

ARIZONA CAREER LADDER PROGRAM RESEARCHED RESULTS, 1985 - 2007

Mary Walton Braver (1989, ASU), (Career Ladder Pilot Project)

Results from the analysis of the impact of the Career Ladder on student academic achievement using a comparison of prior to and following implementation:

- 1) Average student achievement in Career Ladder districts showed a definite increase after Career Ladder was introduced. The change in achievement level was consistent for each of the three years after Career Ladder implementation
- 2) **Average student achievement in Career Ladder districts exceeds that in non-Career Ladder districts.** The difference in average student achievement between the two types of districts increases after the introduction of Career Ladder in favor of the Career Ladder districts

Packard and Dereshiwsky (1990)

Positive outcomes were noted for Career Ladder teachers related to:

- 1) student achievement
- 2) curriculum and instruction and
- 3) teacher skills development and leadership.

In the area of **student achievement and production outcomes**, Career Ladder teachers demonstrated a/an:

- Increased ability to document pre- and post-tests and to assess associated gain scores.
- Increased ability to define measurable outcomes in “hard to quantify areas” (e.g., art, music, phys/ed).
- Greater emphasis on student achievement documented in teachers’ action plans.
- Increased documentation of standardized test results.
- Greater satisfaction, self-pride, and sense of accomplishment relative to student achievement gain-score assessment.

In the area of **curriculum/instruction/student achievement measurement**, Career Ladder teachers demonstrated:

- Tangible, ongoing curriculum alignment with district objectives.
- Creation of locally developed assessment tools.
- Increased focus on higher quality content, skills, classroom materials, and instructional strategies.
- Heightened teacher and administrator awareness of the overall importance of sound curriculum development.

Datasphere Inc. (1992-93)

Results of a survey distributed to school board members, administrators, career ladder teachers, and non-career ladder teachers concerning the impact of the Career Ladder Program on student progress and achievement:

“Teachers and administrators believe there are **very positive impacts on student achievement as a result of the Plan**. They attribute this belief to five aspects of the Career Ladder Plan:

- 1) increased attention to sequenced instruction
- 2) better teacher organization for instruction
- 3) attention to higher order thinking skills
- 4) preparation of better curriculum materials and
- 5) general strengthening of schools’ instructional programs.”

Sloat (1994)

The following information resulted from an examination of student achievement in the original 14 Group 1 Career Ladder Districts.

In comparing student achievement in Career Ladder districts with student achievement in non-Career Ladder districts:

- A. Career Ladder districts out-performed non-Career Ladder districts in four areas:
 - 1) **Drop out rate** – From 0.04% to 1.86% lower dropout rates in Career Ladder districts between 1985-86 and 1991-92
 - 2) **Graduation rate** – 5% higher graduation rates for Career Ladder districts in 1991 and 8% higher in 1992
 - 3) **ITBS Composite NCE scores** – 7.95% higher Composite NCE Scores in Career Ladder districts in 1988, 8.14% higher in 1990, and 9.10% higher in 1991
 - 4) **1993 ASAP Average Scores** – Ranges from 4.67% to 5.81% higher Grade 8 Average ASAP Scores in 1993 Reading, Mathematics, and Writing assessments.
- B. In comparing the actual and predicted students’ NCE scores for students in Career Ladder Districts with those in non-Career Ladder districts, students in non-Career Ladder districts scored slightly above predicted scores (.417 NCE points higher than predicted) and **students in Career Ladder districts scored even higher** (1.45 NCE points higher than predicted).

Sloat (1994) *continued***In comparing student achievement in Career Ladder teachers' classrooms with student achievement in non-Career Ladder teachers' classrooms:**

- A. In 12 of the 14 Career Ladder districts, the students receiving instruction from teachers participating in Career Ladder programs had higher achievement K-6 than students receiving instruction from non-Career Ladder teachers.
- B. Across all districts, the NCE scores for students receiving instruction from Career Ladder teachers were **1.7 percent higher** than the NCE scores for students in non-CL classrooms.

Arizona Career Ladder Program Teacher Perception Survey State Totals (1998)

Positive responses on a statewide survey indicated a perception among Career Ladder teachers that the Career Ladder Program has a positive impact on student achievement. Twenty-seven of the twenty-eight districts participating in the Career Ladder Program responded to the survey.

Sample Survey Items	Percent Indicating Strongly Agree and Agree
The Career Ladder Program promotes	
effective practices to monitor student achievement	87%
the attainment of district and state student standards	84%
higher level thinking skills appropriately in instruction	88%
strategies to engage all students in learning during instruction	86%
the use of effective instructional strategies	78%
the use of research based instructional methodologies	75%
the improvement of student achievement	88%

Danzig (1999)

All 28 participating Career Ladder districts are designed with multiple steps and levels, demonstrating a career cycle for teachers with expectations for contributions greater than just "years of experience".

An essential aspect of every district's plan is the **focus on teaching and monitoring of student outcomes**.

Sloat (2002)

The following resulted from the comparative study between the 28 Career Ladder districts and the Non-Career Ladder districts:

In comparing student achievement between Career Ladder and non-Career Ladder districts on the spring 2001 Stanford 9 assessment, Grades 2 through 8, Reading, Language, and Mathematics:

- A. **Career Ladder districts out-performed non-Career Ladder districts** at every grade level, 2-8, in Reading, Language, and Mathematics as indicated by the **median scores**.

- B. **Career Ladder districts out-performed non-Career Ladder districts** at every grade level, 2nd through 8th, in Reading, Language, and Mathematics as indicated by the **mean NCE scores**. The level of difference indicated was **SIGNIFICANT**, statistically speaking, at all grade levels and in all subject areas except for 6th grade Reading.

Dowling (2007)

Conclusion

Overall results indicate, that on average, **students in Career Ladder schools are performing significantly better on AIMS measures than did students in non-career ladder schools**, even after adjusting for differences in student and school characteristics. The impact of the Career Ladder program seems to be greater in math and reading with the coefficients for these two subject areas larger than the coefficient for writing.

Citations

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Arizona Career Ladder Program Evaluation: Macro Analysis; prepared by Datasphere, Inc., Phoenix, 1993

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Dowling (2007)

Evaluation Report: The Effects of the Career Ladder Program on Student Achievement presented to Jan Amator, NBCT, Deputy Associate Superintendent, Lisa Kelley, NBCT, Education Program Specialist Highly Qualified Professionals, Arizona Department of Education by Jane Dowling, PhD, Sheila E. Murphy, PhD, Baofeng Wang, PhD, Sheila Murphy Associates Evaluation Team, January 15, 2007