Tutoring Quality Improvement System Quality Standards

The TQIS quality standards align with the Accelerator's [Framework for High-Impact Tutoring](). The [TQIS Advisory Group]() developed the standards and updates them regularly to reflect new learnings. Please see information about the February 2023 update [here]().

Each TQIS quality standard is grounded in research and categorized as one of the following:

- **Research-based**: This recommendation comes from a robust research base.
- **Research-informed**: This recommendation comes from some combination of studies of effective tutoring programs, inferences from analogous research settings, and practitioner insight.
- **Emerging evidence**: There is not yet a robust research base for this recommendation, but practitioners and researchers are highly aligned on its likely importance for quality.

A Note about Equity: Equity is one of the foundational elements of the Accelerator's Framework for High-Impact Tutoring. High-Impact Tutoring programs embed equity throughout their program; therefore, equity-related quality standards are included within each of the elements rather than as a stand-alone set of equity standards.

Element	Characteristic	Quality Standard	Research Base
TUTOR	Tutor Recruitment and Selection	The program has a clear recruitment and selection process that results in tutors with the skills and mindsets necessary to be successful in that program.	Emergent: Research has not explicitly focused on the most effective way to recruit tutors. However, experts in the field generally agree that programs should have clear processes and standards for recruitment.
	Tutor Preservice Training	The program provides high-quality onboarding and training, tailored to program context.	Research-Informed: Research shows that highly skilled educators have a greater impact on student achievement. Therefore, programs that implement high-quality training to improve a tutor's skill level will likely positively impact student achievement.

	Tutor Coaching and Feedback	The program provides ongoing support to tutors such as through coaching on the effective use of research-informed practices that foster academic success and overall student well-being.	Research-Informed: Research shows that educators improve by receiving ongoing support and feedback. Providing tutors with support in utilizing research-based instructional practices is, thus, likely to improve their practice and the program's effectiveness.
DATA USE	Program Effectiveness and Improvement	The program has demonstrated a commitment to understanding overall program effectiveness and processes for ongoing improvement.	Research-Informed: Research provides evidence that management practices that include data collection and analysis can improve organizational outcomes. As a result, tutoring programs that use data in their design and improvement process are likely to increase program effectiveness over time.
	Formative Assessment	The program provides tutors with support to collect, analyze, and use formative assessment data to inform design of future sessions.	Research-Based: Research on formative assessments in other settings suggests that they can provide valuable data for educators. As a result, similar formative assessments are likely to help tutors improve tutoring sessions and personalize instruction. Research suggests tutors need time and support to review formative assessment data, as well as the ability to act upon them.
	Student Progress Measure	The program has a system for measuring individual student progress over time and responding to those results; measures of progress include both academic growth and adaptive indicators (i.e., student engagement; student confidence).	Research-Informed: Tutoring programs can measure student progress over time by analyzing grades, assessment results, and standardized test scores. Monitoring individual student's progress over time can improve tutor's practice as well as allow the program to adjust or change tutors to better reach goals.
INSTRUCTION	Student Grouping	The program strategically groups students by skill level or language need to allow the tutor to deliver relevant instruction to the full group.	Research-Informed: Research on supplemental educational supports (not tutoring explicitly) suggests that grouping students by skill level or ability level can increase effectiveness.
	Tutor Consistency	Students receive consistent tutoring from the same tutor;	Research-Informed: Limited research on the effects of tutor consistency on

		any adjustments to groupings occur sparingly and strategically.	student achievement exists. However, evidence does suggest that the practice of "looping" - students having the same teacher for multiple years - may positively impact student achievement. The general consensus is that it is beneficial for students to receive instruction from a consistent tutor.
	Student-Tutor Relationship	The program has an intentional strategy and supporting systems to build strong, positive relationships between students and tutors.	Emergent: Many educators highlight the importance of relationships in effective tutoring, though research has not directly tested the role of relationships in driving student outcomes. The well-researched benefits of same-race teachers points to the importance of cultural competency in building those relationships and improving student outcomes. Tutors who are able to foster positive and professional relationships with students likely have great potential to engage students and improve outcomes.
	High-Quality Instructional Materials	The program uses high-quality instructional materials (HQIMs) that are user-friendly, rigorous, and research-based.	Research-Based: HQIMs positively impact student achievement in the classroom setting; therefore, the use of HQIMs is likely to improve the success of tutoring programs.
	Instructional Practices	Tutors use research-based instructional practices aimed at fostering academic success and overall student well-being.	Research-Based: Research-based instructional practices, by definition, promote student outcomes. One driver for the strong impacts of teacher led tutoring may be their expert facilitation of learning using these practices. Providing tutors with support in utilizing research-based instructional practices, thus, is likely to increase the effectiveness of the program.
	Routines and Structures	The program has consistent lesson structure, set instructional routines, and standard procedures to	Research-Informed: The evidence base does not provide detailed information on how the structure of specific tutoring interventions affect student

		maximize learning. Tutor-specific modifications are intentional and informed by student needs.	learning. However, students generally tend to benefit from a consistent lesson structure, procedures, and routines in educational settings.
	Dosage	The program provides each student with at least three tutoring sessions per week, with ample time (usually a minimum of 30 minutes per session) for students to engage fully with the material.	Research-Informed: Overall, tutoring interventions appear to be more effective as the number of tutoring sessions per week increases. Although research does not identify the most effective combination of duration and frequency, it does provide evidence that at least a minimum amount of exposure is necessary for high-quality tutoring to lead to desired outcomes.
	Ratio	The ratio of students to tutor in the program is low and does not exceed 4:1.	Research-Informed: Multiple studies suggest 1:1 tutoring has a greater impact on student achievement than any other grouping. However, research also suggests that tutoring is effective up to a ratio of 4:1. Some considerations when defining the student-tutor ratio are cost, resources and tutor type.
LEARNING INTEGRATION	Setting	The program occurs during the school day.	Research-Based: Studies on tutoring programs find that the effects of programs conducted during the school day are roughly twice as large as those conducted outside of school. However, out-of-school tutoring programs can be effective if the necessary structures and systems are in place to ensure student participation and engagement.
	Integration with School Schedule	If occurring during the school day, the program strategically considers the tradeoffs of students attending tutoring instead of alternative uses of time.	Emergent: Substantial evidence makes clear that classes vary in their benefits for students. Integration of tutoring into a student's schedule requires them to substitute tutoring for other uses of their time, which might also be important for their learning and well-being.
	Curricular Alignment	If classroom instruction is based on rigorous and high-quality materials, the tutoring	Emergent: Aligning tutoring with work in the classroom reduces the potential for student confusion from differences in the approach and facilitates

		program aligns to classroom curricula.	communication between the tutor and the student's teachers. However, if the materials are not high quality, the benefits of alignment may not exceed the drawback of low quality materials.
	School and Teacher Engagement	The program regularly engages with school leaders and/or teachers regarding instructional alignment and student progress.	Emergent: A number of effective tutoring programs engage regularly with school leaders and teachers, though researchers have not directly tested the importance of school engagement. Experts suggest that strong tutor-teacher communication may improve tutors' understanding of students and, as a result, the effectiveness of tutoring.
	Caregiver Engagement	The program ensures regular engagement with caregivers and updates on student progress.	Emergent: While no studies have directly tested the benefits of tutors interacting with caregivers, a number of studies have shown caregiver involvement can positively impact student achievement. Therefore, tutoring programs may benefit from proactively encouraging tutors to engage with caregivers.
	Student Enrollment and Retention	The program has a defined approach to enroll and retain students; particular attention is paid to reducing barriers to participation.	Research-Informed: Tutoring programs vary based on how students are chosen (i.e., required participation, opt-in or opt-out participation). While these different features have not been researched, it is suggested that required opt-out programs (where students are automatically enrolled unless parents actively ask that they not be enrolled) reduce barriers to participation.
SAFETY	Safety Protocols	The program has health, physical safety, and emergency management protocols in place to provide an environment conducive to learning and fosters awareness and understanding of the protocols. Note: This standard, as all	Emergent: Researchers have not studied the importance of safety protocols for tutoring programs. However, common consensus is that programs cannot operate without making student safety a pillar of operations.

		others, is applicable for both in-person and virtual tutoring programs.	
	Data Privacy and Security	The program has reasonable data security infrastructure and data privacy policies and practices in place in order to keep student information safe.	Emergent: Researchers have not studied the importance of data security infrastructure for tutoring programs. However, common consensus is that tutoring programs cannot operate without making data privacy a pillar of their operations.
COHESION	Program Design	The program is designed to successfully meet the needs of the community it serves.	Research-Informed: Research on organizations generally suggests that programs that have a clear logic model and sense of what drives impact in their program may be more effective. This is likely true for tutoring programs as well.
	Leader Role Clarity	The program has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the leadership team, with particular attention to clearly defining tutor coaching responsibilities.	Evidence Informed: Research on nonprofit organizations generally suggests that programs with clearly defined leadership roles may be more effective. This is likely true for tutoring programs as well.
	Leader Professional Development	Program leaders receive support to implement their roles with fidelity.	Evidence Informed: Research on nonprofit organizations generally suggests that programs with leaders who have the necessary skills and knowledge for their role may be more effective. This is likely true for tutoring programs as well.
	Organizational Culture	The program has a defined mission, vision, and set of organizational goals; and these guiding documents are aligned with the broader context and well understood by stakeholders.	Research-Informed: Research on organizations generally suggests that programs that have a clear mission and goals and an aligned organizational culture tend to be more effective. This pattern is likely to hold for tutoring programs as well.

Standards Revisions – February 2023

Based on research and feedback from the field, the TQIS Advisory Group reviewed and revised the following standards as of February 2023:

Standard	Previous Language	Revised Language	Rationale
Tutor: Tutor Coaching and Feedback	Standard: The tutoring program provides ongoing support to tutors through observations, coaching, and two way feedback between the tutor and their coach.	The program provides ongoing support to tutors such as through coaching on the effective use of research-informed practices that foster academic success and overall student well-being.	Clarifies type of instructional support to be included in training and coaching and adds overall student well-being.
Instruction: Student- Tutor Relationship	Research Base: Emerging Evidence: There is not one perspective on the value or importance of the student-tutor relationship. The importance of the relationship depends on a program's mission, mode of delivery, tutor consistency and other factors. Nevertheless, it is suggested that tutors who are able to foster positive and professional relationships with students may lead to greater gains.	Emergent: Many educators highlight the importance of relationships in effective tutoring, though research has not directly tested the role of relationships in driving student outcomes. The well-researched benefits of same-race teachers points to the importance of cultural competency in building those relationships and improving student outcomes. Tutors who are able to foster positive and professional relationships with students likely have great potential to engage students and improve outcomes.	Calls out cultural competency as an important aspect of effective tutoring.
Instruction: Instructional Practices	Standard: Tutors receive explicit training, modeling, and coaching related to the use of effective instructional strategies (e.g. strong questioning, lesson pacing, and modeling).	Tutors use research-based instructional practices aimed at fostering academic success and overall student well-being.	Clarifies the types of instructional practices to be used and adds overall student well-being.
Safety: Safety Protocols	Standard: The tutoring program has all necessary protocols in place to keep students (and their data) safe and implements those protocols with fidelity.	The program has health, physical safety, and emergency management protocols in place to provide an environment conducive to learning and fosters awareness and understanding of the protocols.	Separates data safety from physical safety allowing for more direct assessment of the standard.
Safety: Data Privacy and Security	Standard: none	The program has reasonable data security infrastructure and data privacy policies and practices in place in order to keep student information safe.	Adds a separate standard to allow for direct assessment of data versus physical safety.