Report to the WERA Council – WERA IRN on Educational Advocacy
Submitted by Lauri Johnson, Boston College, IRN Convener, November, 2017

The WERA International Research Network on Engaging Families, Educators, and Communities as Educational Advocates: Cross National Perspectives was convened in Fall 2015 and currently involves 77+ researchers across 15 countries (see Appendix A). Our three research strands include teacher/teacher union activism, advocacy by community based organizations, and parent/family empowerment. The activities of the IRN include organizing symposiums at international conferences; developing small working conferences to encourage networking between researchers and practitioners; and sponsoring and disseminating publications by network conveners and members.

Network Symposia and Working Conferences

Network sponsored symposiums were presented at the WERA focal group meeting in Washington D.C. in April, 2016; ECER in Dublin in August, 2016; CSSE (Canadian Society for the Study of Education) in Toronto in May, 2017; and the WERA focal group meeting in Hong Kong in late November 2017. We have submitted a network symposium proposal for the CIES (Comparative and International Education Society) conference in Mexico City in March, 2018 and are waiting to hear if it has been accepted.

Each year we convene one day working sessions and meetups of the IRN before major international conferences. Two recent IRN working conferences are described below:

*Advocacy and the Activist Professional: Public Education in Tough Times*

A working conference co-sponsored with the Irish National Teachers Organization was held on August 22, 2016 at the INTO headquarters in Dublin. Thirty members of the network attended, including teacher union officials as well as researchers who study teacher union activism in Scotland, Ireland, England, and the USA. Sample papers presented were entitled “Equity Is Not Enough: Seeking Persuasive Arguments for Policy Change,” “Teacher Unionism in Scotland: Union Renewal as Co-construction,” “Getting Actively Involved in a Trade Union: The Experiences of Young Teacher Activists,” and “Why, if it’s kicking off everywhere, is it not kicking off where I am? Making Sense of ‘Resistance’ in the Neoliberal School System.”

*Community Advocacy In/For Education*

Thirty researchers and educational advocates from Canadian and American universities, school districts, and community organizations met in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, on May 27, 2017 to share and discuss their on-going work. The range of topics addressed by participants was broad. For example, one community-based researcher spoke about his organization’s efforts to broaden definitions of school success while another reported on her study of youth pushed out of school. Advocates working within school districts talked about how they advocate for marginalized students by drawing on district-wide data, by challenging classism in schools, and by providing workshops for Canadian educators about their treaty partner identities. University-based researchers presented findings from studies designed to change school practices, including investigations of how to support
indigenous children in foster care, how school leaders promote social justice in diverse settings, and how school personnel can engage better with their communities. Other researchers shared findings from their studies of educational advocacy itself, including investigations into how context impacts advocacy and an international review of the literature on parent/family empowerment. This one-day meeting of the WERA IRN was held in advance of the annual meeting of the Canadian Society for Studies in Education.

Publications

WERA IRN publications include a special issue of the journal *Leadership and Policy in Schools* (January 2016) on “Engaging Families, Educators, and Communities as Educational Advocates” which includes five articles by network members. This special journal issue is currently being republished by Routledge as an edited book, which will be available in December 2017 (see attached special issue introduction and Routledge book cover).

WERA IRN member Nina Bascia and co-convenor Howard Stevenson authored a May 2017 publication based on case studies of teacher union organizing in 7 countries. Entitled “Organising Teaching: Developing the Power of the Profession” (funded by Education International), it is currently available in French, Spanish, and English and was widely disseminated throughout the IRN via member listserves and international webinars.

We are currently developing a proposal for a special issue of *The Journal of Educational Change* focused on advocacy by teachers, families, and community-based organizations tentatively titled “In Defense of Public Education: Cross National Perspectives.” This proposal will be submitted by June 2018.

World-wide Literature Review

Work has been underway on the world-wide literature review on educational advocacy over the past year. We have currently identified 100+ articles representing 50+ countries. Based on our preliminary findings, we are presenting two papers (one focused on family advocacy and the other on community-based organizations) at the November 2017 WERA focal group meeting in Hong Kong. We anticipate that the world-wide literature review will be completed by June 2018. Plans are underway to prepare at least one article based on this work for the proposed special issue of the *Journal of Educational Change* and potentially other journal publications.
Appendix A

List of WERA IRN Participants (77)– Engaging Families, Educators and Communities as Educational Advocates: Cross National Perspectives

Convenor

**Lauri Johnson, Associate Professor and Chair**
Dept. of Educational Leadership and Higher Education
Boston College
205C Campion Hall
Chestnut Hill, MA, USA 02467
lauri.johnson@bc.edu
Honorary Research Fellow, University of Nottingham
lauri.johnson@nottingham.ac.uk

Co-Convenors

**Sue Winton, Associate Professor**
York University
203 Winters College
4700 Keele Street
Toronto ON • Canada M3J 1P3
SWinton@edu.yorku.ca

**Howard Stevenson, Professor and Director of Research**
School of Education
University of Nottingham
Exchange Building
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham
NG8 1BB
UK
Howard.Stevenson@nottingham.ac.uk
Network Participants

**Paul Adams, Senior Lecturer**  
University of Strathclyde, Scotland  
paul.adams@strath.ac.uk

**Landy Ing-Anderson**  
York University, Toronto, Canada  
landyanderson@rogers.com

**Serafin Antunez, Professor**  
University of Barcelona, Spain  
santunez@ub.edu

**Herleen Arora**  
Laidlaw Foundation Fellow, Toronto, Canada  
herleen.arora@gmail.com

**Melanie Baak, Lecturer**  
University of South Australia, Australia  
melanie.baak@unisa.edu.au

**Nina Bascia, Professor**  
OISE, University of Toronto, Canada  
nbascia@oise.utoronto.ca

**Katherine Bates**  
Western Sydney University, Australia  
katherine.bates2@bigpond.com

**Lori Beckett, Professor**  
Leeds Beckett University, UK  
l.beckett@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

**Paul Bocking, Ph.D. Student**  
York University, Toronto, Canada  
pbocking@yorku.ca

**Halil Buyruk**  
Ankara University, Turkey  
Halil.buyruk@ankara.edu.tr

**Dave Cameron, Research Director**  
People for Education, Toronto, Canada  
david@peopleforeducation.ca
Tal Carmi
Tel Aviv University, Israel
talcarmi@gmail.com

David Casalaspi, Ph.D. Student
Michigan State University, USA
dwc@msu.edu

Christine Corso, Project Coordinator
People for Education, Toronto, Canada
christine@peopleforeducation.ca

Ty-Ron Douglas, Associate Professor
University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri, USA
douglastyr@missouri.edu

David Duffy, Education and Research Officer
Teacher’s Union of Ireland, Ireland
d Duffy@tui.ie

Maggie Dwyer, Graduate Student
Boston College, USA
dwyermy@bc.edu

Michael Evans, Associate Professor
Miami University, USA
mpevans16@gmail.com

Ori Eyal, Senior Lecturer
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
ori.eyal1@mail.huji.ac.il

Yael Fisher, Director of Graduate School
Achva Academic College of Education, Israel
yael@fisher.co.il

Ann Marie Fitzgerald, Assistant Professor
Duquesne University, USA
fitzger3@duq.edu

Christa Freiler, Consultant
Social Planning Council, Toronto, Canada
Cfreiler@bell.net
Alison Gilliland, Ph.D. Student
Irish National Teachers Organization and
University of Nottingham, UK
alisongilliland.ie@gmail.com

Tina Gourd, Ph.D.
University of Washington, Seattle, USA
gourdt@uw.edu

Catherine Hands, Associate Professor
Brock University, Canada
chands@brocku.ca

Kayla Healey, Graduate Student
Ryerson University, Canada
kaylahealy5@gmail.com

Rodney Hopson, Professor
George Mason University, USA
rhopson@gmu.edu

Sonya Horsford, Associate Professor
Teachers College, Columbia, USA
horsford@tc.columbia.edu

Ann Ishimaru, Associate Professor
University of Washington, USA
aishi@uw.edu

Lauren Jervis, Ph.D. student
York University, Toronto, Canada
Lauren_Jervis@edu.yorku.ca

Christine Johnston, Associate Professor
Western Sydney University, Australia
c.johnston@westernsydney.edu.au

Reva Joshee, Associate Professor
OISE, University of Toronto, Canada
rjoshee@oise.utoronto.ca

Karen Julien, Graduate Student
Brock University, Canada
karen.julien@brocku.ca
Ecem Karlidag, Ph.D. student
University of Nottingham, UK
ttxek38@nottingham.ac.uk

Yvonne Kelly, Community Resource Facilitator
York Region District School District, Canada
yvonne.kelly@yrdsb.ca

Brianna Kennedy, Asst. Professor
Utrecht University, Netherlands
b.l.kennedy@uu.nl

Muhammad Khalifa, Associate Professor
University of Minnesota, USA
khalifam@umn.edu

Temple Lovelace, Associate Professor
Duquesne University, USA
templelovelace@gmail.com

Christian Lundahl, Professor
Orebro University, Sweden
christian.lundahl@oru.se

Katherine Cumings Mansfield, Associate Professor
Virginia Commonwealth University, USA
kcmansfield@vcu.edu

Ruth McGinity, Lecturer
Institute of Education, UCL, UK
ruth.mcginity@

Rhiannon Maton
Pennsylvania State University, USA
rhiannonmaton@gmail.com

Michelle Milani, Ph.D. student
York University, Toronto, Canada
michellemilani@live.com

Peter Miller, Professor
University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA
pmmiller2@wisc.edu

Alison Milner, Ph.D. student
University of Nottingham, UK
ttxam93@nottingham.ac.uk
Christine Nganga, Assistant Professor
South Dakota State University, USA
ngangac@gmail.com

Blair Niblett, Assistant Professor
Trent University, Canada, UK
blairniblett@trentu.ca

Deniz Örücü
Baskent University, Turkey
denizorucri@hotmail.com

Pamela Osmond-Johnson, Asst. Professor
University of Regina, Canada
pamela.osmond-johnson@uregina.ca

Vijay K. Paralkar, Ph.D. student
Miami University, USA
paralkvk@miamioh.edu

Peter Piazza, Ph.D., Researcher
American Institutes for Research
Waltham, MA, USA
ppiazza@air.org

Mark Potter, Principal
Berhampore Primary School, Wellington, NZ
mark.potter@nsei.org.nz
mark.potter@berhampore.school.nz

Mark Priestley, Professor
University of Stirling, Scotland
m.r.priestley@stir.ac.uk

Carmen Proteasa
University of Bucharest, Romania
Carmen.proteasa@gmail.com

Andréanne Gélinas Proulx, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Université du Québec en Outaouais, Canada
andreanne.gelinas-proulx@uqo.ca

Barbara Ryeburn
British Columbia Teachers’ Federation, Canada
bryeburn@bctf.ca
Carolyn Shields, Professor  
Wayne State University, USA  
cshields@wayne.edu

Dennis Shirley, Professor  
Boston College, USA  
dennis.shirley@bc.edu

Patricia Silva  
University of Lereida, Spain  
patriciasilva@ub.edu

Sofia Marques Silva  
University of Porto, Portugal  
sofiamsilva@fpce.up.pt

Charles L. Slater, Professor  
California State University Long Beach  
Long Beach, CA USA  
Charles.Slater@csulb.edu

Hilda Smith, Graduate Student  
York University, Canada  
hsmith@yorku.ca

Ingrid Spencer, Asst. Headteacher  
Linden Primary School, Leicester, UK  
ispencer@linden.leicester.sch.uk

Anna Sullivan, Associate Professor  
School of Education  
University of South Australia, Australia  
anna.sullivan@unisa.edu.au

Jonas Larsson Taghizadeh  
Department of Government  
Institute for Housing and Urban Research  
Uppsala University, Sweden  
jonas.larsson@statsvet.uu.se

Emanuel Tamir  
Ohalo Academic College, Israel  
el.tamir@gmail.com
Dorit Tubin, Associate Professor
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel
dorittu@bgu.ac.il

Dr. Pierre Tulowitzki, Researcher
Institute for the Management and Economics of Education (IBB)
Teacher University Zug (PH Zug), Switzerland
pierre.tulowitzki@phzg.ch

Terri Watson, Assistant Professor
City College, City University of New York, USA
twatson@ccny.cuny.edu

Anjale Welton, Associate Professor
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA
ajwelton@illinois.edu

Terry Wilkenson, Ph.D. student
York University, Canada
Terry_Wilkinson@edu.yorku.ca

Camille M. Wilson, Professor
University of Michigan, USA
camillew@umich.edu

Emily Winchip, Ph.D. Student
University of Nottingham, UK
ttxejwin@nottingham.ac.uk

Miri Yemeni
Tel Aviv University, Israel
miriye@post.tau.ac.il