

Research Brief

Saturday Schools and Tutoring as Interventions

In a Nutshell

Being clear about the reason for academic intervention programs is essential prior to establishing programs. Saturday School and tutoring are two approaches that can be helpful in student retention and increasing graduation rates but only if they are set up to meet the specific needs of the school's students. There are no common measures of the success of Saturday School programs but there are many programs that have been successful for several years. Saturday school programs fit three categories---enrichment, credit recovery, and disciplinary. There is strong evidence about the positive impact of tutoring on student academic confidence and high school graduation. But the evidence is clear that no single approach will meet the needs of students who may benefit from tutoring. Further there is evidence that when learning is personalized students are more successful.

Question: How effective are Saturday School and Tutoring as intervention strategies?

Summary of Findings:

The major goal of high schools is to prepare students for post-secondary success. And provide them with the skills to be successful. In order to do this, each student must have access to a high quality instructional program and ample time to pursue and develop depth in the different content areas. Nationally, high school dropout rates from 2000-2008, have increased from 11% to 8%, although it is much higher for African-Americans and Hispanics than for other students (National Center for Education Statistics).

The achievement of U.S. students is often compared with that of students from other countries. But by one measure, time in the classroom, the United States trails other countries. According to research done by Finn (2010):

- Chinese students attend school 41 more days and receive 30% more instructional time than American students
- Students in Singapore attend school 40 weeks a year
- Korean students routinely attend Saturday School.

Additionally, by age 18, American students will have spent only 9% of their time in school leaving 91% of their time for other activities. American adolescents spend approximately 7.5 hours a day using some form of entertainment media, equally 53 hours a week. But they spend, on average, only 30 hours a week in school (Finn).

Making good use of available instructional time is critical if high schools are going to provide appropriate opportunities for students so that they are prepared for the post-

secondary world. One strategy used in many districts is Saturday school. Another is to support students with tutoring. This brief will examine both options.

Saturday School

Saturday schools generally fall into three categories. Many are designed to provide enrichment and extend the traditional program. Others provide remediation and opportunity for credit recovery. The third type of Saturday school is used for disciplinary reasons.

Students enrolled in the first type of Saturday school tend to be those that are higher achieving and the courses are often used for enrichment purposes. Churches, colleges and private vendors often offer these programs and they are fee based.

When public schools offer Saturday programs, they are most often designed for course or credit recovery, make-up work and/or disciplinary reasons.

While individual schools may collect local data about the success of such programs there is no common measure of their success. Several of the links included later in this brief take you to individual school programs that may provide some data about their success.

Tutoring

Another approach to supporting student success is to provide tutoring. Information on the characteristics of successful peer and one-on-one tutoring programs is abundant. Across studies, two key ideas emerged. First there is no one right approach for every student in every situation. Second, when learning is personalized, adequate growth happens (Aarons; Breakthrough Collaborative; National High School Alliance 2007).

Tutoring allows students to feel more at ease and comfortable asking questions, making mistakes and developing academic confidence. Aarons described a peer-tutoring program where tutors worked one hour after school and three hours on Saturdays. In 2006, there was a 97% pass rate by those who were tutored and in 2007, there was a 100% pass rate (2007).

Benefits for tutee

Several benefits of being tutored have been identified. They include:

- usually make significant academic gains
- improved attendance
- contributes to social and cognitive development
- improves self-confidence and self-esteem
- better attitude towards the subject and school
- encourages persistence
- develops appropriate study skills, questions and transferable skills

Benefits for tutor

Similarly, benefits for the tutor have also been identified. They include:

- helps with personal knowledge

- improves grades
 - practices high levels of thinking
 - increases confidence in their own ability
 - encourages empathy for others
 - encourages responsibility
- (Breakthrough Collaborative; International Writing Center; National High School Alliance, 2007)

Online Resources

Saturday School

Enrichment/Academic Support Programs

- Associated Press. (2009, April 8). Ed. secretary wants more school. Retrieved online from http://www.teachermagazine.org/tm/articles/2009/04/08/arneduncancmoreschool_ap.html
This article reports on a speech given by Education Secretary Duncan in Denver, where he calls for a longer school day and year.
- Finn, C. E. (2010, March 20). The case for Saturday school. Retrieved online http://online.wsj.com/article/NA_WSJ_PUB:SB10001424052748704207504575130073852829574.html
This article reports on the amount of time and how it is used in American schools and compares it to what is spent in other cultures.
- George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, Rockville, Maryland. (n.d.) Mission statement. Retrieved online from <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/gbtl/>
This school is strictly a Saturday School that works in conjunction with the Montgomery County School District in Maryland. Its purpose is help students close the achievement gap.
- Georgia State University. (n.d.) Saturday School for scholars and leaders. Retrieved online from <http://education.gsu.edu/saturdayschool/>
This program is offered to students in K-8 in the Atlanta area in the areas of math, science and applied and fine arts.
- ICS Saturday school, Atlanta, GA (2007). Saturday school. Retrieved online from <http://saturday-school.blogspot.com/>

This site provides a description of a program that is offered to students and adults from war-torn countries to help them gain requisite literacy in English.

- KIPP, Houston, TX. (n.d.). Saturday school. Retrieved online from http://www.kipp-houston.org/kipp/Saturday_School1_EN.asp?SnID=2
A brief description of the school's mandatory Saturday School program is provided on this site.
- O. Perry Walker College and Career Preparatory High School and Community Center, New Orleans, Louisiana. (n.d.) Retrieved online from <http://www.opwchargers.com/index.php?page=saturday-school-and-saturday-academy>
A very brief description of their mandatory exit exam prep class is provided on this site.
- University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA. (n.d.) Pre-college Saturday school.
Retrieved online from <http://www.uarts.edu/k-12/precolss.html>
A description of a program offered for high school students at the University of Arts in Pennsylvania is provided in this piece.
- Wise Geek. (n.d.) What is Saturday school? Retrieved online from <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-saturday-school.htm>
Very brief descriptions of Saturday School for both scholastic development and disciplinary purposes are provided.

Course credit/Absentee Make-up Programs

- Alexandria Public Schools. (n.d.) Saturday school program. Retrieved online from <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/saturdayschool.pdf>
The guidelines for this voluntary disciplinary and academic assistance program for elementary and middle school students are provided.
- Blacksburg High School, Blacksburg, Virginia (n.d.) Saturday school/credit recovery.
Retrieved online from <http://www.mcps.org/bhs/Sat-school.htm>
A concise description of this school's unique program for both discipline and the making up of class time missed is provided.
- Brooklyn Center High School, New York. (n.d.). Retrieved online from <http://www.brookcntr.k12.mn.us/bchs/saturdayschool>
A program for middle school students that are failing one or more core classes is described in this piece.

- Eastern Hills High School, Fort Worth, Texas. (2009). Saturday school. Retrieved online from <http://schools.fortworthisd.net/education/components/scrapbook/default.php?sectiondetailid=45398&PHPSESSID=1e5444fe8ad637e94350cb474b33eabf>
Guidelines for this school's program are listed here.
- O. Perry Walker College and Career Preparatory High School and Community Center, New Orleans, Louisiana. (n.d.) Retrieved online from <http://www.opwchargers.com/index.php?page=saturday-school-and-saturday-academy>
A brief description of their course credit recovery program is provided on this site.

Discipline-Based Programs

- Alexandria Public Schools. (n.d.) Saturday school program. Retrieved online from <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/saturdayschool.pdf>
The guidelines for this voluntary disciplinary and academic assistance program for elementary and middle school students are provided.
- Beaufort County School District, Beaufort, South Carolina. (2008). Friday School. Retrieved online from <http://web.beaufort.k12.sc.us/education/components/scrapbook/default.php?sectiondetailid=42554&PHPSESSID=728c82222259366de4889bd2f1e0c395>
A brief, yet detailed, description of this school district's Friday School program. This is in lieu of a Saturday School Program.
- Blacksburg High School, Blacksburg, Virginia (n.d.) Saturday school/credit recovery. Retrieved online from <http://www.mcps.org/bhs/Sat-school.htm>
A concise description of this school's unique program for both discipline and the making up of class time missed is provided.
- Brown, P. (n.d.) Saturday school program praised. Richmond County Daily Journal. Retrieved online from http://www.yourdailyjournal.com/pages/full_story?page_label=home&id=2277368-Saturday+School+program+praised&widget=push&article-Saturday%20School%20program%20praised%20=&instance=secondary_news_left_column&open=&
A brief report from the principal of a high school about their Saturday School program and the results of the program.
- Cotton, K. (2000). Schoolwide and classroom discipline. NWREL. Retrieved online from <http://www.nwrel.org/archive/sirs/5/cu9.html>

A detailed review of research done on school-wide discipline practices in effective and ineffective schools is provided in this piece.

- Gunn High School, Palo Alto, CA. (n.d.). Saturday school information. Retrieved online from <http://gunn.pausd.org/~info/satschool/satschool.html>
A succinct description of this school's program is provided.
- Holly Springs High School, Holly Springs, North Carolina. (n.d.) Saturday school. Retrieved online. This needs to be manually typed in
<http://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=%22saturday+school+holly+springs+high+school%22&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>
This is a PowerPoint about the guidelines for this school's Saturday School program.
- South Pasadena High School. (n.d.) Saturday school rules. Retrieved online. This needs to be manually typed in and it will say Saturday School Rules
<http://www.google.com/search?q=%22Saturday+school%22&hl=en&client=safari&rls=en&start=50&sa=N>
This is a well spelled out list of what a student could do to earn Saturday School, along with ramifications for not attending it.
- Wayzata High School, Minnesota. (n.d.) Saturday school detention. Retrieved online from
http://www.wayzata.k12.mn.us/whs/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1066&Itemid=1960
This provides a description of the school's Saturday School program.
- Wise Geek. (n.d.) What is Saturday school? Retrieved online from
<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-saturday-school.htm>
Very brief descriptions of Saturday School for both scholastic development and disciplinary purposes are provided.

Peer Tutoring Resources

- Aarons, D. (2007). Student reap benefits of peer tutoring. Retrieved online
<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2007/nov/18/students-reap-benefits-of-peer-tutoring/>
This article describes peer tutoring relationships and the results on state tests.
- American school counselor association. (n.d.). Why secondary school counselors? Retrieved online <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/content.asp?contentid=233>
An outline and description of the many roles a counselor plays in the life of a school community are provided in this article.

- Breakthrough Collaborative. (2009). August 2009 research brief: Elements of effective academic support. Retrieved online
<http://btresearch.files.wordpress.com/2009/08/bt-research-brief-effective-academic-support.pdf>
Considerations for providing academic support for students are described in this brief.
- California Department of Education. (n.d.). Intervention programs for students. Retrieved online <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/lp/vl/hsepc8.asp>
A brief description of suggested interventions for math and language arts in California are given in this piece.
- Educational outreach programs. (n.d.). Retrieved online
<http://www.srs.gov/general/outreach/edoutrch/index.htm>
A description of different programs done with Savannah River Site are provided in this brief piece.
- International Writing Center. (n.d.). Peer tutoring. Retrieved online
<http://writingcenters.org/resources/peer-tutoring/>
This site provides active links to many sites on different aspects of peer tutoring.
- Murray, C. and Walty, C. (n.d.). Can the effects of peer tutoring lessen the effects of teachers (sic) shortages? Retrieved online
http://www.helium.com/debates/202624-can-the-benefits-of-peer-tutoring-lesser-the-effects-of-teachers-shortages/side_by_side
This article has two columns, one in support of the topic and the other not in support.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2009). Fast Facts. Retrieved online
<http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=16>
This provides the national dropout rates from 1980-2008.
- National High School Alliance. (2007). Academic interventions to help students meet rigorous standards. Retrieved online
http://www.hsalliance.org/_downloads/NNCO/InterventionsExecSummary.pdf
An executive summary of this report is provided along with information on obtaining the full report.
- National High School Alliance. (2005). Transforming high school for all youth. Retrieved online
http://www.hsalliance.org/_downloads/home/Call%20To%20Action%202005/CalltoAction2005.pdf

A description of the four core principles to which all schools should adhere is provided in this report, sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

- Rockefeller University. (n.d.). Entering the world of scientific discovery. Retrieved online <http://www.rockefeller.edu/outreach/>
A science and mentoring program for K-12 teachers and high school is described in this piece.

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