

PEEPS FROM EEPS



THE THOMAS B. FORDHAM INSTITUTE & THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

GREETINGS EEPS!

As always, we hope this newsletter finds you healthy and well. We over at Fordham and AEI had a wonderful winter convening with our Cohort 13 members in Washington D.C. in January. We look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming cross-cohort happy hour in April (more details to the right) and reconvening our current EEPS again in May.

Thank you so much for sending in all your recent life and career updates. We hope you enjoy reading about your peers' news, accomplishments, and publications!

—Abigail and Joe

SAVE THE DATE!

Fordham will host a cross-cohort EEPS happy hour on Friday, April 12th, in connection with the AERA 2023 conference in Philadelphia, PA!

If you are attending the conference or live in the area, please join us for drinks and appetizers on **April 12th from 5–6:30 PM ET. Stay tuned for more details. We can't wait to see you there!**

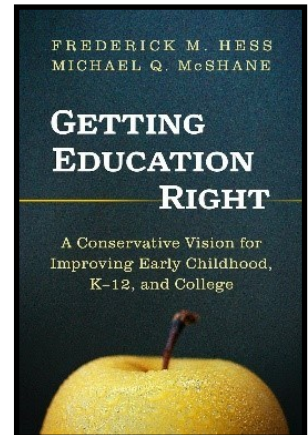


BOOK: *Getting Education Right*

FEBRUARY 2024

By Rick Hess and Mike McShane

In [Getting Education Right](#), Rick Hess and Mike McShane argue that America has too long suffered from the absence of a robust, coherent, and principled conservative vision for educational improvement. The book both diagnoses a problem and offers a solution. The problem? The right has focused too narrowly on school choice, campus speech, and shrinking Washington's footprint, while the left has sought to subsidize and supersize the status quo. The solution? An education system imbued with shared values, respectful of family ties, and equipped for the challenges of the twenty-first century. Rooted in fundamental conservative principles, the book explains both how we got here and where we need to go when it comes to early childhood, K-12, and higher education. Eschewing performative polemics, this book offers a field guide to bringing education back to its formative mission. Readers from across the ideological spectrum will benefit from engaging with the provocative analysis Hess and McShane offer, whether or not they agree with the policies they propose. Education is the foundation on which America's future will be constructed, and *Getting Education Right* provides a timely blueprint for that project.



REPORT: *Long Covid for Public Schools: Chronic Absenteeism Before and After the Pandemic*

JANUARY 2024

By Nat Malkus

This [report](#) documents chronic absenteeism over the Covid-19 pandemic. Drawing on the American Enterprise Institute's [Return to Learn Tracker: Chronic Absenteeism Data Collection](#), the most comprehensive and current data collection on pandemic and postpandemic chronic absenteeism, Malkus shows that pandemic increases in chronic absenteeism were widespread during the pandemic. More worrisome, using the most recent data for the 2022-23 school year, Malkus shows that even after the pandemic subsided drastically, the elevated rates of chronic absenteeism fell very little.

ARTICLE: *The Upside of the College Enrollment Downswing*

February 2024

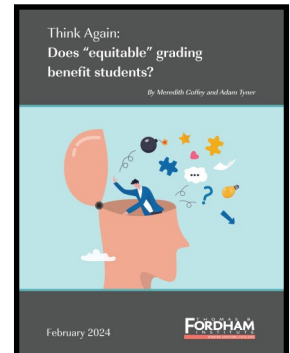
By Beth Akers

Despite the painful trade-offs that will inevitably need to be made, we will be better off if we address the underlying crisis driving declining interest in higher education: the declining value of many degree programs. Higher education, the golden child of the movement to advance social mobility, has rested on its laurels and failed to incorporate innovations that will better serve students and our nation. [Read the article here.](#)

REPORT: *Think Again: Does “Equitable” Grading Benefit Students?*

February 2024

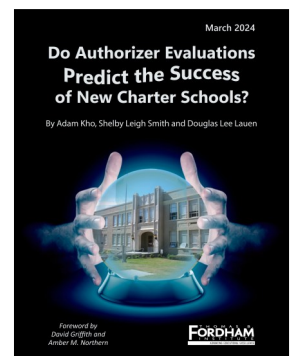
Recent years have seen a flurry of new grading policies that risk lowering academic standards in the name of equity. Newly popular practices include “minimum-grading” policies, which prevent teachers from assigning students less than 50 percent credit; prohibitions on grade penalties for late work; and bans on grading homework and class participation. Such changes in grading practices, which accelerated during the pandemic, deserve greater scrutiny. Indeed, they risk removing both discretion from teachers and crucial incentives for students to study hard and cooperate with teachers and peers. Although some grading reforms may benefit students, those that water down expectations ultimately harm the students they are meant to help. [Download the brief here.](#)



STUDY: *Do Authorizer Evaluations Predict the Success of New Charter Schools?*

March 2024

As the charter sector’s gatekeepers, authorizers are responsible for ensuring that schools in their purview set students up for success. To that end, they provide various forms of scrutiny and technical assistance, decide whether existing schools’ charters should be renewed, and—perhaps most important—set the bar for the approval of new schools. However, while prior research has examined how the content of charter applications predicts the academic performance of newly created schools, there is almost no research on how the actions taken by the authorizer during the approval process might do the same thing. Accordingly, this study examines the extent to which the ratings of application reviewers and their votes on authorization predict the initial success of new schools that are authorized. [Download the report here.](#)



EVENT: *New School Applications: Do Authorizer Evaluations Predict the Success of New Charter Schools*

March 2024

At this event, the National Association of Charter School Authorizers featured Fordham’s report, *Do authorizer evaluations predict the success of new charter schools?* Representatives from the Fordham Institute and North Carolina summarized the report’s methods and findings, as well as provided takeaways for the field. Following the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to engage in focused dialogue, pose questions, and explore the implications for their own authorizing practices. [View a recording of the event here.](#)

COHORT 13 NEWS & UPDATES

LAUREN COVELLI recently released a [report](#) with coauthors at the RAND Corporation describing the national landscape of access to math opportunities for K–8 students. She has a forthcoming coauthored publication later this year in the *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness* entitled, “Leading Indicators of Long-Term Success in Community Schools: Evidence from New York City.”

BLAKE HELLER recently published two working papers through the Annenberg Institute at Brown University’s EdWorkingPapers series: “GED® College Readiness Benchmarks and Post-Secondary Success” (2/2024) and “When Pell Today Doesn’t Mean Pell Tomorrow: Evaluating Aid Programs With Dynamic Eligibility” (9/2023). He was recently accepted as a 2024 EdResearch for Action Writing Fellow. Blake’s article “Immigrant Integration in the United States: The Role of Adult English Language Training” (coauthored with Kirsten Slungaard Mumma) was published in the *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* in August 2023.

SARAH RUTH MORRIS recently went to the 2024 EERA conference and won best graduate student paper! She also was recently selected as her department’s (EDRE) Most Outstanding Graduate Student. Sarah is wrapping up things in her program a year early and defending this May.

VETERAN EEPS

ANJALI ADUKIA (Cohort 6) received the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE) Early Career Award. She also published, “What We Teach About Race and Gender: Representation in Images and Text of Children’s Books” (joint with former EEPS member Alex Eble, Emileigh Harrison, Hakizumwami Birali Runesha, and Teodora Szasz) in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. They published an accompanying piece in the Brookings Institution blog in June 2023: “What Award-Winning Children’s Books Teach Children about Race and Gender.” Separately, she wrote an op-ed with David Evans of the Center for Global Development, “Most Out-of-School Children are in Rural Areas. Education Systems Must Serve Them Better,” which came out in October 2023.

HELLA BEL HADJ AMOR (Cohort 1) has had a rewarding year, going back to doing a lot of grant writing and securing anywhere from one to four million dollars for our state and postsecondary partners (with her team, not single handedly!). The massive Alaska Teacher Retention and Recruitment initiative she’s been a part of got a [kickoff](#) of sorts in Anchorage 2/29–3/1, and she presented on three policy reports she coauthored with local researchers and practitioners. She’s always looking for collaboration opportunities. If anyone is participating in a Comp Center bid and has room for more subs, she loves Comp Center work, and her team includes former state and district leaders. Besides educator workforce

CONNECT WITH EEPS, FORDHAM AND AEI ON X

If you have an X account and would like to follow new and veteran EEPS alike, consider subscribing to the Thomas B. Fordham Institute’s “EEPS” list on our profile page ([@educationgadfly](#)).

Fordham Institute

[@educationgadfly](#)

AEI Education

[@AEIeducation](#)

Mike Petrilli

[@MichaelPetrilli](#)

Nat Malkus

[@natmalkus](#)

Victoria McDougald

[@V_McDougald](#)

Joe Pitts

[@JPittsAZ](#)

VETERAN EEPS, CONT'D

and TA, they bring expertise in early learning and strong ties to Alaska, Delaware, and New Mexico. She'd love to see anyone in Portland for [Head Start](#), [Stata](#), or other conferences. And if you want a good laugh, check out the [musings](#) of Rick's Uber driver.

MEGAN AUSTIN (Cohort 9) recently published two Annenberg Working papers on corequisite remediation in community colleges. She also coauthored a forthcoming article in the *Review of Educational Research* reporting on an IES-funded meta-analysis of the effects of college financial aid, as well as a recent chapter in an edited volume on school vouchers. In February, she provided testimony to the Minnesota House Education Policy Committee about findings from her study of automatic enrollment policy in Washington state, as they considered a bill that would establish an automatic enrollment pilot program in Minnesota.

DR. DANIEL ARAYA (Cohort 3) remains a senior fellow with [the Centre for International Governance Innovation](#), where his work focuses on emerging technologies and the need for comprehensive regulation at the global level. His latest research explores the impact of [technology on military conflict](#) and the scramble to [dominate data-driven technologies](#) in a multipolar era. His recent book with Peter Marber, [Augmented Education in the Global Age](#), looks at the impact of AI in augmenting learning and work.

DANIEL BOWEN (Cohort 4) recently coauthored a study published in the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* titled, "Investigating the Causal Effects of Arts Education" that has been highlighted in [The New York Times](#) and [NPR Morning Edition](#). He also received a renewal grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in support of his codirected [Arts, Humanities & Civic Engagement Lab](#).

KATHARINE BROTON (Cohort 4) was promoted to associate professor with tenure at the University of Iowa and currently serves as an associate editor for *Educational Researcher*. She recently coauthored "Seeking STEM: The Causal Impact of Need-based Grant Aid on Undergraduates Field of Study" in *The Journal of Higher Education*.

SARAH COHODES (Cohort 2) joined the University of Michigan Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy last July as an associate professor of public policy.

F. CHRIS CURRAN (Cohort 5), associate professor and section head and coordinator of the Educational Leadership and Policy Program Area at the University of Florida, was recently named the Irving & Rose Fien Endowed Professor in Education. Ongoing projects include the development of a statewide school safety data dashboard and the development of new early childhood policy graduate programs at UF through several recent external grants.

MICHAEL GOTTFRIED (Cohort 3) loves being a professor at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, where he works alongside so many fellow EEPS: Brooks Bowden (Cohort 3), Sade Bonilla (Cohort 8), and Katharine Strunk (Cohort 1).

SABRINA LITTLE'S (Cohort 11) published her first book, [The Examined Run](#), in February, through Oxford University Press. She describes how athletics can be used for character education.

VETERAN EEPS, CONT'D

MELISSA ARNOLD LYON, "MIMI" (Cohort 10), published a couple of new papers, including a recent one on anti-CRT policy narratives in *Policy Studies Journal*. She is also cochair of the WPSA Education Politics and Policy monthly workshop series alongside EEPS alum David Houston (Cohort 11). Reach out if you'd like to join!

MEGHAN MACKAY (Cohort 12) successfully defended her dissertation on the challenges of the urban superintendency in January. She's excited to reclaim her life and plans to put what she learned into practice by building a new program based on the findings through her organization, the LeveragED Foundation. LeveragED supports a diverse community of school systems leaders across the country through connection and ongoing professional-development experiences.

MORGAN POLIKOFF (Cohort 2) was promoted to full professor at the USC Rossier School of Education. His [work](#) with Anna Saavedra to study the impact of Covid and Americans' views on education policy has continued to be widely publicized in national news media.

MATTHEW LENARD (Cohort 10) will be starting a new job as assistant professor of education policy at Florida State University this fall. [One of his papers](#) on the effects of student assignment (coauthored with fellow EEPS alum Lindsay Page of Cohort 3, among others) received an [article of the year distinction](#) from the *Economics of Education Review*.

LENA SHI (Cohort 11) recently published "[Clearing Up Transfer Admissions Standards: the Impact on Access and Outcomes](#)" in the *Journal of Human Resources*. She will be an assistant professor of education policy and evaluation at UC Irvine this fall.

KATHARINE STEVENS (Cohort 3) recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of founding her new organization, the [Center on Child and Family Policy](#) (CCFP). Highlights of CCFP's first year include launching a well-received podcast, [Early Matters](#), and publishing Katharine's in-depth analysis of the evergreen early care and education provisions in the federal Build Back Better legislation, [A Flawed Agenda for America's Young Children: Build Back Better's Blueprint for Early Care and Education](#).

ELIZABETH LEISY STOSICH (Cohort 6) was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor at Fordham University. She recently coauthored an article on designing external support for underperforming schools in *American Journal of Education* entitled, "Learning Together to Lead Together: Designing Professional Learning to Strengthen Principal and District Leadership for School Improvement."

SIVAN TUCHMAN (Cohort 7) is part of Marshall Street Initiative's new release of [research-to-impact practice guides](#) aimed at increasing outcomes for students with disabilities. This effort is based on three years of continuous improvement work at twenty charter schools funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

IWUNZE UGO (Cohort 12) completed his Ph.D. in economics at UC Davis in December 2023. His dissertation was composed of a series of papers on how school districts—California districts, in particular—operate as economic actors. The papers explored how districts generate revenues from alternative sources, accumulate reserves, and manage funding volatility. He plans to continue as a research fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, where his work focuses on education at both the K–12 and postsecondary levels.

VETERAN EEPS, CONT'D

DR. ANGELA WATSON (Cohort 10) with Johns Hopkins and the Institute for Education Policy announce the launch of the Hopkins Homeschool Hub. She created the Hub as a catalog of all things homeschool policy and participation, including downloadable data. All fifty states, all in one place. She also created the Homeschool Research Lab, aimed at elevating the conversation around and quality of research on homeschooling and related evolving models of education like microschools, hybrid schools, and co-ops. In the US, 5–6 percent of all K–12 students are classified as home-schooled, compared to 7 percent in charter schools and 9 percent in private schools. However, homeschooling is largely understudied. [Explore the Hub](#) or contact Angela for more information at awatso43@jhu.edu.

RACHEL WHITE (Cohort 6), assistant professor of educational leadership and policy studies at the University of Tennessee–Knoxville, recently launched [The Superintendent Lab](#), a central hub for research and insights on the superintendency and home to the National Longitudinal Superintendent Database (NLSD), an annually updated database (2019–present) of all traditional K–12 public school district superintendents in the United States that is used to help inform researchers, policymakers, and practitioners on issues related to superintendent diversity, stability and mobility, and working conditions. Rachel recently published "[Ceilings made of glass and leaving en masse? Examining superintendent gender gaps and turnover over time across the United States](#)" in *Educational Researcher*. This research was named one of the "[10 Education Studies You Should Know from 2023](#)" by *Education Week*.

RHSU EDU-SCHOLAR INFLUENCE RANKINGS

Congratulations to our EEPS who made it on the 2024 RHSU Edu-Scholar Public Influence Rankings!

Dominique Baker: Cohort 5

Julie Cohen: Cohort 4

Sarah Cohodes: Cohort 2

Jason Grissom: Cohort 1

Robert Kelchen: Cohort 4

Matt Kraft: Cohort 2

Morgan Polikoff: Cohort 2

Katherine Strunk: Cohort 1



RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Austin, Megan, Paco Martorell, Trey Miller, and Lindsay Daugherty. "The Benefits of Math Corequisite Support for Academic Outcomes for Students in Texas." EdWorkingPaper: 24-903. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute at Brown University, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.26300/c236-t320>.

Berends, Mark, R. Joseph Waddington, and Megan Austin. "School Vouchers in Indiana: Policy Shifts and Their Implications for Economically Disadvantaged Families and Students of Color." In *The School Voucher Illusion: Exposing the Pretense of Equity*, edited by Kevin Welner, Gary Orfield, and Luis Huerta. New York: Teachers College Press, 2023.

Bertrand, Ariell Rose, Melissa Arnold Lyon, and Rebecca Jacobsen. "Narrative spillover: A narrative policy framework analysis of critical race theory discourse at multiple levels." *Policy Studies Journal*. Published electronically December 20, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1111/psj.12523>.

Cohodes, Sarah R., Sean P. Corcoran, Jennifer L. Jennings, and Carolyn Sattin-Bajaj. "When Do Informational Interventions Work? Experimental Evidence From New York City High School Choice." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. Published electronically November 6, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737231203293>.

Cunha, Jesse, Trey Miller, Megan Austin, Lindsay Daugherty, and Paco Martorell. "A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Corequisite English Developmental Education: Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial in Texas Community Colleges." EdWorkingPaper: 23-764. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute at Brown University, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.26300/kxa8-1002>.

Curran, F. Chris, Lelydeyvis Boza, Katharine Harris-Walls, Tiffany S. Tan. "Assessing the Public Availability of School Discipline and Infraction Data." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. Published electronically May 8, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373723116881>.

Gershenson, Seth, Stephen B. Holt, and Adam Tyner. "Making the grade: The effect of teacher grading standards on student outcomes." *Contemporary Economic Policy*. Published electronically December 30, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1111/coep.12637>.

LaSota, R., J. Polanin, L. Perna, M. Rodgers, and M. Austin. "Does college aid matter? Evidence from a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research* (forthcoming).

Lavery, Lesley, and Sara Dahill-Brown. "The Role of Teachers Unions in School Governance during COVID -19." *National Association of State Boards of Education* 23, no. 1 (2023): 37–41. <https://www.nasbe.org/leading-and-governing>.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS, CONT'D

Lyon, Melissa Arnold. "The Effect of Right to Work Laws on Union Membership and School Resources: Evidence from 1942–2017." *Educational Researcher* 52, no. 6 (2023): 339–47. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X2311671>.

Vernon, Keenen, and F. Chris Curran. "On Guard but not Sworn: The Relationship between School Security Guards, School Resource Officers, and Student Behavior, Discipline, and Arrests." *Criminology and Public Policy*. Published electronically November 15, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12653>.

WHAT IS EEPS?

The Emerging Education Policy Scholars program (EEPS) brings up-and-coming scholars to our nation's capital to meet with education policy experts and brainstorm exciting new directions for education research. The program aims to do the following:

1. Foster an opportunity for talented scholars to meet and connect with their peers as well as key players in the education policy arena
2. Expand the pool of talent and ideas from which the education policy field currently draws

Fordham and AEI launched the EEPS program in the summer of 2010 with an inaugural cohort of twenty-eight promising education policy scholars. Today, cohorts average around twenty individuals, a more manageable size for interactive and group discussions.

Have you joined the EEPS Google Group?

If not, you could be missing out on important EEPS event announcements, job postings, and opportunities to collaborate with colleagues.

To join our EEPS Google group, please:

1. Visit <http://groups.google.com/group/EEPScholars>.
2. Click on "Apply for Membership," while signed into the account you would like to use.
3. Fill out the short form. (We recommend receiving emails as a "daily summary" or one email per post.)