Data Connections

Discussion Group – Thursday April 24, 2014, 11:15-12:00, hosted by Wendy Smith & Traci Kutaka

VAM as Part of a Larger Picture

Notes from the conversation:

What does it mean for professional development to “work”?

- Increased test scores—valid, reliable, aligned; knowledge and abilities
- Teachers try new classroom practices
- “non-cognitive” factors
- attitudes, beliefs, self-efficacy
- pedagogical skills
- fidelity of implementation—PD, K-12 curriculum
- high quality PD⇒implement well⇒proximal T outcomes—beliefs, knowledge, practice⇒student achievement
- increased STEM interest (pipeline) by students
- National Professional Board Certification for teachers (external validation)
- Retention of teachers in the building/profession
- Program implementation
- Cultural change
  - Ending isolation
  - Maintaining changes begun by PD
  - Increased teacher leadership
- Building capacity to improve
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Good content
- Problems: bad tests, different content

How can VAM contribute to understanding the effects of professional development?

- Valid, reliable, aligned assessments, curriculum, PD
- Longitudinal
- Student⇒Teacher links
- Scheduling (Professional Learning Communities)
- Problems: student teachers, maternity leave (how to attribute gains to teachers who are not teaching students the whole year?)
- Student mobility and attendance
- Student characteristics
- Multiple baseline necessary
- Professional Learning Communities—Teacher support (mentor)
- Good control group
- Teacher characteristics—background, mobility, experience
- School characteristics and leadership

What other data and analyses can be included to holistically evaluate the effectiveness of professional development?

- Descriptive first
- HLM (hierarchical linear modeling)
- Teacher effects, Student effects
- Other types of VAM
- Measure fidelity of implementation—Student work
- SEM (structural equation modeling)
- Program theory of change v. how Teachers change, self report v. obs