

PROJECT MORRY EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM

Sponsored by the Edwin Gould Foundation

2009 Follow-up Report

On May 15, 2009 Project Morry hosted the fourth annual Education Symposium (PMES), bringing together some of the best and brightest teachers, researchers, policy makers, curriculum experts, and Project Morry staff to consider the cost-effectiveness of summer and out-of-school youth development programs and their societal benefits.

In a lecture to the American Educational Research Association, Professor of Economics and Education, Dr. Henry M. Levin says, “we know that inadequate education affects not only the poorly educated individual but also the society because of lost productivity, lower tax revenues, and higher costs of public services. Therefore, it is useful to consider not only the important issue of educational justice but the question of whether seeking such justice through greater educational investment in at-risk populations provides an overall economic payoff to the public that exceeds the costs.”¹

The symposium gave participants the opportunity to consider the various implications of cost-benefit analysis for the various stakeholders we serve. While it is common for organizations to research and evaluate outcomes, determining the cost-benefit of inputs and their results is less familiar. There is increased emphasis on measuring “costs” and evaluating results, and the outcomes generated from the PMES have implications for how organizations use cost-benefit data and apply these ideas to their work.

The day consisted of three parts:

I) Introduction:

Susanne Randolph Sparks framed the “summer learning gap” and the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth through the lens of unequal access to summer learning opportunities. Ms. Sparks is the senior research coordinator at the National Center for Summer Learning where she administers the Center’s research agenda through project management with the goal of informing the field of program providers, teachers, librarians, researchers, and policy makers about effective practices.

II) Morning Session:

Participants brainstormed the ways in which out-of-school time organizations determine costs and benefits.

III) Afternoon Session/Lunch Forum:

The lunch forum featured remarks by Dr. Henry M. Levin about his research on the economic payoff to investing in educational justice. Dr. Levin is the William Heard Kilpatrick Professor of Economics and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. He is also the David Jacks Professor Emeritus of Higher Education and

¹ Levin, Henry M. “The Economic Payoff to Investing in Educational Justice” *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 38, No. 1, pp. 5–20

Economics at Stanford University, consultant to the World Bank and former economist at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC.

INTRODUCTION

At the National Center for Summer Learning, Susanne Randolph Sparks administers the Center's research agenda through project management with the goal of informing the field of program providers, teachers, librarians, researchers, and policy makers about effective practices. She also assists with policy and legislative outreach as well as authoring and editing publications. Her introduction emphasized the following research briefs:

- Two-thirds of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. As a result, low-income youth are less likely to graduate from high school or enter college (Alexander et al, 2007).
- Most students lose about two months of grade-level equivalency in mathematical computation skills over the summer months. Low-income students also lose more than two months in reading achievement, while their middle-class peers make slight gains (Cooper, 1996). When this pattern continues throughout the elementary school years, lower income youth fall more than two and one-half years behind their more affluent peers by the end of fifth grade.

MORNING SESSION

Using Dr. Levin's research on the cost benefits of academic achievement, symposium participants worked in small groups to generate ideas and opportunities to assess the cost-effectiveness of the work in summer and out-of-school time. Each small group recorded responses to the following prompts:

- ✓ How do we know we identify the costs?
- ✓ How expensive are these costs?
- ✓ What are the benefits and how valuable are they?

Listed under each category is the entire brainstorm composed by the groups during the morning session. Following the brainstorm, the group engaged in a rich discussion of the lists and identified the common themes from the synthesized lists (emphasized).

<i>HOW DO YOU MEASURE THE COSTS AND THE BENEFITS:</i>

- How much does it change what kids know and can do
- ***Time and effort***
- ***Relationships + giving & getting***
- ***How we feel about the impact we're having***
- ***In relation to actual impact***
- ***What's the lasting impact on the work (world)?***
- Does what you're doing matter more than who you are?

- Are we becoming less necessary/ that's a good thing
- Sustainability (retention/network)
- **Budgets**
- **Evaluations**
- Dialogue/Conversation
- **Statistical Analysis/ Quantitative**
- Qualitative
 - Observations (internal, external)
 - Funder support/Partners/Parents as funders/Stakeholders
 - Narrative (Direct, Indirect)
 - Parents as participants/Kids
- Staff
 - Retention
 - Size/loyalty of network
- Research
- Needs Assessment: Pre & Post
- Budget: Total cost/ program cost = cost per child
- Talk to other service providers:
 - Teachers,
 - Social workers
 - Admin
- # of interested parties seeking services
- Graduation rates
- Attendance and retention
- Self assessments and actualization
- Staff investment and retention
- Health???
- Survey Continued Comp Experience

<i>HOW EXPENSIVE ARE THE COSTS?</i>

- **Very**
- No such thing ♥
- Not much
- Not expensive if it meets needs of kids in program
- **Expensive in terms of time**
- How expensive is it for the schools to re-educate students in September after learning loss?
- Costs a month of learning
- Summer School
- **More expensive not to do it than to do it early**
- Parents time
- Volunteer time
- Emotional risks
- Physical and mental cost

- *Very in regards to time and energy...if we don't do this*
- We maintain the haves and the have not's
- ***More prisons, less schools***
- Global disadvantage in terms of usefulness, competence
- It maintains an ineffective structure
- Very expensive
 - Staff strain
 - Assigning value to invaluable qualities/goals/life lessons
- Not expensive: It's a steal
 - Compared to alternatives;
 - Ignorance,
 - Disempowered
 - cost income
 - productivity
 - civic participation
 - avoidable life mistakes

<p><i>WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND HOW VALUABLE ARE THEY?</i></p>
--

- ***SES Benefit NCLB – Academic***
- Free Benefits 4 family – work at camp
- ***Weekend programs – continuity***
 - ***Confidence for next year***
 - ***Prepared***
 - ***Well rounded***
- ***Social Skills***
- ***Conflict/Resolution***
- ***Anxiety language levels dropped***
- ***Community life***
- Lasted when back at school – lowered again, not much
- ***Leadership roles – ? – back at school***
- *Feeling stronger, more joyful, more able to impact the world*
- Pride, being the first
- *Empowered to make a difference*
- *Shared understanding of challenges and opportunities*
- *Many hands make light work*
- ***Network and support***
- *Educates people about the need and what's missing*
- Defining expectations/stereotyping
- ***Creating better communities***
- *Being able to give second chances*
- Sharing resources, strategies, and great ideas
- What it gives to the participants
 - Sense of commitment
 - Empowerment

- Curiosity
- *Exposure – young adults; kids who are different; academic; activities/disciplines/experiences*
- Achievement
- *Social Skills; ability to work with others*
- Community: both support from and ability to impact others
- Increase net worth/
 - Financial/learning power
 - Social impact
- *Awareness of possibility—careers, educational paths, multiple layers in disciplines*
- Building of local communities – improvement over time
- Feelings of worth/acceptance – being heard
- Ability to bridge diverse communities/social strata

Value	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better jobs, less public services, less crime, higher education ● Expanding of world view ● More accepting ● Lower cost long term ● Higher self confidence ● Life skills ● Decrease in school violence, general aggressiveness and dangerous behavior ● Happy kids don't hurt others * ● Belonging, supportive structure ● Keeping families together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Graduation ● More exposure ● Less remedial needs ● Learning to live w/ others (get along) ● Exposure to successful role models (young and old) ● Being part of a supportive community ● Decrease in family stress

LUNCH FORUM

Henry M. Levin spoke to the 2009 Symposium about the societal benefits and cost-effectiveness of high school graduation. Dr. Levin is the William Heard Kilpatrick Professor of Economics and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. He is also the David Jacks Professor Emeritus of Higher Education and Economics at Stanford University, consultant to the World Bank and former economist at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC. From 1986-2000 Levin served as the Director of the Accelerated Schools Project, a national school reform initiative for accelerating the education of at-risk youngsters.

Dr. Levin's remarks concerned issues associated with the costs to individuals and society when students do not graduate from high school. High school students who come from African American, Latino, and Native American families are at an especially high risk of dropping-out or not completing high school. Levin's remarks made the case for the

economic payoff to investing in educational Justice. To read a summary article of Dr. Levin's work in this area: [CLICK HERE](#)

AFTERNOON SESSION

Symposium attendees were asked to consider how they plan to use the day's learning to further their work in summer and out-of-school time learning programs. Below are the "takeaways" from 2009 participants:

SYMPOSIUM TAKEAWAYS

- Need to come up with a specific tool to measure our after school/summer programming
 - We must help kids graduate from High School
- To defend what we do in ways comprehensible to other people
 - To redefine old missions and envision new ways for future development
 - To organize what we assume is the "un-organizable"
 - To take risks
- Importance of outcomes and program evaluation, based on:
 - Dr. Levin's work on cost of not implementing effective interventions to promote HS graduation
 - Connections with great people doing similar work
- Its not time on task, but quality of the time on task

- Plan to read Henry Levin's book
 - The most important things in a school are the people
 - Educational justice
 - Passion + Structure = intentionality
 - Article on Danish journalist experience that was recently published in the NYT. How that ties into Levin's findings
- Cost effectiveness: More than monetary, but monetary is a vital institution (and backed by statistics and fact finding)
 - Importance of dedicated staff at good positions
 - Difference between success and mediocrity
 - Cannot be replicated; needs to be identified for success with similar models
- Cost and impact of summer learning
 - How important is it for youth to understand communities
 - Network with like minds that assist youth
- Importance of "heart", of really caring about the work that you do and about being effective
 - Need to have good data/research to back up claims and support work AND the need to get that information out to broader constituents
 - Significance/importance of early interventions/community approach to supporting students

- The benefits of summer learning or out of school time is not just about “now”, but leads to true life changing outcomes such as High School graduation, decrease in incarceration, increased wages and quality of life (that is “immeasurable”.)
- Reflect on why I’m in the business of growing
 - Learned quantitative facts for why what we’re doing matters
 - Solidified my belief that it’s essential to treat all students like their geniuses
- Societal benefits of prioritizing what is often a sentimental and moral discussion in the context of national political and civic interests
 - Focus on the impact that good, quality, and passionate programs have on society as a whole.

[ABOUT PROJECT MORRY](#)

Project Morry, formerly known as Morry’s Camp and founded in 1996, is a nationally recognized youth development organization with an intentional focus on the educational enhancement of the underserved youth. Project Morry is unique in the field of nonprofit camps due to the focus on the year-round support of its campers. First year participants are entering the fifth grade, and over the next nine years, our year-round and summer camp programs guide children through a critical period of their academic and social development. In schools and communities where fewer than 50% of incoming ninth graders graduate from high school, 100% of Project Morry students have completed high school on-time.

[ABOUT THE EDWIN GOULD FOUNDATION](#)

The Edwin Gould Foundation works in collaboration with innovative non-profit partners to close this achievement gap. We invest time, money and resources to seed and grow educational models that create effective solutions to increase the number of college graduates from under-resourced communities. The Foundation [advocates nationally](#) for strong, workable solutions and policies that help motivated yet underserved students enter college, graduate and advance society. At the same time, we [demonstrate locally](#) by partnering with a select number of educational non-profits in the New York metropolitan area who are developing effective strategies for student success.

[CONTACT](#)

Lance Ozier
 Education and Mentor Coordinator
 Project Morry
 900 Dobbs Ferry Road
 White Plains, NY 10607
www.projectmorry.org
Lance@projectmorry.org

2009 Symposium Participants

NAME	AFFILIATION
Cynthia Rubino	Berkeley College
Lisa Berg	
Reeshemah Brightley	Touro College of Pharmacy
James Sheridan	Institute for Student Achievement
Jeff Ackerman	Project Morry Board
Kate Sullivan	OASIS Children's Services
Doug Present	Project Morry Board
Susan Sparks	Johns Hopkins University
Pam Heller	Project Morry Board
Keely Ball	Teachers College, Columbia Univ.
Erica Lazarow	Project Morry Staff
Nicholas Tynes	Harlem Educational Activities Fund (HEAF)
Chris Chavez	Fiver Foundation
Quinton Buckley	American Camp Association-NY
Lance Ozier	Project Morry
Latoyia R. Williams	KIPP to COLLEGE
Dawn Ewing	Project Morry
Aaron Lapp	Project Morry
Deb Jones	Project Morry
Luke Jones	Project Morry
Christie Ko	Fiver Foundation