CORE-PACE Research Partnership

Research Process || Ongoing Research || Research Findings || Work Currently Under Review ||

Research Process

Contact Heather Hough at hjhough@stanford.edu

In October 2015, Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) and the CORE Districts launched the CORE-PACE Research Partnership. This research partnership is focused on producing research that informs continuous improvement in the CORE Districts and policy in California and beyond. In this role, PACE will conduct original qualitative and quantitative analysis and will manage the research and analytics by partners using CORE data to ensure that the portfolio of work is cohesive and meaningful to the districts. As part of this research partnership, PACE will engage a network of university-based researchers across the state to conduct research projects of mutual interest. Our vision is that together we can make California a destination for world-class research and can simultaneously transform the way research is conducted in the state, by creating a process that dramatically accelerates research timelines and ensuring that products are meaningful and well communicated to decision-makers**.**

Research process

- **Generating research questions to maximize learning.** Research questions will be generated by district leaders as well as researchers in the field, and PACE will facilitate the development of proposals to be aligned with the learning priorities expressed by district staff at CORE meetings and events, to ensure a high-quality scientific contribution, and to impact current policy making in Sacramento and beyond.

- **Process for approving research proposals.** Our goal with the research partnership is to maximize learning while minimizing burden on district staff. We intend to accept and vet research proposals from PACE-affiliated researchers on an ongoing basis, but will seek district approval for new research projects only once per year. District staff will review these proposals and will decide whether to opt into particular research studies. The portfolio of work will then be presented to the CORE Board for approval by consent at the September meeting annually. (The 2016-17 research agenda was approved by the CORE Board on December 9, 2016; the 2017-18 research agenda was approved by the CORE Board on September 8, 2017; the 2018-19 research agenda will be approved by the CORE Board on September 14, 2017.).

- **Data sharing.** PACE currently has data use agreements (DUAs) with each CORE district and is building a historical research database that can be shared with external researchers. By providing data that is cleaned, documented, and ready-to-use, we can eliminate time in data processing so that researchers can begin work immediately. We will streamline this process even further by engaging external researchers contractually as agents of PACE, thus eliminating the need for a separate DUA between every university and every district for work covered under the CORE-PACE DUAs. Rather than transferring data to researchers at each affiliated university, the researchers will sign a data use agreement with PACE and will only access CORE data through Stanford's secure, remotely-accessed folders. We can also share data in this way with researchers that specific districts are engaging in non-CORE research studies, if desired; contact Heather Hough at hjhough@stanford.edu if you are interested in discussing this option further.

- **Managing the research process.** As research is underway, PACE will manage the portfolio to ensure coherence and timeliness. As researchers have analysis plans or preliminary results, PACE will share with district leaders at CORE meetings and will host webinars in which district staff can engage with researchers on specific project plans, progress, and interpretation.

- **Reports tailored for different audiences**. To maximize impact, we will require that each researcher, in addition to reports for an academic audience, produce a policy brief designed to share policy implications for leaders in Sacramento and state-wide, and a district-specific "improvement report" which will translate the research into actionable, local data for improvement. For example, these reports, which will not be made publicly available, will highlight which schools/subgroups are doing well or are most at risk in a particular analysis, how the district compares to others, or how the investigated problem has changed over time.

- **Review of academic and policy reports prior to publication.** When research studies are completed, drafts will be shared with all district staff through the CORE weekly newsletter. Every time a draft report is released, district staff will have 2-3 weeks to provide feedback. For every PACE policy report that is released, PACE will enlist a district leader to serve as a formal reviewer on the paper, in addition to two academic reviewers. (Formal reviewers receive a small stipend for their efforts.) Note: No individual district's results will be shared publicly. Research studies will say that the study was conducted using data from the CORE Districts (or a subset), but will never compare findings across districts or disaggregate findings by district.

Current Action Items for District Research Leads

- **Check out new publications from the CORE-PACE research partnership!**

Timeline for approving external research

Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct

Data shared, research ongoing →

PACE manages portfolio to ensure coherence and timeliness; preliminary results are presented regularly at CORE meetings; full papers are reviewed by district staff as completed

Research questions for next year developed by researchers and district leaders in partnership, proposals developed and approved

Research portfolio approved by CORE Board in September of each year

PACE Policy Analysis for California Education