

# Curriculum

## Inclusion and Prioritization Standards

### Definition of Curriculum

Curriculum is the detailed, sequenced subject matter—including content and skills—that teachers plan to teach and students are expected to know. In some cases, curriculum programs may include instructional strategies for delivering that material (e.g., students should discuss a topic in small groups).

When determining the parameters for program inclusion on the Business-Higher Education Forum’s (BHEF) StrategicEdSolutions.org site, clear attention was given to BHEF’s theory of change. Subsequently, the curriculum portion of this resource focuses on core content areas of reading, writing, math, and science, and will focus on curricula that are major sources of content for those classes (i.e., designed to cover at least one semester of instruction). Further, the BHEF Strategic Ed Solutions reviews curricula that focus on college and work readiness,<sup>1</sup> especially in middle and high school.<sup>2</sup>

### Standards for Screening Curricula

*These standards are used to identify curricula that may be included in BHEF’s StrategicEdSolutions resource center now or in the future.*

#### Relevant

- The curriculum is consistent with the definition, above.
- The curriculum has been implemented in public middle or high schools in the United States.
- The curriculum has a clear (and usually explicit) focus on college or work readiness in core subjects (reading, writing, math, or science).
- The curriculum is designed to take at least one semester.

#### Replicable

- There needs to be enough publicly available information about the curriculum for a district to implement.
  - A “branded” program with a commercial, non-profit, and/or IHE developer/implementer can be assumed to be well documented.
  - Otherwise, the curriculum could be considered well documented if the following, at minimum, are available: guidance on how to implement the core strategies, a timeline for implementation, and a list of key participants (e.g., superintendents, teachers, students, parents).

---

<sup>1</sup> “Work readiness” is seen as an element of “college readiness”. The focus for this Key is on preparing students for college, with the understanding that those skills also will be useful for students who go directly into the workforce.

<sup>2</sup> Although the profiles featured in BHEF StrategicEdSolutions.org resource center will have the focus described here, the “Research and Resources” section of the site provides links to other curriculum reviews that have broader parameters. For example, elementary school curricula and curricula that are not focused on college or work readiness might be described in the other curriculum reviews.

## Standards for Prioritizing Curricula

*These standards are used to identify, from the set of curricula that meet the screening standards above, the best curricula to highlight in the June 2008 Strategic Ed Solutions. Curricula identified as lower priority may be reviewed and described in the future.*

### Degree of Relevance

- The curriculum has been implemented in an urban district.
- The curriculum has been implemented in middle or high schools.
- The curriculum targets underserved populations (e.g., low socio-economic status, minority students).
- Together with the other curricula profiled for the BHEF Resource Center, the group of 10 curricula shows diversity in content (e.g., at least one curriculum for each core subject: reading, writing, math, and science).
- Together with the other curricula profiled for the BHEF Resource Center, the group of 10 curricula includes at least five that have previously received direct support from corporate or private foundations.

### Degree of Replication

- The curriculum has been implemented districtwide **OR** in more than 10 schools across multiple districts **OR** in at least two of the 100 largest school districts in the US ([http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100\\_largest/index.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100_largest/index.asp)).

### Effectiveness

- If a curriculum is identified as effective by a critical review using standards at least as rigorous as those listed below, it would automatically be eligible for inclusion **OR** the curriculum must meet these effectiveness criteria
  - Quality of the evidence
    - Study with a comparison group or a pre-post study<sup>3</sup>
  - Findings
    - For curricula, relevant findings include reading, writing, math, or science achievement, as measured by test scores, grades, or similar sources.
    - Findings should be positive and moderately strong
      - Statistically significant **OR** an effect size of at least 0.15
    - Findings should be consistent
      - Half or more of the relevant findings in a study should be positive and strong for the study to be considered.
  - Extent of the evidence
    - At least one study at the district level **OR** at least one study in multiple schools **OR** multiple smaller (e.g., one or a few schools) studies. The study/studies must meet the quality criterion above.

---

<sup>3</sup> Studies comparing cohorts in the program with earlier cohorts not in the program do not qualify as pre-post studies.

# **Student Opportunity and Access Inclusion and Prioritization Standards**

## **Definition of Student Opportunity and Access Programs**

Student Opportunity and Access programs should help students learn about and prepare for college or the workforce<sup>1</sup> by the end of high school. This could be a primary or secondary focus of the program, but should be an explicit focus. Student Opportunity and Access programs should foster a culture of “college-going” and increase college and workforce access through information, finances, internships and mentoring programs. These programs may provide students information about their options, support in completing college applications, linkages to postsecondary options, development of the skills and knowledge needed in a postsecondary setting, and other similar types of support.

When determining the parameters for program inclusion on the Business-Higher Education Forum’s (BHEF) StrategicEdSolutions.org site, clear attention was given to BHEF’s theory of change.

## **Standards for Screening Programs**

*These standards are used to identify programs that may be included in BHEF’s StrategicEdSolutions resource center now or in the future.*

### **Relevant**

- The program is consistent with the definition of Student Opportunity and Access, above.
- The program has been implemented in or in affiliation with public schools in the United States.

### **Replicable**

- There needs to be enough publicly available information about the program design and elements for a district to implement the program.
  - A “branded” program with a commercial, non-profit, and/or IHE developer/implementer can be assumed to be well documented.
  - Otherwise, the program could be considered well documented if the following, at minimum, are available: guidance on how to implement the core strategies; a timeline for implementation; and a list of key participants (e.g., superintendents, teachers, students, parents).

---

<sup>1</sup> “Work readiness” is seen as an element of “college readiness”. The focus for this Key is on preparing students for college, with the understanding that those skills also will be useful for students who go directly into the workforce.

## Standards for Prioritizing Programs

*These standards are used to identify, from the set of programs that meet the screening standards above, the best programs to highlight in the June 2008 StrategicEdSolutions. Programs identified as lower priority may be reviewed and described in the future.*

### Degree of Relevance

- The program has been implemented in an urban district or with students from an urban district.
- The program has been implemented in middle or high school.
- The program targets underserved populations (e.g., low socio-economic status, minority students).
- Together with the other programs profiled for the BHEF Resource Center, the group of 10 programs includes at least five that have previously received direct support from corporate or private foundations.

### Degree of Replication

- The program has been implemented district wide **OR** in more than 10 schools across multiple districts **OR** in at least two of the 100 largest school districts in the US ([http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100\\_largest/index.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100_largest/index.asp)).

### Effectiveness

- If a program is identified as effective by a critical review using standards at least as rigorous as those listed below, it would automatically be eligible for inclusion **OR** the program must meet these effectiveness criteria:
  - Quality of the evidence
    - Study with a comparison group or a pre-post study<sup>2</sup>
  - Findings
    - For Student Opportunity and Access, relevant findings include changes in student and family attitudes about college education; participation rates in college information sessions, financial aid sessions, and other guidance opportunities; rates of application to college, rates of acceptance to college, and rates of retention beyond the first year (if available); transfer rates between two year and four year schools (if available); access to financial aid, mentoring programs and internships, etc; certificate and degree completion rates (if available) and similar measures.
    - Findings should be positive and moderately strong
      - Statistically significant **OR** an effect size of at least 0.15
    - Findings should be consistent
      - Half or more of the relevant findings in a study should be positive and strong for the study to be considered.
  - Extent of the evidence
    - At least one study at the district level **OR** at least one study in multiple schools **OR** multiple smaller (e.g., one or a few schools) studies. The study/studies must meet the quality criterion above.

---

<sup>2</sup> Studies comparing cohorts in the program with earlier cohorts not in the program do not qualify as pre-post studies.

# **Leader Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal Inclusion and Prioritization Standards**

## **Definition of Leader Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal**

Leadership Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal programs focus on getting, keeping, and further developing highly qualified education leaders. Leaders include principals and district staff such as superintendents or other senior leaders at the district office. Leadership Recruitment programs are designed to attract leaders to education in general, and to the schools and districts where they are most needed in specific. Leadership Retention programs are designed to keep both new and experienced leaders in the schools and districts where they are most needed, usually by addressing causes of leader dissatisfaction. Leader Renewal programs are designed to provide continuous learning opportunities for leaders, and may include traditional professional development as well as mentoring, internships, and other learning opportunities. Leader Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal programs may work directly with districts, or may prepare and support leaders without a direct link to any specific district. Leadership programs may develop aspects of leaders such as instructional leadership, managerial leadership, or other foci.

When determining the parameters for program inclusion on the Business-Higher Education Forum's (BHEF) StrategicEdSolutions.org site, clear attention was given to BHEF's theory of change.

## **Standards for Screening Programs**

*These standards are used to identify programs that may be included in BHEF's StrategicEdSolutions resource center now or in the future.*

### **Relevant**

- The program is consistent with the definition of Leader Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal, above.
- The program has been implemented in or in affiliation with public schools in the United States.

### **Replicable**

- There needs to be enough publicly available information about the program design and elements for a district to implement the program.
  - A "branded" program with a commercial, non-profit, and/or IHE developer/implementer can be assumed to be well documented.
  - Otherwise, the program could be considered well documented if the following, at minimum, are available: guidance on how to implement the core strategies; a timeline for implementation; and a list of key participants (e.g., superintendents, teachers, students, parents).

## Standards for Prioritizing Programs

*These standards are used to identify, from the set of programs that meet the screening standards above, the best programs to highlight in the June 2008 StrategicEdSolutions. Programs identified as lower priority may be reviewed and described in the future.*

### Degree of Relevance

- The program has been implemented in an urban school or district or with leaders from urban schools or districts.
- The program has been implemented with middle or high school leaders.
- The program targets leaders who currently serve, or might serve, schools or districts with a large proportion of underserved populations (e.g., low socio-economic status, minority students).
- Together with the other programs profiled for the BHEF Resource Center, the group of 10 programs includes at least five that have previously received direct support from corporate or private foundations.

### Degree of Replication

- The program has been implemented with leaders districtwide **OR** in more than 10 schools across multiple districts **OR** in at least two of the 100 largest school districts in the US ([http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100\\_largest/index.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100_largest/index.asp)).

### Effectiveness

- If a program is identified as effective by a critical review using standards at least as rigorous as those listed below, it would automatically be eligible for inclusion **OR** the program must meet these effectiveness criteria:
  - Quality of the evidence
    - Study with a comparison group or a pre-post study<sup>1</sup>
  - Findings
    - For Leader Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal, relevant findings include evidence of an increase in highly qualified professionals applying to school districts of interest (e.g., public school districts, urban districts, districts with underserved populations), increased retention of both new and experienced leaders in districts of interest, and the meaningful engagement of leaders in professional development that supports their effectiveness in districts of interest.
    - Findings should be positive and moderately strong
      - Statistically significant **OR** an effect size of at least 0.15
    - Findings should be consistent
      - Half or more of the relevant findings in a study should be positive and strong for the study to be considered.
  - Extent of the evidence
    - At least one study at the district level **OR** at least one study in multiple schools **OR** multiple smaller (e.g., one or a few schools) studies. The study/studies must meet the quality criterion above.

---

<sup>1</sup> Studies comparing cohorts in the program with earlier cohorts not in the program do not qualify as pre-post studies.

## **Co-curricular/Extra-curricular Activities Inclusion and Prioritization Standards**

### **Definition of Co-curricular/Extra-curricular Activities**

Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities occur outside of the regular class. They often allow students some degree of freedom in the selection, planning, and/or control of the program and are intended to enrich the educational and social development and experiences of students by providing opportunities beyond scheduled classes. Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities can include academic (e.g., National Honor Society, Debate Club), philanthropic (e.g., Volunteer Club), athletic (e.g., after school sports, intramural sports), and fine arts related (e.g., Art Club, Dance Club, Choir) opportunities.

They may be related to the curriculum (for example, a civics class may opt to sponsor a voter registration drive as a co-curricular activity for their class). They may be independent of the curriculum (for example, debate club).

When determining the parameters for programs inclusion on the Business-Higher Education Forum's (BHEF) StrategicEdSolutions.org site, clear attention was given to BHEF's theory of change. Subsequently, the co-curricular/extra-curricular portion of this resource focuses on co-curricular/extra-curricular activities that explicitly intend to promote college readiness by developing students' academic and career knowledge and skills. For example, a sports program that is designed to build teamwork to better succeed in the workplace would be eligible for BHEF review, but a sports program without that explicit focus would not.

### **Standards for Screening Programs**

*These standards are used to identify programs that may be included in BHEF's StrategicEdSolutions resource center now or in the future.*

#### **Relevant**

- The program is consistent with the definition of Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities, above.
- The program has been implemented in, or in affiliation with, public schools in the United States.

#### **Replicable**

- There is enough publicly available information about the program design and elements for a district to implement the program.
  - A "branded" program with a commercial, non-profit, and/or IHE developer/implementer can be assumed to be well documented.
  - Otherwise, the program could be considered well documented if the following, at minimum, are available: guidance on how to implement the core strategies; a timeline for implementation; and a list of key participants (e.g., superintendents, teachers, students, parents).

## Standards for Prioritizing Programs

*These standards are used to identify, from the set of programs that meet the screening standards above, the best programs to highlight in the June 2008 Strategic Ed Solutions. Programs identified as lower priority may be reviewed and described in the future.*

### Degree of Relevance

- The program has been implemented in an urban district or with students from an urban district.
- The program has been implemented with middle or high school students.
- The program targets underserved populations (e.g., low socio-economic status, minority students).
- Together with the other programs profiled for the BHEF Resource Center, the group of 10 programs includes at least five that have previously received direct support from corporate or private foundations.

### Degree of Replication

- The program has been implemented district wide **OR** in more than 10 schools across multiple districts **OR** in at least two of the 100 largest school districts in the US ([http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100\\_largest/index.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100_largest/index.asp)).

### Effectiveness

- If a program is identified as effective by a critical review using standards at least as rigorous as those listed below, it would automatically be eligible for inclusion **OR** the program must meet these effectiveness criteria
  - Quality of the evidence
    - Study with a comparison group or a pre-post study<sup>1</sup>
  - Findings
    - For Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities, relevant findings include evidence of effects of students' academic achievement (measured through tests, grades, or other similar approaches), social or emotional development (e.g., greater connection to school), behavior (e.g., reduced disciplinary problems), or post-secondary trajectory (e.g., higher college application rates or job placement rates).
    - Findings should be positive and moderately strong
      - Statistically significant **OR** an effect size of at least 0.15
    - Findings should be consistent
      - Half or more of the relevant findings in a study should be positive and strong for the study to be considered.
  - Extent of the evidence
    - At least one study at the district level **OR** at least one study in multiple schools **OR** multiple smaller (e.g., one or a few schools) studies. The study/studies must meet the quality criterion above.

---

<sup>1</sup> Studies comparing cohorts in the program with earlier cohorts not in the program do not qualify as pre-post studies.

## **Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal Inclusion and Prioritization Standards**

### **Definition of Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal Programs**

Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal programs focus on getting, keeping, and further developing highly qualified teachers. Teacher Recruitment programs are designed to attract teachers to the teaching profession in general, and to the classrooms and schools where they are most needed in specific. Teacher Retention programs are designed to keep both new and experienced teachers in the classrooms and schools where they are most needed, usually by addressing causes of teacher dissatisfaction. Teacher Renewal programs are designed to provide continuous learning opportunities for teachers, and may include traditional professional development as well as mentoring, internships, and other learning opportunities. Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal programs may work directly with districts, or may prepare and support teachers without a direct link to any specific district.

When determining the parameters for program inclusion on the Business-Higher Education Forum's (BHEF) StrategicEdSolutions.org site, clear attention was given to BHEF's theory of change.

### **Standards for Screening Programs**

*These standards are used to identify programs that may be included in BHEF's StrategicEdSolutions resource center now or in the future.*

#### **Relevant**

- The program is consistent with the definition of Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal, above.
- The program has been implemented in, or in affiliation with, public schools in the United States.

#### **Replicable**

- There needs to be enough publicly available information about the program design and elements for a district to implement the program.
  - A "branded" program with a commercial, non-profit, and/or IHE developer/implementer can be assumed to be well documented.
  - Otherwise, the program could be considered well documented if the following, at minimum, are available: guidance on how to implement the core strategies; a timeline for implementation; and a list of key participants (e.g., superintendents, teachers, students, parents).

## Standards for Prioritizing Programs

*These standards are used to identify, from the set of programs that meet the screening standards above, the best programs to highlight in the June 2008 StrategicEdSolutions. Programs identified as lower priority may be reviewed and described in the future.*

### Degree of Relevance

- The program has been implemented in an urban district or with teachers from an urban district.
- The program has been implemented with middle or high school teachers.
- The program targets teachers who currently serve, or might serve schools with a large proportion of underserved populations (e.g., low socio-economic status, minority students).
- Together with the other programs profiled for the BHEF Resource Center, the group of 10 programs includes at least five that have previously received direct support from corporate or private foundations.

### Degree of Replication

- The program has been implemented with teachers districtwide **OR** in more than 10 schools across multiple districts **OR** in at least two of the 100 largest school districts in the US ([http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100\\_largest/index.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/100_largest/index.asp)).

### Effectiveness

- If a program is identified as effective by a critical review using standards at least as rigorous as those listed below, it would automatically be eligible for inclusion **OR** the program must meet these effectiveness criteria
  - Quality of the evidence
    - Study with a comparison group or a pre-post study<sup>1</sup>
  - Findings
    - For Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Renewal, relevant findings include increases in numbers of teachers applying to school districts of interest, increased retention of new and experienced teachers in school districts of interest, meaningful engagement of teachers in professional development that supports their effectiveness in school districts of interest. Changes in student achievement, as measured by grades or tests, also are relevant outcomes for teacher renewal programs.<sup>2</sup>
    - Findings should be positive and moderately strong
      - Statistically significant **OR** an effect size of at least 0.15
    - Findings should be consistent
      - Half or more of the relevant findings in a study should be positive and strong for the study to be considered.
  - Extent of the evidence
    - At least one study at the district level **OR** at least one study in multiple schools **OR** multiple smaller (e.g., one or a few schools) studies. The study/studies must meet the quality criterion above.

---

<sup>1</sup> Studies comparing cohorts in the program with earlier cohorts not in the program do not qualify as pre-post studies.

<sup>2</sup> Retrospective opinion surveys (e.g., “I feel that my instruction improved as a result of this program”) do not qualify.