

## POSSIBLE RESEARCH PROJECTS FOR WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AS OF JULY 2009

*Research projects on the topics below will have priority. Other proposals will be considered if they do not require a great deal of staff or student time.*

The Instructional Services Division is interested in studies on the following topics, which would be helpful to WCPSS. Initial contact should be with Evaluation and Research (919-850-1903).

| <b>Project</b>                                       | <b>Grade Span</b> | <b>Possible Tasks</b>   |
|--|-------------------|---|
| <b>Math Expressions</b>                              | K-5               | Examine implementation of Math Expressions in collaboration with Evaluation & Research and Curriculum & Instruction department staff  |
| <b>Study of Students Scoring Level IV on the EOG</b> | 3-8               | Examine the experiences of low and high Level IV students in reading and mathematics; observations or teacher logs or surveys.  |
| <b>Algebra Grades</b>                                | 8-9               | Study subsequent course-taking of similar students who take algebra in grade 8 vs. 9 (for students with similar End-of-Grade scores in grade 7). Check results in other systems and nationally.   |
| <b>Formative assessments</b>                         | 3-12              | Analyses of item difficulty, results by subgroup, etc. Establishment of rubrics for performance assessments.  |
| <b>Reading Materials and Program(s)</b>              | 7-12              | Study materials and programs used to provide effective reading instruction at the secondary level along with impact.  |
| <b>Studies on High School Required Courses/Tests</b> | 9-12              | Follow-up on biology, US History, or algebra studies to further examine the instructional delivery style of the teachers found to be the most effective. In-depth study of the most effective teachers and schools. Support our studies. Look more specifically at strategies used, by objective. |

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Contact: (919) 850-1840



[www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research](http://www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research)

| <b>Project</b>   | <b>Grade Span</b> | <b>Possible Tasks</b>   |
|--|-------------------|---|
| <b>Studies Related to Graduation</b>   | 6-12              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine the risk factors and graduation requirements that best predict dropping out or graduating.</li> <li>• Examine the most effective practices or programs for promoting passing of EOC tests or of passing courses.</li> <li>• Examine the relationship of practices to other indicators of progress towards graduation.</li> <li>• Examine practices in schools with more and less positive patterns of graduation.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Alternative Schools</b>   | 6-12              | Carry out qualitative study of students' experiences at alternative schools and their transition back to regular campuses.  |
| <b>Retention</b>   | K-12              | Study retention rates, reasons, and impact. Study difference in success of students placed into the next grade with intervention versus those retained. Study relationship of retention to graduation. Support our studies.   |
| <b>Attendance</b>  | K-12              | Study issues related to chronic non-attendance and suspension in relation to school success.  |
| <b>Curriculum Issues</b>   | K-12              | Examine issues related to fidelity of implementation, use of assessments, calendar pacing, instructional strategies, etc. Study implementation of mathematics expressions with others.  |
| <b>PLCs</b>  | K-12              | Explore functioning of PLCs in more detail, possible qualitative work on a sample of schools and/or groups.   |
| <b>Grading</b>   | K-12              | Investigate changes in grading practices over time, impact on students, case studies (e.g., students who score on grade level but fail courses).  |
| <b>Limited English Proficiency (LEP) English as a Second Language (ESL) programs</b> | K-12              | Interviews or survey of staff on services for LEP students. Examine the way proficiency testing is handled at various schools, quantifying time needed and identifying the most time-efficient models.  |
| <b>Intervention Alignment</b>  | K-12              | Check implementation and success of this approach to support struggling students. Check on use of universal screening. Support E&R/C&I work in this area.   |
| <b>Walk-throughs</b>   | K-12              | Check implementation and use of tool to improve teaching practices.   |