



William Penn School District – 2011 Summer Bridge Program *August 2011*

Summary Report

Introduction

In the summer of 2011, KnowledgePoints® provided a tutoring program to selected students of William Penn School District (“District”). The Program was designed to improve the academic performance of students transitioning into middle school or high school in the upcoming school year as well as offset the academic phenomenon referred to as *summer learning loss*. Students in 6th and 8th grade that were classified as “below basic” and “basic”, as per the most recent PSSA test results, were initially targeted. This was later expanded to help more students. The Program was originally offered for four weeks and later extended to six weeks. (The high school program was limited to five weeks due to a facility issue.) KnowledgePoints® provided a reading program which consisted of an initial diagnostic assessment, up to fifty (50) hours of tutoring and a progress test at the conclusion. The students were with KnowledgePoints® about two and one half (2 ½) hours each day and a snack was provided. The Program was offered at Penn Wood Middle School and for one week at Penn Wood HS, Cypress Street Campus. Transportation was also available to the students.

Program

In any KnowledgePoints® Program, each student receives individualized instruction that is specific to their academic strengths and weaknesses as shown through an initial diagnostic test. As such, the process for the Program began with an initial assessment: the California Achievement Test edition 5 (“CAT/5”). The test provides information necessary to understanding the student’s academic needs and for planning an effective program. The CAT/5 determines a student’s functional ability. For the KnowledgePoints® Program, the grade equivalent that is calculated from these tests is used to place students in the appropriate level of materials.

After testing was completed, a unique academic “prescription” was written for each student. Instruction was provided on an individualized basis while maintaining a student/instructor ratio of 3:1 or less. Instructors provided daily monitoring of their students’ academic progress. Each student’s progress (and prescription) was also reviewed regularly by the senior Directors of Learning and/or Assistant Directors. Modifications were made to the student’s “prescription” to maximize or improve the learning process, if necessary. In addition,

the program offered a unique motivational system, which was designed to ensure that all students received significant positive reinforcement to promote rapid success.

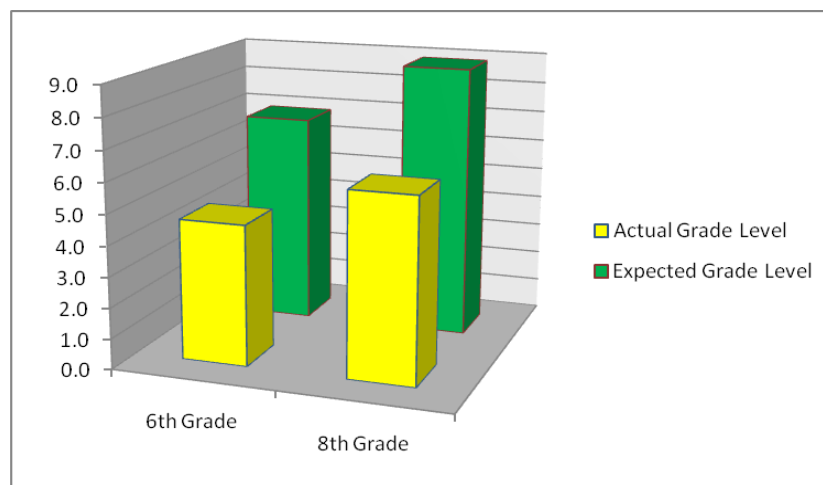
Initial Assessment

A total of one hundred and fifty two (152) students completed the initial assessment. Most of the students were tested prior to the start of the Program at their schools. Some students had been recently participating in other District after school programs that were provided by KnowledgePoints and they were able to seamlessly continue their individual program. The pre-testing enabled KnowledgePoints to prepare their individual curriculum in advance as well as allow these students more tutoring hours.

Each student was tested in reading only. Of those students that completed the initial assessment, the following is a breakdown by grade level (as of June 2011):

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u># of Students</u>
6	84
8	63
Other	5

The primary component of the initial assessment is the CAT/5, which determines a student's functional ability. Based on this test, an average grade equivalent is calculated. **On average the students tested were 2 years, 6 month or 2.6 grade levels below standards in reading.** The graph below illustrates average grade equivalency performance for each of the grades tested.



Average Performance by Grade Level

Of the one hundred and fifty two (152) students tested, twenty (20) students tested at or above grade level. The remaining students tested from 1 month to 7 years below grade level. However, many of the students that tested significantly below grade level were actually functioning closer to grade level.

Attendance

The Program ran for a total of six weeks (only five weeks for the High School Program, due to the power outage at the Cypress Building) from the end of June until the first week of August with a total of 243 students participating. Most of the students completed their initial assessment prior to the start of the Program. Excluding post-testing and the last day of the Program (celebration and awards ceremony), a total of 7,320 hours were administered to the students by KnowledgePoints. One hundred and thirty four (134) students or 55% completed thirty one (31) or more hours in the Program. The following is a breakdown tutoring hours and number of students:

<u>Hours Completed</u>	<u># of Students</u>
0 - 10	56
11 - 20	19
21 - 30	34
31 - 40	44
41+	90

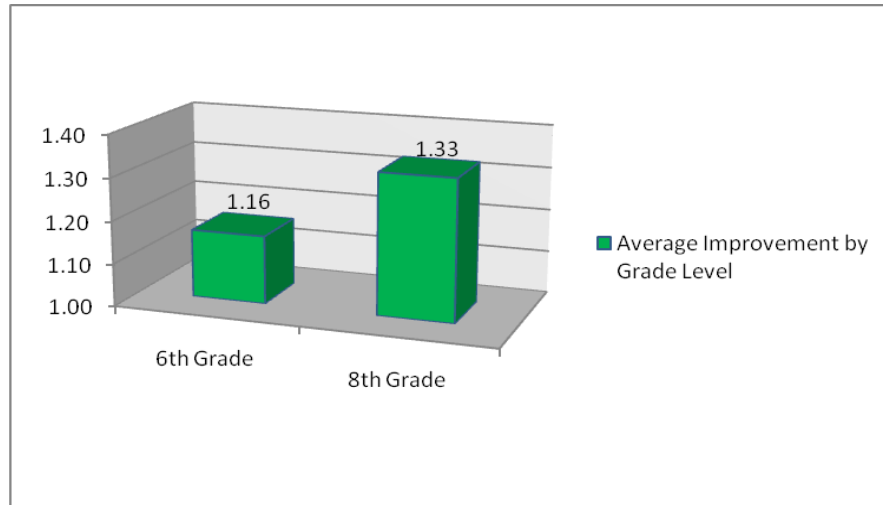
An incentive was offered to those students that had perfect attendance. **A total of eight six (86) students earned this award (gift cards from \$25 to \$35).**

Results

Generally, when a student completes at least 40 hours in a KnowledgePoints Program, a progress test (similar to the initial assessment) is administered. This is measured against the initial assessment or benchmark to determine academic improvement or growth. By the conclusion of the summer program, one hundred and thirty three (133) students completed this progress test.

To assess the effectiveness of the program, we analyzed all test results where the student completed at least thirty five (35) hours of tutoring before the progress test was administered. A total of one hundred and twenty three (123) students were part of this group. Based on these reading progress test results, **students gained an overall weighted average grade level improvement of 1.24 grade levels.** This is remarkable when you consider certain of the adverse factors impacting these results, including the individual academic challenges of the students as evidenced by their initial assessment. In addition, twenty one (21) of the students were negatively impacting the above test results. Upon closer review of the tutoring curriculum these students were utilizing at the end of the Program, all but four (4) of these twenty one (21) students were performing one or two grade levels above their tested levels. It is also important to

note that none of the students received assistance in taking the test, even if allowed by the School because of their academic classification.



Average Improvement by Grade Level

Conclusion

Based on the results, the students did a great job! Even though these students had various academic challenges and needs, this program was very successful in helping them perform closer to grade level. It also most likely helped them offset *summer learning loss*. However, this will need to be quantified through testing, once the school year resumes. Probably the most remarkable fact is that these **students improved on average 1.24 grade levels in just five to six weeks.**

Overall, the Program has materially impacted the academic performance of the participating students. Their performance reflects the quality of the program as well as the skills of their instructors. However, the students also contributed to their own academic achievement through regular attendance and the willingness to learn. It was also truly a pleasure to work with the School in conjunction with their summer program. Working together we were able to create a positive and diverse academic environment for the students, which was clearly a more constructive way to spend a portion of their summer break. More importantly, these students are better prepared for success in the upcoming school year as they “bridge” into middle school or high school.