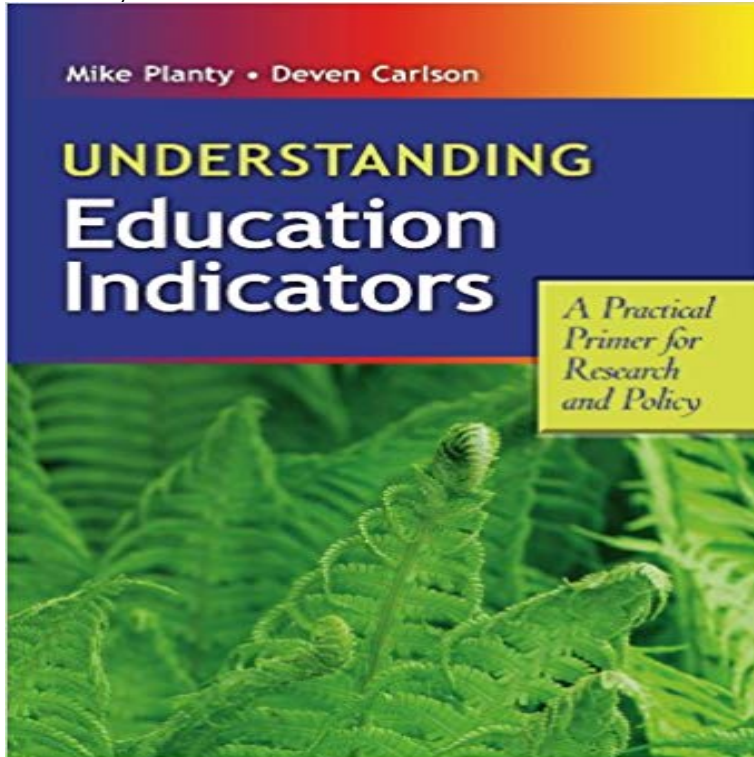


Understanding Education Indicators: A Practical Primer for Research and Policy



In the push to bring data to bear on all of the important education issues of the day, one essential fact is often overlooked: Not all indicators are created equal. This book provides a comprehensive approach for understanding how statistical measures of achievement are developed, evaluated, and interpreted. Given the extent to which accountability measures determine outcomes for schools and students, this practical introduction is essential reading for a wide audience that includes school administrators, teachers, policymakers, and the media. The authors strive to increase statistical literacy by engaging readers in the process of becoming thoughtful and critical users of data. With the practitioner in mind, this hands-on primer:

- Outlines a viable approach to interpreting the vast array of available data about education in the United States.
- Uses clear, jargon-free language with real examples from local, national, and international indicator systems.
- Offers a website (www.educationindicator.com) with additional resources, examples, and a forum for up-to-the-minute policy discussions.

Mike Planty is a statistician at the U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC. Deven Carlson is a Ph.D. candidate in political science and a graduate research fellow at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Mike Planty and Deven Carlson have taken pity on nonexpert readers of the glut of information about schools and, in this incisive and clearly written book, show how to figure it all out. Jay Mathews, Washington Post education columnist

In a data-driven world where competing experts will cite conflicting stats and figures to make their case, Planty and Carlson have penned a volume that will prove invaluable to parents, practitioners, and policymakers trying to separate fact from fiction. If you want to know what's really going on in

education today, read this book. Frederick M. Hess, Director of Education Policy Studies at the American Enterprise Institute Education researchers, policy analysts, and journalists interested in understanding what really is going on behind the simple data that drive the education policy debate need this book. Jack Buckley, New York University and former Deputy Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics

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