



REL Southwest Ask-A-REL Response

August 2017

Background:

To impact student outcomes such as improving academic achievement and test scores, or reducing learning loss, learning gaps, and achievement, schools and districts sometimes employ the educational strategy called extended learning time. Extended (or expanded) learning time takes a wide variety of forms from state to state or school to school, and has multiple uses. For example, the number of hours per day or days per week are modified to: increase instructional time; teach through non-traditional experiences such as apprenticeships or internships; give students academic support as part of their school days or years; or engage in learning opportunities in areas such as the arts and sports.¹

Question:

What does research say about providing extended time to high performing, high poverty students?

Response:

Following an established REL Southwest research protocol, we conducted a search for research reports as well as descriptive study articles on providing extended time to high poverty/performing students. The sources included ERIC and other federally funded databases and organizations, research institutions, academic research databases, and general Internet search engines (For details, please see the methods section at the end of this memo.)

NOTE: Due to the lack of research on high poverty, high performing students, the search was expanded to include the provision of extended time to high poverty or at-risk students, more generally, rather than to the specific subgroup.

We have not evaluated the quality of references and the resources provided in this response. We offer them only for your reference. Also, we searched the references in the response from the most commonly used resources of research, but they are not comprehensive and other relevant references and resources may exist.

¹ The Glossary of Education Reform—<http://edglossary.org/expanded-learning-time/>—a comprehensive online resource that describes widely used school-improvement terms, concepts, and strategies for journalists, parents, and community members.

Research References

August, D., Artzi, L., & Barr, C. (2016). Helping ELLs meet standards in English language arts and science: An intervention focused on academic vocabulary. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 32(4), 373-396. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1094127>

From the ERIC abstract: “The Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards require students to understand and produce academic language that appears in informational text. Vocabulary is a critical domain of academic language, but English language learners (ELLs) come to the English Language Arts classroom with more limited English vocabulary than their English-proficient peers. This study compared 2 methods of vocabulary instruction: extended vocabulary instruction and embedded vocabulary instruction. Teachers implemented both approaches in the context of interactive shared reading, in which teachers and students read and discussed informational text. A total of 30 teachers in 18 schools and 509 third- and fourth-grade Spanish-speaking ELLs in a large, high-poverty district in the southwestern United States participated. Findings indicate that although extended instruction was the more effective approach, embedded instruction also helped ELLs acquire general academic and domain-specific vocabulary--an important finding, given that embedded instruction requires considerably less instructional time.”

Curwen, M. S. & Colón-Muñiz, A. (2013). Educators challenging poverty and Latino low achievement: Extending and enriching the school day. *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, 9, 65-77. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1027061>

From the ERIC abstract: “Latino students, as children of historically underachieving populations, often have their academic success in jeopardy. For many schools, after-school programs complement the regular school day, with more than half of the 49,700 U.S. elementary schools having one or more on-site programs. Such programs vary in intent, purposes, and resources and typically emphasize remediation rather than developing interests or competencies in curricular areas beyond language arts and math. This qualitative case study explores the practices of one dual language elementary school in a high poverty Latino community and its academic/enrichment extended day program. Wenger's (1998) community of practice framework captures the mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire of practices tightly woven between the regular school day's classroom teachers and the after-school instructional assistants. This investigation provides insight into collaborative efforts that can counter the isolation, segregation, and mediocrity of school experiences that children in poverty often experience and provide points for offering dual language and cultural experiences through an extension of the school day.”

Fashola, O. S. (2013). Evaluation of an extended day program for African American males in the context of single gender schooling and schoolwide reform: A case for extending the school day for African American males, *Peabody Journal of Education*, 88(4), 488-517. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1021123>.

From the ERIC abstract: “This article presents the results of the 2nd-year evaluation of an after-school program designed for an extended school day program serving African

American middle school students in the city of Baltimore, Maryland (ACCESS-West). This study describes the effects of schoolwide reform especially as it relates to single-gender schools, educating African American males, and extending the school day. The ACCESS-West program goals included improving academic achievement, improving student attitude toward school, decreasing chronic truancy and absenteeism, and increasing parental engagement and involvement. Second-year results reveal that three of the four goals were met but that the interplay between schoolwide reform and implementing the extended-day program had mixed effects on the program. Staffing and administrative changes and high percentages of special needs students adversely affected the program and results. Dedication, commitment, and implementation positively contributed to the outcomes of the 2nd-year results. The results contribute to the growing body of literature and research that continues to investigate the effects of single-gender schools on minority males. The results suggest that the schools need a number of years to establish their areas of staffing, administration, curriculum, and student enrollment before the results they can expect positive results. These results also suggest that providing African American males with an extended-day program that is flexible, yet structured, can provide positive results academically, behaviorally, and with the challenges of parental engagement and involvement.”

Gabrieli, C. (2011). The emergence of time as a lever for learning. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 131, 43-54. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ945494>.

From the ERIC abstract: “More schools than ever are expanding their schedules beyond the traditional limits of six and a half hours a day, 180 days of the year. Schools serving predominantly high-poverty populations make up the vast majority of this emerging movement as they try to overcome the widespread failure of schooling to meet academic goals for high-risk students. Although raising academic achievement is certainly the single biggest driver of this wave, many participants are also motivated by the desire to provide a well-rounded education to all children and to address their broader social-emotional and twenty-first century skills needs. This chapter offers an overview of expanded learning time (ELT) schools and their relationships with community-based partners offering expanded learning opportunities (ELOs).”

Graves, J. (2011). Effects of year-round schooling on disadvantaged students and the distribution of standardized test performance, *Economics of Education Review*, 30(6), 1281-1305. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ944391>.

From the ERIC abstract: “Using detailed longitudinal data for the state of California, this paper estimates the effect of year-round school calendars on nationally standardized test performance of traditionally disadvantaged students. The student subgroups studied in this paper are: low socioeconomic status, limited English proficiency, Hispanic and Latino, and African American students. I find significant negative effects of multi-track year-round calendars on academic achievement for all subgroups examined, with only the limited English proficiency student subgroup producing unreliable estimates. Negative and significant results for another type of year-round calendar, single-track, are also found for the full sample of students and low socioeconomic status students. (Contains 27 tables.)”

Long, D. A. (2014). Cross-National educational inequalities and opportunities to learn: Conflicting views of instructional time, *Educational Policy*, 28(3), 351-392. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1041966>.

From the ERIC abstract: “Educational reformers use international evidence to argue that increasing the number of days in school and the length of the school day will improve academic achievement. However, the international data used to support these claims (1999 Third International Math and Science Survey and 2000 Program for International Student Assessment) show no correlation between time in school and achievement. In this article, the author re-examines the effects of instructional time using improved measures of instructional time, a more extensive data set (2006 Program for International Student Assessment), and a more nuanced multilevel model. The author finds mixed evidence of a positive effect of subject-specific instructional time on achievement, controlling for socioeconomic status, school characteristics, and country-level traits. The author finds no effect of the length of the school year on academic achievement and that sample selection and the specific uses of time in school have a strong influence on conclusions about the effectiveness of instructional time.”

Patall, E. A., Cooper, H., & Allen, A. B. (2010). Extending the school day or school year: A systematic review of research (1985-2009). *Review of Educational Research*, 80(3), 401-436. <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ906926>.

From the ERIC abstract: “Attention has been directed toward extended school time as a measure to improve academic achievement. The school year and day length have varied over time and across localities depending on the particular needs of the community. Proponents argue that extending time will have learning and non-academic benefits. Opponents suggest increased time is not guaranteed to lead to more effective instruction and suggest other costs. Despite noted limitations in the research, past reviewers have argued that any positive relation between allocated time and achievement is tentative and instructional quality needs to be addressed first. After a comprehensive search of the literature, 15 empirical studies of various designs conducted since 1985 were found. The literature revealed that (a) designs are generally weak for making causal inferences and (b) outcomes other than achievement are scarcely studied. That said, findings suggest that extending school time can be an effective way to support student learning, particularly (a) for students most at risk of school failure and (b) when considerations are made for how time is used. Of note, the strongest research designs produced the most consistent positive results. Implications for policy and practice are discussed.”

Additional Organizations to Consult

The Education Commission of the States’ “Issue Site” on school calendars —
<https://www.ecs.org/research-reports/issues>

The State Legislation section of the website — <http://www.ecs.org/state-legislation-by-state/> — provides information about what policies states are adopting with respect to school calendar reform.

The direct link to the Extended Day Programs: Education Commission of the States (ECS) State Policy Database can be accessed at:
<https://b5.caspio.com/dp.asp?AppKey=b7f93000695b3d0d5abb4b68bd14&id=a0y70000000CbroAAC>

The National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) —<http://www.timeandlearning.org>.

From the website: “dedicated to expanding learning time to improve student achievement and enable a well-rounded education.” Its Research section includes materials under the headings Time & Learning Theory, Time & Student Achievement, and Expanded-Time Schools Database.

Massachusetts 2020 —a state affiliate of the NCTL and coordinator of the Massachusetts’ Extended Learning Time Initiative, which requires participating schools to add 300 hours over the course of the school year.

Provides a comprehensive document, *Time and Learning*—http://www.timeandlearning.org/sites/default/files/resources/learningtimeinamerica_2015_0.pdf—presents a variety of readings, research summaries, and statistical information, including discussion of extended day programs and summer school as possible strategies for reducing achievement gaps.

Methods

Keywords and Search Strings

The following keywords and search strings were used to search the reference databases and other sources:

Extended learning time

Instructional time

Impact of extended learning time for high poverty students

High poverty and high achievement

Databases and Resources

We searched ERIC for relevant resources. ERIC is a free online library of over 1.6 million citations of education research sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences. Additionally, we searched Google Scholar and PsychInfo.

Reference Search and Selection Criteria

When we were searching and reviewing resources, we considered the following criteria:

Date of the publication: References and resources published for last 15 years, from 2001 to present, were include in the search and review.

Search Priorities of Reference Sources: Search priority is given to study reports, briefs, and other documents that are published and/or reviewed by IES and other federal or federally funded organizations, academic databases, including ERIC, EBSCO databases, JSTOR database, PsychInfo, PsychArticle, and Google Scholar.

Methodology: Following methodological priorities/considerations were given in the review and selection of the references: (a) study types – randomized control trials, quasi experiments, surveys, descriptive data analyses, literature reviews, policy briefs, etc., generally in this order (b) target population, samples (representativeness of the target population, sample size, volunteered or randomly selected, etc.), study duration, etc. (c) limitations, generalizability of the findings and conclusions, etc.

This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by stakeholders in the Southwest Region (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest at SEDL. This memorandum was prepared by REL Southwest under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Contract ED-IES-12-C-0012, administered by SEDL. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.