

**National High School Center Research Studies: Transition Into High School
December 2009**

The research pieces included in this document have been vetted using the National High School Center's research review criteria and received a score of 3 or 2, which are ratings reserved for the most rigorous study designs. A score of 3 or 2 indicates more confidence in the researchers' conclusions. Further explanation of the criteria is available at <http://betterhighschools.org/docs/ResearchReviewCriteria09232008.pdf>.

Calderon, S., Klein, S., Fitzgerald, R., Berger, R. (2005). *Ninth-grade remediation programs: A synthesis of evidence-based research*. Berkeley, CA: MPR Associates, Inc. (synthesis)

After a thorough literature search, researchers identified 22 rigorous quantitative studies of ninth-grade remediation programs, 10 of which qualified for the full review according to the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)'s Study Design and Implementation Assessment Device (DIAD). The 10 studies included in the full review were too divergent in the focus and construction of the programs they assessed for the authors to reliably draw conclusions about the overall magnitude and direction of effect sizes. As a result, they suggest that the evidence base is not yet sufficient to warrant the development of a WWC Intervention Report on this topic, however they do discuss themes of the programs included in the sample of studies in relation to the academic support services, school restructuring, and summer remediation. In general, authors concluded that study results indicate that supplemental academic services were associated with improved student learning, findings on school restructuring were mixed, and summer remediation might be related to positive outcomes.

Link: http://www.mprinc.com/products/pdf/Ninth_Grade_Remediation.pdf

Harlow, K., & Baenen, N. (2001). *The effectiveness of the Wake Summer Bridge Summer Enrichment Program*. Eye on Evaluation: Evaluation and Research Department, E&R Report No. 01.47. (quantitative study)

This matched quasi-experimental study evaluated the effects of the Wake Summer Bridge Summer Enrichment Program. Overall, there were no significant differences between program participants and the control group. Participants scored higher on every end-of-course test (e.g., Algebra I, English I, Biology, English Language Proficiency, and U.S. History) and received fewer Ds through grade 10 compared to control students, but differences were not significant. However, program participants did receive slightly more Fs and were more likely to be suspended than controls.

Link: http://www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research/reports/2001/0147_Summerbridge.pdf

Harvard Family Research Project. (2006). *A profile of the evaluation of the Louisiana State Youth Opportunities Unlimited Program.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education. (quantitative study)

This randomized controlled trial compared students who participated in the Louisiana State Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) program to students who did not participate in the program. Both participants' and control students' reading comprehension scores decreased from pretest to posttest, although the control students' decline was greater. However, participants did have significantly higher scores in mathematics computation, concepts, and applications than students who did not participate in the program. In addition, program participants increased their intention to remain in school and to graduate. Finally, the program appeared to have a positive effect on participants' workforce development (e.g., punctuality, attitude).

Link: <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/mott/21cclcla.pdf>

McClanahan, W. S., Sipe, C. L., & Smith, T. J. (2004). *Enriching summer work: An evaluation of the Summer Career Exploration Program (SCEP).* Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures. (quantitative study)

This randomized controlled trial study evaluated the effects of the Summer Career Exploration Program (SCEP). Overall, there were no significant differences between SCEP participants and control students on academic achievement, which included grades, effort put into classes, likelihood of graduating, and enrollment in a college prep curriculum. Furthermore, participating in SCEP did not increase students' plans to go to college or help participants make the connections between the importance of an education and how it relates to the work environment.

Link: http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/176_publication.pdf

Walker, G., & Vilella-Velez, F. (2002). *Anatomy of a demonstration: STEP from pilot through replication and postprogram impacts.* Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures. (quantitative study)

This randomized controlled trial compared students who participated in the Summer Training and Education Program (STEP) to students who did not. Although STEP participants outperformed their control counterparts in reading and math at the end of the first summer, this effect was mainly due to the decrease in scores by students in the control group. Furthermore, the groups were no longer significantly different during the school year. After the second summer, the differences between the groups were smaller than during the first summer. Additionally, only 55% of students who participated in the STEP program graduated on time. About one-half of the students who had not graduated on time were still enrolled in school, but more than 20% had dropped out.

Link: http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/81_publication.pdf