

Measuring Academic Return on Investment

Evaluate the impact resource
allocations are having on
student outcomes



ECRA Group
Education | Consulting | Research | Analytics

ecragroup.com/roi



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Academic Return on Investment (ROI)

How do you know the investments your district is making are having a positive impact on student outcomes?

School leaders make decisions every day about how to best allocate community resources to ensure all students receive a high-quality education. Documenting the impact of programmatic investments is the essence of evidence-based practice.

Academic return on investment is an analytic approach that quantifies the impact of a particular program or intervention on student growth.

Learn more: ecragroup.com/roi

Asking the Right Question

The key insight that motivates academic ROI is recognizing that students will continue to grow with or without a particular investment. **Academic ROI quantifies the impact of an investment on student growth above and beyond growth that would have happened anyway.**

Districts often ask:

“How did students in the program grow?”

Academic ROI asks:

“How did students in the program grow compared to how they would have grown without the program?”



The Process of Academic ROI

Academic ROI uses a disciplined method of inquiry that leverages the scientific method.

1

Invest

Our district invested \$1.5 million into a reading program to accelerate rates of growth for struggling readers.

2

Question

Are students served by the program growing faster than they would have grown without the program?

3

Evaluate

Create a personalized growth projection for each student assuming the program did not exist. Then, compare observed growth for each student with the program to projected growth without the program.

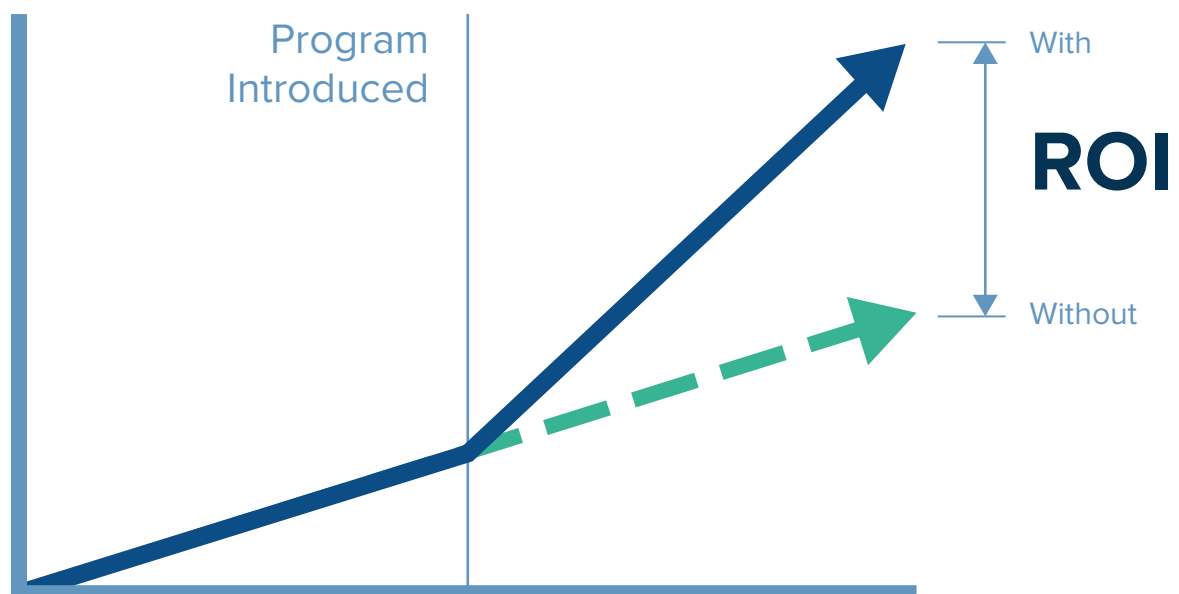
4

Act

Validate program effectiveness, use results to improve the program, or consider reallocating resources to more effective programming.

ECRA's ROI Methodology

ECRA analyzes an individual student's longitudinal growth trajectory, and the trajectory of similar students to create a personalized projection for each student. The projection represents where a student would likely perform without the program. We then measure the distance between observed performance with the program to projected performance without the program.



Observed Results - Student performance with the program.

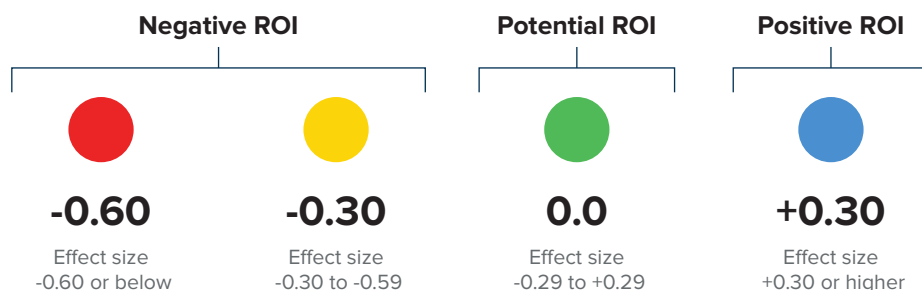
Projected Results - Student performance without the program.

Reporting Results

ECRA reports academic ROI using the metric of effect size. We categorize effect sizes using well established research-based thresholds to aid interpretation.

Imagine evaluating every program and intervention every year for academic ROI. Over time, ensure investments are directed towards programs with positive ROI.

Program	Students Served	Financial Allocation	Effect Size (ROI)
Reading Support	112	\$250,000	-0.32 ●
Summer School	58	\$112,000	+0.13 ●
Instructional Coaches	145	\$135,000	+0.40 ●



Bringing decisions into focus.

At ECRA, we focus on helping school districts embed evidence-based practices via predictive models that empower school leaders with the information needed to ensure a more equitable environment where all students succeed. ECRA helps educators and school leaders realize their mission and vision in a way that inspires and engages the community, aligns resources, and provides a framework for continuous improvement.

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