Insight Policy Research (Insight) is a small business leader in education research and policy. Since 2001 we have conducted a broad spectrum of evaluation, data collection, statistical analyses, and technical assistance projects for the Department of Education, other federal agencies, states, school districts, and private clients. Our education staff include sociologists, psychologists, statisticians, anthropologists, and former teachers, all with advanced degrees and recognized as leaders in their field. Insight is a certified 8(m) woman-owned small business. Below we showcase a selection of our projects across four core areas:

- College and Career Readiness
- Statistical Services
- Student Success
- Workforce Development

Clients

- Administration for Children and Families
- Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
- General Services Administration
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Institute of Education Sciences
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Science Foundation
- Regional Educational Laboratory—Appalachia
- UNCF
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Small Business Administration

Data Collection

- Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Observations

Program Evaluation

- Formative
- Process/Implementation
- Effectiveness
- Impact (quasi-experimental design, randomized control trial)

Statistical Analyses

- Multilevel Modeling
- Sampling
- Time Series Analysis
- Propensity Score Matching
- Weighting
- Power Analysis

Technical Assistance

- Practitioner Modules
- Technical Guides
- Professional Learning Resource
- Communities of Practice
- Stakeholder Engagement

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Not just answers—Insight
College and Career Readiness

Minority-Serving Institutions Communities of Practice (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education). Insight provided technical assistance to the Office of Career and Technical and Adult Education and Minority-Serving Institution grantees. We led the needs assessments and community of practice (CoP) coaching to grantees at Historically Black Colleges and Predominantly Black Community Colleges and coordinated webinars to address needs of all grantees. Coaching involved helping CoP leaders understand the structure and facilitation of CoPs, building capacity in issues related to improving career and technical education, and sharing best practices.

Evaluation of the Northeast Tennessee College and Career Readiness Consortium (Niswonger Foundation). As part of a 5-year Investing in Innovation Fund grant, Insight provided a formative evaluation of several programs that promote college and career readiness across a consortium of rural school districts. We analyzed extant data on student course enrollment and completions to provide feedback on growth of and student success in Advanced Placement courses and developmental college math courses taken prior to high school graduation. We also monitored the activities of a team of college and career counselors, including a text message pilot program to prevent summer melt. For this evaluation, Insight developed student and teacher surveys, teacher interview protocols, and a classroom observation protocol. The analyses combined student assessment data, web survey data, and qualitative data.

Career Pathways Initiative Process Improvement Effort (CPI-PRIME), for UNCF. UNCF contracted with Insight to assist with UNCF’s Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) at Historically Black Colleges and Predominantly Black Institutions. Through CPI-PRIME, Insight provides technical assistance in implementing continuous improvement cycles in one of three areas: (1) general education; (2) workforce development; and (3) faculty development by guiding administrators through multiple Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycles. Insight is working with three case study colleges, seven virtual colleges, and the Carolina Cluster state team and member institutions to systemically improve their implementation of the CPI using PDSA cycles. The technical assistance enables administrators to highlight the outcomes they want to achieve, identify the issues in reaching their goals, develop solutions that can be implemented quickly to address the barriers, monitor change and improvement, and analyze outcomes.

Evaluation of the Nursing Educational Loan Repayment Program and the Nursing Scholarship Program (Health Resources and Services Administration). Under this project, Insight led a 5-year evaluation of the impact of two national programs: the Nursing Educational Loan Repayment Program and the Nursing Scholarship Program, both designed to reduce the current nursing shortage and address the nation’s growing need for nursing professionals, particularly in critical shortage areas. The evaluation included the development and implementation of annual performance measures and a cost-benefit analysis of the programs in the context of the issues affecting the current nursing shortage. Insight conducted data collection and analysis of current program databases and drafted the final report detailing the findings and policy recommendations presented to the Health Resources and Services Administration and Congress.

Insight is conducting cross-sectional analysis of data on career and technical education (CTE) and analyzing and reporting data related to postsecondary education in the United States on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at the U.S. Department of Education. Insight produces Statistics in Brief reports, Data Point reports; a series of Web Tables examining patterns and trends in CTE course-taking, nondegree education and training among adults who are not enrolled in high school; and categories of college costs, types of financial aid, and family contributions across institution types and selected student characteristics. Data used in the reports come from the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009, the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002, the Adult Training and Education Survey, the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, and the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

Statistical Services

Publications, Education Analysis, and Reporting for Sample Surveys, Assessments, and Administration (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics—NCES). Insight conducts data analysis of several National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) sample surveys to generate estimates of target populations. The Department uses these estimates and in reports, briefs, and web tables for publications and presentations. Insight creates visual representations of data for ease of sharing results across wide audiences. All analyses and reports go through the rigorous NCES review process prior to publication.

Schools and Staffing Survey Reports (U.S. Department of Education, NCES). Insight holds the reporting contract with NCES for the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). We provide statistical support for the analysis, writing, production, and release of reports on the latest administration of data from SASS. Statistical support includes statistical coding and analysis, data quality and consistency checks, and recommendations on analytical decisions related to report content. Insight also adjusts analyses for complex survey design and ensures report compliance with NCES statistical standards and reporting requirements.

U.S. Participation in PIRLS 2016 (U.S. Department of Education, NCES). The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is a large-scale comparative assessment of student performance across Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. Under this 5-year contract, Insight analyzed and reported U.S. data for the 2016 administration of PIRLS. We developed individual school reports comparing the performance of each participating school to that of the United States overall and other OECD countries. Insight also contributed to dissemination activities.
Merit Review: Assessment of Investigator and Reviewer Experiences (National Science Foundation). Insight is leading a 5-year evaluation of the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) Merit Review system to assess principal investigators’ and reviewers’ experiences with the system. The project will also determine the impact of five pilot programs aimed at increasing the quality and efficiency of the review system. As part of the study, Insight is developing and administering a web survey to the universe of 120,000 principal investigators who submitted and/or reviewed proposals to or for NSF during 2012–2014, conducting in-depth interviews with NSF staff, and examining the impact of the five pilot studies through a quasi-experimental design using time-series data.

Florida Comprehensive Study on Middle School Performance. Insight produced a comparative report of Florida’s performance on the 2015 National Assessment of Education Progress with that of six states (Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Vermont, and Washington) for the Florida state legislature as required by House Bill 293. The study used a mixed-methods approach to analyze Florida’s performance on key metrics associated with students’ educational experiences relative to the comparison states identified as having high-performing fourth and eighth grade students. The report provided recommendations for strategies to improve outcomes among a large proportion of the student population, with an emphasis on high-need student populations in Florida.

Student Success

Evaluation of an Algebra I Blended Learning Pilot Program (Niswonger Foundation). Through the Niswonger Foundation’s Investing in Innovation Fund grant, one large high school decided to pilot blended learning in ninth grade Algebra I classrooms in the 2014–2015 school year. Half the classes implemented blended learning, and the other half continued as usual. Insight monitored implementation and collected data from student assessments, student surveys, teacher surveys, teacher interviews, and classroom observations. Teachers implementing blended learning strategies reported positive attitudes about flexibility in classroom instruction, greater student engagement and motivation, and a collaborative working environment. Teacher surveys and interviews, student surveys, and classroom observations revealed between-classroom differences in approaches to using blended learning strategies. End-of-semester course exams showed a higher percentages of students in blended learning classrooms answered more exam questions correctly compared to their peers in traditional classrooms.
Evaluation of NSF’s Gender in Science and Engineering (GSE) Program. Insight conducted a 3-year evaluation of the GSE program to assess its contribution to the development of knowledge, social, and human capital related to gender in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. Insight conducted a portfolio analysis of the GSE program by coding grantees’ annual and final reports. The 174 funded GSE projects resulted in the publication of 267 peer reviewed journal articles; 464 conference papers; 27 conference proceedings; 39 books; and numerous courses, curricula, and other resources. The projects also trained more than 2,500 faculty members and student researchers and teachers, community members, and parents. The GSE program provided access to social capital through networks, partnerships, and collaborations.

Evaluation of the Story Mentors Pilot Marketing Campaign in Mississippi, for the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. Insight conducted an evaluation of the Story Mentors pilot to help the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy better understand the level of engagement of teachers, parents, and mentors with a literacy product targeted to first and second grade students in Mississippi. Employing a mixed-methods approach, including random assignment of marketing materials, Insight provided the foundation with several recommendations to improve dissemination and engagement prior to the implementation of a national campaign.

Evaluation of the Adult Literacy XPRIZE Community Competition, for the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. Insight conducted an evaluation of the Adult Literacy XPRIZE Community Competition (CC) to help the foundation understand and document the various strategies proposed to increase access and use of five digital literacy mobile applications among adult learners. The project used a mixed-methods approach to analyze information from the various phases of the XPRIZE-CC to culminate in one report with considerations for a future study of the efficacy of mobile applications.

Workforce Development

Evaluation of NSF’s Advanced Technological Education Program (NSF). Insight is conducting a 3-year, mixed-methods evaluation of NSF’s Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program. The ATE program is designed to educate highly qualified science and engineering technicians in advanced technology fields, improve the technical skills and preparation of educators in STEM, and increase the capacity of institutions that educate technicians. The evaluation includes collection and analysis of extant data from more than 1,000 institutions of higher education plus state departments of labor, new quantitative data collections through use of web surveys, qualitative case studies, and interviews with industry. Results will help NSF determine which programs, practices, and approaches hold the most promise for producing new, in-demand technicians.

Support of Implementation and Evaluation Design for Simulated Workplace (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, REL Appalachia). Insight worked with members of the West Virginia Workforce Readiness Alliance to design a research agenda focused on showing how career and technical education prepares students for the workforce. The agenda helped educators, students, parents, and industry partners understand authentic workforce development. The Simulated Workplace initiative was
a partnership of West Virginia's Division of Technical and Adult Education Services, business and industry, higher education, and K–12 educators where high school students were immersed in real workplace environments. Insight conducted a series of projects to analyze implementation data collected in fall 2014, provide guidance on additional data collection needs, and design a rigorous evaluation of the Simulated Workplace initiative’s effects on student outcomes.

**Evaluation of the Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program and the Educational Partnership Program (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA], Office of Education).** NOAA’s Office of Education operates a $5 million scholarship program providing funds that offer direct NOAA involvement (internships) and partial tuition payments to students. Insight is leading the evaluation aimed at assessing the success of these scholarship programs in increasing recipient college graduation rates, increasing the likelihood of students continuing their studies in graduate school, and increasing employment in related fields. The mixed-methods evaluation incorporates a regression discontinuity design of scholarship recipients and those who applied but did not receive the scholarship, web and computer-assisted telephone interview surveys, in-depth interviews, and site visits to institutions of higher education.

**Formative Evaluation of NSF’s Career-Life Balance Initiative (NSF).** Insight conducted a formative evaluation for NSF’s Career-Life Balance Initiative, which supports family-friendly policy solutions that promote work-life balance among science and engineering graduate students, postdoctorates, and faculty at institutions of higher education. This multiphase evaluation included document review, review of grantee reports, focus groups with NSF program directors, and in-depth interviews of more than 50 grantees. The findings will inform the implementation of an impact evaluation along with the collection of systematic grantee outcome data.

**Evaluation of SNAP Employment and Training Pilots (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service).** The 2014 Farm Bill authorized grants for 10 pilot sites to develop and test innovative employment and training strategies designed to raise employment, increase earnings, and reduce reliance on public assistance. This study is a rigorous evaluation of the 10 pilot projects to measure the impact on (1) helping participants find and retain employment, (2) increasing household income, (3) reducing reliance on public assistance, and (4) improving other measures of household well-being. Insight is providing technical assistance, training, and monitoring of pilot projects and conducting site visits. We are also collecting and analyzing administrative data on employment, earnings, and public assistance related to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Medicaid.
Randomized Control Trial Evaluation of the Health Profession Opportunity Grants Program (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families). Insight partnered with Abt Associates and MEF Associates on a multisite, randomized control trial evaluation of the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) program. Each HPOG site designed and implemented an occupational training program for low-income individuals to earn educational credentials and enter a healthcare profession. Insight assessed sites’ capacity for the random assignment study, developed customized evaluation plans for each grantee (unique to their particular recruitment, intake, and enrollment procedures), conducted pilot testing, and provided technical assistance and training to grantees for implementing random assignment. Insight monitored administrative data and provided ongoing technical assistance to help grantees achieve their enrollment targets and ensure the continued distinction between treatment and control group services. We collected qualitative data through site visits and semistructured interviews and conducted an implementation analysis.

Identifying Community Needs: Environmental Scan for Dutchess Community College’s Academic and Facilities Master Plan. Insight conducted an environmental scan to assist Dutchess Community College in developing a comprehensive but feasible 10-year master plan for the institution’s academic direction and facilities development. The environmental scan summarizes regional economic trends, workforce needs, labor supply, and gaps between labor supply and labor demand for the Hudson Valley region based on extant data and interviews with a large, diverse set of business and industry leaders.

Contract Vehicles
Certified 8(m) woman-owned small business | GSA Schedule: GS-10F-0136X

NAICS Codes
541690 | 541611 | 541990
541720 | 541618 | 541631 | 541641
611430 | 611710