Using WWC Resources to Identify Interventions That Meet ESSA Tiers of Evidence

Lyzz Davis, Ph.D.
Senior Researcher
What Works Clearinghouse

Natalya Gnedko-Berry, Ph.D.
Senior Researcher
What Works Clearinghouse and Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest

Joshua R. Polanin, Ph.D.
Principal Researcher
What Works Clearinghouse
Presenters

Lyzz Davis, Ph.D.  
What Works Clearinghouse

Natalya Gnedko-Berry, Ph.D.  
What Works Clearinghouse and REL Midwest
Learning Goals for the Webinar

During this webinar, you will learn:

• Definitions and use of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) tiers of evidence.

• How the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards align with the definitions for ESSA tiers of evidence.

• How to use the WWC’s Reviews of Individual Studies and Data from Individual Studies to make an ESSA evidence tier determination.
ESSA Tiers of Evidence
What Is ESSA?

• ESSA is the Every Student Succeeds Act, signed December 10, 2015.

• ESSA reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—the United States education law. The previous version (No Child Left Behind) was enacted in 2002.

• Some of ESSA’s provisions include:
  – A focus on equity.
  – An expectation that all students be taught to high academic standards.
  – More flexibility for states to set goals for student achievement and accountability.
  – Elimination of unnecessary testing.
  – Accountability beyond math and reading test scores, including a measure of school quality.
  – A greater focus on evidence-based practices.
From No Child Left Behind to ESSA: Focus on Evidence

No Child Left Behind

“Research based”

Less focus on outcomes

ESSA

“Evidence based”

Focus on improvement of outcomes
Evidence Under ESSA: Four Tiers

1: Strong
2: Moderate
3: Promising
4: Demonstrates a Rationale
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSA Evidence Criteria</th>
<th>Strong Evidence (Tier 1)</th>
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<td>Well-defined logic model</td>
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<td>Related research or evaluation is planned or underway</td>
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Uses of ESSA Tiers of Evidence

• Educators may use ESSA tiers of evidence to identify interventions that demonstrate evidence of effectiveness:
  – Inform school improvement plans.
  – Select and implement evidence-based practices.

• States may have lists of “preferred practices,” some of which align with ESSA’s evidence requirements:
  – Program developers need to generate evidence of their programs’ effectiveness to be eligible for these lists.
Uses of ESSA Tiers of Evidence

• Federal grant programs may require evidence of effectiveness for proposed interventions based on ESSA tiers of evidence.

• Education Innovation and Research program:
  – In the past, early-phase grants needed to be supported by evidence that demonstrates a rationale, mid-phase grants by moderate evidence, and expansion grants by strong evidence.
Alignment of the WWC Design Standards With ESSA Tiers of Evidence
Webinar Focus: WWC Reviews of Individual Studies

• The WWC produces three products: reviews of individual studies, practice guides, and intervention reports.

• The webinar’s focus is on the WWC reviews of individual studies, because:
  • Individual studies provide the most current information.
  • WWC’s tools for ESSA evidence tier filters are currently available only for individual studies.
Steps in WWC Reviews of Individual Studies

• Step 1: Screen for eligibility.
• Step 2: Conduct review if a study is eligible.
• Step 3: Determine a study’s rating.
Steps in WWC Reviews of Individual Studies

If a study is rated *Meets WWC Standards With Reservations* or *Meets WWC Standards Without Reservations*:

- Step 4: Evaluate evidence of effectiveness.
- Step 5: Document context.

The WWC’s procedure may affect what information is available for ESSA determination.
Study Rating

- An eligible study receives one of three WWC design ratings (ratings that reflect internal validity of the study):
  - Meets WWC Standards Without Reservations
  - Meets WWC Standards With Reservations
  - Does Not Meet WWC Standards

- Studies rated *Meets WWC Standards With Reservations* or *Without Reservations* reviewed under the WWC standards version 2.1 or later receive an ESSA rating.

- A study-level WWC and ESSA rating is based on the highest rated finding.
Study Rating

• Different findings in the same study may have different ESSA evidence tier ratings.

• Example: *Early College, Early Success: Early College High School Initiative Impact Study* has the highest study rating under the WWC Standards and ESSA evidence criteria.

Source: [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/77771](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/77771)
Different outcomes are rated differently in the same study.
Evidence of Effectiveness

• WWC only reports evidence of effectiveness for studies rated *Meets WWC Standards With Reservations* or *Without Reservations*.

• WWC rating of effectiveness is independent of design rating.
  – A well designed and implemented study may or may not produce evidence of effectiveness.
Evidence of Effectiveness

- Example: A study received the highest design rating, but the intervention did not produce evidence of effectiveness.

Using social-emotional and character development to improve academic outcomes: A matched-pair, cluster-randomized controlled trial in low-income, urban schools.


Randomized controlled trial examining 14 schools, grades 3-8

Reviewed: February 2018

Source: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Study/81474
Study Context

- WWC will only document context of studies rated *Meets WWC Standards With Reservations* or *Without Reservations*.
  - Sample characteristics (for example, race/ethnicity, gender, grade level, English learner status)
  - Setting characteristics (for example, class and school type, urbanicity, state)
  - Intervention characteristics (for example, method of delivery, program type)

- To make an ESSA evidence tier determination, a practitioner will need information about sample and setting characteristics.
WWC Ratings and ESSA Tiers of Effectiveness

Studies reviewed under the WWC Standards version 2.1 or a more recent version have an ESSA rating.
Knowledge Check 1

• A small suburban district in the Northwest, with 30% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, wants to provide extra support to students in grades 9 and 10 struggling with high school math. Administrators want to identify an intervention that has demonstrated evidence of improving math achievement in these grades. Based on funding requirements, evidence from the intervention must meet ESSA criteria for Tier 1 or Tier 2. Administrators located a study on the WWC website that examines the effectiveness of a math tutoring program. Results of the study look promising, but the administrators want to make sure that all criteria are met:
  – Intervention is delivered in grades 9 and 10.
  – Intervention is effective.
  – Evidence meets definitions for ESSA Tier 1 or Tier 2.
Knowledge Check 1

Based on the study snapshot below, what should the district administrators conclude?

A. The study meets all required criteria (grades 9–10, effective, ESSA Tier 1 or 2).
B. The study does not meet all required criteria.
C. The information is insufficient for making a decision.

**Randomized Controlled Trial Examining 1,919 Students, Grades 9-10**

- **Review Details**:
  - Reviewed: December 2016
  - For: Grant Competition (findings for Match Education's tutoring model)

- **Findings**:
  - Meets WWC standards without reservations
  - At least one statistically significant positive finding
  - ESSA Tier 1
  - At least one finding shows strong evidence of effectiveness

- **Sample Characteristics**:

- **Study Details**:

**Using:**
- Secondary Mathematics Review Protocol 3.1
- Review Standards 3.0
Knowledge Check 1

• Based on the study snapshot, what should the district administrators conclude?
  A. The study meets all required criteria (grades 9–10, effective, ESSA Tier 1 or 2).
  B. The study does not meet all required criteria.
  C. The information is insufficient for making a decision.

• Correct answer: C
  The study snapshot has insufficient information for making a decision. The intervention is at the high school level (grades 9 and 10), and the intervention is effective (at least one statistically significant and positive finding). However, although at least one outcome shows strong evidence of effectiveness eligible for ESSA Tier 1, the administrators need to confirm that the study’s sample and setting overlap with the district’s.
Knowledge Check 2

- Administrators from the same district (a small suburban district in the Northwest with 30% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 50/50 male/female) located additional information about the study’s setting and sample. Based on the additional information below, does the study meet evidence definitions for ESSA Tier 1 or Tier 2?

A. The study meets evidence definitions for ESSA Tier 1.
B. The study meets evidence definitions for ESSA Tier 2.
C. The study does not meet evidence definitions for ESSA Tier 1 or Tier 2.
Knowledge Check 2

• Administrators from the same district (a small suburban district in the Northwest with 30% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 50/50 male/female) located additional information about the study’s setting and sample. Based on the additional information, what should the district administrators conclude?

  A. The study meets evidence definitions for ESSA Tier 1.

  B. The study meets evidence definitions for ESSA Tier 2.

  C. The study does not meet evidence definitions for ESSA Tier 1 or Tier 2.

• Correct answer: B

  The study’s setting is an urban district in the Midwest, which does not overlap with a small suburban district in the Northwest. The study’s sample, however, overlaps with the students that the district wants to help. Students in the study and in the district are in grades 9–10, and we have overlap in characteristics (90% eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in the study and 30% in the district; a similar proportion of male and female students in the study and in the district).
Using WWC Resources to Identify Interventions That Satisfy the ESSA Tiers of Evidence
WWC Tools for ESSA Determination

- WWC examined all studies reviewed under version 2.1 or later to determine alignment with ESSA evidence definitions for Tier 1 or Tier 2.
  - Findings from new studies are automatically reviewed for ESSA alignment.
Using the Reviews of Individual Studies Page

Access reviews of individual studies at: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ReviewedStudies
Using the Reviews of Individual Studies Page

After two years, three elementary math curricula outperform a fourth (NCEE 2013-4019).


RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL EXAMINING 2,045 STUDENTS, GRADES 1-2

Select a WWC Review Saxon Math Intervention Report - Primary Mathematics, 5/2017
Using the Reviews of Individual Studies Page

- Review “Findings” to examine individual outcomes.

![Reviews of Individual Studies Page](image-url)
Using the Data From Individual Studies Database

- Access data from individual studies at: [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/StudyFindings](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/StudyFindings)
Example: The director of research at a state education agency is looking for a mathematics interventions that demonstrate Tier 1 evidence in improving general mathematics achievement.

If you are interested in a separate data extract that includes archived reviews, please visit the Archived Data From Individual Studies page. Note that archived reviews may contain information that has been updated in new reports.
Using the Data From Individual Studies Database

- Checkboxes for different categories:
  - Functional abilities
  - General academic achievement - college
  - General academic achievement (high school)
  - General academic achievement (middle school)
  - General reading achievement
  - Genre elements
  - Geometry
  - Geometry and Measurement
  - Graduating school

- Option to download a merged file

Additional information:
- For more details, visit the Archived Data From Individual Studies.
- The data has been updated in new reports.

With the WWC logo.
Using the Data From Individual Studies Database

If you are interested in a separate data extract that includes archived reviews, please visit the Archived Data From Individual Studies page. Note that archived reviews may contain information that has been updated in new reports.

Connect With the WWC
Using the Data From Individual Studies Database

Merged file provides:

- All fields from each of the three individual files.
- Newly available information:
  - Findings-level WWC ratings
  - Multisite indicator
  - Designation for findings that meet ESSA Tiers
Using the Data From Individual Studies Database

- 50 outcomes from 20 interventions that meet criteria for Tier 1 General Mathematics Achievement

- Users can further filter results by:
  - Grade
  - Program type
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Region
  - School type
  - Urbanicity
Summary

• In this webinar, we learned about:
  – Definitions and use of ESSA tiers of evidence.
  – How the WWC standards align with the definitions for ESSA tiers of evidence.
  – How to use the WWC’s Reviews of Individual Studies and Data from Individual Studies to make an ESSA evidence tier determination.
Evidence Tier Resources on the WWC Website

Evidence Tiers and WWC Ratings

Using the WWC to identify ESSA Evidence Ratings
May 1, 2019

The WWC includes tools to assist state and local administrators, teachers, and others in finding research that meets the definitions of strong (Tier 1) or moderate (Tier 2) evidence under ESSA. This video demonstrates how to use the Evidence Release Date and Program Rating tools to identify research meeting these definitions.

Understanding the Department of Education’s Evidence Definitions
April 1, 2018

The Department of Education defines different “ tiers” of evidence for education activities, strategies, and interventions. This presentation explains how federal education law and the Department's regulations define Tier 1 evidence. It also provides tips for using the WWC website to search for Tier 1 evidence.

Using the WWC to Find Strong or Moderate Evidence
April 1, 2018

The Department of Education defines different “ tiers” of evidence for education activities, strategies, and interventions. This presentation describes how the What Works Clearinghouse website can be used to search for evidence meeting these definitions.

Download the Transcript
Questions?
Have questions? Contact us: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/help

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Resources


