

From: (b)(6) on behalf of Macke Raymond
[macke@stanford.edu]
Sent: Friday, December 21, 2012 6:20 AM
To: What Works
Subject: Re: WWC Quick Review Blast of Report

Good morning,
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Margaret Raymond

CREDO

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From: WhatWorks
Sent: Friday, December 21, 2012 11:13 AM
To: (b)(6)
Subject: RE: WWC Quick Review Blast of Report (WWCPC 3989)

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Sent: Friday, December 21, 2012 6:20 AM
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Sincerely,

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Subject: RE: WWC Quick Review Blast of Report (WWCPC 3989)

Dear Dr. Raymond,

In light of your specific comments re: statistical significance, an independent review team is checking that the initial review was done correctly. Once the review is complete, the team will summarize their findings and suggestions for changes, if any, and send to them to you.

Thank you,

What Works Clearinghouse

From: (b) (6) **On Behalf Of** Macke Raymond
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 11:07 AM
To: WhatWorks
Subject: Re: WWC Quick Review Blast of Report (WWCPC 3989)

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At this time, we are unable to provide a timeline for the response.

If you have additional comments or questions, you may submit them in response to this email and they will be provided to the Quality Review Team to include in their review.

Thank you,

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Sent: Tuesday, January 08, 2013 11:08 PM
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Dear WWC Team,

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Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2013 9:28 AM
To: 'Macke Raymond'
Subject: RE: WWC Quick Review Blast of Report (WWCPC 3989)
Attachments: QRT 2012016 Response_9.18.2013.pdf

Dear Dr. Raymond,

Attached in the document entitled *QRT 2012016 Response_9.18.2013* is a response to the questions you raised in your inquiries concerning the What Works Clearinghouse review of your study "Charter School Performance in New Jersey." If you have other concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the WWC through info@whatworks.ed.gov.

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September 18, 2013

Dr. Margaret Raymond
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(650) 725-3431

Reference: QR2012016

Dear Dr. Raymond:

Thank you for your emails concerning the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) quick review of “Charter School Performance in New Jersey” (posted December 2012). In response to your inquiry, the WWC quality review team undertook an investigation of the issues you raised. The WWC quality review team responds to concerns raised by study authors, curriculum developers, or other relevant parties about WWC reviews published on our website. When a quality review is conducted, a reviewer who was not involved in the initial review undertakes an independent assessment of the study in question. The reviewer also examines the procedures followed and decisions made during the original review of the study

The WWC quick review rated the study as meeting WWC standards with reservations. It included a caution that the percentages of schools exhibiting statistically significant differences in gains might be overstated because the study did not adjust for multiple comparisons. In your email dated January 8, 2013, you stated that “the assessment of the study completed by the WWC team is inaccurate.” You asked in an email dated December 21, 2012, whether the basis of the WWC caution was concern that (1) the study conducted multiple tests of statistical significance without a “correction factor” to adjust p -values; or (2) the study has a positive correlation within the unit of assignment (charter schools) that does not match the unit of analysis (student), thus biasing the standard errors down. You further stated in that email that the WWC caution about possible bias in the study toward finding statistically significant results is not warranted because the intraclass correlation (ICC) is negative, so correcting for both clustering and multiple comparisons could bias the study’s results against finding statistical significance.

We carefully examined the issues you raised and revisited our review of the study. The quick review’s caution that the percentages of schools exhibiting statistically significant differences in gains might be overstated was not based on concerns about clustering, but refers to the testing of multiple hypotheses (see the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, version 2.1, Appendix D, pp. 49–54). For the analysis in this report, an adjustment for multiple hypothesis testing could reduce the percentages of schools exhibiting statistically significant differences in gains as reported in Table 4. Therefore, in the section “How does the WWC rate this study?,” the quick review states that “caution must be exercised when interpreting the results of analysis of impacts by school, because the authors did not adjust for the fact that,

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when *conducting multiple statistical tests of significance* (in this case, one for each charter school), it becomes more likely that some impacts will be statistically significant by chance.” The quality review team concluded that the WWC quick review was accurate in reporting this caution.

WWC quick reviews are intended to provide a timely and objective, but preliminary, assessment of prominent research. Based on the findings of this quality review, we will not issue a revised quick review. However, the study is currently being reviewed in more detail and a final and more complete assessment of the study will be released as a single study review. I hope that this letter has addressed your concerns. If you have other concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the WWC through info@whatworks.ed.gov.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Jill Constantine
Director
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