



EVALUATION OF ACHIEVEMENT MENTORING

EDUCATION POLICY PROJECT SUMMARY

THE PROJECT

This project was funded through a *Department of Education*, Education Innovation and Research (EIR) Program early-phase grant awarded to **The Center for Supportive Schools (CSS)** from 2019-2025.

PRG served as the external evaluator for the grant and designed an implementation and impact evaluation of CSS's high-school mentoring program, Achievement Mentoring (AM).

SETTING & PARTICIPANTS

- Implemented in 13 high schools across 5 states: Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania
- Two thirds of schools were from rural communities, one third from suburban and urban communities
- A total of 393 10th graders participated across three cohorts
- 51% of study participants identified as Black, 23% as Hispanic/Latino/a
- In the year prior to study enrollment:
 - 65% failed a core course
 - 55% missed 20+ days of school
 - 20% incurred 3+ disciplinary infractions



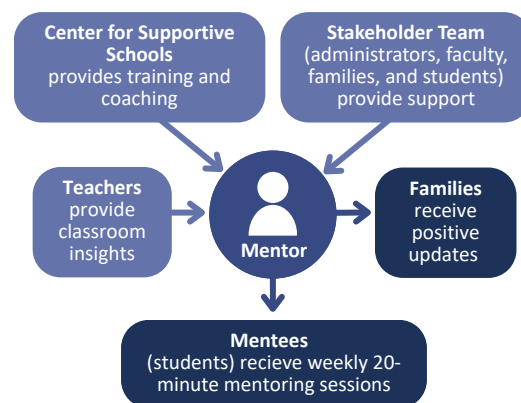
CENTER FOR
SUPPORTIVE
SCHOOLS

THE INTERVENTION

Achievement Mentoring (AM) is a school-based mentoring program for students in Grades 4 through 11 that is implemented over two consecutive school years. This project focused on AM as implemented with 10th- and 11th-grade students identified as being at risk of dropping out of school before graduation. Over two consecutive school years, school-based adult mentors are assigned 2 or 3 student mentees and provide weekly, 20-minute structured mentoring sessions that aim to strengthen students' engagement and achievement in school and build healthy social and emotional skills.

The program model includes a stakeholder team comprised of administrators, faculty, families, and students who support the mentors throughout the school year. Mentors also collaborate with students' teachers to gather insights on classroom behaviors and achievements each week and communicate monthly with families to share achievements. CSS provides training and coaching for mentors throughout their two-year tenure.

Achievement Mentoring Program Model



THE STUDY

PRG conducted a rigorous impact and implementation evaluation of the AM program's effect on 10th- and 11th-grade student outcomes. The impact study was an individual-level randomized controlled trial (RCT) where half of eligible 10th-grade students were randomly assigned to be offered the AM program (treatment) or a class-as-usual control condition.

Students were eligible for the program and study if in 9th grade they: (1) missed 20+ days of school; (2) had a failing grade in 1+ core classes; and/or (3) incurred 3+ disciplinary infractions.

Program impact was measured on the following outcomes at the end of 10th and 11th grades:



Social and emotional outcomes (e.g., perceived support, self-efficacy, and decision-making skills)



Credits earned



Suspensions



Attendance

STUDY FINDINGS

10th Grade



At the end of 10th grade, students assigned to AM self-reported feeling more supported by adults at school and more confident in their abilities to practice goal-setting, help-seeking, and academic skills. They also self-reported using critical decision-making skills more frequently.



Compared with 30% of control students, only 20% of students assigned to AM were suspended during 10th grade.



Although not statistically significant, students assigned to AM attended two additional days of school in 10th grade compared with control students.



Although not statistically significant, students assigned to AM earned just under one additional credit toward graduation in 10th grade compared with control students.

11th Grade



At the end of 11th grade, students assigned to AM self-reported feeling more supported by adults at school, identifying as someone who could succeed academically, and practicing critical decision-making skills more frequently.



Students assigned to AM had a similar suspension rate in 11th grade compared with students assigned to the control condition.



Although not statistically significant, students assigned to AM attended fewer days of school in 11th grade compared with control students.



Although not statistically significant, students assigned to AM earned just under one additional credit toward graduation in 11th grade compared with control students.

CONCLUSIONS

- Results from our evaluation of AM provide promising evidence of the program's potential to improve outcomes for students identified as being at risk of dropping out of high school.
- Findings from the first year of mentoring suggest students felt more supported and self-confident, and were less likely to be suspended than their peers who were not offered mentoring.
- Although we expected to observe greater program effects after two years, findings are more modest when we examine the effect of AM on 11th-grade outcomes.
- Findings from our multiyear, cross-state evaluation provide support for the continued investigation of how AM could improve graduation rates for students who meet one or more risk indicators during 9th grade.

See PRG's full evaluation report at [this link](#).

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