A Commitment to Equity Leads to Success

Relationships matter, and students do better when they are known and cared about by multiple adults. This approach is central to BARR’s success at raising the academic achievement of low-income students and students of color. We believe that all people have unique strengths and that all students have the right to a quality education. BARR is a tool that schools can use to make their practice more equitable, ensure that no student is invisible, and remove both academic and non-academic barriers to learning.

BARR Closes the Gap in Graduation Rates

St. Louis Park Senior High School (MN) was the first school to implement BARR, and it has been using BARR for the past 19 years. During that time, St. Louis Park closed its gap in graduation rates. In 2014, it was recognized with ACT’s National College and Career Transition Award.


More Students Take AP and IB Courses with BARR

St. Louis Park Senior High School also has seen a 500% increase in the number of students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses—and taking AP and IB tests. The student composition of these honors classes mirrors the entire student population based on race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.

![Number of AP/IB tests taken graph](source: St. Louis Park District data)

BARR PROMOTES CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Acknowledge the complexity of cultural identity. BARR begins with a focus on the individual student. Multiple adults know who is doing well, who is struggling, and what each student’s barriers to success are.

Recognize the dynamics of power. Block Meetings and Risk Reviews provide a safe, effective structure for teachers and staff to discuss the macro and micro impacts of race and ethnicity with their colleagues. (BARR provides equity training to schools.)

Recognize and eliminate bias in social relations. The I-Time social emotional curriculum develops a sense of belonging that reduces students’ fear that they will be stereotyped according to their race or ethnicity.

Employ culturally congruent theories and methods. Interventions built on positive student-teacher relationships encourage and support all students, maximizing collective impact.

Continue self-assessments. Teachers use data on grades, attendance, and social emotional issues to ensure that ALL students in need of support receive it.

Based on American Evaluation Association’s five Essential Practices for Cultural Competence.
**RCTs Show Evidence of BARR’s Success**

### Hemet High School Closes Achievement Gaps

An i3 2010 development grant funded a within-school randomized controlled trial (RCT) at Hemet High School (CA). At Hemet, 74% of students qualify for free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) and 58% are students of color.

Results demonstrated a statistically significant positive impact on 9th grade students’ standardized test scores, credits earned, grade point average, and overall failure rate. This study meets What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservation.

In addition, BARR closed the gap in achievement between white and non-white students. The failure rate for Hispanic students was reduced by 50% to a level nearly identical to that of non-Hispanic students.


### Multi-Site RCT: Positive Change on All Measured Outcomes

American Institutes for Research (AIR) is the evaluator for the current i3 2013 validation grant of BARR. This study is an ongoing multisite RCT involving 11 schools (in CA, KY, ME, MN, TX). The full sample includes 4,168 9th grade students randomized into experimental conditions with 75% students of color, 66% eligible for FRPL, 25% ELL students, 8% receiving special education services, 51% male, and 14% in rural settings.

**BARR HELPS STUDENTS MOST AT RISK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BARR</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students of color</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRPL</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preliminary results from the first two cohorts show statistically significant impacts (p<.05 or better) for BARR students compared to control students on all measured student achievement outcomes, as well as some key social and emotional outcomes.

**Improved Academic Outcomes**
- More total core credits earned
- More students passing all core courses
- Higher reading Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores
- Higher mathematics MAP scores

**Improved Social and Emotional Outcomes**
On surveys, students reported feeling:
- More supported by their teachers
- More rigorous academic expectations
- More engaged in the classroom

**Positive Impact on Subgroups**
- The impact on passing all core courses was stronger for BARR students of color, FRPL-eligible students, and males.
- Student reports of rigorous academic expectations, engagement in the classroom, and supportive relationships with teachers were greater for BARR students of color compared with control students of color.

**HEMET HIGH SCHOOL: DRAMATIC DROPS IN COURSE FAILURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hispanic 9th graders not participating in BARR</th>
<th>Hispanic 9th graders participating in BARR</th>
<th>All other 9th graders not participating in BARR</th>
<th>All other 9th graders participating in BARR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–14</td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATISTICS FOR ENTIRE SAMPLE**

Higher scores on Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAP scores for BARR students compared with control students (reading ES=.08, p<.01; mathematics ES=.08, p<.01).

More BARR students met their projected growth than control students in both reading (BARR 73%, Control 67%, ES=.06, p<.05) and mathematics (BARR 79%, Control 72%, ES=.07, p<.01).

Total core credits earned during 9th grade higher for BARR students (84%) compared with control students (79%; ES=.05, p<.01).

Higher percentage of BARR students (67%) compared to control students (58%) passed all core courses without any failures during 9th grade (ES=.13, p<.001).

BARR students reported feeling more supported by their teachers (ES=.34, p<.001), experienced higher expectations and rigor from their teachers (ES=.23, p<.001), and were more engaged in the classroom (ES=.12, p<.05) than control students.

**STATISTICS FOR SUBGROUPS**

Impact on passing all core courses was greater for subgroups: students of color (ES=.17, p<.001), FRPL-eligible students (ES=.16, p<.001), and males (ES=.18, p<.001).

Impact on social and emotional outcomes was largest for students of color: supportive relationships (ES=.43, p<.001), expectations and rigor (ES=.31, p<.001), and student engagement (ES=.23, p<.001).