

Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration: DRAFT Research and Evaluation Plan Summary NC Department of Public Instruction

Overall, districts across NC report that 23 percent of students were at-risk for academic failure at the end of the 2020-21 school year. Students were defined as at-risk based on grades, observations, attendance, diagnostic and formative assessments, and other factors. This indicates that a very large number of students need support to ensure their educational success. The state of NC has identified supporting at-risk students as an urgent priority.

Superintendent Truitt created the Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration (OLR) to address the associated lost instructional time resulting from the interruption in service and instructional time across the state by developing, implementing, and evaluating state and district run interventions. This office was created to provide resources and support to districts and schools to promote a resilient recovery.

The mission of the OLR is to serve Public School Units (PSUs) by providing the information and support needed to make evidence-based decisions to combat the impact of lost instructional time and accelerate learning for all students. The OLR directly interfaces with each of the constituent units within the Department of Public Instruction to carry out this mission. The OLR partners with PSUs and other stakeholders to bring needed solutions to long-standing challenges faced in NC public education. In response to these considerable challenges, we intend to make substantial strategic investments in supporting learning recovery for those students, educators, families, and schools most impacted by the pandemic. OLR will also assess and report out on the impact of the pandemic on student learning based on empirical evidence so that educators understand the scope of the problem.

The OLR will combat the impact of lost instructional time and accelerate learning for all students by

- *Evaluating the implementation and impact* of the interventions sponsored by the OLR and support decision-making about continuation, expansion, and targeting of the programs.
- *Using research* to identify, extend, scale, and sustain programs that demonstrate impact, and build a clearinghouse of NC Promising Practices

Several priorities drive the development of the OLR research and evaluation plan including:

- Meet requirements of [NC approved USED ARP Plan](#) and COVID-focused state statutes ([HB82](#), [SB654](#), [HB196](#)) and aligned with [Operation Polaris](#), [SBE Strategic Plan](#), and [Comprehensive Remedial Plan](#)
- Identify critical outcomes for students and educators
- Use existing data sources where possible: attendance, discipline, EOG/EOC, ACT, AP, SAT, grades, promotion/ retention, National Student Clearinghouse, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, EVAAS, staffing, Teacher Working Conditions, Digital Learning Media Inventory
- Leverage **on-going** research studies OR design and implement **new** targeted COVID intervention research studies with external partners
- COVID-19 "Lost Instructional Time" impact analysis in partnership with the EVAAS team at SAS

To fulfill the mission, the OLR team will support implementation several major strategies:

- A. Identify and support targeted academic interventions for students
- B. Identify and support enrichment programs
- C. Develop and share digital educational instructional materials aligned to NC standards
- D. Make state-level diagnostic tools available for use by PSUs
- E. Support the educator workforce
- F. Disseminate promising practices to the field for learning recovery and acceleration

The OLR will monitor nearer and longer-term outcomes for students, educators, and families:

Outcomes for Students

1. Student engagement
2. Student academic progress
3. Student access and use of community-based resources
4. Families and students feel connected to school and their community
5. Student health and wellness needs are met
6. Students take ownership of their learning
7. Students meet expected growth/proficiency
8. Students are career and college ready
9. Students are prepared for postsecondary plans of their choice
10. Public schools meet the needs of all NC families

Outcomes for Educators

1. Educators use new instructional materials, resources, and assessments
2. Educators understand the academic, health and well-being needs of their students
3. Educators create flexible and personalized learning environments for all students
4. Educators feel supported and valued
5. Educators' health and well-being needs are met
6. PSUs recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, administrators, and support personnel
7. Each school is led by a high quality and well-prepared principal
8. Each classroom has a high quality and well-prepared teacher

Deliverables:

Required reports in 2022

- JLEOC: January 15, March 15 (2), December 15
- USED: “regular and on-going”
- Note these JLEOC deadlines require updates to the North Carolina State Board of Education: January 5, February 2, March 2, November 2, December 1.

NCDPI Leads:

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Major Research/Evaluation Questions:

- Implementation:
 - How were state-funded learning recovery and acceleration strategies implemented?
 - What were the most promising local learning recovery and acceleration practices?
- Impact: What were the near- and longer-term outcomes of the state and local learning recovery and acceleration strategies on students, educators, and families?
- Improvement: What strategies should be considered for continuation, expansion, and targeting of the programs?

Timeframe	Potential Data Sources for Student, Educator, and Family Outcomes	Student characteristics of interest	Contextual factors
Before March 2020 and after	Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment • Attendance • Instructional Mode: In-person; Blended; Virtual/180 days • Discipline • Kindergarten readiness assessment/Early Learning Inventory • Early literacy assessment • ELL Screener/Proficiency assessment • EOG/EOC • ACT, AP, SAT • WorkKeys • Grades/GPA • Credits Earned • Promotion/retention • Cohort Graduation Rates • CTE Concentrations 	Race/Ethnicity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White • American Indian/Alaskan Native • Asian • Black • Hispanic/Latino • Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander • Two or More Races Sex: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female • Male Grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-13 Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academically or Intellectually Gifted • Chronically Absent • English Learners • Students with Disabilities 	PSU-Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADM • SBE Region • Low Wealth Designation • Locale • ARP Funding Level • Low Performing • Tier Designation School-Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADM • School Grade (A-F) • School Type (ES, MS, HS) • Restart/not-Restart but recurring low performing • Low performing • TSI/CSI (ESSA-Designation) • Majority White/Black/Hispanic/None • Majority EDS/non-EDS • Rural/Urban

Timeframe	Potential Data Sources for Student, Educator, and Family Outcomes	Student characteristics of interest	Contextual factors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Student Clearinghouse • Youth Risk Behavior Survey • School climate survey <p>Educators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EVAAS • Staffing Data • NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey <p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of Family Needs • Census and/or DHHS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economically Disadvantaged • Justice-involved Students • Military-connected Students • Students Experiencing Homelessness • Students in Foster Care <p>Educators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics • Years of experience • National Board Certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home internet connectivity

GUIDING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Are these the most critical outcomes NC should track to measure progress for recovery from the pandemic?
- How do we prioritize analysis for these student characteristics and contextual variables of interest?
- Are these the data sources used and referenced most to understand student learning and school context in NC?
- Are there any on-going research or evaluation studies that could help us understand teaching and learning in NC schools from 2019-2024?
- What are the most promising practices for learning recovery and acceleration in the field?
- Beyond the mandated state and federal reports, what deliverables would be most helpful to the Board, NCDPI, the field?