

## Results Call for Proposals Spring 2014

**Next Call for Proposals: Apply by December 19, 2014**

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### Barbara LeRoy

Barbara LeRoy holds a doctorate in Education from the University of Michigan. She is the director of the Developmental Disabilities Institute at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan (USA). She also holds a graduate faculty position in the University's College of Education. LeRoy's research focuses on the inclusion of students with special needs in regular education, including such related topics as post secondary transitions, family and individual quality of life, community inclusion, and self determination. She is a Governor's appointed member of the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, a board member of the United States International Council on Disabilities and Rehabilitation International, and a member of the Advisory Panel to the 2013 State of the World's Children with Disabilities (UNICEF).



### Fellowship project:

LeRoy will use data from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) to examine the equity, participation, accommodations and performance of students with special educational needs in this standardized assessment. The study will be divided into two phases. The first phase will use the most recent PISA results to examine the current status of students with special educational needs by country, student demography, and academic performance. Between-student and within-student group comparisons will be made on the impact of learner behaviors and economic, social and cultural status on access, participation, and performance. The second phase of the study will examine the policy issues related to the implementation of PISA for students with special educational needs, including equity, access, and accommodation considerations.

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**Next Call for Proposals: October 23 to December 18, 2014**

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### Joel Rapp

Joel Rapp is a researcher and the director of the testing and assessment department at the National Authority for Measurement and Evaluation in education (RAMA), in Israel – the institution responsible for the evaluation and periodical measurement of the education system in Israel. He is a psychometrician and holds a PhD. in cognitive and experimental Psychology from Tel Aviv University. He was recently elected chair of the Israeli Psychometric Association (ISPA). For over two decades he has worked in the field of large scale tests and tool design for psychological and educational measurement. He led the development and was involved in the implementation of several large scale assessment educational programs such as GEMS (MEITZAV) – a national Israeli test battery implemented at two grade levels in 4 subjects used for the periodic evaluation of schools. He is also responsible for the participation of Israel in International studies such as PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS and TALIS. As part of his duties he serves as one of the National Project Managers (NPM) of PISA for Israel. He has been working on various research projects such as the influence of student motivation on student achievement in national and International tests; the relationship between grade, age and PISA results, and the gender gap in mathematics, science and language.



### Fellowship project:

The investigation of gender differences in mathematics and reading in all five PISA cycles has consistently revealed that across many countries, boys scored higher than girls in mathematics. However, across all countries they score lower than girls in reading. Since there is considerable variability between nations in the extent and the direction of the gender gap in mathematics, some researchers have suggested that the gender gap in mathematics within countries may be related to the level of gender equality in a country. More research is needed to develop these ideas and transform them into practical policies. The aim of my study is to further our understanding of the aspects that may be related to the gender gap at school, as part of an attempt to define policies that might contribute to enhance equality between boys and girls. The proposed research has two objectives:

- a. To investigate the sources and nature of the persistent correlation found between the magnitude of the gender gap in mathematics and in reading. According to a recent study based on Israeli data, it seems that one key for improvement in mathematics, especially for under-achieving boys, might lay in improving their reading proficiencies at an early stage of schooling. This practice is especially relevant to emerging countries with low achievements, where boys in particular tend to have a very low level of proficiency in reading.
- b. To analyze the gender gap issue in mathematics (i.e. at the level of schools.) in order to identify factors and characteristics of schools' climate, practice and/or policy related to narrowing the gender gap in educational outcome in mathematics, language and science. Results might inform the development of policies and practices at the school level aimed to reduce these gaps.