



**Research Support for Evidence-Based  
Education Policy:  
The North Carolina Education Research  
Data Center at Duke University**

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# NC Education Data Center- A Partnership for Research

- A partnership of Duke University and the NC Department of Public Instruction
- Established in January 2001
- Research-centered mission
- User-friendly data portal for eligible researchers

# Ongoing Data Center Activities

- Acquire data collected annually by the NCDPI on all school districts, schools, students, and teachers
- Encrypt confidential data, use unique identifier to link information across sources and over time
- Create user-friendly documentation for new and updated data files
- Release only de-identified data to researchers.

# NCERDC Data Use Agreement

- MOU with the NCDPI defines standards for researcher eligibility and access
- Research proposals are reviewed by the NCERDC
- Investigators sign confidentiality agreements
- Each project must be approved by the investigator's university Institutional Review Board, with specific reference to its data security plan

## **NCDPI/NCERDC Partnership: a relationship of mutual trust and benefit**

- Work to increasingly direct research inquiries and requests to the NCERDC.
- Provide data files and technical assistance for researchers within NCDPI and other state agencies.
- Provide NCDPI with frequent updates on projects, publications, and key findings.
- Maintain a website as a tool for disseminating data archive information and research findings.

# Benefits for the Research Community

- Access to information that allows tracking of large numbers of students and teachers over many years
- Richness of administrative data
- NCERDC has supported 306 individual research projects
- Support for doctoral research
- 120 studies published in peer-reviewed journals, many policy briefs and reports

# Research using NCERDC resources to inform education policy

## School and district—level implications

Multi-year evaluation study of North Carolina's Early College High Schools.

Longitudinal experimental study compares the attendance, achievement, behavior, and attitudes among groups of students who are randomly assigned from the pool of applicants

*Edmunds, J., SERVE Center at UNC-Greensboro*

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## State—level implications

Longitudinal analyses exploring relationship of teacher characteristics (education, experience, test scores) and credentials (licensure, National Board Certification, advanced degrees) to student achievement.

*CALDER researchers, including: Clotfelter, Goldhaber, Ladd, Vigdor, Rothstein, Sass*



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## National-level implications

Lead exposure during early childhood has a significant impact on school performance in elementary school, at levels of exposure far lower than the federal standard.

*Miranda et al., University of Michigan*

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Linking higher education to public school data, researchers examined how remediation in community colleges affects student outcomes, particularly among students who performed poorly in high school.

*Clotfelter, Ladd, Muschkin, & Vigdor, Duke University*

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Linking birth records, programmatic records, and student data, researchers examine the long-term effects of state investments in two early childhood education programs.

Benefits of these investments for individual student outcomes through Grade 5: gains in math and reading test scores, reductions in special education placements and in grade retention.

*Muschkin, Ladd, & Dodge, Duke University*

# Looking to the future: enhancing the policy impact of research

- Access to resources for addressing priority questions from NC policymakers
- Improve NCERDC efficiency, timeliness of data releases
- Encourage researchers to present findings in formats that are accessible to policymakers and practitioners
- Enhance dissemination and translation efforts, in collaboration with NCDPI and other state agencies