



Youth CareerConnect Implementation and Impact Evaluation

SUMMARY

In 2014, the Chief Evaluation Office partnered with the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) to manage an impact evaluation and complementary analysis of Youth CareerConnect and to develop a participant tracking system for the program. These evaluation activities were carried out by contractors Mathematica and Social Policy Research Associates. The final impact report follows implementation study reports published in 2017 and 2019. The study included two methodological components: a quasi-experimental design analysis (QED) in 16 school districts and a randomized controlled trial (RCT) in four school districts that were also part of the QED.

The goal of the Youth CareerConnect (YCC) program was to prepare high school students for both college and careers in high-demand industries with employers that often rely on H-1B visas to fill job vacancies. In 2014, ETA awarded 24 grants to a broad array of organizations across 18 states and Puerto Rico, including local education agencies, local workforce entities, a higher education institution, and other non-profit organizations. The high-school based program included a combination of academic and career-focused learning, rigorous college and career curricula, employer partnerships, work-based learning, and intensive counseling.

This Department of Labor-funded study was a result of the annual learning agenda process. It contributes to the growing labor evidence-base to inform employment and training programs and policies and addresses Department strategic goals and priorities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Key takeaways from the impact study:

- The primary analysis demonstrated that **school attendance increased by nearly a percentage point from about 90.7 to 91.5 percent.**
- **The program accelerated the accumulation of credits for high school graduation, and the increase is equivalent to moving a student at the 50th percentile up to about the 54th percentile.**
- There is some evidence that **the program may increase students' proficiency in English language arts, but there is no evidence of increased completion of algebra coursework.**
- The study found that while there were few differences in impacts among subgroups based on prior academic achievement and low-income status, **impacts were more substantial for students who participated in an internship, had a mentor, or completed an individual development plan.**





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Key observations from the implementation study:

- The research suggests that **grantees implemented activities and services in each of the three main program components: preparing students for both college and career, connecting students to career-track employment, and offering academic and nonacademic supports.**
- **Grantees actively integrated partners, especially employers, into YCC and used work-based learning activities, small learning communities, and students' Individual Development Plans to distinguish YCC from other programs.**
- **Some grantees faced challenges in launching the more intensive work-based learning activities**—particularly mentoring and internships—that require considerable advanced planning and coordination with employers and other partners.

[SEE FULL STUDY](#)

TIMEFRAME: 2014-2019
SUBMITTED BY: Mathematica, Social Policy Research Associates
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