



Chester Upland School District – 2013 Summer Program

Report Date - August 2013

Summary Report

Introduction

In the summer of 2013, KnowledgePoints[®] provided a comprehensive six-week summer program to selected students of Chester Upland School District (“District”). The Program was designed primarily to improve the academic performance of the participating students as well as offset the academic phenomenon referred to as *summer learning loss*. KnowledgePoints provided a program for approximately 100 Elementary students and 50 Pre-K/Kindergarten students of the District. The KnowledgePoints[®] Program was offered between 9:00AM and 2:30PM daily, Monday thru Thursday, except for the July 4th holiday. Elementary students received two hours of tutoring in reading, one hour of tutoring in math and one hour of enrichment activity (provided by the Unity Center, Inc.) each day. Students in the Pre-K/Kindergarten program were provided an integrated academic and enrichment program each day, with a focus on primary phonics and reading. The Program was offered at Chester Upland School of the Arts. Breakfast, lunch as well as transportation were provided to the students by the District. An afternoon snack was also provided as part of the Program by KnowledgePoints[®].

This report will deal primarily with the elementary program, since formal testing of the Pre-K/Kindergarten students is generally not considered meaningful.

Program

In any KnowledgePoints[®] Program, each student receives individualized instruction that is specific to their academic needs as shown through an initial diagnostic test. As such, the process for the Program for the Reading component began with an initial assessment: the California Achievement Test edition 5 (“CAT/5”). The test provides information necessary to understanding the student’s academic strengths and weaknesses, which is essential 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.

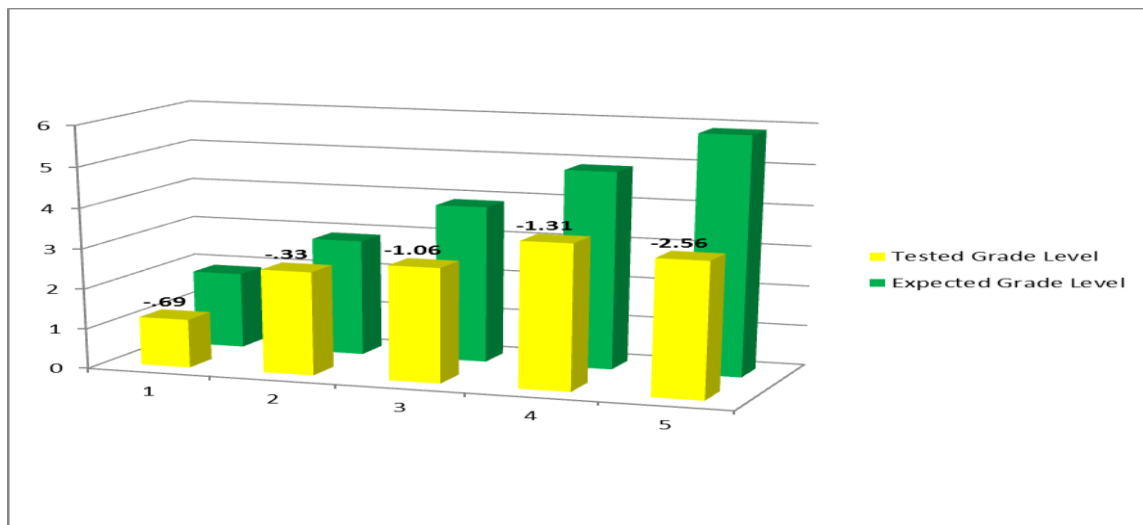
The Math Program also began with an initial assessment: the Danforth Test (the “Test”). Similar to the CAT/5, this Test provided information essential to planning an effective program

for each student by enabling KnowledgePoints® to better understand their academic strengths and weaknesses.

After testing was completed, a unique academic “prescription” or student learning plan was written for each student. Instruction was provided on an individualized basis while maintaining a student/instructor ratio of 3:1 or less for the reading program and a student/instructor ratio of 5:1 or less for the math program. 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, as 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.

Reading Program

Initial Assessment: A total of one hundred and two (102) students completed both an initial assessment as well as a progress assessment in reading (see Exhibit 1). As noted previously, 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 1 years, 2 months or 1.2 grade levels below standards in reading.** The graph below illustrates average grade equivalency performance for each of the grades tested. The average below grade level is noted on the tested grade level.

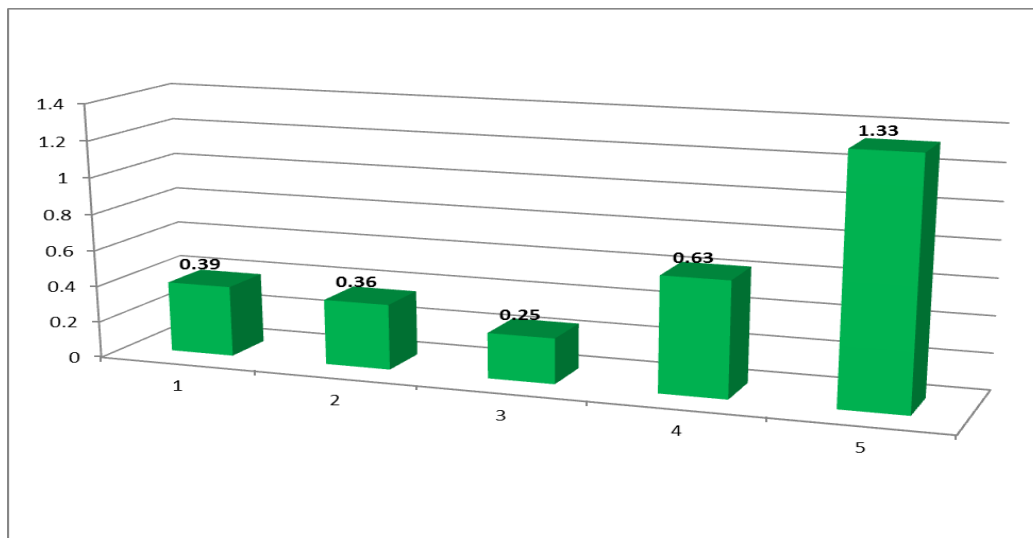


Average Grade Level Below Standards

Of the one hundred and two (102) students tested, eighteen (18) students tested at or above grade level. The remaining students tested from 1 month to just over 4 years below grade level. However, many of the students that tested significantly below grade level were actually functioning closer to grade level.

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 two (102) students completed this progress test.

To assess the effectiveness of the program, we analyzed all test results where the student completed at least twenty (20) hours of tutoring before the progress test was administered. A total of eighty six (86) students were part of this group. Based on these reading progress test results, **students gained an overall weighted average grade level improvement of 7 months or 0.7 grade levels.** The graph below illustrates average grade level improvement for each of the grades tested. The 4th and 5th grade students showed the most improvement.



Average Grade Level Improvement

This overall performance 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, fifteen (15) of the students were negatively impacting the above test results. Upon closer review of the functional level or tutoring curriculum these students were utilizing at the end of the Program, on average they exhibited growth of 0.8 grade levels above in vocabulary and 0.9 grade levels above in comprehension. In fact, if you utilized the functional level to measure student growth, as opposed to the progress test levels, the overall group average improvement was about 1.2 grade levels. It is also important to note that none of the students received assistance in taking the test, even if allowed by the District because of their academic classification.

Math Program

Initial Assessment: A total of ninety five (95) students completed an initial assessment as well as a progress test. It is important to note that while the test used for the math program, the

Danforth Test, enables us to understand a student's strengths and weaknesses, it does not provide a grade equivalency. As such, we measure student progress by the percentage of growth in their initial and progress test scores. Also of note, of all of the students completing the initial diagnostic assessment, the majority was below proficient levels (i.e. - below standards).

Results: Consistent with all KnowledgePoints® programs, at the completion of the math 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 Program, ninety five (95) students completed this progress test.

To assess the effectiveness of the math program, we generally analyze all test results where the student completed at least twenty five (25) hours of tutoring before the progress test was administered. Due to the limited time provided for the math program, we lowered this criterion to ten (10) hours. A total of seventy four (74) students were part of this group. Based on the progress test results, **student test scores averaged a remarkable 18% improvement** during this relatively brief program (see Exhibit 2). In addition, a number of students had either zero or negative improvement. The negative test score improvements are generally considered a testing anomaly, but were still included in the average test results. Upon closer review of the tutoring curriculum these students were utilizing at the end of the Program, they were generally performing above test levels. It is also important to note that none of the students received assistance in taking the test, even if allowed by the District because of their academic classification.

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 certainly 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 in reading on average 0.7 grade levels (or 7 months) and math scores averaged almost an 18% improvement.**

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 District in conjunction with this 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.