Education Policy Think Tank Models and Mission

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Abstract

This paper explores how two advocacy think tanks—the Heritage Foundation (Heritage) and Center for American Progress (CAP)—engage in research on K-12 education and attempt to influence education policymaking. Through our research, we discovered both expected and surprising differences and similarities between the think tanks. Differences included topic choice, particularly around school choice and disadvantaged students, the use of data analyses to underpin positions, and the volume of publication. Similarities included the mix of output type. Our most notable finding was that the model and mission of each think tank drove topic choices and how each conducted research and interacted with the policy world and media.

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Full Text

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