# 2021 Summer Research Program

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| **Project title:** | **Successful transition: Identifying predictors of resilient trajectories of transition into secondary school** |
| **Project duration, hours of engagement & delivery mode** | 10 weeks |
| Description: | The transition from primary to secondary school can be a challenging time for students. For those already struggling academically, this transition and accompanying changes to school routine, structure, friendship groups and social dynamics can compound matters, significantly increasing the risk of disengagement from education sooner rather than later. If students are unable to find their feet in a new environment and schooling system, the danger of them disengaging from education becomes very real. Transitioning to secondary school also comes at a time in children's lives when they are entering adolescence and experiencing significant personal change, sometimes triggering worries about being the youngest in high school, not fitting in and/or being bullied. Such fears can see young adolescents' self-worth plummet, grades drop, and school attendance affected. Additionally, poor transitions have been linked to increased parent and student stress, adverse student-teacher relationships, a reduction in the social and emotional skills of students. <br><br> Despite a general understanding, there are gaps in our understanding of transitions from primary to secondary school. Understanding the factors that impact a student's transition from primary to secondary schooling is crucial. This study aims to understand and identify: <br><br> - students that are most likely to disengage during this transition phase **(Who?)** <br> - the points of intervention to avert disengagement **(When?)** <br> - potential structures and support strategies to improve the transition to secondary schooling **(How?)** <br><br> Using longitudinal statistical and econometric analysis (such as group-based trajectory analysis and logistics regressions), in this study, we aim to identify individual, community and systematic factors associated with trajectories of transition from primary to secondary school. By understanding these factors, we can inform policy and practice strategies that support vulnerable students in this transition. This project utilises existing de-identified Department of Education administrative data (2009 – 2019) that provides annual educational outcomes (attendance behaviour effort, achievement NAPLAN) for approximately 1.7 million students enrolled in Queensland state schools. |
| **Expected outcomes and deliverables:** | Scholars will gain skills in applied research techniques and using quantitative methods. They will be able to learn how to conduct literature reviews and also navigate large administrative datasets (subject to approval from the Department of Education). They will also be able to enhance their skills in using statistical software packages such as Stata. Scholars may be asked to produce a report or oral presentation at the end of their project. |
| **Suitable for:** | This project is open to students who come from a quantitative background and have some understanding of statistics and/or econometrics analysis. |
| **Primary Supervisor:** | Dr Azhar Hussain Potia and Professor Karen Thorpe |
| **Further info:** | If you have any questions or require more information, please feel free to email Dr Azhar Potia |

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