

## CIRCLE Monthly Newsletter – February 2023

The mission of the [Center for Innovative Research in Change, Leadership, and Education \(CIRCLE\) at Texas Tech University](#) is to provide empirical research, training, and evaluation in collaboration with community partners, using interdisciplinary approaches, on issues that influence educational experiences and outcomes of students, leadership, and policy throughout the PK-20 system.

### From the Director: [Dr. Alex Wiseman](#)

- February has a lot of different faces including the month of love, Black History Month, the Super Bowl, and Groundhog Day to name a few. But, the name February has a Latin root, which means “to cleanse” (*februa*), and in Roman times it was a month-long festival of purification and atonement.
- So, in this month of purification and atonement it’s a good time for all of us at CIRCLE, and hopefully for you and our other colleagues, to reflect on what you’ve been working on or thinking about and adjust as needed. We may not need to purify or atone for the research on change, leadership, and education that we’ve been focusing our efforts on, but it’s always important to reflect on and revise the direction, the intentions, and the intended outcomes of our research, training, and other interactions.
- We also have some excellent opportunities to reflect and revise our work by sharing these ideas with our colleagues and critics this month (and into the next). You will see that we are hosting a “Data is Bigger in Texas” research talk and data workshop this month and are meeting again with colleagues in Denver for our AEFPP Pre-Conference Workshop (see below).
- We continue to be excited about the work that CIRCLE is doing with our community partners as well as the collaborative research with our colleagues at CIRCLE and at Texas Tech University. And, we will continue revisiting our intentions and actions as we move forward to ensure that CIRCLE and its affiliates are doing the most good with the data, trainings, and other tools we have!

### Outreach & Partnership Updates

*Data is Bigger in Texas: Research Talk & Data Workshop (Wednesday, February 22, TTU Campus & Zoom)*

- Join us for a day dedicated to understanding advantages and opportunities for using the Texas Statewide Longitudinal Data System. Keynote speaker Dean Catherine Horn (University of Houston) will open the day with a research talk on education policy in Texas and accompany **Dr. Jacob Kirksey** in the afternoon to discuss the data housed at the University of Houston Education Research Center (ERC). Note the Data Workshop in the afternoon is in-person only. [Register here!](#)

*Texas RP3 (Research, Practice, Policy, Partnership)*

- A CIRCLE leadership team consisting of **Drs. Wiseman, Kirksey, and Gottlieb** attended the Texas RP3 Convening in Houston on February 3. By joining this RP3 consortium, CIRCLE seeks to both learn from and contribute to research, practice, and policy partnerships across the state of Texas. Look for more information on Texas RP3 and CIRCLE’s role in it in upcoming newsletters.

## Research & Funding Updates

*AEFP Pre-Conference Workshop (March 22, Denver, CO)*

- **Drs. Kirksey, Gottlieb, and Wiseman** are leading a pre-conference workshop sponsored by the [Center for Innovative Research in Change, Leadership, and Education \(CIRCLE\)](#) the day before the [annual meeting of the Association of Education Finance and Policy in Denver, CO](#). The pre-conference workshop is open to CIRCLE-affiliated faculty, doctoral students, PhD candidates, and researchers who may be in or near Denver or are presenting at the AEFP conference. It's a time to practice research presentations, learn about professional networking, interact with your colleagues/classmates in a face-to-face environment, get advice on academic job hunting, and provide feedback and constructive comments on your colleagues' research. If you would like to join us, please contact Dr. Kirksey or Dr. Wiseman as soon as possible.

## New Publication & Reports

- **Kristin Mansell, Dr. Gottlieb, and Dr. Kirksey** published the policy brief, "[Endorsement Alignment Between Secondary and Postsecondary Institutions](#)." This brief highlights the misalignment between endorsements under the Foundation High School Program and admission criteria of postsecondary institutions in Texas.
- **Dr. Wiseman, Angela Crevar, and Dr. Kirksey** published, "The promises and pitfalls of House Bill 5: What we've learned from 10 years of technical and academic endorsements in the Foundation High School Program." Their policy overviews the major changes prompted by House Bill 5 and the transition from the 4x4 plan to the Foundation High School Program in high school.
- **Teresa Lansford and Dr. Kirksey** published a new working paper, "[A matter of course: Student attendance under new graduation requirements of the Texas Foundation High School Program](#)." Using statewide data and more granular data from one large school district, their study shows that STEM-Career and Technical Education (STEM-CTE) courses are driving better attendance in high school for students who had poor attendance in middle school.
- **Dr. Kirksey, Teresa Lansford, and Joseph Elefante** published a new working paper, "[Six periods a day, five days a week: Classes students miss most frequently and cumulative impacts on high school graduation](#)." Using data from a California school district, their study highlights what classes students are most likely to be absent and how specific class absences link to students' likelihood to drop out of high school.

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*People mentioned in this month's newsletter:*

[Dr. Alexander W. Wiseman](#), Professor and Director of CIRCLE

[Dr. Jessica Gottlieb](#), Assistant Professor and Associate Director of CIRCLE

[Dr. Jacob Kirksey](#), Assistant Professor and Associate Director of CIRCLE

*Angela Crevar, Ph.D. Candidate and CIRCLE Scholar*

*Joe Elefante, Ph.D. Candidate*

*Kristin Mansell, Ph.D. Candidate and CIRCLE Scholar*

*Teresa Lansford, Ph.D. Candidate and CIRCLE Scholar*

[Dr. Catherine Horn](#), Interim Dean of the College of Education at the University of Houston

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