Is Academic Performance in Primary Grades an Indicator for Performance in Secondary Grades?

Holzer, Kyra

The purpose of this research project was to determine if academic performance in primary grades was an indicator of academic performance in high school. It was hypothesized that students' academic abilities are well determined by third grade. If students score well academically at this age, then they will also have high achievement in high school. Standardized test data from sixty high school students was studied. Comparisons were made between math and reading scores as third grade students with the same student's performance math and reading ACT test scores and cumulative grade point average as seniors in high school. The statistical analysis of the data showed correlation coefficients at the high range of 0.7321 between scaled reading scores and reading ACT sub scores when ranked in order and 0.7123 between scaled math scores and math ACT sub scores when ranked in order. The lowest correlation was 0.4444 between math raw scores and math ACT sub scores when ranked in order. Considering the limitations of this study, a strong correlation was present indicating a connection between academic performance in third grade and high school. Additional research with larger sampling sizes is needed to prove direct correlation. However, the implications for education are concerning. Inferences can be made that by third grade academic performance is generally determined. This makes early learning interventions, high quality pre-school programs, and nurturing birth-to-school years crucial to student success.

Awards Won: