

Overview

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc: National Study of KIPP Middle Schools

History

In 2007, KIPP commissioned Mathematica Research Policy, Inc. to complete a national, multi-year study of KIPP middle schools that would answer the following questions:

1. What is the impact of KIPP middle schools on student achievement and other outcomes, and how do these outcomes compare with those of students at other public schools?
2. Does the performance of KIPP students—both within and beyond core academic areas—suggest that they are on a path toward college attainment and persistence?

Report #1: Mathematica Report on KIPP Middle Schools – June 2010

On June 22, 2010, Mathematica released the most rigorous report to date on KIPP middle schools. Researchers collected multiple years of data for students from 22 KIPP middle schools, along with data from students in non-KIPP public schools in nearby districts. Using these data, Mathematica researchers were able to do compare two things: 1) characteristics for KIPP and non-KIPP students, and 2) state assessment outcomes for KIPP students and a set of matched non-KIPP students who were similar in terms of demographics and academic history.

Key Findings

KIPP does not attract more able students (as compared to neighboring public schools)

The Mathematica study shows that KIPP schools most often enroll students whose average fourth-grade achievement is lower than the average achievement of students in local district schools.

KIPP schools typically have a statistically significant impact on student achievement.

For the vast majority of KIPP schools studied, impacts on students' state assessment scores in mathematics and reading are positive, statistically significant, and educationally substantial. Within two years after entering KIPP, students are experiencing statistically significant, positive gains in 18 of the 22 KIPP schools in math and in 15 of out of 22 KIPP schools in reading.

Academic gains at many KIPP schools are large enough to substantially reduce race and income-based achievement gaps.

In three years, half of all KIPP schools in the study closed one half or more of the black-white achievement gap in math, and one third of the black-white achievement gap in reading. In these KIPP schools, student gains are equivalent to 1.2 years of additional growth in mathematics and 0.9 years of extra growth in reading over three years.

Most KIPP schools do not have higher levels of attrition than nearby district schools

When compared to other surrounding public schools, Mathematica's researchers did not find a pattern of high attrition among the 22 KIPP schools they studied. The findings showed that approximately one-third of the KIPP schools in the study had lower attrition rates than corresponding district schools; one-third had equivalent levels of attrition; and one-third had higher attrition.

Report #2: Mathematica Report on KIPP using Randomized Control Trial Analysis: Due 2012

This second report will include data on a larger sample of KIPP schools across the country, and, where possible, will compare the achievement results of KIPP students to those students who tried to enroll in KIPP but did not get a spot through the lottery.