

Terms of Reference Ontario Education Research Panel

Purpose:

The purpose of the Ontario Education Research Panel (OERP) is to promote education research and evaluation activities that contribute to the advancement of education in Ontario. It promotes:

- new or improved relationships between and alignment among the many organizations and individuals involved in conducting and using education research and evaluation;
- better use of the unique talents, resources and positions of those organizations and individuals;
- collaborative research and evaluation among educators, researchers, policy makers, and other education partners;
- a focus on research and evaluation efforts in areas that will contribute to the attainment of improved student learning;
- identification of opportunities for collaboration and partnership to advance education research as a support for improved teaching and learning.

Background

At the 2006 Ontario Education Research Symposium, held in Toronto, participants were invited to provide input to the formation of the OERP. Reflecting the diverse make-up of the Symposium participants—researchers, educators, and public policy developers—an Interim Organizing Committee was struck to refine a preliminary draft of Terms of Reference and to propose a process for identifying Panel Co-chairs and Panel members. The Interim Organizing Committee included representatives from the following education and research stakeholders:

Association of Educational Researchers of Ontario
Canadian Council on Learning
Canadian Evaluation Society
Council of Deans of Faculties of Education
English and French-Language District School Boards

Ministry of Education

Activities of the OERP

The OERP's current activities focus on:

- Facilitating discussion about, and collaboration among, school boards, faculties of education, other university-based researchers, independent researchers, researchers from professional organizations, community agencies, school boards, the Ministry of Education, and other ministries on
 - research priorities for Ontario education,
 - the state of knowledge in specific areas,
 - opportunities for and impediments to the advancement of research, and
 - the potential for future partnerships among the various parties.
- Facilitating discussion among researchers working in Ontario, nationally and internationally.
- Contributing to the planning and implementation of the annual Education Research Symposium hosted by the Ministry of Education.
- Facilitating discussions at the Ministry of Education-hosted annual Education Research Symposium.
- Promoting the themes emerging from the ministry's annual symposium.
- Promoting actions in response to the themes through their networks and across the education research community of interest.
- Updating the ministry on its activities. The reporting function of the Panel will be ongoing in nature and contain information and advice aimed at enhancing research capabilities and usage as well as professional linkages between researchers, education and public policy developers.

Measurement of Success

The following are among the areas in which detailed indicators will be developed to judge the success of the Panel.

- Collaboration in Research and Evaluation
 - Frequency and scope of collaboration in research and evaluation in Ontario

- Relevance of Research and Evaluation
 - Quality, quantity and relevance of research and evaluation to educational policies and practices in Ontario
- Dissemination and Use of Research and Evaluation Results

The OERP Members

The Ontario Education Research Panel consists of 15 members, including 2 co-chairs, and 1 ex-officio from the ministry. The co-chairs are external to the ministry. They are well-known and respected in the field of education, public policy and the relevant research.

The ex-officio member is the Chief Research Officer/Director of the Education Research and Evaluation Strategy Branch. The names of current Panel members are attached.

Selection of Members

New members for the Panel are selected at the end of every year. Solicitation for nominations of potential members is conducted competitively. All applicants for membership, including self-nominations, must meet criteria for membership outlined below.

Criteria for Membership

Members and the Co-chairs of the Ontario Education Research Panel must meet the following qualification criteria. They must demonstrate:

- Breadth and depth of knowledge and/or experience in applied research and/or evaluation relevant to education JK-12, its antecedents and outcomes.
- Ability to communicate to a broad range of audiences about research and evaluation as it relates to education JK-12, its antecedents and outcomes.
- Broad knowledge of the Ontario educational system.
- Commitment to using research and evaluation in education decision-making.
- Experience and commitment to developing collaborative partnership working across research, policy, and practice community.
- Other (e.g., relevant experience applying research to support and improve educational outcome including application from other jurisdictions).

Terms of Appointment

Panel members are appointed by the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education. The co-chairs are appointed for a two-year renewable term as are other members of the Panel, excluding ex-officio. Since in the first year OERP members' terms were for either one or two years, a system has been established such that some of the members' positions will end each year, thereby ensuring that the Panel always has a mix of new and experienced members.

Role of Members

Panel members:

- Encourage within their own networks that their colleagues bring forward resources and expertise on issues of shared research concern in K-12 education.
- Help establish the public presence of OERP, and communicate its mandate.
- Identify educational questions and issues for investigation.
- Help stimulate knowledge exchange by gathering examples of existing research-to-practice initiatives at the board, school and classroom levels and encouraging organizations whose mandates include profiling research to document and disseminate the examples.
- Identify and share success stories and models that show how students, teachers, principals, parents, and school districts, in partnership with researchers and organizations, effectively bridge the gap between research and practice.
- Forge relationships, partnerships, and collaborative actions in the wider research community on educational issues relevant to elementary and secondary education in Ontario.

Role of Ex-Officios

Ex-officio members are from the Ministry of Education. They provide both educational research expertise and the public policy perspectives on issues of interest to OERP.

Meetings

The OERP meets at least quarterly, in addition to participation in the ministry annual education research symposium.

Remuneration

The Co-chairs and OERP members receive *per diems* for their participation in Panel's activities that result in a foregoing of income. In keeping with the Treasury Board authorized maximum *per-diem* payment and the ministry remuneration practices for members of such a panel, the co-chairs receive \$350 per day based on a 7.25 hour day up to a maximum of 20 days per year. Other Panel members receive a *per-diem* payment of \$200 per day based on a 7.25 hour day up to a maximum of 10 days per year.

Claims for *per diems* and other expenses incurred while working for the Panel are paid according to the ministry and provincial government directives. Appropriate receipts and/or signed invoices should be submitted to the Education Research and Evaluation Strategy Branch of the Ministry of Education.

Resources to the Panel

Secretariat support to the OERP is provided by the Education Research and Evaluation Strategy Branch, Ministry of Education. This support includes maintaining minutes of Panel meetings; arranging meeting logistics; communicating about ministry priorities to the Panel; collecting and disseminating information about research initiatives and findings connected to the Panel's purposes and Ontario's education priorities; and organizing the annual symposium.

Mandate Review

After each year of operation, the ministry will review whether the OERP has made progress in respect of its purposes and/or whether those purposes and Terms of Reference require amendment.

Annex: List of members of Ontario Education Research Panel

Co-chairs	
1	Joan Green Co-chair
2	Ben Levin Co-chair
Other members	
3	Kathryn Bennett Professor, McMaster University
4	Serge Boulé Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario
5	Chris Conley Research Analyst, Durham District School Board
6	Christa Freiler Director, Canadian Education Association
7	Carl James Professor, York University
8	Don Klinger Associate Professor, Queen's University
9	Luis Radford Professor, Laurentian University
10	Kathy Short Psychologist, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
11	Linda Staudt

	Superintendent, Windsor-Essex Catholic DSB
12	Erica vanRoosmalen Chief Research Officer, Halton Catholic District School Board
13	Lyn Vause Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association
14	Louis Volante Associate Professor, Brock University
15	Doris McWhorter - Ex-officio Interim Director, Education Research and Evaluation Strategy Branch, Ministry of Education