



Chester Upland School District – 2014 After School Program

Report Date - March 2014

Summary Report

Introduction

Beginning in January of 2014, KnowledgePoints provided a comprehensive eleven-week after school program to selected elementary level students of Chester Upland School District (“District”). The Program targeted 2nd through 5th grade students attending Main Street Elementary School and Chester Upland School of the Arts (“CUSA”). In general, the Program was designed primarily to improve the academic performance of the participating students as well as provide a variety of enrichment and recreation activities. KnowledgePoints provided a program for approximately 160 elementary students of the two targeted schools. The Program was offered after school between 3:45PM and 6:00PM daily, Monday thru Thursday, except for holidays as well as other scheduled days off. Students received up to 34 hours of tutoring, primarily in reading. Math was also offered, if their reading scores were at or above standards. In addition, one hour of enrichment or recreation activity was provided daily by the Unity Center, Inc. The Program was offered at both Main Street Elementary School and Chester Upland School of the Arts. A snack as well as transportation was provided to the students by the District.

Academic Program

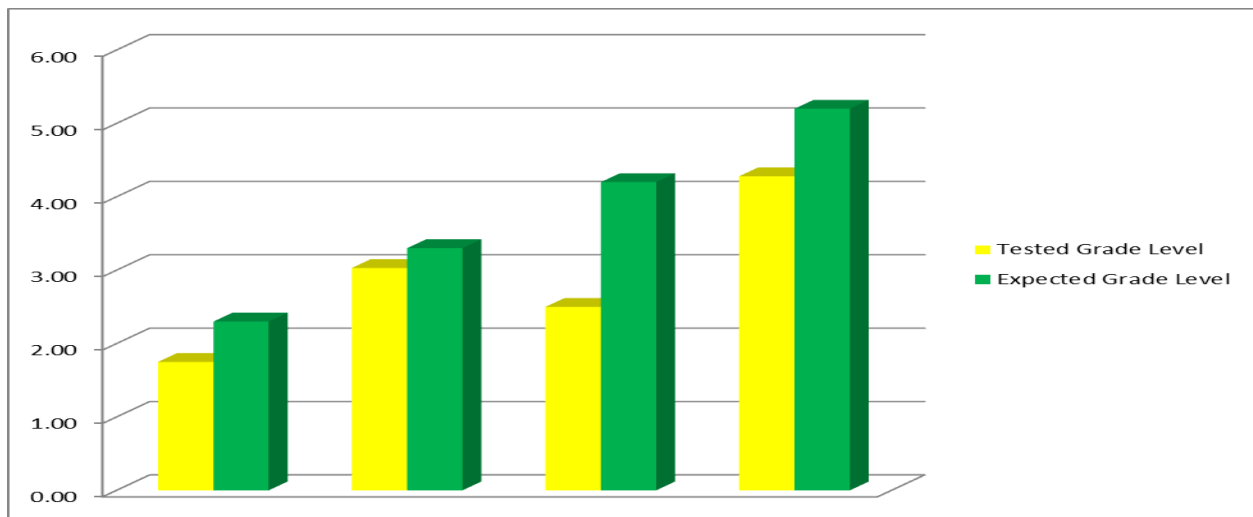
In any KnowledgePoints Program, each student receives individualized instruction that is specific to their academic needs as shown through an initial diagnostic test. As such, the process begins with an initial assessment: the California Achievement Test edition 5 (“CAT/5”). The Math Program also utilized the CAT/5 for the initial assessment. In general, the test provided 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.

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 an average student/instructor ratio of 3:1. Instructors provided daily monitoring of their students’ academic progress and this is documented in each student’s folder or record. 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 six (106) 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, 3 months, or 1.3 grade levels below standards in reading.** The graph below illustrates average grade equivalency performance for each of the grades tested.

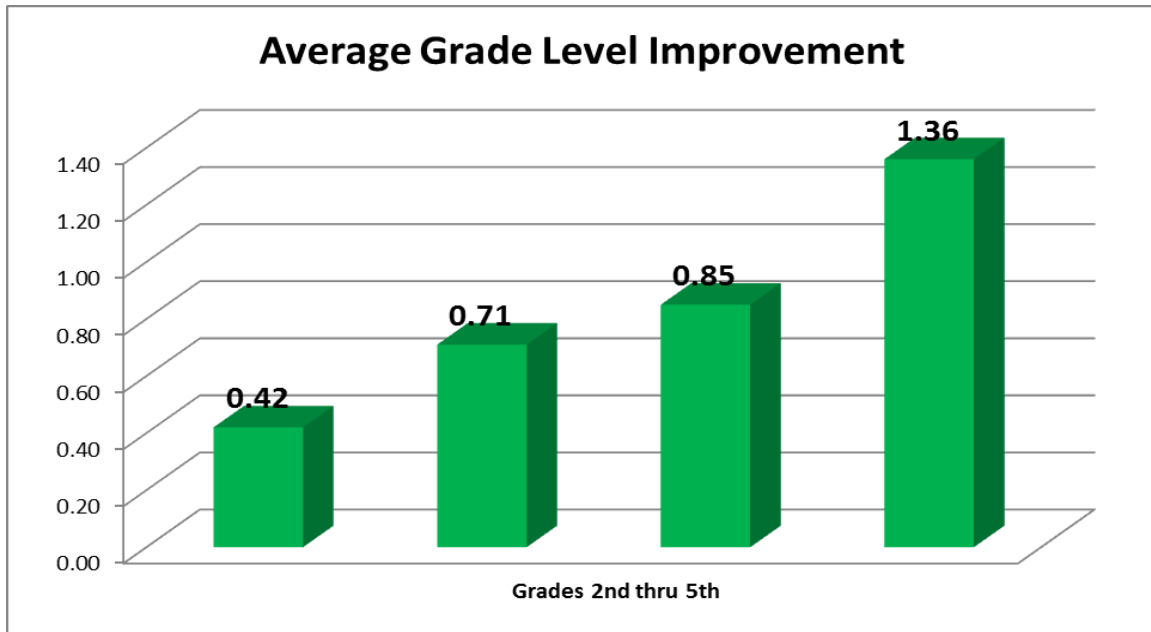


Average Grade Level Below Standards – 2nd thru 5th Grade

Of the one hundred and six (106) students tested, nineteen (19) 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. Because of the duration of the program, students that completed at least fifteen (15) hours of tutoring were administered a progress test. The average student tested completed twenty seven (27) hours of tutoring. The majority, almost 70%, of the students completed twenty five (25) hours or more of tutoring.

Based on these reading progress test results, **students gained an overall weighted average grade level improvement of 8 months, or 0.8 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.



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, fourteen (14) 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, all of the students were performing above tested levels. In addition, five (5) of these students were already performing at or above expected grade level. 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.

Another factor to consider was that twenty two (22), or about 21%, of the one hundred and six (106) students tested were classified as “Learning Support”. Based on the initial assessment, these students on average tested 2 years, 1 month or 2.1 grade levels below standards in reading. However, based on the reading progress test results of these students, they had comparable gains to the other students. **Overall these students had a weighted average grade level improvement of 7 months or 0.7 grade levels.**

Math Program

The math program was offered on a limited basis, as noted above. As such, only eight (8) students completed a progress test. Based on these math progress test results, **students gained an overall weighted average grade level improvement of 1 year, or 1.0 grade levels.**

Enrichment and Recreation Program

While the academic program is an essential element of the after school program, the enrichment and recreational activities are just as important. The enrichment programs provided by Unity Center, Inc. exposed students to different arts and cultural activities that they might not normally have access or the ability to experience. In essence, it gave them the opportunity to explore potential areas of interest. The recreational activities allowed students to expend energy and relieve stress as well as generally promote a healthier lifestyle. They were also designed to be fun!

The activities offered were diverse and included dance, music, art, science and various recreation activities.



Students Participating in Art Class

Students Learning the Fundamentals of Music

A Girl Scout program was also integrated into the Program at the CUSA location. They met every Wednesday for about an hour of activities. Even though they started midway through the Program, approximately fifteen (15) girls were active in the Girl Scout program. We also supported a Cub Scout recruiting effort. However, since it was near the end of the Program, it was too late to also integrate them as part of the Program at CUSA.

Attendance

The Program ran from January 7th until March 24th with a total of one hundred and eighty nine (189) students participating. Although the Program targeted one hundred and sixty (160) students, we typically over-enroll to maximize attendance. Excluding testing as well as the last day of the Program (Celebration and Awards Ceremony), a total of 4,191 tutoring hours was administered to the students by KnowledgePoints. The students received the same amount of hours for enrichment and recreational activities. It should be noted that the level of attendance was somewhat remarkable when you consider the impact of the numerous winter weather related events, including cancellations, delayed starts, etc.

One hundred and one (101) students, or 63% of the targeted enrollment, completed twenty five (25) or more hours in the Program. Eight students had perfect attendance and were recognized at the Celebration and Awards Ceremony. The following is a breakdown of tutoring hours and number of students:

<u>Hours Completed</u>	<u># of Students</u>
0 - 14	44
15- 24	44
25+	101

Conclusion

The Program was clearly a success! Overall, the Program has materially impacted the academic performance of the participating students. The students also further benefited from the exposure to a diversity of enrichment and recreational activities. This success is also evidenced by the parent and student surveys as well as occasional feedback from teachers of the students.

From an academic perspective, the students did a great job. Even though these students had various educational challenges and needs, this Program was very successful in helping them perform closer to grade level. Probably the most rewarding fact is that these **students improved in reading on average 0.8 grade levels (or 8 months) and, although limited, math scores improved on average 1.0 grade levels (or 1 year)**. It is even more remarkable when you consider this was only an eleven week program as well as the impact to the Program's continuity, caused by the numerous winter weather events. 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.

The success of this Program is clearly the result of a collaborative effort. Our primary partner was Unity Center, Inc., a local non-profit organization that has an inherent "stake" in the success of the children and the community. It was also truly a pleasure to work with the District and their staff in conjunction with this after school 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 time after school. More importantly, these students are better prepared for success during the school year.