



## **National Education Knowledge Industry Association**

*1718 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 700 Washington, DC 20009 [www.nekia.org](http://www.nekia.org)*

### ***Towards More Effective Approaches to Knowledge Use in Education***

#### ***Overview***

The National Education Knowledge Industry Association (NEKIA) believes that the effective use of education knowledge can significantly enhance and accelerate the nationwide efforts to improve academic performance and close achievement gaps in k-12 education. Education knowledge can and should be an essential factor in shaping policy and practice at all levels.

The current approaches to knowledge use in K-12 education are frequently hampered by a number of impediments and flaws including: a serious disconnect among the research community, practitioners, developers and policy makers; inadequate capacity at the local and state levels to facilitate an effective knowledge use system; lack of cultural or institutional incentives to promote greater knowledge use. In order to address the increasingly urgent demand for knowledge-based solutions to educational problems at the local, state and federal levels, new approaches to effective knowledge use are needed that can be sustained and expanded in significant ways over time.

NEKIA believes that effective knowledge use should be a central organizing theme of school improvement policies and practice across the country. We present four principles upon which approaches to effective knowledge use should be based.

#### ***Four Principles***

**Principle #1 Useable Knowledge** --- Knowledge that is used to shape policy and practice should be derived from the best available empirical evidence and informed by sound professional judgment.

**Principle #2 Key Stakeholders** --- The effective use of knowledge in education requires the active participation of and the on-going collaboration among five key stakeholder groups:

- **Practitioners** should be involved in all phases of the knowledge development and utilization process, not just as recipients of research.
- **Policymakers** need to develop the capacity for integrating knowledge into the policy making apparatus.

- **Researchers** should focus on rigor, relevance, and replication in addressing practical questions of effectiveness based on the needs of practitioners and policy makers.
- **Developers and Providers** need to use the best available knowledge in developing and delivering their products and services.
- **Intermediaries** are needed to facilitate productive collaborations and relationships among stakeholders, help interpret and disseminate findings, conduct applied research, and provide capacity-building assistance.

**Principle #3 Cumulative Process** --- Effective knowledge use depends upon dynamic on-going exchanges of data and information among the stakeholders and involves a continuous process of research, application and adaptation. As knowledge is used and adapted, new knowledge is created and applied in a cumulative, iterative fashion.

**Principle #4 High Priority Policy** --- School improvement policies at the federal, state, and local levels should focus priority attention on the effective use of knowledge and create incentives to stimulate greater demand for and increased supply of knowledge-based solutions.

Jim Kohlmoos  
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