

## Q&amp;A

# “THE CULTURE IS BECOMING MORE READY NOW”

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By CAMILLA MEHLSEN

### \* *Why are you interested in knowledge mobilisation in education research?*

“I see the value in teachers, principals, district leaders and policy makers being able to access the best knowledge we have available in order to improve outcomes for students. This has been at the heart of a lot of the reforms at Ontario. The efforts that have been put into being more research-informed and evidence-based have been major factors in terms of some of the gains being made for the students.

I think the culture is becoming more ready now. Teachers, principals, policy makers and trustees are becoming more and more aware of the need to incorporate the best possible knowledge available in order to improve teaching and learning.”

### *What kind of knowledge do you – or the governments – need the most?*

“At the policy level we need to know what kinds of policies are most likely to create the greatest benefits of all types and all subgroups. We need to have the best possible evidence to support our policies in terms of teaching and learning strategies, in terms of assessments, school effectiveness, reducing the achievement gaps and engaging students, parents, community members as well as professionals.”

### *What do you hope will be the next big step in knowledge mobilisation?*

“I think we have already embarked upon some new initiatives that are trying to forge closer relationships between government, universities and school boards through the Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research [see information box]. We bring together

partners from a wide range of organisations in order to identify priority needs and mobilise existing forms of knowledge. We are at the very early stage but I see this as one step in terms of moving the whole field forward.” ■

## The KNAER – a new knowledge broker in the class



### The Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research (KNAER)

is a Canadian network promoting the use of research in education. The aim is to strengthen relationships between research, policy and practice in education in Ontario, Canada. The **KNAER** was established as a collaborative partnership among the Ontario Ministry of Education, the University of Toronto and the University of Western Ontario.

The **KNAER** will focus on building, advancing and applying robust evidence of effective practices through conducting

research, synthesising state-of-the-art knowledge from existing bodies of evidence and facilitating networks of policy makers, educators and researchers working collaboratively to apply research-to-practice. It will also act as a ‘knowledge broker’ to facilitate and lead the spread of established and new evidence through networks across Ontario’s policy, education and research communities, as well as connecting with national and international networks.

More than 40 projects have so far received funding from the KNAER, among them the projects ‘Bringing research to the classroom: Building a SURE Teacher Learning Community to enhance evidence uptake in schools’ and ‘Knowledge mobilisation on decision making for school improvement: A peer-to-peer network for school principals’.

Source: [www.knaer-recrae.ca](http://www.knaer-recrae.ca)