

# EIC: HELPING SCHOOL DISTRICTS CLOSE MATH ACHIEVEMENT GAPS



## THE CHALLENGE

Math proficiency is a critical precursor to a student's future occupational and economic success (Watts, 2020; Werner, Acs, & Blagg, 2024). Unfortunately, historically disadvantaged groups, including students experiencing poverty and Black, Latino/a, American Indian/Alaska Native, and English Learner-designated students, trail behind their peers in math proficiency (U.S. Department of Education, 2025).



## EIC: A POTENTIAL SOLUTION

Schools can promote parity in math proficiency by having teachers:

- Deliver high-quality math curricula,
- To all students,
- In ways that maximize student benefit.

To that end, **The Effective Implementation Cohort (EIC)** supported:

- Implementation of high-quality middle-grade math curricula in 19 U.S. school districts, and
- Application of strategies to ensure that teachers delivered curricula effectively (see box at right).

The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) supported technical assistance providers, school leaders, administrators, and teachers in carrying out these strategies, using training, coaching, peer learning, and tools and resources. NIRN also collected and analyzed data for districts, schools, teachers, students, and technical assistance providers.



## EIC STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

- Cultivate relationships, champions, and leadership
- Facilitate curriculum integration
- Engage students and families
- Make data-driven decisions
- Allocate resources and financial incentives
- Set up a structured, system-wide, multi-level, integrated implementation infrastructure
- Offer implementation support opportunities

**Districts participating in the EIC Project built implementation capacity, demonstrated strengthened leadership, fostered high-quality instruction, and boosted student engagement in mathematics.**



## THE MOST BENEFICIAL EIC STRATEGIES, ACCORDING TO DISTRICTS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS

- Getting buy-in from leaders, decision-makers, and teachers
- Collecting data using district-preferred methods, like walkthroughs, classroom observation, and coaching cycles
- Using data for multiple purposes, including implementation tracking, performance improvement, and outcome reporting
- Using an implementation approach that is system-wide, multi-level, and integrated
- Promoting alignment across all levels of a district through shared vision and shared planning
- Providing one-on-one intensive coaching to teachers
- Offering professional learning opportunities at all system levels, on weekdays and with substitute teachers provided
- Offering a community of practice to support peer learning
- Sharing of tools and resources, including instructional strategies



## OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT DISTRICTS AND IMPLEMENTERS

- Assess whether districts and schools are ready to implement curricula, and build readiness if needed.
- Encourage selection of evidence-based curricula.
- Assess curriculum fit and feasibility prior to adoption.
- Tailor implementation plans to align with a district's unique context and needs.
- Give staff, families, and students voice in all parts of the implementation planning and decision-making process.
- Develop a clear plan for how program implementation and related supports will continue after current funding ends.

### REFERENCES

Watts, T. W. (2020). Academic achievement and economic attainment: Reexamining associations between test scores and long-run earnings. *AERA Open*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858420928985>

Werner, K., Acs, G., & Blagg, K. (2024). *Comparing the long-term impacts of different child well-being improvements*. Urban Institute. [https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/Comparing\\_the\\_Long-Term\\_Impacts\\_of\\_Different\\_Child\\_Well-Being\\_Improvements.pdf](https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/Comparing_the_Long-Term_Impacts_of_Different_Child_Well-Being_Improvements.pdf)

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2025). NAEP Report Card: Grade 12 mathematics: Performance by student group. *The Nation's Report Card*. <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reports/mathematics/2024/g12/performance-by-student-group/>

**For more information on EIC, and about how implementation science can improve outcomes for students and families, visit:**

<https://eic.fpg.unc.edu>

<https://sisep-center.shorthandstories.com/eic-final-report/index.html>

<https://implementation.fpg.unc.edu>

<https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu>