

Public Abstract

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Ed. D.

Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

An Examination of the Relationship Between Teacher Characteristics, Socioeconomic Factors and Statewide Test Performance of Students with Individual Education Plans

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Adequate Yearly Progress expectations of NCLB required students, to demonstrate proficiency in reading and math by 2014. 2004 testing results indicated that two of Missouri's 96 middle schools with 30 or more eighth grade students with IEPs met the proficiency goal in math. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the performance of students with and without IEPs on the MAP mathematics examinations, socioeconomic factors, and teacher characteristics.

Data was collected from public sources and statistical analyses included descriptive findings, correlations, and regression. Findings indicated that teachers' average years of experience and mean household income failed to demonstrate a significant correlation to student achievement. Correlations demonstrated a significantly negative correlation between achievement for students with IEPs and per pupil expenditures for students with and without IEPs. There was a significantly negative correlation between the percent of student receiving free or reduced-price lunch and achievement for students both with and without IEPs. Findings indicated a significantly positive relationship between the percent of teachers with advanced degrees and achievement for students both with and without IEPs.

Students with IEPs are scoring significantly lower than students without IEPs on state assessments in math. Socioeconomic factors had the greatest impact on student performance for both groups. While socioeconomic status is not something educators can directly control, findings from this study do not present an excuse for failure. Educators must set aside old paradigms and accept the responsibility to continue the search for supports and programs for students at-risk for failure to meet the adequate yearly progress standards.