

IMPACT STUDY OF FEDERALLY-FUNDED MAGNET SCHOOLS

Why is a Study of Magnet School Effectiveness Important?

Magnet schools have long played an important role in many districts' efforts to better serve their students. Yet, even though magnet schools serve as many students as charter schools, we know much less about their effectiveness. Rigorous studies—such as those that use lotteries to examine the impact of magnet schools—are rare and in the past have been focused on a single district or state. Local evaluations can be useful in understanding individual programs, but a large-scale, national study that takes advantage of lotteries conducted by **Magnet School Assistance Program (MSAP)** grantees can look at the effects of a wider range of magnet schools and their practices. This kind of rigorous evidence of effectiveness can help educators and policymakers understand “what works” to improve their programming as well as inform future MSAP competitions.

How will the Study Work?

The U.S. Department of Education is sponsoring the Impact Study of Federally-Funded Magnet Schools to learn more about:

1. How magnet schools recruit and admit students
2. Whether magnet schools promote diversity and boost student achievement
3. Whether particular features of magnet schools are associated with greater success

In 2018 the study team will gather descriptive information about recruitment practices, and determine if there are enough grantee schools that hold lotteries to carry out an effectiveness study. If so, data on those schools' lotteries and other school records will be used to compare the outcomes of students admitted to magnet schools to the outcomes of students not admitted.

What do MSAP Grantees Need to Do?

- Participate in an interview to describe student recruitment and admissions practices, and provide detailed information about admission lotteries
Fall 2018
- Share lottery and waitlist results from 2018 and/or 2019
Summer 2019
- Provide student-level school records on test scores, demographics, and enrollment and attendance
Fall 2020 and 2022
- Complete annual, web-based surveys
Spring 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022

MSAP grantees are required to participate in the study.

Who is Conducting the Study?

The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences selected **Mathematica Policy Research** to lead this study. Mathematica is a nonpartisan research firm that designs studies, collects data, and conducts analysis for governments, foundations, and the private sector (www.mathematica-mpr.com). Mathematica's partner for this study, **Social Policy Research Associates (SPR)**, is a nationally recognized small business that provides research, evaluation, and technical assistance services (www.spra.com).

Districts and schools may be contacted by team members from either organization.

To Find Out More:

Please contact Mathematica's study director, Ms. Christina Tuttle, by phone at 202-238-3323 or by email at ctuttle@mathematica-mpr.com.