

# Research Brief

## THE IMPACT OF INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORT ON OUTCOMES

### THE MARY E. WALSH CENTER FOR THRIVING CHILDREN

Integrated student supports are “a school-based approach to promoting students’ academic success by developing or securing and coordinating supports that target academic and non-academic barriers to achievement.”<sup>1</sup> Emerging evidence demonstrates positive associations between select approaches to integrated student support and beneficial student outcomes.<sup>2</sup>

#### Higher Academic Achievement

- Students who received elective integrated student support during elementary school demonstrate improved academic achievement, measured by report card grades and standardized test scores.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Students experiencing elective integrated student support in elementary school demonstrate long term benefits. By the 8th grade students closed half of the achievement gap in English and two-thirds of the achievement gap in Math relative to the Massachusetts state average, an internationally competitive standard. Ninth grade students in a comprehensive, strength-based, individualized intervention approach demonstrated significantly higher reading and math skills, compared to students in the control group.<sup>5</sup>
- First generation immigrant students and students learning English experiencing elective integrated student support performed better in both English and Math relative to their peers.<sup>6</sup>
- A national research review found that integrated student support can contribute to increases in Math achievement, Reading and English Language Arts achievement, and overall GPA.<sup>7,8</sup>
- Approaches that tailor supports and enrichments to meet the needs of individual students are most strongly correlated with positive academic outcomes.<sup>9</sup>
- Ninth grade students in an elective integrated student support approach earned significantly more total core credits, and were more likely to pass all of their core courses. The impacts were especially strong for students of color, male students, and students from low-income families.<sup>10</sup>



#### Reduced Dropout Rates

- Students who received elective integrated student support during elementary school were almost half as likely to dropout during high school than their peers who did not.<sup>11,12</sup>
- Among students receiving individualized, intensive services, 99% remained in school and 93% were promoted or graduated.<sup>13</sup>

#### Improved Attendance, Effort, Engagement

- Rates of chronic absenteeism for students who received elective integrated student support during elementary school were significantly lower during middle- and high-school.<sup>14</sup>
- Students who participated in elementary school integrated student support had significantly fewer school absences in grades 4-12 (except grade 7).<sup>15</sup>
- Elementary school students receiving elective student support achieved higher teacher ratings of academic effort than students who did not.<sup>16</sup>
- Comprehensive and integrated supports are shown to diminish stressors and address non-academic barriers to achievement.<sup>17</sup>



- Emerging evidence from multiple integrated student support studies shows that integrated supports are associated with improved attendance, greater credit completion, and lower high school dropout rates.<sup>18</sup>
- Students who received a comprehensive, strength-based, individualized intervention demonstrate better engagement in classrooms, compared to students in the control group.<sup>19</sup>

## Increased Support for Teachers & Better Social Outcomes

- Teachers report having a better understanding of students' out-of-school lives when integrated student support is implemented in a school.<sup>20</sup>
- Teachers feel more supported when integrated student support is in place.<sup>21</sup>
- Students who received integrated student support had more positive attitudes about school and better relationships with adults and peers.<sup>22</sup>
- Students in a comprehensive, strength-based, individualized intervention group perceived their teachers as more supportive, compared to students in the control group.<sup>23</sup>
- Students who received integrated student support were more likely to believe their teachers have high expectations for their performance, provide clear guidelines, and encourage them to be successful.<sup>24</sup>

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