A division of CNA Corporation’s Institute for Public Research, CNA Education helps policymakers and practitioners improve the quality of public education by providing critical decisionmaking support. Our approach combines objective scientific methods, evidence-based analysis, on-the-ground field experience, and absolute data integrity.

We focus on:
- Making Effective Use of Data
- Teacher Quality
- K-12 Program Effectiveness
- Transitions from Secondary School
- College and Career Readiness/Workforce Development

We provide:
- Applied Research
- Program Evaluation
- Policy Analysis
- Technical Assistance

RESEARCH THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE...

Linking Teacher Quality to Prep Programs

CNA Education analyzed Virginia’s current teacher licensure processes and provided recommendations for implementing its new web-based license application portal. CNA identified additional data that Virginia could collect—through the online portal or other sources—to strengthen the state’s ability to conduct research on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs. Our report to the Virginia Department of Education identified the existing state data available to inform its improvement efforts. It also highlighted how other states have used data similarly. Learn more

Using Social Media to Support Teachers

During our ongoing summative evaluation of the Florida College and Career Readiness Initiative (FCCRI), CNA Education found that teachers of grade 12 college readiness and success courses lacked ready access to information about the skills tested on the state’s mandatory college placement exam and to existing course prep and instructional materials. In cooperation with state and college officials, CNA launched an “FCCRI group” on the social media site Edmodo.com, loading the group page with links and downloadable documents collected by the research team. Within a month, more than 300 teachers had joined. Learn more

Nearly 75% of Florida’s 67 county-based districts have at least one teacher who has joined the online FCCRI group CNA Education created.

www.cna.org/centers/ipr/education
Making Information about Kentucky High Schoolers “Click”

As part of our Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Appalachia contract, CNA Education conducted a study to provide Kentucky public high schools with information about their students’ participation and performance in the state’s college preparatory transition courses. We accompanied our report of the study findings with an online, interactive map of Kentucky that displays district-level data with a single click. Many Kentucky superintendents found the map helpful as a quick, easy way to access, compare, and share data about their district. REL Appalachia is one of a nationwide network of 10 regional educational laboratories. It serves Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Tools for Measuring Social Networks

The objective of the Northeast Tennessee College and Career Ready Consortium of 30 schools and five colleges is to increase students’ access to academically rigorous courses. In one strategy, members are partnering on programs of distance learning and dual enrollment. CNA Education is using a variety of social network analysis tools to evaluate the strength and density of these partnerships over time, with a focus on sustainability after the Consortium’s grant funding runs out.

Understanding Impacts of Employment Training

Recipients of Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grants from the U.S. Department of Labor must undergo third-party evaluation of their program’s impact/outcomes and implementation, following strict evidence standards. CNA Education is evaluator for several TAACCCT programs, including the $2.6 million Southwest SOLUTIONS at Southwest Tennessee Community College and the $12.1 million Health & Life Sciences Initiative (HL-SCI) from a consortium of five community colleges in Connecticut.

Evaluating Teacher Professional Development

Applying a randomized experimental design, CNA Education evaluated the efficacy of TERC’s Using Data—a professional development program to help teachers improve instruction through collaboration. Using Data has teachers work together to analyze data on student performance, share expertise, try new ideas, and learn from content specialists. In addition to measuring overall program effects, we conducted exploratory analyses to better understand when the program works, and for whom. Our evaluation produced actionable recommendations that TERC could use to enhance the Using Data process.

Defining and Implementing Mastery Learning

In conversations at the University of Kentucky, CNA Education connected with several school districts interested in creating or expanding mastery learning programs. We helped them by undertaking a descriptive study of high school programs in three Kentucky districts. The resulting report, Beyond Proficient, documented definitions, rationales, and implementation—including professional development, instructional approaches, assessments, and scheduling. To address remaining questions, the three districts are partnering with us, the University, and other high schools across the state to dive deeper into how definitions of mastery affect the way it is measured and implemented with fidelity.