It Takes a City to Raise a Child: Past and Current Outcomes for a City-wide Systemic Reform Initiative

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January 21, 2015 (Wednesday)
12:45 – 14:00
Room 205, Runme Shaw Building, HKU
Chair: Dr Timothy Hew

Abstract:
This seminar will describe implementation processes and outcomes of the Say Yes City-wide Turnaround Strategy (SYCTS) in Syracuse and Buffalo, two New York state districts serving large numbers of disadvantaged students. Based on a record of success through “chapters” serving small cohorts of students in Harlem, Philadelphia, Hartford, and Cambridge, Say Yes initiated the SYCTS in Syracuse in 2008 and in Buffalo in 2012. As an extension of past reform approaches, the Say Yes change process is collaboratively driven by the schools, the district, and the community (including higher education). The shared vision is that when all students are prepared to graduate high school and enroll in higher education (or pursue careers), the district’s schools become more desirable and the entire city benefits through higher prosperity, population growth, and increased employment. In the process, the reform gains much more urgency and value than simply raising test scores, while growing sustainability roots resilient to changes. During the seminar, we will review research outcomes from the two cities and discuss challenges and successes related to implementation activities.

About the speaker:
Steven M. Ross is currently a senior research scientist and professor at the Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Ross is the author of six textbooks and over 140 journal articles in the areas of educational technology, at-risk learners, educational reform, extended learning time programs, and research and evaluation. He is a noted lecturer on school programs and educational evaluation, Editor Emeritus of the research section of the Educational Technology Research and Development journal, and a member of the editorial board for four other professional journals. In 1993, he was the first faculty recipient of The University of Memphis Eminent Faculty Award for teaching, research and service, and recently held the Lillian and Morrie Moss Chair of Excellence in Urban Education and a Faudree Professorship at The University of Memphis. He has testified on school restructuring research before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families, has been a consultant to the National Science Foundation on project evaluation design, and is a technical advisor and researcher on current federal and state initiatives regarding the evaluation of out-of-school learning, technology usage, evaluation of principals, and supplemental educational services. Current projects include the evaluation of principal preparation and professional development programs, a city-wide turnaround initiative in Syracuse and Buffalo, NY, and after-school mentoring and experiential learning programs for children and adolescents in multiple states.

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