

Best practices in policy analysis: the case of school reform

Eugenia F. Toma

Wendell H. Ford Professor of Public Policy
Martin School of Public Policy & Administration
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40506 USA

Abstract: This paper discusses the concept of policy analysis in five steps described in varying detail by Bardach (2005) and Wiemer and Vining (2005). These steps include (1) defining the issue, (2) thinking conceptually about the issue, (3) considering alternative policies, (4) examining evidence, and (5) making policy decisions. This general framework serves as a guide for policy analysis with the specifics depending on the type of policy being considered. I explain the concept of best practices in policy analysis by applying the concept to a salient topic in the U.S. at this moment in history and that topic is school reform.