

From: Kevin Feldman [kfeldman@scoe.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 22, 2012 2:32 PM
To: What Works
Cc: carol egan
Subject: Comments form the Field re: Read Naturally evaluation

Greetings,

I am a 41 yr professional educator, co-author of a reading intervention program

(Scholastic's READ 180) and long time supporter of "evidence based practices".

In that spirit I would like to give you some feedback re: problems with one of

your

WWC reviews re: the Read Naturally (RN) program. While my remarks are specifically

re: the RN program they would apply to any/all reviews conducted by the WWC.

First off let me begin with a strong caveat, I am a SOLID supporter of the

WWC

and other similar research supported, objective evaluations of tools for educators

(e.g. Johns Hopkins Best Evidence Encyclopedia, National RTI website - www.rti4success.org).

I have been urging the thousands of educators I interact with annually to not

simply

believe publisher advertising but to insist on quality/objective third party

evidence. Thus, my feed back

in this email is in the context of unabashed support for your work.

However, in the case of RN I think you have made some categorical errors that

need to

be corrected so practitioners in the field are not confused and misled by receiving partial

or unintentionally misconstrued information. Specifically, the Hancock et al.

report is clearly

misleading because the research question being investigated was not the efficacy of the RN

program/strategy... in fact the authors (C. Denton is a personal colleague of

mine) have gone

on the record noting as such. In other words, while the study did use the RN

materials, they did not

use the RN instructional strategy - thus it could in no way be represented as an

objective review of

the efficacy of the RN intervention. In contrast, the study by Christ et al, (<http://www.rti4success.org/instructionTools>) posted on the RTI site does actually evaluate the efficacy of the RN program using the entire program as designed.

As a colleague who is not in the employ of RN (they are colleagues too), in point of fact, I am in an author on a competitors program as noted above, I have a keen interest in fairness and objectivity in the information we provide to the educational community. I think the WWC needs to be more thorough in disclosing what is actually being evaluated in the studies it chooses to review, and should go back and adjust/clarify any existing reviews that are misleading, such as that for RN as noted above.

Thank you for listening and considering my suggestions.

Sincerely,

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