

# Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Evaluation and Evidence-Building Plan for the U.S. Department of Education

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



## U.S. Department of Education

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### March 2022

As part of the implementation of the *Foundations of Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018* (Evidence Act), the Secretary has determined the responsibilities for the Agency Evaluation Officer should rest with the Institute of Education Sciences' (IES) Commissioner for the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE).

IES is the independent, non-partisan statistics, research, and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Education. The IES mission is to provide scientific evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share this information in formats that are useful and accessible to educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public.

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U.S. Department of Education. (2022). *Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Evaluation and Evidence-Building Plan for the U.S. Department of Education*. Washington, DC: Author.

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# **Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Evaluation and Evidence-Building Plan for the U.S. Department of Education**

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## Introduction

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) and its predecessor organizations have supported evidence-building for the purpose of improving outcomes for all learners for more than 70 years.<sup>1</sup> Over time, this work has included rigorous implementation, outcome, and impact evaluations; grants to researchers for basic science, applied research, and evidence synthesis; student assessments; and data collection in support of official statistics and performance improvement.

Many of the Department’s evidence-building activities are housed in its Institute of Education Sciences (IES), including its National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), National Center for Education Research (NCER), and National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER). However, a growing number of offices across the Department are engaged in work around evidence. Principal operating components with grant-making authority, such as the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE); the Office Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE); the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE); and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), collect and use performance data to improve their programs, and an increasing number are requiring grantees to conduct research or evaluation activities that build evidence about the outcomes and impacts associated with their work. Building and using evidence—be it in small ways or large—is everyone’s business at the Department of Education.

The *Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018* requires agencies to detail a specific component of their evidence-building work—program evaluations—in *Annual Evaluation Plans*. In the Department’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 *Annual Evaluation and Evidence-Building Plan* (Plan), the Department summarizes all implementation, outcomes, and programs evaluations undertaken by NCEE. To demonstrate the breadth of our evidence-building work, we augment that list of significant evaluations with selected field-initiated grants supported by NCER and NCSER. We include both new work that is under consideration for FY 2023 well as continuing activities begun in a prior year.<sup>2</sup>

## Organization and Contents of this Document

This Plan is organized topically, using categories that represent both common areas of focus in education research and long-standing programmatic interests of the Department. Within each topic area, we detail ongoing and planned evaluations. Activities are listed only once and are “cross-referenced” in other sections, where applicable.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the *Cooperative Research Act of 1954* (Pub. L. 531).

<sup>2</sup> No part of this document represents a commitment by the U.S. Department of Education to award a new, or continue an existing, contract, grant, or cooperative agreement.

For ease of aligning this work to the Department’s FY22-FY26 Learning Agenda, we crosswalk the Department’s significant activities in a table at the end of this section. Readers will note that the Annual Evaluation Plan does not uniformly align with every aspect of the Department’s Learning Agenda.

In any given year, there will be significant evaluations that are beyond the immediate scope of the Learning Agenda. One reason for the expanded scope is that the Department has chosen to operationalize its obligation to include “significant evaluations” in the Plan by listing *all* its planned and ongoing program evaluations—including those that represent persistent problems of education policy or practice that were identified prior to the development of the Learning Agenda. This approach is consistent with our annual and biennial reporting of all program evaluations as part of our Annual Performance Report/Annual Performance Plan and the Institute’s Biennial Report to Congress, respectively, as well as a separate biennial report to Congress on the use of evaluation funds authorized under Section 8601 of the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA). A second reason is that Congress can require evaluation activities not aligned to the Learning Agenda, but the Department considers these efforts to be significant as well. Rarely, there may be aspects of the Learning Agenda for which there is limited work listed in this Plan. Most often, this is because federal evaluation resources have not yet been identified to address them.

The Department anticipates that, over time, its Annual Evaluation and Evidence-Building Plan will come to mirror its Learning Agenda. Wherever possible, the Department intends to use its Learning Agenda to guide decision-making about where to invest evidence-building resources. Additionally, the Department hopes to develop new mechanisms for building evidence, including new partnerships with external researchers that provide opportunities for answering questions of shared interest.

## How We Describe Our Program Evaluations

Each program evaluation described below is tailored to address a series of evaluation questions co-created by NCEE’s professional evaluators, Department staff, and external stakeholders. For each evaluation, we detail: (a) whether it is aligned to one or more of the Department’s Learning Agenda focus areas for evidence-building; (b) expected start and end date; (c) the issues, contexts, and problems that motivate the evaluation activity; (d) the evaluation questions it seeks to answer; (e) evaluation design and data sources; and (f) the publications and products that are expected to arise from the evaluation. Because each study is at a different phase in its lifecycle, the amount of information available about—and profiled for—each will vary.

Although each program evaluation is substantively different on most dimensions, there are some commonalities that, for the sake of parsimony, we describe here. These include common technical challenges and common approaches to disseminating evaluation findings to key stakeholders.

### Common Technical Challenges

The Department’s program evaluations typically face one or more of three challenges: (1) accessing administrative data that are necessary to generate high-quality evidence; (2) obtaining high response rates to surveys that are used as part of program evaluations; and (3) providing actionable evidence to stakeholders in a timely manner. We discuss each below.

Wherever possible, the Department relies on administrative data for its evaluation activities. The use of administrative data for evaluation activities can improve data quality, minimize respondent burden, and reduce cost. Reliance upon administrative data for the purpose of understanding students, student outcomes, and education institutions is particularly compelling due to the Department's longstanding financial investment in the development of state longitudinal data systems (SLDSs), which increasingly link data from elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education to the workforce and beyond.

The Department can sometimes experience challenges accessing administrative data, be it held in SLDSs or with federal agency partners. Examples include legislation or regulation that allow access to administrative data for program operations or enforcement purposes but not for research and evaluation, or difficulties in definitively linking data about individuals or institutions across systems due to the absence of a common identifier. The Department is actively participating in efforts across government to develop privacy-preserving approaches to data linking and analysis, ensuring the protection of confidential information in its evidence-building efforts.

When administrative data are not widely available, the Department often must rely upon survey instruments to collect data directly from respondents including students, parents, and educators. It is well-known across the federal statistical community that response rates to web-based and other survey collections are in decline. The Department is not immune from this trend. The Department employs industry standard approaches to, initially, maximize response rates. This includes being cautious about the number and length of surveys the Department sponsors in an effort to reduce survey fatigue. The Department subjects data to rigorous non-response bias analysis to ensure that the data can support credible estimates and rigorous analysis. Should the downward trend in survey response rate continue, conducting high-quality program evaluations will become more difficult—particularly if administrative data that might serve as a substitute or proxy cannot be readily accessed.

Finally, providing stakeholders actionable evidence in a timely manner can be a challenge to program evaluators. Several factors can affect the timeliness of evaluations and other evidence-building activities, including: the time needed to procure independent evaluation services; the development of instrumentation used in an evaluation and meeting statutory requirements on information collection; gathering outcomes data, particularly on outcomes that may take several years to be observed (e.g., whether first-year college students complete a bachelor's degree); and analysis and reporting. The Department has sought to improve the timeliness of its evaluation efforts through more flexible contracting and by ensuring that evaluation reports focus on the results of greatest relevance to our stakeholders, including practitioners, policymakers, and others who could benefit from our work.

### **Common Dissemination Approaches**

IES follows a consistent approach to dissemination for the bulk of its evidence products, including findings from program evaluations, official statistics, and evidence syntheses. This includes:

- Developing shorter, more policy-relevant reports that are aligned to the needs and interests of various stakeholders (i.e., moving to a standard 15-page report for most studies, accompanied by 4-page study briefs and 1-page study snapshots);
- Internal briefings for the Department's policy and program leadership during a two-week period prior to a product's release by IES;

- Sharing products with relevant media outlets, subject to an embargo agreement, immediately before their release;
- Posting products to the Department’s website, and actively pursuing an agenda of website modernization that improves the ies.ed.gov user experience;
- Announcing the release of new products using IES social media, including its NewsFlash listserv (46,000 subscribers) and its @IESResearch Twitter handle (20,000 followers);
- Leveraging the Department’s Regional Comprehensive Centers and Regional Educational Laboratories to disseminate relevant products directly to regional, state, and local education stakeholders; and
- Presenting findings to conferences of relevant grantees, advocacy organizations, and education researchers, such as the annual meetings of the Council on Opportunity in Education, the National Association of ESEA State Programs Administrators, and the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management.

### Crosswalk of Planned and Ongoing Program Evaluations to the Learning Agenda

We list program evaluations underway or planned to begin in FY 23 associated with each of the majors aspects of the Department’s Learning Agenda in the table below. We do not include anticipated studies in the table below, as specific research questions for anticipated studies have not been finalized. No part of this document represents a commitment by the U.S. Department of Education to award a new, or continue an existing, contract, grant, or cooperative agreement.

Note that several priority questions listed below are addressed by other evidence-building activities across the Department that are not “significant evaluations” and therefore are not listed here.

Learning Agenda Focus Area	Related Significant Evaluations, And Link in Associated Page in this Document
Area 1. Address the impact of COVID-19 on students, educators, and faculty (COVID-19)	<a href="#">National Implementation Study of Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Title IV, Part A)</a>  <a href="#">Study of Strategies to Address Unfinished Learning in Math</a>  <a href="#">Evaluating Implementation of the Statewide Family Engagement Centers Program</a>  <a href="#">Evaluation of Full-Service Community Schools</a>  <a href="#">National Evaluation of Career and Technical Education under Perkins V</a>
Area 2. Promote equity in student access to educational resources, opportunities, and inclusive environments (Equity)	<a href="#">Implementation of Title I/II-A Program Initiatives</a>  <a href="#">Study of Schools Identified for Comprehensive School Improvement under ESSA</a>  <a href="#">Study of Educational Policies, Supports and Practices for English Learners: Implementation of Title III and Social and Emotional Learning</a>

	<p><a href="#"><u>Study of the Impact of English Learner Reclassification Policies</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>National Implementation Study of Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Title IV, Part A)</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Study of Strategies to Address Unfinished Learning in Math</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>State and Local Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Evaluation of Transition Supports for Youth with Disabilities</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Study of District and School Uses of Federal Education Funds</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Evaluating Implementation of the Statewide Family Engagement Centers Program</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Evaluation of Full-Service Community Schools</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Evaluation of Promise Neighborhoods</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>The Effects of a Systematic Approach to Improving Quality in Afterschool Programs: An Impact Evaluation to Inform the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Program</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Evaluating the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program After the 2017 Reauthorization</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Impact Study of Magnet Schools</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Study of Access to Charter Schools</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Assessing Evidence of Effectiveness in Adult Education: Study of Career Navigator Training</u></a></p>
<p>Area 3. Support a diverse and talented educator workforce and professional growth to strengthen student learning (Educators)</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Implementation of Title I/II-A Program Initiatives</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Impact Evaluation of Teacher Residency Programs</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Impact Evaluation to Inform the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program</u></a></p>
<p>Area 4. Meet students' social, emotional, and</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Evaluation of Title I Pilots That Provide Flexibility Under the Every Student Succeeds Act</u></a></p>



<p>academic needs (Meeting Student Needs)</p>	<p><a href="#">Study of Schools Identified for Comprehensive School Improvement under ESSA</a></p> <p><a href="#">Study of Strategies to Address Unfinished Learning in Math</a></p> <p><a href="#">Evaluation of Promise Neighborhoods</a></p> <p><a href="#">Evaluation of Full-Service Community Schools</a></p> <p><a href="#">Evaluating Implementation of the Statewide Family Engagement Centers Program</a></p> <p><a href="#">National Evaluation of the 2019 Comprehensive Centers Program Grantees</a></p> <p><a href="#">Evaluation of Preschool Special Education Practices</a></p> <p><a href="#">Impact Evaluation of Departmentalized Instruction in Elementary Schools</a></p> <p><a href="#">Impact Evaluation of Training in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Reading in Early Elementary School</a></p> <p><a href="#">National Evaluation of the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) and Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Programs</a></p> <p><a href="#">National Implementation Study of Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Title IV, Part A)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Study of Educational Policies, Supports and Practices for English Learners: Implementation of Title III, With a Focus on Social and Emotional Learning</a></p>
<p>Area 5. Increase postsecondary value by focusing on equity-conscious strategies to address affordability, completion, post-enrollment success, and support for inclusive institutions (Postsecondary)</p>	<p><a href="#">Evaluation of Transition Supports for Youth with Disabilities</a></p> <p><a href="#">National Evaluation of Career and Technical Education under Perkins V</a></p> <p><a href="#">National Study of the Implementation of Adult Education Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</a></p> <p><a href="#">Assessing Evidence of Effectiveness in Adult Education: Study of Career Navigator Training</a></p> <p><a href="#">Text Ed: A Study of Text Messaging to Improve College Enrollment Rates Among Disadvantaged Adults</a></p>

Area 6. Effectively manage federal student aid programs (Federal Financial Aid)	<a href="#"><u>Evaluations of Federal Financial Aid Information and Delivery Strategies: An Experiment in the Federal Work Study Program to Encourage Student Jobs in the Private Sector</u></a>  <a href="#"><u>Expanding Pell Grant Eligibility to Incarcerated Students: A Study of Early Implementers to Inform Roll Out of the FAFSA Simplification Act</u></a>
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# Topic Areas

The FY23 Annual Evaluation plan includes evidence building activities organized into the following twelve topical areas:

1. [Behavior and Attendance](#)
2. [Early Learning](#)
3. [English Learners](#)
4. [Literacy](#)
5. [Other Core Academic Subjects](#)
6. [Parent Engagement](#)
7. [Pathways to Career or College](#)
8. [School Choice](#)
9. [School Improvement](#)
10. [Students with Disabilities](#)
11. [Teachers and Leaders](#)
12. [Technical Assistance](#)

# Behavior and Attendance

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [Evaluation of Full-Service Community Schools](#)
- [The Effects of a Systematic Approach to Improving Quality in Afterschool Programs: An Impact Evaluation to Inform the 21st Century Community Learning Centers \(CCLC\) Program](#); listed below in the [School Improvement](#) topic area.

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

- [Bridging Science and Practice for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Problems](#)
- [Developing and Evaluating Processes for the Dissemination of Effective Universal and Targeted Classroom Management Practices](#)
- [Developing and Validating a Technically Sound and Feasible Self-Report Measure of Teachers Delivery of Common Practice Elements](#)
- [ECHO: Prosocial and Positive School Climate](#)
- [Efficacy of a Peer-Delivered Intervention for High School Students with ADHD](#)
- [Evaluation of an Intervention to Improve Academic Outcomes for Low-Income Urban Youth through Instruction in Effective Coping Supported by Mentoring Relationships](#)
- [Initial Efficacy Trial of a Group-Based Implementation Strategy Designed to Increase Teacher Delivery of Evidence-Based Prevention Programs](#)
- [Measuring Prosocial Behavior in Schools through a Virtual Reality Game: vSchool](#)
- [Project BASICS \(Behavioral Accountability for a Successful Instructional Climate in Schools\)](#)
- [Project MIDAS: Development of a Multi-Informant Decisional Assessment System](#)
- [Refinement and Further Development of the Washington Assessment of the Risks and Needs of Students](#)
- [Social-Emotional Skill-Building Continuity between School and Home: Developing Second Step: Parents](#)
- [Supporting Teachers in Engaging Parents \(STEP\): The Development of a Teacher Training Curriculum and Coaching Model to Foster Family Engagement](#)
- [Testing the Impact of Academically Focused Interventions on the Self-Regulation of Preschool and Elementary-School Students: An Integrative-Data-Analysis Approach](#)
- [The Development and Validation of the Social and Emotional Learning Observation Checklist for Elementary School \(SELOC-ES\)](#)

## Evaluation of Full-Service Community Schools

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 1. COVID-19 Area 2. Equity Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	November 2019 - May 2024

### **Background**

Children living in distressed communities face significant academic, social, and health challenges, many of which have been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. The Full-Service Community Schools program aims to address these challenges by funding coordination and expansion of a comprehensive set of educational and developmental services for students, their families, and the broader community. Grants typically go to school districts and community-based organizations. Since 2010, Congress has invested \$55 million in the program, which is authorized by Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Congress also mandated an evaluation of the program, which this study will fulfill.

### **Research Questions**

- What are the effects of the Full-Service Community Schools grants or a core component of the grants on student outcomes?
- What services are offered by the grants, and how are they connected and coordinated? What challenges do grantees face, and how are they addressed?
- How many students and families are served by the grants and at what cost?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This study will assess the effects of Full-Service Community Schools as rigorously as possible. Among the study designs being considered are: a random assignment study of a future cohort of grantees; a study that compares the outcomes of prior grantees' schools to similar schools that did not receive a grant; or a random assignment study that measures the impact of a core component of Full-Service Community Schools. Data collection will include administrative records on student outcomes, such as attendance, behavior, and achievement test scores, as well as grantee surveys and annual performance reports to describe program implementation.

### **Publications and Products**

- The report is expected in 2024 and will be announced on <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Early Learning

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [Evaluation of Preschool Special Education Practices](#)
- [State and Local Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act](#); listed below in the [Students with Disabilities](#) topic area.

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

- [A Lottery-Based Efficacy Study of the District of Columbia Public Prekindergarten Program](#)
- [Building Coaching Capacity: Development of the Core Competencies for Coaching Professional Development Program \(C3PD\)](#)
- [Children's Longitudinal Development from Pre-K through High School as Disrupted by COVID-19](#)
- [Development and Validation of Complementary Measures of Early Writing: Teacher Practices and Child Outcomes](#)
- [Exploring Heterogeneity Among the U.S. Latino Dual Language Learner Head Start Population: A Secondary Data Analysis](#)
- [Individual Growth and Development Indicators for Hmong Preschoolers: High-Quality Screening Tools for Diverse Learners](#)
- [Red Light, Purple Light! Evaluating a Self-Regulation Intervention for Children in Early Learning Settings](#)
- [School Characteristics, Classroom Processes, and PK-1 Learning and Development](#)
- [Teaching Together: The Added Value of Tiered School Plus Home Interventions for Young Children At-Risk for Language Difficulties](#)

## Evaluation of Preschool Special Education Practices

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	November 2013 -November 2023

### **Background**

Experiences in early childhood programs can help young children, including those with disabilities, develop skills important for classroom learning. But many children need help to strengthen their social-emotional skills and facilitate their engagement in classroom activities. Currently, there is limited evidence on how to effectively integrate these kinds of supports into the general curriculum, particularly in classrooms where children with disabilities are served alongside their peers as promoted by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The objectives of this evaluation are twofold: (1) to provide nationally representative descriptive information about preschool special education programs and the curricula or interventions being delivered to preschool children with disabilities, and (2) to assess the feasibility of a large-scale impact study by conducting an efficacy study piloting the integration of targeted instructional supports for children with disabilities with an evidence-based curriculum that promotes the language/literacy and social-emotional skills of children with disabilities in inclusive preschool classrooms.

### **Research Questions**

- Which curricula and strategies are used nationally for preschool children with disabilities to promote learning of language, literacy, and social emotional skills?
- In what settings, and using what program structures, are these curricula and interventions being used with preschool children with disabilities?
- Are teachers able to successfully implement a new approach that integrates targeted instructional supports for children who demonstrate risk for social-emotional delays or persistent behavior challenges with instruction for all children?
- What are the impacts of this approach on the classroom environment and the social-emotional, behavioral, and language skills of children with and without disabilities in inclusive preschool classrooms?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

To help plan for the efficacy study, information was collected in Spring/Summer 2015 on the programs, curricula, and extra supports available to children ages 3 through 5 identified for special education services. This collection was based on surveys of state agency staff coordinating grants and services under IDEA Part B Section 619 and a nationally representative sample of district preschool special education coordinators. The study randomly assigned 34 inclusive preschool classrooms in 29 schools from three districts to either receive training and coaching support to implement the study's program

integration approach or continue with the teachers' regular program and practices. The addition and integration of the programs began in classrooms in 2019. Although data on participating preschool students was to be collected for 2 school years, the coronavirus pandemic disrupted these activities and teachers' willingness to continue to participate in them. The efficacy study's analyses will be based on documentation of training provided to teachers, classroom observations to assess how program components are being implemented, teacher surveys, and their rating of children's social skills.

### **Publications and Products**

A series of tables describing the characteristics of preschool education services and practices was released in August 2020. See: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/2020003/>. The report for the efficacy study is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.



# English Learners

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [Study of Educational Policies, Supports and Practices for English Learners: Implementation of Title III, with a focus on Social and Emotional Learning](#)
- [Study of the Impact of English Learner Reclassification Policies](#)
- Impact Evaluation of Strategies to Accelerate Learning for English Learners (anticipated)

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

- [Developing A2i Spanish Adaptive Progress Monitoring Assessments for PK-3rd Grade](#)
- [Personalizing Literacy Instruction for English Learners](#)

# Study of Educational Policies, Supports and Practices for English Learners: Implementation of Title III and Social and Emotional Learning

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity	September 2019 - September 2024

## **Background**

English learners (ELs) face disproportionate educational challenges because they must master subject-matter content while also developing English proficiency. Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides funds to states and districts to help ELs attain English proficiency and to close the significant achievement gaps in reading and math between ELs and their non-EL peers. The 2015 reauthorization of ESEA as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) made changes to federal policy related to ELs and state and district activities under Title III. This study will provide a national portrait of Title III under ESSA and the strategies states, districts, and schools use to meet the needs of ELs more generally. A particular focus will be on approaches to support social and emotional learning, given the challenges of engaging and serving ELs during the coronavirus pandemic.

## **Research Questions**

- What curricula, instructional methods, or other supports do districts and schools use to promote ELs' English proficiency and academic achievement and to supplement language instruction educational programs, including parent engagement activities?
- How are states, districts, and schools responding to changes in federal policy for ELs, such as standardized statewide entrance and exit procedures and shifts in accountability provisions?
- What strategies are states and districts using to improve EL educator effectiveness? What are the certification requirements to teach ELs in each state?
- What are the social and emotional learning needs of ELs, and how do districts and schools identify and support those needs?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

Surveys of all state Title III coordinators and nationally representative samples of districts and schools were delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Some in-depth data is being collected in Spring/Summer 2021, but the surveys will be conducted in Spring 2023. The evaluation also draws on existing data, such as information from ESSA state plans and the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data and Civil Rights Data Collection. The study is descriptive and not designed to estimate the impact of federal policies on state and local actions.

## **Publications and Products**

The first report, expected in 2022, will draw on existing data to examine the role of EL students in schools' overall academic performance and in schools' ESSA accountability designation as needing improvement and additional support. The second report, expected in 2024, will draw on results from the field surveys to examine Title III implementation. Both publications will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Study of the Impact of English Learner Reclassification Policies

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity	September 2021 - May 2024

## **Background**

Districts' reclassification of English learners as English proficient is a high-stakes decision with implications for academic equity in the U.S. Since former ELs are no longer entitled to language supports, exiting EL status too soon can leave these students linguistically unprepared for success in mainstream U.S. classrooms. However, maintaining EL status for too long can compromise students' opportunities to learn academic content among their peers. The decision is complicated by lack of universal agreement on a definition for English proficiency and wide variation in reclassification criteria within and across states. To reduce variability in EL entry and exit procedures within states, the 2015 reauthorization of Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (the Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA) required states to develop standardized procedures. The shift to statewide standardization in exit procedures and the use of common English language proficiency (ELP) assessments in many states provide a unique opportunity to study the impact of reclassification nationwide. Of particular interest is assessing how impacts for students vary across contexts, such as the level of proficiency states require to exit, whether states consider factors other than ELP assessment scores, instructional policies (such as dual language or English-only instruction), policies for monitoring and serving former ELs, and characteristics of the EL population enrolled.

## **Research Questions**

- Did standardized statewide procedures, introduced to Title III under ESSA, result in more consistent application of reclassification procedures across districts within states?
- Does reclassification have an impact on the instructional opportunities and experiences of former EL students relative to students who remain ELs? How much do impacts vary across student subgroups and state and local policy contexts?
- Does reclassification have an impact on academic achievement and attainment for former EL students relative to students who remain ELs? How much do impacts vary across student subgroups and state and local policy contexts?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This study will describe state and local reclassification policies and use a regression discontinuity design (RDD) to assess how these policies affect students' instructional experiences and outcomes. The descriptive analysis will be based on policy documents and survey data from state and local education agencies about their reclassification, course placement, and EL monitoring policies. The RDD analysis will rely on student-level educational data from state longitudinal data systems (SLDS). The RDD approach will compare students within each included district whose performance was just high enough

to reclassify out of EL status with students in the district whose performance was just under the reclassification threshold.

### **Publications and Products**

The report for the study is expected in 2024 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Literacy

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [National Evaluation of the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grants](#)
- [Impact Evaluation of Training in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Reading in Early Elementary School](#)

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

- [Catch and Release: Predicting Maintenance of Tier 2 Reading Intervention Effects](#)
- [The Effect of Content-Focused Coaching on Reading Comprehension Instruction: Evidence from Urban and Rural Schools](#)
- [Validating Automated Measures of Student Writing and the Student Writing Process to Help Classroom Teachers Implement Formative Assessment Practices](#)
- [Writing Across Levels of Language \(WALL\) in First Grade](#)
- [Writing Architect: A Web-based Tool for Adapting Writing Instruction to Meet Students' Needs](#)
- [Zoom: Innovative Detailed Examination of Digital vs. Paper Reading](#)

# National Evaluation of the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) and Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Programs

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	May 2018 - December 2026

## **Background**

Boosting literacy among school-age children remains a national priority. Nearly one-third of students in the U.S. have not developed the foundational reading skills needed to succeed academically, with those living in poverty, those with disabilities, and English learners (ELs) especially at risk. Since 2010 Congress has provided funds for preschool through grade 12 literacy improvement efforts, including through the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) program and the newer Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program. This study will assess the implementation of both CLSD and SRCL to determine whether states, districts, and schools use the grant funds as intended and to inform program improvement. In addition, the study will assess the effects of CLSD on instruction and students' reading achievement.

## **Research Questions**

- What is the impact of CLSD funding on grade 3-5 teachers' literacy instruction and their students' reading achievement?
- How do trends in reading achievement differ for SRCL- and CLSD-funded schools and similar non-funded schools?
- To what extent are SRCL and CLSD funds targeted to disadvantaged students?
- To what extent are SRCL- and CLSD-funded literacy programs supported by evidence?
- What instructional practices are used by teachers in SRCL and CLSD schools?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

The SRCL implementation evaluation includes grant application reviews, annual grantee interviews, surveys of all subgrantees in Spring 2019, surveys of principals and teachers in a representative sample of 500 funded schools in Spring 2019 and Spring 2020, and collection of state and local extant reading/language arts assessment data. The evaluation will also conduct evidence reviews of practices commonly funded by SRCL.

The CLSD evaluation will include the first two rounds of grantees funded in FY 2019 and FY 2020. To document program implementation, the evaluation will include interviews of all state grantees and a survey of all district subgrantees. To assess the program's impact, the study will use an experimental design. The contractor will recruit approximately 130 schools and randomly assign them to a group that will receive CLSD funding right away or a group that will receive CLSD funding two years later. In

both groups of schools, data from state reading/language arts assessments and school-level surveys will be collected.

### **Publications and Products**

The report for the SRCL implementation evaluation is expected in 2022, and the CLSD evaluation report is expected in 2025. Both will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.



# Impact Evaluation of Training in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Reading in Early Elementary School

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	September 2018 - November 2027

## **Background**

With a third of U.S. students failing to develop foundational reading skills by 4th grade, a renewed focus on this critical learning is needed. Many elementary schools are seeking to move beyond basic good practice and adopt a more strategic approach to improve the quality of reading instruction and how struggling students are identified and provided with extra help. These efforts, often under the umbrella term *multi-tiered systems of support for reading* (MTSS-R), rely on outside training and technical assistance to strengthen core reading instruction for all students (Tier I) and the systematic and targeted use of supplemental supports for those who need it (Tier II). To expand the rigorous evidence about MTSS-R, this study evaluates the effectiveness of two promising strategies. The strategies differ in the way they help teachers with instruction of the core curriculum and in how closely that curriculum is linked to the supplemental support. They also differ on whether the supplemental support simply pre-teaches the core curriculum or uses an alternative curriculum with lessons tailored to student needs.

## **Research Questions**

- Does the training and technical assistance (TA) affect students' reading skills and achievement, both initially and over time? Does it help students identified as struggling in reading make more significant gains? Do the effects differ across the two strategies?
- Are the effects on reading related to schools' experiences implementing the MTSS-R strategies, including the extent to which they carry out the strategies as intended, and their use of key instructional practices?
- In what ways do these strategies affect the identification of special education students? What are students' outcomes?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

Approximately 150 schools will be randomly assigned to one of the training and TA strategies or to continue with their usual reading instruction and supports. The study's training and TA will be provided for teachers in grades 1 and 2 across three school years, 2021-2022 through 2023-2024. Data collection includes: (1) study-administered assessments of students in grades 1 and 2 to identify struggling students and to estimate effects on their foundational reading skills; (2) student records to estimate longer-term effects on these students' reading achievement, (3) staff surveys and observations of Tier I and II practice to provide information about instructional practice and the extent of staff training and TA; and (4) documentation of program implementation.

## **Publications and Products**

The first product for the study, a practitioner-oriented brief to provide implementation lessons learned, is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Other Core Academic Subjects

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

### Civics Education and Social Studies

- [Building Students' Environmental Knowledge and Engagement With Local Government Through Civic Science](#)
- [Connecting Classrooms to Congress: Fostering Informed Civic Engagement via Online Deliberative Town Halls](#)
- [Initial Efficacy Evaluation of an Action Civics Program](#)
- [US History Through Young People's Eyes: An Efficacy Study of Mission US](#)

### Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education

- [A Quantitative Synthesis of Outcomes of Educational Technology Approaches to K-12 Mathematics](#)
- [Developing & Testing Real-time Assessment & Scaffolding for Mathematics Use & Modeling During Science Inquiry](#)
- [Evaluating the Efficacy of MathByExample](#)
- [Formative Assessment Bundling Literacy and Elementary Science in the NGSS](#)
- [Leveraging Technology to Improve Children's Understanding of Mathematical Equivalence](#)
- [Making Space in Science Instruction: Developing the SPACE-IT Program to Foster Students' Spatial Thinking Skills and Science Achievement](#)
- [Validity Evidence on the Spatial Ability Assessment for STEM Instruction and Evaluation](#)

### Other Cognition and Student Learning

- [Improving Conceptual Knowledge in Upper Elementary Science with Scaffolded Sketch-Based Modeling](#)
- [Reducing Knowledge Gaps for Low-Income and Educationally At-risk Pre-kindergartners through Taxonomically Organized Books and Screen Media](#)
- [Story Talk-Kindergarten: Developing a Cognitive-based Vocabulary Intervention](#)

### Small Business Innovation Research Program

- [ACE - A Music Creation Engine to Improve Algebra Readiness](#)

- [AI-Driven Formative Assessments for Hands-on Science](#)
- [Combining AI \(Machine Learning and Game-Based Learning to Support English Learners](#)
- [Delivering and Demystifying Data for Literacy Leaders to Transform Reading Outcomes at Scale](#)
- [Interactive Audio Technology to Build Phonological Awareness and Early Childhood Literacy](#)
- [LoomVue Browser: Supporting Language Learning with a Dynamic Diglot Weave](#)
- [SkillCheck: Automatic Early Reading Diagnosis and Intervention](#)
- [Teachley Math Practice Kits: Transmedia resources to support students' metacognitive math reasoning](#)
- [Teachley Problem-Solving Assessment: Supporting Teachers to Assess and Promote Students' Mathematical Thinking](#)
- [vCoder with AI Assisted Learning](#)

# Parent Engagement

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [Evaluating Implementation of the Statewide Family Engagement Centers Program](#)
- [Evaluation of Promise Neighborhoods](#)
- [Evaluation of Full-Service Community Schools](#); listed above in the *[Behavior and Attendance](#)* topic area.

# Evaluating Implementation of the Statewide Family Engagement Centers Program

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 1. COVID-19 Area 2. Equity Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	September 2020 - March 2023

## **Background**

Despite the important role family engagement may play in children's educational progress, parents and guardians with lower incomes are significantly less likely than others to be involved in their child's schooling. The Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFEC) is one of the key U.S. Department of Education programs designed to close this gap. Funded for the first time in 2018, SFEC builds on an earlier program and provides grants to partnerships of education organizations and their states. The partners are expected both to deliver services directly to families to increase their engagement and to provide technical assistance and training to state, district, and school staff to help them help families. This study will describe the work of the first 12 grantees, focusing on the extent to which certain program priorities are being implemented. The results are intended to help federal policy makers refine the goals and objectives of the SFEC program, as well as inform the work of current grantees and improve the work with families of other education organizations and state and local educational agencies.

## **Research Questions**

- What services do grantees prioritize?
- How do they decide which services or activities to provide?
- To what extent do grantees serve disadvantaged communities and families?
- What are grantees' greatest challenges in meeting the objectives of the grants, including how the coronavirus pandemic influenced the provision of services and activities?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This is a descriptive study to better understand implementation of the 2018 Statewide Family Engagement Centers. Data will be collected primarily through surveys and follow-up interviews with the 12 SFEC grantee project directors and their 13 state counterparts in Spring 2022. Implementation of the study was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

## **Publications and Products**

The report for the study is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## Evaluation of Promise Neighborhoods

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	November 2019 - August 2024

### **Background**

The federal Promise Neighborhoods program supports nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, Indian tribes, and their partners in providing comprehensive, coordinated services for children, their families, and others in distressed communities. The broad range of possible services and focus on coordination are meant to build a pipeline of educational and developmental supports from "cradle to career" for children and to benefit the community at large. These services may be directed at improving academic, social, health and mental health, family and community engagement, crime prevention and rehabilitation, and workforce readiness outcomes.

The program, authorized under Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (or ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA), awarded its first grants in 2010. This first-ever national evaluation of Promise Neighborhoods is mandated by ESSA.

### **Research Questions**

- What does Promise Neighborhoods look like in the field: What services are offered and by whom? How are services connected and coordinated? How many students and their families receive each service? What is the total cost per year per participant? What challenges do grantees face, and how are they addressed?
- How do the services compare to those offered prior to the Promise Neighborhoods grant and to those offered in other, similar neighborhoods without grants?
- Do children in Promise Neighborhoods have greater improvements in outcomes over time than children from other, similar neighborhoods without grants?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This study will describe how the program is implemented using surveys of grantees and data from grantees' annual reporting to the Department. The study will also compare outcomes in Promise Neighborhoods before and after the grant award to the same outcomes for other neighborhoods that were similar but not served by a Promise Neighborhood grant. The outcomes will be collected through state birth records (to identify children living in the neighborhoods over time) and administrative student records, such as student test scores on state assessments, attendance, and high school graduation rates.

### **Publications and Products**

The report for the study is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Pathways to Career or College

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [National Evaluation of Career and Technical Education under Perkins V](#)
- [National Study of the Implementation of Adult Education Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#)
- [Assessing Evidence of Effectiveness in Adult Education: Study of Career Navigator Training](#)
- [Text Ed: A Study of Text Messaging to Improve College Enrollment Rates Among Disadvantaged Adults](#)
- [Evaluations of Federal Financial Aid Information and Delivery Strategies: An Experiment in the Federal Work Study Program to Encourage Student Jobs in the Private Sector](#)
- [Expanding Pell Grant Eligibility to Incarcerated Students: A Study of Early Implementers to Inform Roll Out of the FAFSA Simplification Act](#)
- Putting Dual Enrollment Within Reach (anticipated)

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

### Career and Technical Education

- [An Experimental Evaluation of the Efficacy of Virtual Enterprises](#)
- [College and Career Readiness: Investigating California's Efforts to Expand Career Technical Education Through Dual Enrollment](#)
- [Postsecondary and Labor Market Effects of Career and Technical Education in Baltimore City Public Schools](#)
- [SREB Career and Technical Education Leadership Academy Study](#)
- [Sub-baccalaureate Career and Technical Education: A Study of Institutional Practices, Labor Market Demand, and Student Outcomes in Florida](#)

### Postsecondary and Adult Education

- [Chicago Scholars Program Randomized Controlled Trial](#)
- [Developing a Context-Integrated Mindset / Belonging Intervention to Eliminate Demographic-based Underperformance in Challenging Large Lecture Undergraduate Courses](#)
- [Evaluating the Longer Term Impact of Early College High Schools on Workforce and Life Outcomes](#)
- [Examining the Efficacy, Predictive Power, and Cost Effectiveness of the Diagnostic Assessment and Achievement of College Skills](#)



- [Exploring Co-Requisite Developmental Education Models](#)
- [Online Instructor Professional Development and Student Outcomes in Community Colleges](#)
- [Scaling Up College Completion Efforts for Student Success \(SUCCESS\): A Multisite Randomized Controlled Trial](#)
- [The Implementation, Impact, and Cost-Effectiveness of Developmental Education Curricular Reform in California Community Colleges](#)
- [Understanding the Support Networks of First-Generation College Students](#)
- [Using Process Data to Characterize Response Profiles and Test-Taking Behaviors of Low-Skilled Adult Responders on PIAAC Literacy and Numeracy Items](#)

# National Evaluation of Career and Technical Education under Perkins V

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 1. COVID-19 Area 5. Postsecondary	September 2019 - September 2024

## **Background**

Even with constant change in the nature of work and the economy, the education decisions students make today will influence their later career direction and success. Helping secondary and postsecondary students develop skills that have value in the workplace is the key goal of career and technical education (CTE). Congress has supported CTE for over a century, most recently through the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act in 2018 (Perkins V). Many provisions of the prior Perkins Act remain, but Perkins V includes some changes designed to: (1) promote equity by expanding exposure to and participation in CTE for all students, including students in underserved groups, (2) enhance CTE program quality through specific mechanisms for labor market alignment, innovation, and improvement specified in Perkins V, and (3) increase Perkins funding and accountability flexibilities intended for continuous improvement purposes. Perkins V requires IES to conduct this national evaluation to assess CTE programs under the new law.

## **Research Questions**

- How are CTE participation and outcomes changing?
- How, and to what extent, does current CTE implementation reflect key policy goals and objectives of Perkins V? What challenges do State agencies and local recipients face in administering and delivering CTE services, particularly the newly introduced provisions in Perkins V?
- In what important ways has CTE implementation evolved since the prior version of the Perkins Act?
- What CTE strategies and practices are effective and for whom?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

The national evaluation will draw on a variety of data sources and studies for its assessment of CTE. New surveys of all state directors of CTE and a nationally representative sample of district coordinators of CTE will be conducted in Fall 2022 to collect information about Perkins implementation. Trends in CTE participation and outcomes will be obtained by analyzing other national data, including those from the National Center for Education Statistics, state-submitted Perkins V performance reports, and labor market repositories. To identify and report on the effectiveness of key CTE strategies, the evaluation will review rigorously conducted research, where it already exists, and consider conducting new studies of CTE approaches deemed most critical to the field's improvement.

## **Publications and Products**

The study's first report is expected in 2022, and IES will report on results from the evaluation every two years. These publications will be announced on <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# National Study of the Implementation of Adult Education Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 5. Postsecondary	September 2017 - March 2023

## **Background**

Higher-level skills are increasingly required to succeed in the American workforce, and yet many adults in the United States lack them. Over 25 million adults have not earned a high school diploma or GED. Even among those with at least a secondary credential, a lack of proficiency with the English language can be a significant barrier to a family-sustaining income and to full integration as citizens. Congress has sought to help individuals address these challenges-and the nation's workforce development needs-by providing funds for adult education. Through the recent update to Title II of the 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), these funds must be used to support programs that have a clearer link between adult education and workforce development, expand opportunities to serve particular subpopulations of adults (such as English learners), and emphasize performance accountability and use of program effectiveness information more so than under the prior law. Reflecting that emphasis on evidence, WIOA mandates an independent national evaluation of Title II-funded adult education programs. A part of the national evaluation, this study is designed to provide implementation information on such programs, with a focus on how the changes contained in WIOA appear to be shaping the services provided by adult education programs and the populations such programs serve.

## **Research Questions**

- How - and to what extent - are the changes to adult education policies and practices promoted by WIOA being implemented?
- Beyond the changes to adult education promoted by WIOA, in what other important ways has implementation evolved since prior to the enactment of the law?
- What challenges do State agencies and local providers currently face in administering and delivering adult education services?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

The study is descriptive and primarily involves collection and tabulation of data from surveys. It includes a survey of adult education State Directors and a survey of adult education providers in the states and the District of Columbia that received federal funds in program year 2018-2019. Some key findings from the provider survey will be compared with findings from an earlier national survey of providers, conducted in 2003. This will allow for an assessment of the extent to which adult education programs have evolved since prior to the enactment of WIOA. The study will also include analyses of extant data such as state- and provider-level data collected for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education's National Reporting System. This includes information on adult education programs

funded and populations served. This data will be used to provide further contextual information about adult education programs and populations.

### **Publications and Products**

The study's first report is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## Assessing Evidence of Effectiveness in Adult Education: Study of Career Navigator Training

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity Area 5. Postsecondary	September 2018 - December 2027

### **Background**

Improving the skills and career pathways of the many adults who struggle with literacy, numeracy, and English proficiency is the key goal of federal adult education policy. Title II of the 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds encourages state agencies and local providers to find ways to facilitate postsecondary enrollment, credential attainment and higher earnings for the more than one million learners who participate in adult education programs. One promising approach is providing these learners with career navigators—dedicated staff whose role is to advise learners in career and college planning and to help them address challenges as they follow through on their plans. Navigators can be a significant expense for adult education providers, but the staff often receive little training despite their diverse backgrounds and thus may not be equipped with the knowledge and skills need to effectively guide learners. The study will test whether providing a promising model of training to navigators leads to improvements in their learners’ postsecondary, employment and earnings outcomes.

### **Research Questions**

- Can providing training to career navigators improve adult learners’ college enrollment and credential attainment rates? Can it improve learners’ employment rates and earnings?
- What types of services do career navigators typically provide, and does the training change either the nature or the intensity of services in ways that explain any impacts on learners’ outcomes?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This impact study will involve approximately 65 adult education sites. About half of the sites will be assigned by lottery to a group in which the site’s career navigators will receive training provided by the study in Fall 2022. Career navigators in the remaining sites will not receive the study’s training until after the study period is over. Using records obtained from the program providers and other agencies, the study will assess learners’ college enrollment, credential attainment, employment status, and earnings at approximately 18 and 30 months after learners begin participating in the study. The study will also survey career navigators at the start of the study in order to collect descriptive information on the types of navigation services typically provided and to whom those services are typically targeted. Through the collection of service logs during the study, information to understand how the training might influence the navigation services provided and the targeting of those services will be obtained.

This study builds on an earlier systematic evidence review that summarized findings from existing studies of adult education strategies and identified gaps in the knowledge base.

### **Publications and Products**

A snapshot titled [Adult Education Strategies: Identifying and Building Evidence of Effectiveness](#) was released in April 2021. A research brief on the knowledge and skills required of career navigators is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## Text Ed: A Study of Text Messaging to Improve College Enrollment Rates Among Disadvantaged Adults

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 5. Postsecondary	August 2016 - November 2022

### **Background**

Boosting college enrollment continues to be a strategy to improve the life-long success of adults who are low income or potential first-generation college goers. The U.S. Department of Education's Educational Opportunity Centers (EOCs) program—one of the federal TRIO programs—aims to support this objective through “light touch” services. Funded EOCs, typically institutions of higher education, are expected to serve a minimum of 1,000 individuals per year and provide informational assistance related to college admissions and financial aid options. The study examines a promising strategy designed to help EOC grantees meet the program's goal of increasing college enrollment. It tests the effectiveness of a low-cost enhancement to grantee services—a systematic set of text messages that include timely, personalized information concerning college enrollment activities and deadlines, resources for overcoming common barriers to enrollment, and an easy way to connect EOC participants with center staff to answer questions and provide further assistance.

### **Research Questions**

- Does providing personalized text messages to EOC participants increase Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates?
- Do the messages increase the likelihood of EOC participants enrolling in postsecondary education?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

Eighteen EOC grantees are participating in the study. Within each grantee site, eligible participants were randomly assigned to receive either the grantee's typical services or the study's messages in addition to the grantee's typical services. About 3,600 participants were assigned on a rolling basis from Spring 2018 through Summer 2020. Participant background information, as well as information required for the customization of messages (for example, the postsecondary institution at which the participant wishes to enroll), are being obtained from grantee records. FAFSA completion will be measured using administrative records from the U.S. Department of Education. Whether participants enroll in college will be measured based on National Student Clearinghouse records.

### **Publications and Products**

The report for the study is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.



# Evaluations of Federal Financial Aid Information and Delivery Strategies: An Experiment in the Federal Work Study Program to Encourage Student Jobs in the Private Sector

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 6. Federal Financial Aid	September 2020 – September 2023

## **Background**

Most students work while enrolled in postsecondary education, but the jobs are more likely to connect to students' course of study or longer-term professional goals if they are higher-income. To help address this inequity, the office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) is conducting an experiment to test the effects of granting colleges flexibility in how they carry out the Federal Work Study (FWS) program. FWS provides participating colleges over \$1 billion to support employment of college students with financial need to help pay education expenses. Currently, about 92 percent of FWS dollars are spent supporting students in on-campus employment that may not be related to their career goals, and few colleges use FWS funds for off-campus, private sector job development. Under the Experimental Sites Initiative authorized by section 487A(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, colleges are receiving waivers to allow them to increase the share of FWS funds used to develop off-campus employment and support students in those jobs, including full-time work required by their academic program (such as clinical rotations or student teaching). The Institute of Education Sciences is assessing whether participating in the FWS experiment changes colleges' use of job development funds, the number of off-campus private sector jobs, and student wages.

## **Research Questions**

- What types of colleges participated in the Federal Work Study (FWS) experiment, which FWS rules did they waive, and how did they implement those waivers?
- How does student participation in FWS compare to participation before the FWS experiment and to participation in other, similar FWS colleges not in the experiment?
- Do FWS students in colleges implementing the waivers engage in more private sector employment, earn higher wages in FWS jobs, complete college at higher rates, or borrow less in student loans than do those in similar colleges not implementing the waivers?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This study has two parts. The first describes the participating colleges and students, and how colleges implemented the FWS waivers using surveys of participating colleges and data from annual reporting to FSA. The second part uses a quasi-experimental design to compare the differences in outcomes in participating colleges before and after the implementation of FWS waivers to changes in outcomes over the same period in other colleges that are similar but not participating in the FWS experiment.

Outcome measures will be collected from FSA's student administrative records and annual reporting of campus-based program expenditures.

### **Publications and Products**

The study's first report is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## [Expanding Pell Grant Eligibility to Incarcerated Students: A Study of Early Implementers to Inform Roll Out of the FAFSA Simplification Act](#)

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 6. Federal Financial Aid	September 2021 – September 2023

### **Background**

Although enrolling in postsecondary education programs while in prison may reduce recidivism and improve the employment prospects of incarcerated individuals after release, the costs and availability of such programs can be barriers to participation. Making financial aid available to incarcerated individuals is one way to encourage more colleges to offer and promote access to prison education programs. To facilitate this goal Congress extended Pell Grant eligibility to incarcerated students as part of the 2020 FAFSA Simplification Act, which will be operational in 2023. This effort builds on an earlier pilot of the policy change conducted with 63 colleges by the Office of Student Financial Aid (FSA) under the Experimental Sites Initiative. The FAFSA Simplification Act requires the Institute of Education Science to conduct an external evaluation, which is intended to inform improvement of key activities under the new law.

### **Research Questions**

- How common are services to encourage access to and success in Pell-eligible prison education programs, at least among colleges who were early implementers under the previous pilot? What are common or potentially promising practices?
- What challenges may colleges face in selecting programs to offer incarcerated students under the new provisions in the FAFSA Simplification Act? How likely are the new provisions to limit participation among early implementers?
- What challenges may colleges face with reporting requirements under the new provisions in the FAFSA Simplification Act and how likely are they to limit college participation, either initially or over time?
- How expansive are Pell-eligible prison education programs likely to be under the FAFSA Simplification Act, given the experiences of early implementing colleges and students?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This descriptive study will draw on the experiences of early implementing colleges and students who participated in a pilot of the policy change. The analysis will be based on surveys of participating colleges, data from annual reporting to the Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA), and interviews with approximately 40 colleges.

### **Publications and Products**

The report for this study is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# School Choice

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [Evaluating the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program After the 2017 Reauthorization](#)
- [Impact Study of Magnet Schools](#)
- [Study of Access to Charter Schools](#)

## Evaluating the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program After the 2017 Reauthorization

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity	January 2019–October 2026

### **Background**

The DC Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) provides low-income students in Washington, DC, with scholarships to attend one of the district's participating private schools. The OSP is the nation's only federally funded private school voucher program.

This third congressionally-mandated evaluation of the OSP intends to use different research methodologies and address different issues than the ones that came before. The previous evaluations (completed in 2011 and soon in 2019) relied on lotteries to award private school scholarships, creating the conditions for a random assignment study to determine the effectiveness of the program. Together, those earlier evaluations raised some questions about how well the program was improving student achievement and parent and student satisfaction with their schools. The current study reflects the prohibition on using lotteries for evaluation included in the 2017 reauthorization of the OSP and interest in better understanding how the program works and could be improved. The study includes analysis of program implementation and student outcomes.

### **Research Questions**

- What role does the program operator play in the OSP, and how is their work carried out?
- What is the experience of applying for a scholarship and to participating private schools? Who uses or does not use a voucher once one is offered, and why?
- What is the experience of using an OSP voucher? What are the challenges encountered and the supports available for overcoming them?
- What are the characteristics of teachers and the instruction they provide in the participating private schools versus in the public schools OSP participants would otherwise attend?
- How do students using OSP vouchers to attend private schools perform and progress on math and reading assessments?
- How do parents of students using OSP vouchers and the students themselves rate their children's school in terms of safety and satisfaction?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

The evaluation relies on a variety of data sources and collection methods, including interviews with the program operator, surveys of participating parents and schools, and collection of academic assessment information from schools for participating students to track their progress over time.

### **Publications and Products**

The study's first report is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## Impact Study of Magnet Schools

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity	September 2017 - May 2024

### **Background**

Decades after the Supreme Court declared racial segregation in public schools to be unconstitutional, the concentration of students in schools by race, ethnicity, and poverty persists. The federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) supports districts and schools in their efforts to reduce group isolation and improve student achievement through increased school choice options for families. MSAP schools seek to attract a diverse set of students and provide high-quality academic programs, typically by organizing recruitment and instruction around one or more themes. With the growth in school choice more broadly and specifically in magnet schools since 2000, it is important to understand how well these federally funded schools achieve their goals and how they work. This evaluation takes advantage of new opportunities to rigorously assess MSAP schools with low burden. It draws on lotteries most MSAP districts now use to admit students to their magnet schools. By comparing the achievement and school characteristics of applicants who were and were not given a seat by chance, the study will determine the impact of the MSAP and examine how specific school features relate to effectiveness.

### **Research Questions**

- What is the impact of the magnet programs on student achievement and/or other relevant measures of student success, such as persistence in school or graduation?
- What is the impact of the magnet programs on the characteristics of the schools that the students attend, including whether they are higher performing or more diverse?
- Are particular features of magnet schools associated with greater success?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This impact evaluation includes over 14,500 students who entered MSAP admissions lotteries in 2018 or 2019 in 11 districts. Data are being collected for both students who were and were not offered placement, including district records containing student characteristics, enrollment, test scores, and other information, and a survey of students' school principals about school organization and instruction. The academic progress and experiences of students in the two groups will be compared for the four years following their admissions lottery (through 2023).

### **Publications and Products**

A snapshot, titled [Drawing Across School Boundaries: How Federally Funded Magnet Schools Recruit and Admit Students](#), was released in January 2021. The next report, on school diversity, is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.



## Study of Access to Charter Schools

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity	September 2019 - January 2024

### **Background**

Equitable access to high-quality schools is a key concern for many supporters of public school choice. The federal Charter Schools Program (CSP), and many individual state laws, require funded charter schools to use lotteries to admit students in a fair and objective way when demand for seats exceeds space. This study will describe the extent to which and how charter schools nationwide implement lotteries, providing information on access to and demand for these schools among key groups. It will also look at barriers these schools face in expanding access.

### **Research Questions**

- How often are charter school admissions part of a larger choice process? What proportion participate in common applications and unified lotteries that include other charter schools and/or other choice options?
- When charter schools have more applicants than they can admit, how do they use admission preferences? Which schools have high demand? How do these schools prioritize particular students, if at all?
- What barriers to expansion do charter schools face?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This study will be descriptive, based on a new nationally representative survey of 2,000 charter schools that are funded and not funded by the CSP. The survey has been postponed until 2023 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Publications and Products**

The report for the study will be published in 2024 and announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# School Improvement

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [Evaluation of Title I Pilots That Provide Flexibility Under the Every Student Succeeds Act](#)
- [Impact Evaluation of Departmentalized Instruction in Elementary Schools](#)
- [Implementation of Title I/II-A Program Initiatives](#)
- [National Implementation Study of Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants \(Title IV, Part A\)](#)
- [Study of District and School Uses of Federal Education Funds](#)
- [Study of Schools Identified for Comprehensive School Improvement under ESSA](#)
- [Study of Strategies to Address Unfinished Learning in Math](#)
- [The Effects of a Systematic Approach to Improving Quality in Afterschool Programs: An Impact Evaluation to Inform the 21st Century Community Learning Centers \(CCLC\) Program Evaluation of Promise Neighborhoods](#); listed above in the [Parent Engagement](#) topic area.

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

- [Exploration of Departmentalized Instruction](#)

## Evaluation of Title I Pilots That Provide Flexibility Under the Every Student Succeeds Act

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	September 2019 - September 2024

### **Background**

Academic assessments can ideally serve multiple important purposes: diagnosing what students know to tailor instruction, assessing school performance for accountability, and monitoring both students and schools for improvement. To encourage the development of innovative assessments that better serve all of these purposes, the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) program was created in 2015 to allow the U.S. Department of Education to exempt states from certain federal testing requirements if they agree to pilot new types of assessment systems. Congress mandated an evaluation of IADA. The evaluation will chart pilot sites' progress and identify lessons learned for developing and implementing alternative assessments.

### **Research Questions**

- Why are states developing an innovative assessment system, and how are they expecting the system to accomplish their goals? How does the system compare to their existing assessments?
- Have states' innovative assessment systems been implemented with fidelity and met the core requirements of the federal pilot program after three years? To what extent have teachers, principals, and other school leaders demonstrated a commitment and capacity to implement the innovative assessment system?
- What were the key challenges to developing an innovative assessment system, piloting it, and scaling it up? How were the challenges addressed, and how did participation in the federal pilot program facilitate or impede the process?
- How have districts, schools, and teachers perceived and adapted to the innovative assessment system? How have practices related to instruction, professional development, and burden under the innovative assessment system compared to practices under the states' existing assessments?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This implementation study will examine IADA implementation in the first four pilot states based on states' IADA applications and annual progress reporting, interviews with state assessment directors, and surveys of participating districts, schools, and teachers. The four states are: Louisiana and New Hampshire (approved in 2018); and Georgia and North Carolina (approved in 2019).

### **Publications and Products**

The first report for the study is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Impact Evaluation of Departmentalized Instruction in Elementary Schools

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	September 2017 - September 2023

## **Background**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, most recently reauthorized in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), supports efforts to deploy the educator workforce efficiently and effectively. One promising strategy is departmentalized instruction, where each teacher specializes in teaching one subject to multiple classes of students instead of teaching all subjects to a single class of students (self-contained instruction). Departmentalization is nearly ubiquitous in secondary schools but has only recently become more common in upper elementary schools. Despite the growing popularity of this approach to organizing teachers' instruction, limited evidence exists on its effectiveness relative to the more traditional self-contained approach. This evaluation was originally intended to fill the gap by examining the impact of departmentalizing fourth and fifth grade teachers in a large number of low-performing elementary schools across the country. However, the coronavirus pandemic disrupted the implementation of departmentalization in participating schools and the schools' administration of state assessments of student achievement that the study intended to draw on. Instead, the study will describe lessons learned in switching to this way of organizing teachers in schools.

## **Research Questions**

- How do schools structure departmentalization?
- What challenges and benefits do principals and teachers perceive in switching from self-contained classrooms to departmentalization?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This descriptive study will share lessons learned from helping elementary schools around the country to implement departmentalized instruction. A total of 90 elementary schools in 12 districts across the country were recruited to participate in the study. All schools were using self-contained classrooms during the 2018-19 school year. Beginning with the 2019-20 school year, approximately half of these schools chose to switch to departmentalized instruction in fourth grade and fifth grade (treatment), while the remaining schools chose to continue with self-contained classrooms (comparison). The study will collect data from principal interviews, to learn how teacher assignments were made and departmentalization was structured, and teacher surveys and focus groups to examine their perceptions of and approaches to departmentalization.

## **Publications and Products**

The report for the study is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## Implementation of Title I/II-A Program Initiatives

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity Area 3. Educators	September 2011 - September 2023

### **Background**

Accounting for about \$19 billion of \$26 billion in ESEA funds in fiscal year 2020, Title I and Title II-A encourage equal access to education by providing financial assistance to schools and districts with a high percentage of students from low-income families (Title I) and by improving teacher and principal quality (Title II-A).

ESEA's latest reauthorization as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015 shifts authority over many education decisions and rules from the U.S. Department of Education (the Department) to states and localities. The new law also retains some federal requirements from prior versions of ESEA to help ensure that states focus on providing a high-quality education to disadvantaged students. How states and localities respond to this combination of flexibility and requirements will determine whether ESSA stimulates educational improvement as intended.

This study provides a national portrait of Title I and Title II-A implementation at several key time points:

- **2013-14**, when the Department had already begun to provide states with waivers from key requirements under ESSA's predecessor, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, in exchange for commitments to specific reform principles, colloquially known as "ESEA flexibility."
- **2017-18**, when the Department approved most states' ESSA plans, marking a transition year to fully implementing ESSA's core components.
- **2021-22**, when ESSA implementation is expected to be in a more mature phase.

### **Research Questions**

- What content standards and high school graduation requirements are states adopting, and what materials and resources are provided to support implementation?
- What types of assessments do states and districts use, and what materials and resources are provided to support the implementation of assessments and use of assessment data?
- What elements are included in states' accountability systems? How do states and districts identify and support their lowest-performing schools?
- How do states and districts evaluate educator effectiveness and assess the equitable distribution of educators, and what supports are provided to improve educator effectiveness?
- How has student achievement changed over time?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

National data will be collected at times that correspond to the key points described earlier. In any year, these data may include surveys of all state Title I and Title II coordinators and nationally-representative samples of districts, schools, and teachers. The evaluation also draws on existing data, such as state-level student academic proficiency data that states report to the Department, state-level math and reading achievement data from the Department's National Assessment of Educational Progress, and information from ESSA state plans.

Responses to survey questions will be tabulated into descriptive statistics (such as percentages) and simple statistical tests (such as tests for differences between percentages). These tabulations provide a snapshot at each time point, as well as aggregate changes over time. The study is descriptive and not designed to estimate the impact of federal policies on state and local actions.

### **Publications and Products**

The first report, titled [Implementation of Title I and II-A Program Initiatives: Results from 2013-14](#), was released in January 2017.

A snapshot, titled [How States and Districts Support Evidence Use in School Improvement](#), was released in June 2020.

The second report, titled [The Transition to ESSA: State and District Approaches to Implementing Title I and Title II-A in 2017-18](#), was released in December 2020.

A [restricted-use file](#) containing de-identified data is available for the purposes of replicating study findings and secondary analysis.

Additional reports and snapshots are expected to be published in 2021 and 2024 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## National Implementation Study of Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Title IV, Part A)

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 1. COVID-19 Area 2. Equity Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	June 2019 - August 2023

### **Background**

Changes to education law in 2015 consolidated several programs to give states and districts greater flexibility in how they use federal funds. The resulting Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program (Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)) tries to maintain the different purposes of the original programs by prioritizing and requiring spending in three broad areas: (1) providing students with a well-rounded education, (2) ensuring a positive school environment, and (3) improving and personalizing learning through technology. The new law also requires districts to consult with stakeholders, distribute Title IV-A funds to high-need schools and, in certain instances, conduct comprehensive needs assessments and use evidence from research to determine which strategies to fund. This evaluation will assess how this new program is being carried out across the country, particularly the ways in which it supports school systems as they seek to recover from the coronavirus pandemic during the 2021-2022 school year.

### **Research Questions**

- What guidance and technical assistance did states provide to districts to assist in local implementation of the Title IV-A program?
- How do districts decide how to use Title IV-A funds?
- What are the primary services and activities districts are implementing with Title IV-A funds?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

The study is descriptive. It will be based on a survey of Title IV-A coordinators from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico and a nationally representative survey of Title IV-A coordinators in 1,200 school districts.

### **Publications and Products**

The study's report is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Study of District and School Uses of Federal Education Funds

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity	October 2019-March 2024

## **Background**

Federal funds, which account for less than 10 percent of K-12 education spending nationally, can play an important role, particularly in communities that are lower-income or have lower-performing schools. Although each federal education program has unique goals and provisions, they often allow funds to be used for similar purposes and services or overlapping populations. Congress provided state and local educational agencies greater flexibility in their use of federal funds through the 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Congress also created the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide funding and flexibilities for states and districts to respond to the COVID-19 emergency in K-12 schools.

Policymakers remain interested in how federal dollars are spent. This study will examine how funds are distributed and used from the CARES Act as well as five major federal education programs: Part A of Titles I, II, III, and IV of ESEA, and Title I, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Together, the non-CARES Act programs account for about 80 percent of total funding for the Department's elementary-secondary programs, or \$32 billion.

## **Research Questions**

- To what extent are federal funds – including those from the CARES Act – reaching the districts and schools with the greatest needs?
- How much do the federal programs in this study increase the level of per-pupil funding over what is provided through state and local sources? How does this vary across districts and schools?
- To what extent do districts and schools use federal funds for instructional staff, professional development, technology, student support services, and other resources? How does spending from federal funds differ from state and local spending? How do local agencies use funding from different sources to support, for example, the education of students with disabilities?
- To what extent do districts make use of flexibilities provided through ESEA, IDEA, and the CARES Act?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This descriptive study will examine the targeting and uses of key federal education programs based on detailed fiscal data from the data systems of a nationally representative sample of 400 school districts. These data include revenue, expenditure, and personnel and payroll data, for up to four consecutive school years: 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22. In addition, the study will collect data on federal funding allocations from states to school districts and from districts to schools and consider study design options for estimating the costs of serving students with special education needs.



## **Publications and Products**

The first report is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## Study of Schools Identified for Comprehensive School Improvement under ESSA

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	October 2019-June 2023

### **Background**

Decades of educational reforms have demonstrated that turning around the lowest-performing schools in the U.S. remains a complex challenge. Federal policies, including the 2015 reauthorization of ESEA as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), seek to boost these efforts by requiring that states identify those schools needing comprehensive support and improvement (CSI), have them create a plan for improvement, and provide additional support to help the schools expand capacity and student progress. Compared with prior laws, ESSA allows states and districts greater flexibility to shape their approach to school improvement. This study will examine implementation of ESSA’s CSI provisions in order to understand how states, districts, and schools are responding to the new requirements.

### **Research Questions**

- To what extent have states altered the number and types of schools identified for significant support after ESSA’s flexibilities were phased in?
- In what ways do the identified CSI schools organize instruction and services differently from other schools? How are states and school districts monitoring implementation?
- Do CSI schools receive and use resources differently than other schools?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This descriptive study will examine existing U.S. Department of Education data on schools identified for significant support before and after ESSA, as well as data on a nationally representative sample of CSI schools collected as part of other IES studies.

### **Publications and Products**

A first report, describing the number and characteristics of CSI schools, is expected in 2022. The study's final report is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

## Study of Strategies to Address Unfinished Learning in Math

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 1. COVID-19 Area 2. Equity Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	August 2021 - August 2026

### **Background**

The coronavirus pandemic led to substantial unfinished learning in math and an important debate about how best to address it. Traditionally, policymakers and educators have advocated a “mastery” approach, which views all below-grade content as foundational and systematically reteaches any content where there are knowledge gaps. “Just-in-time” learning has received attention more recently, including in the U.S. Department of Education’s [COVID-19 Handbook](#). This alternative reteaches only below-grade content deemed most essential to understanding the current grade-level topic. But there is limited evidence on which approach is most effective for which students and which contexts. This evaluation will examine the effectiveness of adaptive technology products that deliver these two catch-up strategies in elementary schools, where teachers often struggle with how to teach math well and the benefits of using technology supports are understudied. The findings will provide valuable evidence, especially for low-performing schools identified under the Every Student Succeeds Act and their most underserved students.

### **Research Questions**

- Does regular use of adaptive technology products that provide catch-up instruction improve struggling students' learning? Do they work particularly well for math teachers in low-performing schools?
- Which catch-up strategy is more effective at improving struggling students' learning – “just-in-time” or “mastery”? What approach is best for students who begin the year especially behind, and for low-income and students of color?
- What below-grade math content is most strongly associated with successful learning of core fourth and fifth grade topics?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This impact evaluation will assess the effectiveness of at least two adaptive math technology products, that provide a “just-in-time” and a “mastery” catch-up learning approach. Up to 150 schools nationally will be recruited in school year 2022-23 to participate in the study. Schools will select which of the technology products they wish to implement. Schools will be assigned by lottery to either implement their chosen product in fourth and fifth grade for two school years (2023-24 and 2024-25) or continue with typical practice. In each school that is assigned to implement the technology product, students will be assigned by lottery to implement the technology product using either the “just-in-time” or

"mastery" approach. Data collection will include: a teacher survey to examine the effects of the technology on classroom practice; data from the technology platform to examine the effects on student engagement and implementation; a study-administered math assessment; and district administrative data on students' math and reading achievement.

### **Publications and Products**

The study's first report is expected in 2024 and will be announced on <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# The Effects of a Systematic Approach to Improving Quality in Afterschool Programs: An Impact Evaluation to Inform the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Program

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity	July 2019 - June 2025

## **Background**

The time students spend outside of school hours, including after school, can be important opportunities for their social and academic development. The 21st CCLC program intends to provide these opportunities by funding a broad range of academic enrichment activities in community learning centers, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. But little is known about the extent and diversity of recent program activities, or whether a systematic approach to support program quality could improve staff practices and student outcomes. This evaluation will produce a national picture of funded program activities and program improvement efforts and evaluate the effectiveness of a continuous quality improvement system aimed at improving staff practices to support students' social and emotional skills.

## **Research Questions**

- What are the impacts of the studied continuous quality improvement system on 21st CCLC afterschool centers' staff practices? What are the impacts on students' social and emotional skills and other school-related student outcomes?
- What are the challenges with implementing the continuous quality improvement system, and how are they addressed?
- What are the activities and services offered by 21st CCLC afterschool centers? How are they staffed and supported to meet local needs?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

To assess the effectiveness of the continuous quality improvement (CQI) system, approximately 100 21st CCLC afterschool centers will be recruited to participate in an impact study. Half of the participating centers will be selected by lottery to implement the CQI system supported by the study for two school years, and half will continue their normally planned program. The impact study will compare staff practices and student outcomes for the two groups of centers. Information also will be collected on program operations and staff training and experiences with the CQI system. Data collection includes afterschool center director interviews, an afterschool staff survey, observations of program quality at each center, student survey and afterschool attendance records, administrative school records, and a school-day teacher survey. The national picture of program activities will be based on a survey of a nationally representative sample of 250 21st CCLC afterschool centers.

## **Publications and Products**

The study's report is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Students with Disabilities

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [Evaluation of Transition Supports for Youth with Disabilities](#)
- [State and Local Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act](#)
- [Evaluation of Preschool Special Education Practices](#); described above in the [Early Learning](#) topic area.
- [Impact Evaluation of Training in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Reading in Early Elementary School](#); listed above in the [Literacy](#) topic area.
- Design and Conduct of an Impact Evaluation of Professional Development for General and Special Education Teachers to Improve Instruction and Academic Outcomes for Students with Disabilities (anticipated)
- Spending and Required Resources for Addressing the Needs of Students with Disabilities (anticipated)

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

- [Analysis of NAEP Mathematics Process, Outcome, and Survey Data to Understand Test-Taking Behavior and Mathematics Performance of Learners with Disabilities](#)
- [College Ready: Reading and Writing to Learn](#)
- [Computer Adaptive Storybook Assessment \(CASA\)](#)
- [Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education \(CARE\) for Special Educators: Supporting Educator Capacity and Well-Being to Promote Positive Student Outcomes](#)
- [Developing and Refining a Parent Training to Improve Outcomes for African American Children with Autism](#)
- [Developing Early Achievements for Pre-K Children with Developmental Language Disorders: A Comprehensive Contextualized Embodied Approach](#)
- [Effectiveness of Leveled Literacy Intervention Intermediate for Third and Fourth Grade Students with Reading Difficulties or Disabilities](#)
- [Effectiveness Replication of Enhanced Core Reading Instruction \(ECRI\)](#)
- [Effectiveness Replication of the BEST in CLASS Intervention for Young Children at High Risk for Delays in Social or Emotional Development](#)
- [Efficacy of Virtual Professional Development in Rural Schools to Enhance Teacher-Parent Partnerships for Students with Behavioral Challenges](#)

- [Enhancing Engagement: Investigating Adaptations to Commonly Used Interventions for Elementary Students with Challenging Behavior](#)
- [Enhancing Peer Network Interventions to Improve Social Communication, Play, and Peer Relationships for Minimally Verbal Students with Autism](#)
- [Examining How Teacher-Student Interactions within Mathematics and Literacy Instructional Contexts Relate to the Developmental and Academic Outcomes of Early Elementary Students with Autism](#)
- [Exploring relationships between college and career readiness, self-determination, and transition planning among adolescents with and without disabilities](#)
- [GoManage: A Self-Management Curriculum App for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Improving Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Academic Functioning of Elementary School Children Through the Interconnected Systems Framework](#)
- [Initial Efficacy Trial of Florida Embedded Practices and Intervention with Caregivers](#)
- [Interventions for English Language Learners At-Risk for ADHD](#)
- [Math and Reading Acquisition Co-Adaptive System \(MARACAS\)](#)
- [Multi-Year Middle School Intensive Reading Intervention for Students with or At-Risk for Reading Disabilities.](#)
- [Preparing Preschool Teachers to Engage in Reliable and Individualized Progress Monitoring Practices using an Online Asynchronous Training](#)
- [Project EXPRESS: EXamining interventions to PRomote Executive functioning and Social Skills](#)
- [Project i-SMART: Intervention to Support Mindset and Reading Together](#)
- [Project PRIME2: Planning Realistic Intervention implementation and Maintenance by Educators](#)
- [Project RISE: Examining Teachers' Reading Instruction, Supports, and Expertise for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [Project STAY: Supporting Teachers of Autism in Years 1-3](#)
- [Rethinking Accessibility Using NAEP Process Data: Exploring Universal Design and Accommodations](#)
- [Speech-Therapy Experiences in Public Schools-2 \(STEPS-2\)](#)
- [Systematic Efficacy Replication Study of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation in Elementary Schools](#)
- [TAGG-MS: Development and Validation of the Transition Assessment and Goal Generator \(TAGG\) for Middle School Students with Disabilities](#)



- [The Development and Pilot Testing of an Intensive Tier 3 Reading Intervention in the Early Grades](#)
- [The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction for Reading \(SDLMI-R\): Improving Outcomes of Upper Elementary Students with or At-Risk for Reading Disability](#)
- [Transitioning to Middle School Successfully: Development of a Brief Intervention to Reduce Student Anxiety \(TRAMSS\)](#)
- [Treatment Intensity Factors Related to Efficient and Effective Communication Intervention for Individuals with ASD and Complex Communication Needs](#)
- [Validating DIBELS 8th Edition as a Screener for Dyslexia \(AIP2\)](#)
- [Varied Practice Reading for Middle School Students With or At Risk for Reading Disabilities](#)

## Evaluation of Transition Supports for Youth with Disabilities

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity Area 5. Postsecondary	September 2019 - November 2022

### **Background**

Students with disabilities continue to lag behind their peers in high school graduation, enrollment in postsecondary education, and employment more than a decade after the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A central goal of IDEA is to help students with disabilities prepare for their transition from secondary school to further education, work, and independent living. To achieve this goal, IDEA requires the provision of transition services focused on improving students' academic and functional achievement in accordance with their individualized education program. Although studies suggest the importance of certain types of preparation for students with disabilities, there is limited evidence about the effectiveness of those or other strategies to promote post high school outcomes.

### **Research Questions**

- What is known about the effectiveness of transition strategies? And for whom?
- How might an impact evaluation of a promising transition strategy be designed?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

The study will examine available evidence on the effectiveness of transition supports and interview transition stakeholders to identify promising transition strategies and methods for studying them. The Department will make a decision by 2021 about conducting an impact study based on this work.

### **Publications and Products**

The first report, if a decision is made to proceed with the impact study, is expected in 2025 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# State and Local Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 2. Equity	September 2017 - March 2024

## **Background**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) is the most recent reauthorization of a law passed in 1975 to promote a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities. Funded at \$12.9 billion in FY 2017, IDEA supports early intervention services for infants and toddlers identified as having a disability or at risk of substantial developmental delay. IDEA also supports special education and related services for children and youth ages 3 through 21 identified as having a disability, as well as coordinated early intervening services for children and youth who are not identified as needing special education but who need additional support to succeed in a general education environment.

This evaluation will provide a more current picture of state agency and school district implementation of IDEA, building on a study conducted in 2009. Since then, new court decisions were issued, other educational legislation has been passed, and new regulations and guidance have been released by the Office of Special Education Programs in the U.S. Department of Education, including a requirement that states use a standardized methodology to determine disproportionality in the identification, placement, and discipline of students with disabilities based on race or ethnicity. Finally, the knowledge base on effective and promising policies and practices has grown. All of these shifts could influence the context and implementation of special education and early intervention in ways that will be important to understand when IDEA is reauthorized.

## **Research Questions**

- How do states and districts identify infants, toddlers, children, and youth for early intervention and special education services? How do they measure disproportionate identification, and what policies and practices have been implemented with the goal of addressing disproportionate identification?
- What policies and programs do states and districts have in place to support infants, toddlers, children, and youth identified for early intervention or special education services? How have these policies and programs changed over time?
- To what extent do states and districts rely on evidence on the effectiveness of policies, programs, and supports for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities?
- How do states and districts allocate resources - including funding and personnel - to support infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities?

- What types of supports do schools provide to children and youth with disabilities to support their academic and behavioral learning, both within and outside of general education classrooms?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

Data collection included surveys of state administrators from all states, the District of Columbia, and territories receiving IDEA funding, as well as surveys of a nationally representative sample of school districts and schools during the 2019-20 school year. The data from these surveys are being analyzed to describe policies and practices in a series of reports.

### **Publications and Products**

The first report for the study is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Teachers and Leaders

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [Impact Evaluation of Teacher Residency Programs](#)
- [Impact Evaluation to Inform the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program](#)
- [Implementation of Title I/II-A Program Initiatives](#); listed above in the *School Improvement* topic area.

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

- [Culturally Responsive Teaching for Student Equitable Achievement \(CuRTSEA\): A Professional Development Program](#)
- [How Teachers Learn Racial Competency and How to be Effective for All of Their Students](#)

## Impact Evaluation of Teacher Residency Programs

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 3. Educators Area 5. Postsecondary	September 2019 - June 2025

### **Background**

Teacher residency programs are rapidly increasing in popularity, as a potential way to address persistent inequities in student access to high-quality teachers. This form of teacher preparation combines coursework with extensive on-the-job training in schools under the guidance of experienced mentors. The programs also place new graduates in hard-to-staff positions, most often in the same low-income or lower-performing districts where they trained. This approach may be promising, as underscored by recent changes in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which now allows states and districts to use Title II funds to support teacher residencies. But so far, there is little evidence that they are more successful than other ways of preparing teachers to work in high-need schools. This study will provide an in-depth description of all current teacher residency programs in the United States and provide the first large-scale assessment of the effectiveness and retention of teachers from these programs.

### **Research Questions**

- Are residency graduates more effective, and do they remain in teaching longer than teachers prepared by non-residency preparation programs?
- What explains any differences in teacher effectiveness and retention between residency and non-residency program graduates?
- What are the core features and strategies used to prepare teachers across residency programs?

### **Design and Analytic Considerations**

To estimate the effectiveness and retention of residency graduates, the evaluation will randomly assign approximately 8,400 students to classes taught by 350 teachers from residency or non-residency preparation programs. This will ensure that the residency and non-residency graduates teach similar students under similar circumstances, so that comparing student achievement and tenure in teaching for the two groups provides a reliable measure of the residency training's effectiveness. Data collected will include teacher surveys, classroom observations, and administrative records (including student assessments) to describe differences in the preparation experiences, satisfaction, teaching practices, and retention of residency and non-residency graduates and their students' achievement. Interviews with the directors of all 140 residency programs across the country will inform the description of program features.

### **Publications and Products**

The first report for the study, the description of residency programs nationally, is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.

# Impact Evaluation to Inform the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 3. Educators	September 2018 - August 2025

## **Background**

Effective school leadership and teaching are at the heart of school improvement. Human capital management - the way in which a district makes and implements preparation, recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, dismissal, compensation, professional development, and tenure and promotion decisions - can play an important role in supporting effective educators. The purpose of the Teacher and School Leader Incentive (TSL) program is to develop and implement performance-based compensation systems or human capital management systems to improve student achievement. Grantees plan to implement multiple strategies, with a role for teacher leaders being the most common strategy among the 2017 awards. This mandated evaluation will provide implementation information from all 2017 grantees, with particular attention to teacher leader selection, roles, and supports. In addition, the study will estimate the impact on student achievement and teacher satisfaction and retention of using teacher leaders to improve student achievement.

## **Research Questions**

- What are the implementation experiences of the 2017 TSL grantees toward the end of their three years with funding? What are their educator satisfaction, recruitment, and retention experiences with TSL, particularly among those grantees funding teacher leader roles?
- What is the effect on student achievement, educator satisfaction, recruitment, and retention of a teacher leader role strategy? Is the teacher leader strategy cost effective?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This is both a study of TSL program implementation and an impact study that will examine the effectiveness of a teacher leader role. Information about implementation of the TSL program will be based on a Summer 2020 survey of all 14 TSL grantees receiving awards in 2017. In addition, about 80 schools are participating in an impact evaluation of funding teacher leaders to support their peers using activities similar to those funded with the TSL grants. For the impact study, data collection will include: teacher and principal surveys to collect program implementation information as well as educator satisfaction and teacher recruitment activities and outcomes; teacher leader activity forms to provide information about teacher leader roles and activities; teacher and principal school assignment records to look at mobility and retention; and student administrative records to look at student outcomes.

## **Publications and Products**

The first report for the study is expected in 2022 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.



# Technical Assistance

## *Significant Evaluations*

The Department has the following significant evaluations that will include work in Fiscal Year 2023:

- [National Evaluation of the 2019 Comprehensive Centers Program Grantees](#)
- Evaluation of the Regional Educational Laboratories Program, 2022-2027 Cycle (anticipated)

## *Recent Research & Development*

Recent Department-sponsored research and development activities related to this topic area include:

### Improving Education Systems

- [An Experienced School Support Organization at Scale: A Study of The Urban Assembly Network](#)
- [Equitable Rostering Solution: A Project on Evidence-Based Teacher-Student Assignment](#)
- [Evaluation of the Texas House Bill 3 Financial Aid Application Requirement for High School Graduation](#)
- [Examining Recruitment Policies and Pathways to Diversify the Teacher Workforce](#)
- [Increasing Equity in Advanced Course Taking Through Automatic Enrollment and Automatic Notification](#)

### Using Longitudinal Data to Support State Education Recovery Policymaking

- [A Study in Equity: Oregon's 9th Grade Transition](#)
- [Analyzing and Understanding the Educational and Economic Impact of Regional Career Pathways](#)
- [Equity in Virginia's Public Education System: A Longitudinal Examination Spanning the COVID-19 Shutdown](#)
- [Evaluation of a Predictive Model - Montana's Early Warning System for Dropouts](#)
- [Shaping Teacher Quality and Student of Color Experience in Massachusetts: Alignment of Preparation and Licensure Systems with Teacher Effects on Student non-Test Outcomes](#)
- [The Distributional Effects of Secondary Career and Technical Educational \(CTE\) Programs on Postsecondary Educational and Employment Outcomes: An Evaluation of Delaware's CTE Programs of Study](#)
- [Understanding Pennsylvania's Educational Inequities in the time of COVID-19](#)

# National Evaluation of the 2019 Comprehensive Centers Program Grantees

Priority Area	Expected Duration
Area 4. Meeting Student Needs	September 2020 - September 2023

## **Background**

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) gave state (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) increased responsibilities, and, therefore, made extra demands on their time and capabilities. The Comprehensive Centers program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education at over \$50 million per year, provides training, tools, and other supports to help these agencies carry out their education plans and take steps to close achievement gaps. The Centers' services aim to build individual and organizational capacity to help identify and solve key problems. This evaluation will examine the delivery and usefulness of the Centers' technical assistance, given new stakeholder needs and changes in the Centers program that took effect with the 20 new grants awarded in 2019. Congress requires a periodic evaluation of the Comprehensive Centers program, with the results intended to inform ongoing program improvements.

## **Research Questions**

- What key educational problems are the Comprehensive Centers seeking to address? How has the pandemic shifted the program's emphasis?
- What services are Comprehensive Centers providing, and what types of capacity are these services designed to increase?
- What are the perceived successes and challenges of program changes, including the shift in the number and geographic reach of the Centers and new requirements to increase collaboration with the Department's Regional Educational Laboratories?

## **Design and Analytic Considerations**

This descriptive study of technical assistance delivered by the Comprehensive Centers will be based on document reviews, surveys and interviews of state agencies and school district staff, and interviews with project directors. The study team will also review existing survey and assessment items, interview stakeholders, and conduct pilot testing with stakeholders to develop some measures of capacity that can be used as outcomes by the Centers or as part of future evaluations, or both.

## **Publications and Products**

The study's report is expected in 2023 and will be announced on <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>.