



# Evidence in Action

## *A K20 Center Research Brief*

### Enhancing Academic Performance Through Strategic After-School Tutoring

*Michael F. Hock, Kim A. Pulvers, Donald D. Deshler, & Jean B. Schumaker  
2001*

#### **Introduction**

The research article by Hock et al. (2001) investigates the efficacy of an after-school tutoring program designed to improve the academic performance of at-risk students and students with learning disabilities (LD). The study addresses the critical issue of educational outcomes for students who are at risk of academic failure. The literature review highlights the mixed results of previous tutoring programs and emphasizes the need for effective interventions that can foster independent learning and academic success. The authors aim to determine whether strategic tutoring can significantly enhance student performance on quizzes and tests in junior high general education classes.

#### **Methodology**

##### **Research Design:**

Two studies were conducted using a multiple-baseline design with follow-up conditions to assess the impact of strategic tutoring on student performance.

##### **Sample:**

The sample included junior high students identified as at-risk or having LD. Study 1 involved three students, while Study 2 included six students. Tutors were university undergraduates and experienced tutors from the university's student-athlete tutoring program.

##### **Data Analysis:**

Data were collected on quiz and test scores, semester grades, and strategy knowledge. Effect sizes were calculated using a variation of Cohen's *d* to measure the impact of strategic tutoring.

#### **Results**

The studies found that strategic tutoring significantly improved the quiz and test performance of at-risk students and students with LD. Students who participated in strategic tutoring showed marked improvements in their semester grades, moving from failing grades to average or above-average grades. Additionally, students demonstrated increased knowledge



of learning strategies and were able to maintain their performance after tutoring ended. The effect sizes indicated robust gains in academic performance.

### **Application into Practice**

To replicate this intervention, schools should consider the following steps:

1. **Tutor Selection:** Choose skilled tutors who can provide strategic tutoring and foster independent learning.
2. **Training:** Implement comprehensive tutor training programs that include knowledge acquisition, modeling, role-play practice, and feedback/coaching.
3. **Tutoring Model:** Use strategic tutoring methods that combine assignment assistance with direct instruction in learning strategies.
4. **Monitoring:** Regularly assess student progress and provide ongoing support to ensure the effectiveness of the tutoring program.

### **Work Cited**

Hock, M. F., Pulvers, K. A., Deshler, D. D., & Schumaker, J. B. (2001). The effects of an after-school tutoring program on the academic performance of at-risk students and students with LD. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 34(2), 172-185.