

Tutoring

This is one of a series of evidence-based strategies to help states and school districts invest Covid relief aid effectively. Read all 18 strategies in FutureEd's [Covid Relief Playbook](#).

The American Rescue Plan requires states to spend at least 5 percent of the money allotted for K-12 schools—about \$6 billion nationwide—on helping students make up for lost instructional time. Similarly, local school districts must spend at least 20 percent of their allocation on this objective. High-impact tutoring is an evidence-based strategy proven to boost academic achievement, social-emotional development, and other outcomes. While tutoring can take many forms and often includes a mentoring component, Brown University's National Student Support Accelerator [defines](#) high-impact tutoring as “a form of teaching, one-on-one or in a small group, toward a specific goal” that supplements, but does not replace, classroom instruction.

THE RESEARCH

A 2020 [meta-analysis](#) by the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab in Cambridge, Massachusetts, found that tutoring programs regularly produce large improvements in student academic outcomes. The Lab reviewed 96 randomized experiments and determined the average effect of tutoring was a 0.37 standard deviation increase in student learning, or the equivalent of a student moving from the 50th percentile to almost the 66th percentile of achievement.

In a 2017 [meta-analysis](#) by SFI, the Danish National Centre for Social Research, researchers analyzed 101 studies, 76 percent of which were randomized controlled trials, on different academic interventions for students of low socioeconomic status in OECD and European Union countries between 2000 and 2014. The researchers found

the average effect of high-impact tutoring to be 216 days of additional learning in math and English language arts.

And in a 2013 [study](#), Matthew A. Kraft, then at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, found positive results after MATCH Charter Public High School began offering a two-hour block of tutoring during an extended school day. Kraft compared the achievement rates for students receiving tutoring to students at other Boston charter schools and found the average impact equal to 90 to 150 additional learning days of English language arts.

Tutoring can improve attendance as well as academic achievement in the early grades. In Milwaukee's [SPARK Literacy Program](#), kindergarten, first- and second-grade students with tutors had on average six fewer absences a year, according to a University of Wisconsin study. They also saw significant gains in reading achievement and literacy when compared to similar students not chosen for the program. The gains were greatest for children who needed the most help: 62 percent of participants who started the program below literary benchmarks for their grade ended up meeting those benchmarks.

WHAT TO CONSIDER

Analysis from FutureEd, Education Reform Now, and the Center for American Progress finds [tutoring](#) to be most effective when it meets the following conditions: occurs during the regular school day; includes at least three sessions per week for the duration of the school year; occurs in groups of four or fewer students; have students work with the same tutor over time; provides tutors with

Tutoring

Continued

pre-service training, oversight, ongoing coaching, and clear lines of accountability; uses data to inform tutoring sessions; uses materials aligned with research and state standards.

In a 2021 [study](#) combining four recent meta-analyses, Brown University researchers Matthew A. Kraft and Grace T. Falken found tutoring programs produced a greater average effect on student achievement than other popular interventions such as class size reduction, vacation academies, extending the school day or year, and summer school. Kraft and Falken suggest using a tiered tutoring structure, with high school students tutoring elementary school students as an elective course, college students tutoring middle school students as a federal work-study job, and recent college graduates tutoring high school students as full-time tutors.

RESEARCH

- [The Transformative Potential of Tutoring for Pre K-12 Learning Outcomes; Lessons from Randomized Evaluations: **STRONG AND MODERATE STUDIES**](#)
- [Academic Interventions for Elementary and Middle School Students with Low Socioeconomic Status: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis: **STRONG AND MODERATE STUDIES**](#)
- [How to Make Additional Time Matter: Integrating Individualized Tutorials into an Extended Day: **MODERATE**](#)
- [SPARK Literacy Program Evaluation: **STRONG**](#)

RESOURCES

- [State Guidance for High-Impact Tutoring](#)
- [The Case for a National Student Tutoring System](#)
- [A Blueprint for Scaling Tutoring Across Public Schools](#)
- [The Ingredients of Successful Tutoring Programs](#)
- [Relationships Matter Toolkit](#)
- [National Student Support Accelerator](#)