Tabletop Session Summary

May 27, 2021

Powerful Interventions: The Evidence for Incorporating High-Dosage Tutoring in Summer Programs

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This tabletop discussion examined the effectiveness of high impact tutoring to address student disrupted learning and to accelerate learning over the long-term.

Session Highlights

» Relief funds to address learning loss are to be used on evidence-based interventions, and tutoring is an evidence-based practice that qualifies.

» More than 150 randomized controlled trials on tutoring show positive effects across grade levels and content areas, including for those who are substantially behind in school.

» There is a lot of flexibility in tutoring as an intervention. While teachers have been proven to be especially effective as tutors, others (e.g., college students and paraprofessionals) can productively serve in this role.

» Tutoring can be provided in-person (the preferred approach) but can also be delivered virtually. While there is not a lot of research on virtual tutoring, a recent study specifically on virtual tutoring showed that it can be highly effective.

» Tutoring is also flexible in terms of when it is done. It can be done before, during, and after school (including during the summer or other school breaks).

» Integrating tutoring into existing learning, however, can improve impact. Embedding tutoring in the school day or a summer program, for example, can bolster attendance.

» Tutoring also offers benefits for tutors and for the teacher pipeline. Tutoring can be an onramp for the teaching profession, providing tutors insight into whether the teaching profession is a good fit for them.

» Research has found high impact tutoring to be more effective than other academic inventions including class size reduction and technology supported instruction.

» High impact tutoring emphasizes acceleration rather than remediation and includes a consistent tutor to support relationship building. It relies on data informed instruction rather than just being homework help and is accessible to all. High impact tutoring is regularly scheduled at a minimum of three times per week.

» Pre-service training (even for certified teachers) and ongoing in-service coaching are important for program success.

Shared Resources

» [Saga Coach Tutor Training Portal](#)
» [Toolkit for Tutoring Programs](#)
» [Tutoring Database](#)

Questions and Answers on Powerful Interventions: The Evidence for Incorporating High-Dosage Tutoring in Summer Programs

Can you contrast the characteristics of acceleration versus remediation?

First, an assessment is necessary to determine where students are. Once their grade level has been determined, remediation would involve going back to the grade level where students are behind and teaching content (e.g., sequentially) to move them closer to being on grade level. Acceleration, on the other hand, involves identifying gaps in previous learning to cover while using grade level content.

Do you have ideas around student/family incentives for programming that takes place after school or in the evenings, both remotely and increasingly onsite?

One approach is to provide tutoring in the morning for students who are consistently dropped off early for school or in the afternoon in partnership with other organizations (e.g., a local Boys & Girls Club). Another option is to provide evening meals to participants in tutoring provided after school. Credit recovery could also be an incentive if students can earn credit for the time spent in tutoring.

Sometimes programs get complaints from parents when tutoring rather than homework help is provided. The complaint is that students arrive home still needing to complete homework. Can you share any suggestions for addressing this issue?

A portion of the time in the afterschool program could be devoted to homework help outside of the time allotted for tutoring and enrichment activities. It could also be helpful to connect with parents to explain the value of high impact tutoring.

What effects does tutor diversity have on outcomes for students?

A best practice is to have tutoring corps reflect students' lived experiences and backgrounds. There is a spillover effect of having a tutor that reflects a student's own life. The tutor, in effect, serves as a role model. Having students from local universities who are from the community serve as tutors can support this diversity and could also possibly have benefits for the teacher pipeline.

Do you have suggestions for how to get others to understand that tutoring is not just focusing on what a student does that day (or even week) in class but is more about filling gaps or missed learning?

Relationships that are formed in tutoring enable tutors to think about not only what each student needs in terms of the content that is being delivered at the time, but they are also able to identify gaps in knowledge to address.

What are your recommendations for community-based organizations with a long-standing history serving their local areas who want to partner with districts but don't have the capacity/budget for studies validating their programs?

The idea is that districts should follow the evidence about the key components of effective tutoring. Community organizations can provide the actual staff to implement the tutoring, within the guidelines of what will be the necessary conditions for success.