

The Promotion Power Impacts of Louisiana High Schools

The Problem

A high quality school can enhance the success of its students after high school graduation. But too often, these contributions from schools go unmeasured. Most school accountability systems stop measuring student progress at high school graduation, rather than following students' postsecondary and employment outcomes. When post-graduation information is available, it is often not used to capture schools' contributions to student outcomes.

The Solution

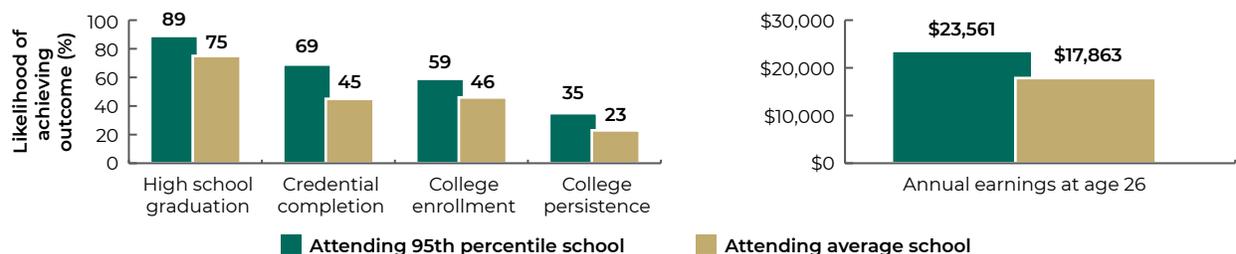
Measure each high school's *promotion power*.

- Promotion power is a school's **impact** on the long-term success of its students, as indicated by high school graduation; college or career readiness; college enrollment and persistence; and, ultimately, success in the job market.
- Promotion power **disentangles** the impact of each high school from the effects of previous schools, family resources, and other external factors.
- The promotion power measures are designed to create (to the extent possible) a **level playing field** that permits equitable and fair comparisons of schools that serve different student populations.

The Report

Mathematica recently released a [report](#) describing the data and methodology used to calculate the promotion power impacts of each public high school in Louisiana. These new measures allow Louisiana to identify high schools that are moving the needle on student long-term outcomes, separately from schools that might be teaching students who are already high achieving. High-performing high schools dramatically improve their students' graduation rates, college success, and eventual earnings (as seen in Figure 1).

Figure 1. Expected outcomes of students attending high schools with high promotion power are substantially better than those of similar students attending high schools with average promotion power



Notes: Credential completion means completing college-level coursework or demonstrating proficiency with an industry-valued skill set by the time students graduate from high school. Each set of bars depicted in this figure is based on a separate promotion power distribution and represents different schools. It is unlikely that a single school would be at the average or 95th percentile of all promotion power models.

Promotion power measures provide rich information about high school performance that can be valuable to districts, schools, and parents in Louisiana. Other states might also be interested in using Louisiana's groundbreaking work on high school promotion power as a springboard to incorporate similar measures into their own school performance reports.