

Announcing the 2016-17 Incentive Fund Recipients

Stanford GSE announces the 2016-17 Incentive Fund Recipients for projects in SFUSD

August 2016

This is the third year the Stanford University Graduate School of Education (GSE) supported an Incentive Fund for Projects in San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). The fund supports faculty research that is conducted in the context of a sustained and deep collaboration with SFUSD. Because the district identifies the problems of practice being researched, the research has a high likelihood of having an effect on policies and practice. The collaboration and funding give Stanford's GSE an opportunity to make a measureable difference in the quality of education experienced by a very diverse population of students.

Below is a list of the six projects funded for the 2016-2017 school year by the Stanford GSE Incentive Fund for Projects in SFUSD:

Practical Measures for Improving the Quality of Mathematics Classroom Practice

Stanford: Professor Hilda Borko

SFUSD: Program Administrator Elizabeth Hull Barnes

Problem of Practice: How can SFUSD assess the quality of discourse in mathematics?

Overview: The purpose of this study is to develop a set of practical measures (Bryk, et al, 2015) that can be used to assess the quality of discourse in mathematics classrooms and associated implementation routines. In collaboration with colleagues at Vanderbilt University and the University of Washington, the project will develop brief surveys to assess students' perceptions of the quality of small group and whole-class discussions in mathematics classrooms, data collection and analysis routines, and data representations to share findings with multiple audiences. The measures will be aligned with the SFUSD vision of powerful classrooms, with a particular focus on improving students' access to mathematics content, and their agency, authority and identity.

iLabs Design Thinking Innovations Research

Stanford: Professor Shelley Goldman

SFUSD: iLab Director Brian Fox

Problem of Practice: How can schools design new solutions to persistent equity dilemmas facing their communities within the context of limited financial and human resources?

Overview: The purpose of the research is to examine and profile the evolution of innovation and equity that results from iLab activities. The iLab is committed to using a design thinking process and promoting related mindsets through training and coaching in design as part of a change management process. The study will examine how school teams winning iLab support through the Innovation Awards are using design thinking to develop innovations that address the specific achievement and equity goals they identify. The research will be aimed at profiling how the training and design thinking problem solving process are understood and put to work in helping innovations be conceptualized and implemented in the awarded schools.

Examining the process and evidence explored during the SFUSD Student Assignment Decision in 2009-2010

Stanford: Assistant Professor Leah Gordon

SFUSD: Executive Director Orla O'Keeffe

Problem of Practice: What are the driving criteria of the different student assignment options explored in 2008-10?

Overview: This study will review artifacts from the 2009-2010 policy development process when the district was considering a proposed change to its student assignment policy. SFUSD policy-makers are in the process of re-examining the student assignment policy and want a survey of documents reflecting the decision-making processes that led to this policy change.

Early Literacy Risk Assessment Partnership

Stanford: Professor Bruce McCandliss

SFUSD: Chief of Special Education Elizabeth Blanco & Chief of Curriculum and Instruction Brent Stephens

Problem of Practice: What is the research-based framework for supports and assessments for students with learning disabilities?

Overview: The central aims of this partnership involve a thought partnership to engage in shared dialogue between research and practice, followed by a systematic assessment of available data on current practice and analysis of potential changes, including jointly-designed pilot studies. The project is designed to help inform new approaches to dyslexia screening in response to a new state mandate requiring a phonological screening for dyslexia by 2017-2018.

Educational success of highly mobile students

Stanford: Assistant Professor Jelena Obradovic and the John W. Gardner Center

SFUSD: Chief of Student, Family, and Community Support Kevin Truitt and Executive Director Mary Richards

Problem of Practice: How can we help SFUSD/how can SFUSD better track, understand, and support their homeless and highly mobile (HHM) student population?

Overview: The study is designed to describe the growing homeless and highly mobile (HHM) student population and to advance our understanding of various risks that these students face. In addition to analyzing the size and distribution of the HHM population across a range of school and student characteristics, the study will identify the implications of being homeless and highly mobile by studying various processes and outcomes related to educational success, including school attendance, academic achievement, socio-emotional learning, and students' participation in relevant existing services

English Learners' Access to Science: An Exploratory Investigation of the SFUSD Middle School Science Core Curriculum, Assessments, and PD

Stanford: Professor Guillermo Solano-Flores, the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity, and Understanding Language

SFUSD: Program Administrator Sarah Delaney

Problem of Practice: How might we develop a core curriculum that will ensure that every student has access to high-quality and engaging teaching and learning in science?

Overview: "Learning Through Performance" (LTP) in middle school science is a collaborative project between SFUSD and UL/SCALE in which teacher-leaders, teachers, and UL/SCALE staff are co-designing professional development and NGSS-aligned science curriculum with embedded performance assessments. At the center of this collaboration is a shared goal to ensure that every student has access to high quality and engaging teaching and learning in science. To achieve this goal it is critical that we more fully understand how curriculum, assessments, and instruction support access and achievement of students who are English Learners (ELs). Thus, the purpose of this study is to build a research base in order to: 1) Identify and document issues and challenges relevant to equitable participation and optimal performance-based learning for ELs that emerge during the planning, development, and implementation of the Grades 7 and 8 NGSS-aligned science courses; and 2) Address those issues and challenges as they emerge with the intent to ensure effective curriculum, assessments, and instruction