Abstract

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) is a website established by Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education under the current American educational reform, endorsed by the No Child Left Behind Act. With its mission to provide educators, policy makers, researchers, and the public with a source of scientific evidence on effective education programs and practices, WWC has been working to review almost all available research on the interventions in various topic areas in education. WWC has a rigorous protocol and procedures for the assessment of evidence in each topic area, and normally admits only randomized control trials. The current topic areas reviewed by WWC are: Adolescent Literacy, Beginning Reading, Character Education, Dropout Prevention, Early Childhood Education, Elementary School Math, English Language Learners, Middle School Math, Students with Learning Disabilities, High School Math, and Early Childhood Education for Children with Disabilities. The publications produced by WWC include Topic Report, Practice Guide, Intervention Report, and Quick Review. Although WWC has produced many publications to disseminate its review and assessment on educational research, there are some critiques that WWC's focus on randomized control trials has raised some serious issues about the meta-analyses conducted by WWC. The current educational reform originally aimed to equip all American students with a strong academic achievement including the critical thinking, problem solving skills that the globalized economy needs. However, the accountability system, which the reform demands of schools and districts, seems to have let them search for “quick answers” that help them teach students just the basic skills required by the high-stakes standardized tests. Thus, the current situation may take the reform in unpredicted directions, and it is uncertain that WWC will continue to play the same role in the near future.