

Job Title: Research Assistant – Elementary School Teaching Intervention

Project Summary: Even prior to school closures due to COVID-19, American schooling faced persistent and unyielding disparities in educational performance and outcomes across race and income student groups. The pandemic has likely exacerbated these dramatic inequities, in part due to differential access to resources to prevent learning loss, like access to tutors or at-home learning support. The University of Chicago Education Lab has developed evidence that high dosage tutoring is one of the most effective interventions for accelerating students' access to grade level content, even for students who are several grade levels behind their peers. This research has led to many districts across the country considering investments in high dosage tutoring as a strategy to recoup losses in educational performance due to the pandemic. To build on this evidence, UChicago Education Lab is launching a new study in partnership with Chicago Public Schools to understand whether computer-assisted learning (CAL) programs, such as Khan Academy, can help reduce the projected learning loss by individualizing instructional supports just like high dosage tutoring but at a far lower cost so that more students can benefit.

This study aims to increase student engagement with a CAL program and measure the effectiveness of CAL in improving student outcomes in math. These questions will be answered through a randomized control trial (RCT), with approximately 200 teachers and 50 schools, for which we will randomize volunteer teachers into receiving either support for using CAL in their classrooms, or no intervention at all. Teachers randomized into receiving the intervention will be assigned an undergraduate or graduate student "coach" who will offer support and guidance to teachers as they implement a CAL platform in their math curriculum. Additional qualitative information and quantitative data will be collected to analyze the program's effectiveness and teacher satisfaction.

Role: This study depends crucially on a team of research assistants who will support teachers as they implement the program. Research assistant "coaches" will receive training and meet regularly with members of our research team to discuss ongoing program implementation. They will be responsible for supporting and guiding teachers and their students with incorporating CAL into a weekly routine of reinforcement and mastery. To do this, they will regularly meet and communicate with teachers to discuss goals, preferences, and plans. Coaches will be responsible for monitoring teachers' weekly progress surveys and student progress using their CAL platform accounts to further support teachers' effort to implement CAL in their classrooms and increase student time spent on and engagement with the platform. Coaches will also support teachers with drafting parent and student communications about student progress and goals.

Responsibilities:

- Regularly meet with members of the University of Chicago Education Lab's research team.
- Regularly communicate with 6-7 teachers to discuss goals, preferences, and plans by supporting them with creating a series of online CAL assignments that align with classroom instruction.
- Weekly availability and flexibility to assist teachers by e-mail, Zoom, telephone, or in-person, depending on teachers' and schools' preferences.
- Regularly monitor teachers' weekly progress surveys to further support teachers with improving their implementation of the program.
- Regularly monitor student progress on the online CAL platform.

- Support teachers with drafting communications to parents and/or students.
- Ensure teachers' implementation of the program proceeds with high fidelity.
- *Additional duties as assigned.*

Education:

- Currently an undergraduate or graduate student

Working Conditions:

- This position will be remote through August 2021, with the potential for moving to in-person during the school year.
- Dedicate 10-12 hours per week in early August for training and onboarding.
- Dedicate 10-12 hours per week for teacher support during September and October.
- After October, we imagine teacher support responsibilities will fall to 3-5 hours per week and remain there for the rest of the academic year.

Desired Competencies:

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills (verbal and written)
- Demonstrates good judgment
- Represents themselves in a professional and courteous manner
- Self-driven and capable of learning quickly
- Strong critical thinking skills
- Understands the research philosophy, purpose, and approach of this evaluation
- Able to commit to the time requirements and have flexibility to work around teachers' schedules
- Experience working with computer-assisted learning platforms and/or experience working in Chicago Public Schools classrooms preferred

To Apply:

Please submit a cover letter and resume to Sarah Horn, Associate Director of Operations at sthorn@uchicago.edu. Please use email Subject Line "Research Assistant" when submitting your application.