider is Director of Research and Knowledge Mobilisation for the Canadian Council on Learning. From 1998 until 2001, Dr. Ungerleider served as Deputy Minister of Education for the Province of British Columbia, Canada. Prior to this he was Associate Dean for teacher education (1993-1998) at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Ungerleider has studied and written about educational policy and governance, student assessment, inter-group relations, and the impact of media on Canadian society. His most recent book *Failing Our Kids: How we are ruining our public schools* provides a critical analysis of the state of public schooling in Canada, the key part schooling plays in fostering Canadian values, and how public schools are treated by parents, professionals, and politicians.

Jerzy Wiśniewski is a consultant in education, and public administration and an expert of the Center for Social and Economic Research (Poland). From 2003-2006 he served as head of Strategy and Structural Funds of the Ministry of Education. He was also Director General of the Polish Ministry of National Education at the time of launching the reform of the education system, as well as the head of the International Department of the Ministry of Education and project manager in the Foundation for Public Administration Development. He was a member of the CERI/OECD Governing Board as well as the OECD team reviewing the educational system in Lithuania, advised the Ukrainian Ministry of Education on the reform of the system, and led the team reviewing the VET system in Croatia (with the European Training Foundation).

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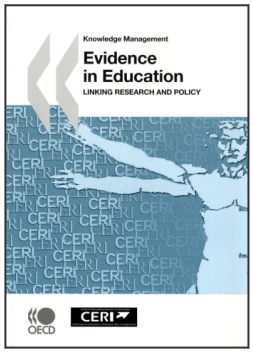

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