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# Can Testing Improve Student Learning? An Evaluation of the Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project

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## Abstract

Unlike state-mandated achievement tests, tests from the Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project (MDTP) offer teachers timely and detailed feedback on their students' achievement. We identify the effects of providing feedback on student outcomes by using data from the San Diego Unified School District, a large urban school district where mandatory diagnostic tests in mathematics were implemented to some grades between 6 and 9 during 1999 and 2006. These diagnostic tests offer teachers timely and detailed feedback on their students' achievement. We find that providing diagnostic feedback improves math test scores by roughly 0.1 standard deviations. We do not find significant differences in the effect based on students' prior math achievement.

Keywords: Diagnostic testing; mathematics; education; feedback; accountability

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