

# ProLEER Agenda

Professional Learning network to advance Early Education Reform

## Annual Meeting

At the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS)

Harvard University

1730 Cambridge Street

Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

Oct 1-3, 2018

### Monday, October 1: Pre-Meeting Activities

**9:15am**      **PICK-UP FOR SCHOOL VISIT AT:**  
**Location:** Porter Square Hotel, 1924 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge

**10:00-11:30pm**      **OPTIONAL SCHOOL VISIT:** Boston Public School's Early Learning Centers.  
*(Limited to 20 first comers and facilitators- confirmation by email).*  
**Location:** Josiah Quincy Elementary, 885 Washington St., Boston

**1:30pm**      **OPTIONAL AFTERNOON VISIT (meet at the entrance – ticket counter)**  
**Location:** 308 Congress St, Boston

A visit to the Boston Children's Museum, recognized internationally as a research and development center and pacesetter for children's exhibitions, educational programs and curriculum development: <http://www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/visit>

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**6:00-8:00pm**      **COCKTAIL**  
Come meet and catch up with ProLEER colleagues.  
**Location:** DRCLAS, 1730 Cambridge Street, CGIS South Concourse

**Tuesday, Oct 2: Meeting Location: DRCLAS, 1730 Cambridge Street**

- 9:30-10:00am**      **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**  
**Catherine Snow**, Patricia Albjerg Graham Professor of Education,  
Harvard Graduate School of Education  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Room: S030
- 10:00-12:00am**      **PLENARY: Setting Instructional Non-Negotiables in Early Literacy**  
**Nell K. Duke**, Professor of Education, Michigan University  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Room: S030
- 12:00-1:00pm**      **LUNCH - Location:** DRCLAS, CGIS South Concourse
- 1:00-3:00pm**      **SIMULTANEOUS CASE PANEL SESSIONS** (*Descriptions in Attachment 2.*)
- PANEL A: Research to Practice, Participant Case Studies** (*Traducción disponible*)  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Room S030  
Moderator: **Ana María Rodino**, Estado de la Educación, Costa Rica  
Presenters: **Eva Villalón Soler, Vanessa de Mier, Carolina Maldonado & Eduardo Escallón, Juan Samaniego & Ann Sofie Olsen.**
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- PANEL B: Policy to Practice, Participant Case Studies**  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Room S153  
Moderator: **Paola Uccelli**, Harvard Graduate School of Education  
Presenters: **Beatriz Cardoso, Alionka Miranda, Silvia Romero & David Montiel, Alejandra Meneses.**
- 3:00-3:30pm**      **COFFEE BREAK - Location:** DRCLAS, Concourse
- 3:30-4:30pm**      **PROJECT PITCHES** (*Descriptions in Attachment 3.*)
- SESSION A: Challenges to Scaling ECE Interventions**  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Room: S030  
Moderator: **Armida Lizarraga**, Luminario, Perú (*Traducción disponible*)  
Presenters: **Ana Maria Nieto, Anne Sofie Olsen, Lucy Zelaya y Rosa Cerezales**
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- SESSION B: Tools to Measure and Improve Literacy Practices**  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Room: S-216  
Moderator: **Kees Broekhof**, Sardes, Netherlands  
Presenters: **Alejandra Meneses, Rufina Pearson, Renata Villers**

- 4:30-5:40pm**      **NEW BOOK PRESENTATION: Un Buen Comienzo para los Niños de Chile.**  
**Andrea Rolla**, Harvard University  
**Marcela Marlozo**, Fundación Educacional Oportunidad, Chile
- 6:30pm**            **SHUTTLE BUS TO DINNER** - Buses will depart from DRCLAS
- 7:00-9:00pm**      **DINNER:** at the home of **Paola Uccelli**, Professor, Harvard Graduate School of Education. 8 Hillcrest Road, Belmont.

**Wednesday, Oct 3: Meeting Location: DRCLAS, 1730 Cambridge Street**

- 9:00-11:00am**      **PLENARY: Improving practice and research simultaneously:  
Learning to work together**  
**Catherine Snow**, Patricia Albjerg Graham Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Room S030
- 11:00-11:30am**    **COFFEE BREAK - Location:** DRCLAS, CGISS South Concourse
- 11:30-1:00pm**     **SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP MEETINGS**  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Concourse, Room S030; and Room S216  
Organizer: **Kees Broekhof**, Sardes, Netherlands
- 1:00-2:00pm**      **LUNCH - Location:** DRCLAS, Concourse
- 2:00-3:00pm**      **GROUP PLANNING: Building a Country Agenda**  
**Location:** DRCLAS, Room S030  
Moderator: **Renata Villers**, Amigos del Aprendizaje, Costa Rica
- 3:00-3:30pm**      **COFFEE BREAK - Location:** DRCLAS, CGIS South Concourse
- 3:30-4:15pm**      **REPORT BACK, by each country group.** Location: DRCLAS, Room S030
- 4:30-6:00pm**      **2019 PLANNING - Country Coordinators & Steering Committee- Room S216**

## Attachment 1. - Plenary Speaker Bios

**Catherine Snow**, is the Patricia Albjerg Graham Professor of Education, at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She is an expert in the language and literacy development of children, focusing on how oral language skills are acquired and how they relate to literacy outcomes. Snow has chaired two national panels: the National Academy of Sciences committee that prepared the report "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children," and the Rand Reading Study Group that prepared "Reading for Understanding: Toward an R&D Program in Reading Comprehension." Her research activities include a longitudinal study of language and literacy skills among low income children who have been followed for 15 years since age three; following the language development of young children participating in the Early Head Start intervention; studying the vocabulary development of first- and second-language learners; and considering aspects of transfer from first to second language in the domains of language and literacy. Her book, *Preparing Our Teachers: Opportunities for Better Reading Instruction*, is one of several efforts she is involved in to develop consensus among teacher-educators about what pre- and in-service elementary teachers need to know about language and literacy. Catherine is the Harvard Faculty Chair of ProLEER.

**Nell K. Duke**, is a professor in [literacy, language, and culture](#) in the [combined program in education and psychology](#) at the [University of Michigan](#). Duke received her Bachelor's degree from [Swarthmore College](#) and her Masters and Doctoral degrees from [Harvard University](#). Duke's work focuses on early literacy development, particularly among children living in poverty. Her specific areas of expertise include the development of informational reading and writing in young children, comprehension development and instruction in early schooling, and issues of equity in literacy education. She has served as Co-Principal Investigator of projects funded by the [Institute of Education Sciences](#), the [National Science Foundation](#), among other organizations. Duke is author of numerous journal articles and book chapters. Her most recent book is [\*Inside Information: Developing Powerful Readers and Writers of Informational Text through Project-based Instruction\*](#). She is co-author of the books [\*Reading and Writing Informational Text in the Primary Grades: Research-Based Practices\*](#); [\*Literacy and the Youngest Learner: Best Practices for Educators of Children from Birth to Five\*](#); [\*Beyond Bedtime Stories: A Parent's Guide to Promoting Reading, Writing, and Other Literacy Skills From Birth to 5\*](#), now in its second edition; and [\*Reading and Writing Genre with Purpose in K-8 Classrooms\*](#). She is co-editor of the [\*Handbook of Effective Literacy Instruction: Research-based Practice K to 8\*](#) and [\*Literacy Research Methodologies\*](#). She is also editor of [\*The Research-Informed Classroom\*](#) book series and co-editor of the [\*Not This, But That\*](#) book series.

## Attachment 2. - Simultaneous Case Presentations Panels

**Tuesday, Oct 2, 1:00-3:00pm**

**PANEL A: Research to Practice, Participant Case Studies**

Location: DRCLAS, Room S030

**Moderator:**

Ana María Rodino, Estado de la Educación, Costa Rica

**Presenters:**

**Eva Villalón Soler, Vanessa de Mier, Carolina Maldonado Carreño & Eduardo Escallón Largacha, Juan Samaniego & Ann Sofie Olsen.**

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**PANEL B: Policy to Practice, Participant Case Studies**

Location: DRCLAS, Room S153

Moderator: **Paola Uccelli**, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Presenters: **Beatriz Cardoso, Alionka Miranda, Silvia Romero & David Montiel, Alejandra Meneses.**

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### PRESENTERS PANEL A: Research to Practice, Participant Case Studies

**1. K-3 Reading in Puerto Rico's Public Schools: Towards a Policy Agenda**

**Eva Villalón Soler**, Flamboyán Foundation, Puerto Rico


Over the last couple of years, Flamboyán Foundation has partnered with agents from different sectors to understand the state of reading instruction in the primary grades in Puerto Rico with the aim of promoting research-based changes in policy and practice. In partnership with the Puerto Rico Institute of Statistics, we analyzed existing individual-level data from the Puerto Rico Department of Education on K-3 students and teachers for the first time on the island. We also collaborated with researchers from the Carlos Albizu University to administer IDEL (DIBELS) to over 500 students in private and public schools in Puerto Rico. We then created a forum with the support of ProLEER members and other local and international experts, where the learnings from these projects turned into policy recommendations for different agents and into new collaborative projects that tackle some of the great amount of work that remains to be done. The presentation will focus on the main findings of the above-mentioned research projects and the policy agenda that stemmed from them.

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**2. Program "Queremos aprender" (We want to learn)**

**Vanesa De Mier**, National Council for Scientific and Technical Research, CONICET, Argentina

In order to help close the attainment gap between young children from different social groups in Argentina, in 2015 a group of researchers (Borzzone, De Mier, Marder, Gannio, Dellafontana, Benítez, Plana and Valiño) began to develop the We Want to Learn Program. The Program considers advances in cognitive psychology and neuroscience to create a comprehensive development program, designed

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to be implemented at the age of 5 in kindergarten and continued in the 1st year of primary school. There is a steady progression in the Program's main pillars, which combine early literacy (vocabulary, phonemic awareness, comprehension, speaking, reading and writing) with the development of socio-emotional and cognitive skills (such as attention, memory and executive functions). In 2017 the government of the province of Mendoza decided to apply the Program. The application began with the training of supervisors, principals and teachers. Nowadays, a total of 60,000 children in kindergarten level and the 1st year of primary school are using the materials we have developed.

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### 3. Quality of Early Childhood Education in Colombia: Results from a National Study

**Carolina Maldonado Carreño & Eduardo Escallón Largacha**, Universidad de Los Andes, Colombia.

Research has shown that high quality ECE makes a significant difference in the lives of children. Yet, most of the research and quality measures have been constructed in the USA and Europe, leaving a gap on how quality of ECE associates with children development in low and middle income countries such as Colombia. This study explores the associations between the quality of institutional ECE and early childhood development in Colombian 3 to 5 year-olds, in both academic and social-emotional outcomes. A national-representative sample of 3,687 children within 597 classrooms and 312 kindergartens was collected, with measures on children development plus data on the quality of the schools' facilities, the pedagogical practices of the teachers, and household characteristics. Using multilevel model analyses we sought to identify which adult competencies (i.e., main caretakers, parents, and teachers) are necessary to nurture and foster high quality learning environments. Results show that availability of learning materials, teachers' education, pedagogical quality, and classroom activities are associated with several dimensions of children's development.

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### 4. Impact evaluation of a National Mentoring Program (Programa de Acompañamiento Pedagógico en Territorio, PAPT)

**Juan Samaniego & Anne Sofie Olsen**, Ministry of Education & Inter-American Development Bank, Ecuador.

Since 2007, Ecuador has made important efforts to improve its education system. However, the quality of education in the region – and more specifically in Ecuador - is still lagging behind that of developed countries, particularly in schools with students of low socioeconomic status, a greater proportion of ethnic minorities and located in rural areas.

PAPT implements a mentoring system in the field to support teachers in vulnerable zones and schools. The objective is to improve teaching of reading and writing in the early grades of primary school. The mentors accompany the teachers in the teaching process, with pedagogical support, feedback and demonstrations of classroom methods and practices in order to progressively achieve improvements in student learning. PAPT was initially rolled out by the Ministry of Education in 15 schools circuits in 2017 and was launched at the national level in February 2018. There have been logistical and implementation issues that might affect the initial results. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank is planning an impact evaluation of the program for late 2018. In order to measure the practices of the teachers, the CLASS instrument will be applied, while student learning will be measured using tests from the Woodcock-Muñoz battery. Within a sample of educational circuits there will be a random assignment of educational institutions to treatment and control groups.

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## PRESENTERS PANEL B: Policy to Practice, Participant Case Studies

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### 1. TITLE: “Learning Language Professional Development Program: Transforming Public School Districts from a Systemic Perspective”

**Beatriz Cardoso**, NGO Laboratório de Educação, Brazil.

Laboratório de Educação is a non-profit organization that seeks to enhance young children’s learning potential by educating adults on the importance of their day-to-day interactions in and outside of school. Since 2015, Laboratório de Educação has developed and piloted a professional development methodology called “Learning Language – 0 to 5”, currently implemented in 3 Brazilian cities, reaching 1.714 educators and 26.097 children enrolled in public nurseries and pre-schools. The program offers pedagogical supervisors, principals and district leaders continued opportunities to reflect on their practices and to learn how to use their unique professional roles to support early language development from a systemic perspective. The program consists of bimonthly professional development sessions, using structured materials, as well as feedback and supervision of jointly planned actions. “Learning Language – 0 to 5” has a monitoring system through which professional learning processes are traced at three different levels, through direct observation of: (i) in-service professional development sessions conducted by pedagogical supervisors; (ii) in-class activities conducted with children 0 to 5, and (iii) school environment, organization and materials that favor children’s language development. Preliminary results from the first year of implementation in the city of Caieiras will be presented.

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### 2. “El Plan Inicial” Advocacy for the public policy.

**Alionka Miranda**, Fundación Elige Educar, Chile

This year, Elige Educar has led a participation and advocacy process called El Plan Inicial, which brought together 20 civil society organizations to promote reforms for strengthening early childhood education in Chile. The reforms being promoted have been built through several participation mechanisms, aiming at establishing public policy measures in the medium (2022) and long-term (2030). In the process, we defined three subjects to address (quality, access and institutionality of the preschool level), gathered evidence about the status in Chile. More than 70 people participated in two face-to-face sessions, to build the next early childhood education agenda. From these sessions, we obtained more than thirty challenges, of which 12 were developed as public policy proposals. In May, an online process gathered more than 16,000 supporters. In the last three months this process has been complemented with a media campaign, placing El Plan Inicial’s proposals in the public agenda, holding meetings with key actors, as well as presenting the process and measures in the Education Committee of the Chamber of Deputies. This way, after a wide participation and advocacy process, which has created political and social consensus about how to improve early childhood education, a holistic reform is expected.

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**3. The use of cooperative learning strategies to promote narrative writing in elementary school children.**

**Silvia Romero-Contreras & David Montiel**, Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí, México.

An intervention was conducted in the narrative writing of 4rd grade elementary school students using cooperative learning strategies in a rural (n=33) and an urban school (n=41). The intervention lasted one school year and included a professional development workshop and educational coaching during 10 sessions. Students were instructed to cooperatively plan a narrative text, write and edit a draft in small groups. To assess the effects of the intervention, individual and cooperative narrative texts were compared before and after the intervention. Results show statistically significant improvements in children's individual and cooperative writing; rural students performed better in individual writing while urban students showed better cooperative writing skills.

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**4. Project Learning Science through Academic Language, CLIC!**

**Alejandra Meneses**, Pontificia Universidad Católica, Chile

CLIC! is a project aimed to improve Science learning through explicit academic language instruction embedded in a Science inquiry lesson. Focused on low-income 4th Chilean graders students, it includes evaluation instruments, lesson materials, and a teacher professional development. On year 1 (2016), 175 students and four teachers participated in the intervention from 3 low SES schools (Santiago, Chile). On year 2 (2017), 374 students and seven teachers participated from 7 low SES schools. The preliminary results of year 1 show that students increased significantly in Academic Language, Academic Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension and Science Learning. The higher effect size was found for Academic Language (d=0.95) and Science Learning (d=0.80). This study contributes with evidence in Spanish of how academic language and disciplinary literacy are key factors to promote educational equity among low-income students.

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## Attachment 3. - Project Pitch Session

**Tuesday, Oct 2, 3:30-4:30pm**

**SESSION A: Challenges to scaling ECE interventions (Traducción disponible)**

Location: DRCLAS, Room: S030

Moderator: **Armida Lizarraga**, Luminario, Perú

Presenters: **Ana Maria Nieto, Anne Sofie Olsen, Lucy Zelaya y Rosa Cerezales**

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**SESSION B: Tools to measure and improve literacy practices**

Location: DRCLAS, Room: S-216

Moderator: **Kees Broekhof**, Sardes, Netherlands

Presenters: **Alejandra Meneses, Rufina Pearson, Renata Villers**

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### PRESENTERS - SESION A: Challenges to scaling ECE interventions

1. **Ana Maria Nieto**, Former Early Childhood Director, National Ministry of Education, Colombia

The quality lab is an open innovation system to build a culture of continuous quality improvement and to the strengthening of early childhood policy through research. As we design the quality lab we have face challenges ensuring scalability and equity in resource distribution.

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2. **Anne Sofie Olsen**, Education Specialist , Inter-American Development Bank, Ecuador

The Government of Ecuador has recently decided to massively scale up a mentoring program aiming at improving teacher practices on reading/writing in the early grades, and the list of associated risks is simultaneously exponentially growing. IDB is providing financial and technical support. We are interested in feedback on best practices in issues ranging from methodology to monitoring.

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3. **Lucy Zelaya y Rosa Cerezales**, Pedagogical Consultants, Sembrando Juntos Civil Association, Peru

At Sembrando Juntos, we are starting a new project in three national public pre-schools in marginal urban areas. This project is based on four years of experience in a private pre-school in the same area (Callao). The project is centered on a socio-constructivist model inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach (Italy); focused on improving teacher performance through professional accompaniment. We seek feedback on specific challenges the project faces.

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**PRESENTERS - SESION B: Tools to measure and improve literacy practices**

1. **Alejandra Meneses**, Associate Professor / Head of Department of Teaching and Learning, Facultad de Educación, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile

The current main challenge of the project CLIC! (learning Science through Language) is to develop measures that capture the classroom's linguistic input and output in order to determine their impact on students' academic language growth. We are interested in feedback on how to best measure this.

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2. **Rufina Pearson**, Director of JEL Aprendizaje, JEL Aprendizaje / Universidad Católica

We have developed a Digital Screening for teachers to detect students at risk for reading fluency or reading comprehension difficulties. The screening allows primary and high school teachers to detect not only fluency problems, but to also see in what areas of reading comprehension their students are falling behind, such as background knowledge, vocabulary, and discourse difficulties. The screening has been administered to 3600 students in Argentina. We intend to build national norms for the tool which is free and easy to administer. We are currently exploring opportunities to apply it in other countries such as Chile and Uruguay. We would like feedback on this measure that was initially presented at ProLeer last year and modified based on comments received.

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3. **Renata Villers**, Executive Director, Asociación Amigos del Aprendizaje, ADA, Costa Rica

Every year ADA publishes an online anthology of the best stories written by children as the culmination of its annual national writing contest in which over 50,000 children, and 10% of the public schools, have participated since 2012. To address the need for better access to reading material and activities that promote balanced literacy in the classroom, ADA is developing new freely downloadable teacher resources – a teacher and children's guide - on how to use these stories in the classroom. The new project will be rolled out through a social media campaign in 2019. We would like feedback on how to evaluate project.