



Linking Education and Economic Development

Three Models of Education Reform for the City of Detroit

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INTRODUCTION

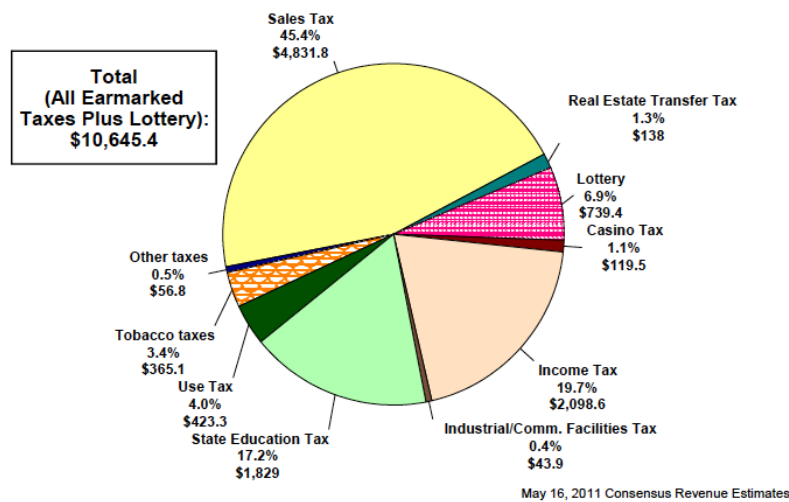
In order to create and retain jobs and increase economic development activity in a region there must be knowledgeable and well trained workers to support it. Increasing educational attainment through academic programs, mentoring programs and through internships will improve the labor force and increase economic development. Education and training lead to economic growth because a knowledgeable labor force is necessary and desirable in order for businesses to successfully improve outputs. As our society becomes more complex and as technology advances, it is crucial that employees have the skill set to be able to perform job duties. Businesses will not locate to a region if they are unable to fill positions because the labor market does not have skilled workers to support it. Thus, successful economic development strategies must incorporate labor force development.

In addition, education is a necessary component to reduce poverty. Education is linked to higher wages, increased job stability and higher job satisfaction. If more people are working and making higher wages then more money is spent in the region, thereby strengthening the economy. Knowledge is power and if a region would like to strengthen its economy, especially fiscally distressed areas, it must take innovative actions to invest in human capital to attract new jobs and economic development.

EDUCATION IN DETROIT

The public perception of public education is often associated with the notion of an over-sized and often corrupt system that provides inferior education to the students of the district. The question is how accurate is the public's perception of the schooling network in the city. As of October 2011, Detroit public schools had an enrollment of 65,971 students in kindergarten through 12th grade, with an additional 3,000 students in pre-kindergarten programs and about 4,000 in district-authorized charter schools ("Crain's Business Detroit"). This represents a decline in enrollment for the district of nearly 100,000 students since the 2001-2002 school year. As a result of the rapid decline in the number of students enrolled in the district, the level of state funding has proportionally dropped. The current financial system for schools in Michigan is largely

Est. FY 2011-12 School Aid Fund Revenue Sources (Millions of Dollars)



funded at the state level through the use of the six percent sales tax, along with several other sources as shown to the left.

Currently, the per-pupil funding is based on a blended formula that bases 75 percent of funding on current academic year

enrollment and 25 percent on the previous academic year's enrollment. As a result of the various factors that determine levels of state aid to a school district, Detroit Public Schools are expected to receive approximately \$15,102 per pupil ("Michigan Public School Districts: Ranked by Selected Financial Data" 36-37). As a result of the great loss of pupils in the district, there has been a reduction in the district's budget of nearly \$1.5 billion in revenue.

This loss of revenue has greatly impacted the district's ability to provide services, and as a result, the district had an emergency financial manager appointed by then Governor Jennifer Granholm in 2009. The most recent emergency manager Roy Roberts proposed the FY 2010-11 Deficit Elimination Plan Narrative to eliminate the district's \$219 million dollar deficit. Under this narrative, two plans were proposed. The first plan was the preferred plan suggesting the district would split into two separate

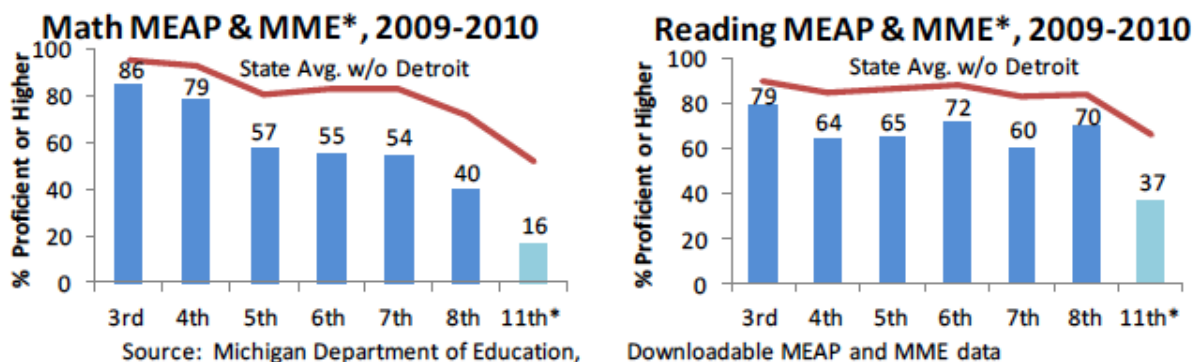
CLASS SIZE				
Grade Level	DFT Contract	FY 2011	FY12-13	FY 13-14
K - 3	17-25	25	29	31
4 - 5	30	33	37	39
6 - 8	35	38	45	47
9 - 12	35	38	60	62

districts that would still be controlled by the DPS Local Education Authority (LEA). This plan would allow for one district to provide the traditional learning

environment setting, while the other larger system would provide for autonomous learning and financial environment in which academic achievement would be the centerpiece of the decision making process. This plan has since been rejected by the state, resulting in the implementation of the second plan. Under this plan the district will

have to close 30 schools in FY 2011, 40 schools in FY 2012, and 30 schools in FY 2013. This plan will leave the district with 72 schools. In addition to the school closings, the plan calls for the substantial increase in class sizes as shown above ("FY 2010-11 Deficit Elimination Plan Narrative", 6).

A second area of distress that can serve as a reason for the decline in the enrollment of students in Detroit Public Schools is the history of substandard education. In particular, this lack of education comes through in terms of low standardized test performance by students in the district. Detroit Public Schools are consistently behind state averages on both the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and the Michigan Merit Examination (MME). By the third grade, one-quarter of Detroit students are already behind grade level. By eighth grade, nearly half of Detroit students are behind grade level in math and reading. These results are shown below:



The result of this lack of preparedness in the basics of reading and mathematics is shown by the staggering number of individuals in the district that do not complete high school. For the class of 2003 the Detroit Public School's graduation rate ranged from 21.7 to 44.5 percent depending in the methodology used. The question that arises based on the underperformance of the Detroit Public School District is what can be done to foster the educational environment. In particular, what can be done to raise both

the rates of graduation and the levels of post high-school educational attainment, through trade schools, community colleges, or traditional four-year universities? To attempt to rectify these problems we proposed three courses of action to serve as a stimulus to student achievement and more broadly, the economic health of Detroit. Our three-prong attack focuses on the use of academic programs, mentoring programs, and the use of mandatory internships for high school students. In looking to implement these programs, we focused on the small-scale implementation as described below.

SCHOOL PROFILES

When considering Detroit high schools in need of supplemental programs to encourage academic success, it can be overwhelming given the consistent failure of the local public education institution to actually educate their students. Only two high schools in the entire city have graduating classes with an ACT score greater than the Michigan average of 19.2. The average student will not be granted admission into even the lowest tier of four-year public universities in the state. While community college is a beneficial opportunity for high school students, Detroit students should not be limited to associates degrees or trade schools based on their poor educational upbringing. However, it is equally unfair to allow these students to walk straight into a high performing four-year research university that has expectations that exceed the students' current capabilities. To truly improve educational outcomes and the local labor force, it is necessary to target high school students while they are in a vulnerable period of transition to learn and be influenced by experienced, professional, and supportive members of society.

In order to narrow down the scope of implementing educational programs, we limited our decision to schools within the Downtown region as categorized by Excellent Schools Detroit. These schools are closest to the educated, young professionals and businesses in the city. These two groups are the most willing to give their time and money to improve schools in their own region. These schools are also in close proximity to the more reliable portions of public transportation and students are more able to travel to local universities or businesses for additional learning experiences.

In the downtown Detroit sector, there are seventeen public and charter schools that serve the community. We have chosen four schools based on varying levels of success and different types of establishment. Only one, Cass Technical, has an ACT score above the Michigan average. Although it is a DPS school, it does have a special admissions process to ensure that the best and brightest of the community are granted access. Martin Luther King, Jr.

High School is one of two solely DPS-owned high schools in the downtown area, but has a lower graduation rate the other high

HIGH SCHOOLS	Average ACT composite 2009 – 2011	Four-year graduation rate 2010
Cass Technical (9 – 12)	19.6	93.7%
King (9 – 12)	15.5	84.6%
George Crockett Consortium (9 – 12)	15.0	100.0%
Detroit Midtown Academy (7 – 12)	14.1	77.6%

school. George Crockett Consortium is a charter school operated under Ferris State University. Although it has a lower ACT score than King, Crockett has a uniquely high graduation rate. Detroit Midtown Academy is the only school chosen that is not solely a high school, but was chosen given the low ACT scores and graduation rates. It is a charter school operated by Wayne RESA, a regional organization operating in Wayne County.

Ideally, we desire to implement our programs in one classroom in each of these four schools and compare them to their classmates without the program and to the other schools studied to see if the effects of the three programs mentioned are more likely to observe higher levels of success in varying situations. For instance, if it could be determined that certain programs disproportionately increased ACT scores or graduation rates, it could be employed in districts with low ACT scores/graduation rates.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Academic programs play an important role in giving people the knowledge and training for a career. An educated and well-trained labor force will increase economic development because businesses will locate where skilled workers are. Certain programs exist and should be expanded upon to enhance the skill set of the labor force. Two programs that have proven results in better educating people are dual enrollment and math corps.

Dual enrollment is a program that gives high school students the opportunity to take college courses early and earn college credit. It is a collaboration program between high schools and community colleges. Dual enrollment is typically reserved for high school juniors and seniors. This program was originally limited to those students who were considered to be high achievers but this program has expanded to include more students. The expansion of the dual enrollment program has shifted to give more focus to average achieving students to give them more tools to be successful in their post-secondary education. In addition, dual enrollment now works with non-college bound students interested in going into a technical career to give them the tools to succeed in those career paths. In fact, dual enrollment has become a major component

of career and technical education (CTE) programs “because its goals mirror those of a variety of CTE reforms, including upgrading the CTE curriculum and building upon the promise and addressing the shortcomings of previous CTE efforts” (Stone, 1998, p. 2). It is recognized in the American education system that not every student is going to be college bound so more needs to be done to provide career and technical training so that they have the tools to succeed in a career. These types of efforts are crucial in economic development because if you want to create more jobs and attract new businesses to a region you must have a knowledgeable and well-trained workforce. Education and training lay an important foundation to attract new economic development projects to a region. A company must feel confident that there is talent in the area to fill positions in their company to produce outputs so that the business can sustain itself. A company would not want to waste a large amount of money to locate somewhere and then not be able to fill positions because there is no one qualified to do the work. In our technologically advancing society, jobs are becoming more complex and many jobs require prior training, especially in manufacturing. The days are long gone where you could walk into a human resources department at an automotive company and get hired on the spot with no prior training. Autoworkers must now have knowledge and training on how to operate the tools and machines used to put vehicles together on the assembly line. This type of training typically comes from CTE programs at community colleges. The benefit of offering CTE training in a dual enrollment program is that upon high school graduation, the graduate will have the skill set needed to begin a career.

In 2005, the U.S. Department of Education released a report that claims that 71 percent of U.S. high schools and 51 percent of higher education institutions in the 2002-2003 school years allowed high school students to take college courses. The report also indicates that participation in the dual enrollment program has increased in recent years and that trend is expected to continue. Research on the effects of dual enrollment is limited but the research that has been conducted shows positive results of the program.

In the study “The Post-Secondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment: An Analysis of Student Outcomes in Two States,” researchers found that in Florida that

“(1) Dual enrollment was positively related to student likelihood of earning a high school diploma; (2) Participation in dual enrollment was more positively related to enrollment in college; (3) Dual enrollment students were statistically significantly more likely to persist in college to a second semester; (4) Of students ever enrolled in postsecondary education, dual enrollment participation was positively associated with their likelihood of remaining enrolled two years after graduating from high school; (5) Dual enrollment students’ grade point averages were statistically significantly higher than their non-participating peers throughout their postsecondary careers; (6) Dual enrollment students had earned more postsecondary credits three years after high school graduation (indicating that they had made more progress toward a degree)” (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, Bailey, 1998, p. 1).

These researchers also contended that it did not matter how many dual enrollment courses students enrolled in. The results did not show any real difference between the numbers of courses that students were enrolled in and future academic success.

In the sample collected for New York, the researchers found that dual enrollment participants were more likely to receive a bachelor’s degree than those who had not

been enrolled in the program. In addition, they found a positive correlation between first semester college grade point averages and enrollment in the program. Finally, participation in dual enrollment was positively related to students' progress made toward their college degree (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, Bailey, 1998, p. 1).

In the study "What Role Can Dual Enrollment Programs Play In Easing The Transition Between High School And Postsecondary Education?," the researchers found similar positive impacts that dual enrollment programs have in other areas of the United States. In Arizona, first semester student grades were found to be higher for students enrolled in the program in comparison to usual community college transfers at the University of Arizona (Bailey, Hughes, Karp, 2002, p. 26). In addition, these researchers found that in Arizona, students who participated in the dual enrollment program had a 90 percent graduation rate from high school compared to 49 percent who were not enrolled in the program from the seven high schools in the Maricopa Community College District (Bailey, Hughes, Karp, 2002, p. 26). Their research also found "that dual enrollment participants had lower drops in GPA upon entering the university (University of Arizona) than did other students, even when prior academic achievement was controlled for" (Bailey, Hughes, Karp, 2002, p. 27).

In the same study, Bailey, Hughes and Karp (2002), found that students enrolled in the state of Washington's dual enrollment program performed comparably to the college students already enrolled in the community college (p. 26). This suggests that these high school students enrolled in the program do not burden others in the class by not being able to keep up with the work that is considered more advanced to them since they are still in high school.

Research on dual enrollment is still in its infancy stage. However, early research suggests that this program is beneficial and provides students with valuable tools to succeed in the workforce. Knowledge and training are essential components to attract and grow business developments to a region. Dual enrollment gives students the tools to succeed if they are college bound or bound for a technical career. This program emphasizes the importance of education and training for future careers and shows students the importance of having the skill set necessary to succeed in today's labor force. A region with a good labor force will attract more economic development.

The dual enrollment program is already available in most Michigan public school districts. However, this program is so important in regards to developing the workforce in fiscally distressed areas that participation should be mandatory for high school juniors and seniors. We have selected four high schools in the downtown and midtown areas in Detroit, Michigan to be a part of a pilot program to look at how well this program will work. These high schools are Cass Technical, Crockett, Detroit Midtown Academy, and King. These high schools would partner with Wayne County Community College District (WCCCD), which has a campus located in downtown. All juniors and seniors in these high schools would be required to enroll.

This should be fairly easy to implement since high school counselors at these schools are already responsible for monitoring and enrolling students interested in dual enrollment. However, it will require more coordination since more students will be enrolled in the program. School counselors and support staff should be able to handle this workload since the students would still be taking the same number of classes, just some of those courses will now be college level. This program will also require a

deeper collaboration with WCCCD. Since there are approximately 2,500 students between these schools that will be enrolled in the program, WCCCD will certainly need more faculty and space to house this high influx of students. WCCCD and the high schools could partner and cut down on some costs by offering some classes at the high schools and could consider using some of the high school teachers if they meet WCCCD hiring qualifications. WCCCD currently charges \$89 per credit hour. With 2,500 students taking 9 credit hours, the cost would be \$2,002,500 each semester. However, there is a potential for costs savings if the schools were to share facilities with WCCCD and partner to share faculty. WCCCD would likely be willing to compromise on pricing since it would be beneficial to them to add more students, especially students who might not have been community college bound. The schools could also cut down on their costs by having the students fill out federal financial aid and covering what that financial support didn't cover for the students. This is a low-income area so it is likely the students would qualify for a substantial amount of aid. In addition, it would be wise to apply for grants since the evaluation of dual enrollment is an area of great interest and a unique program like this would provide valuable insight to the true success (or failure) of this program and could serve as model to other schools across the country.

Dual enrollment is not the only solution to better educate the labor force. Programs also must be instituted to develop important skills early on so that as students continue their education they are not behind. A program that does this well is Math Corps. Math corps is program offered by the Mathematics Department at Wayne State University for 7th-10th graders for a six-week summer camp. It was founded in 1991 and is "a combined academic enrichment and mentoring program that brings middle and

high schools students from Detroit Public Schools together, with college students, to learn mathematics from each other, as well as to interact with professional mathematicians in a university setting" (www.mathcorps.org). The goal of this program is to provide a mentoring environment and give special attention to these students to make sure they possess the math skills needed for future courses. Each year, the math curriculum builds on itself and a student is at high risk of failure if they fall behind. This program helps reinforce important concepts from their curriculum. Mastering math early on will increase their probably of succeeding later on. Comprehensive math skills are a requirement for many jobs; learning mathematical concepts at a young age will give students a variety tools to succeed in a career. In addition, it will give them the background for excelling in college if they dream of going into a program that has a heavy mathematics focus such as accounting or engineering. Since math builds on itself every course, a student would be at a huge disadvantage if they didn't master the material early on. This program gives inner-city students the tools to succeed in whatever career path they choose.

This program has produced successful results. As evident in Figures 1 and 2, the average pretest score was 30 correct answers. The average posttest score was 90 correct answers. That is a remarkable accomplishment and demonstrates the value of this program.

Figure 1. Test Scores of 7th Grade Students from 1995 - 2002

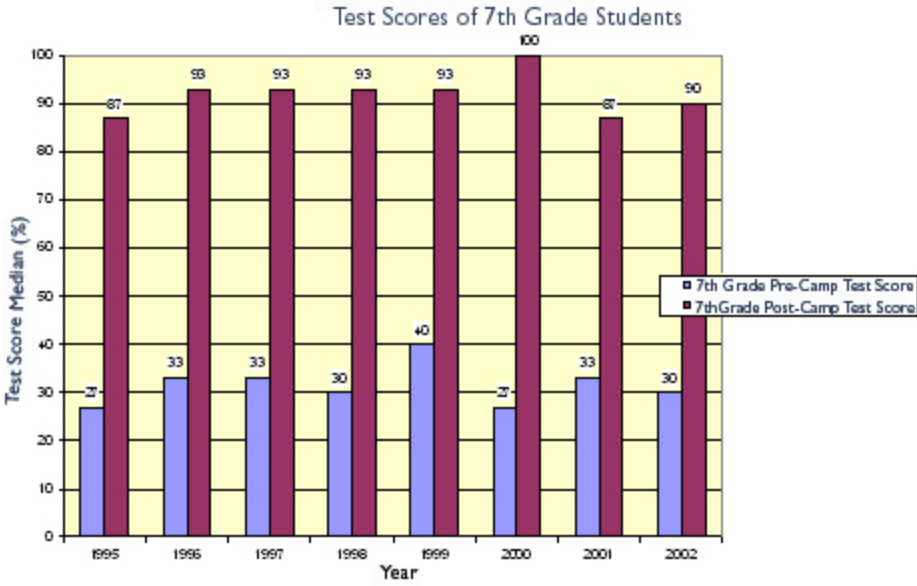
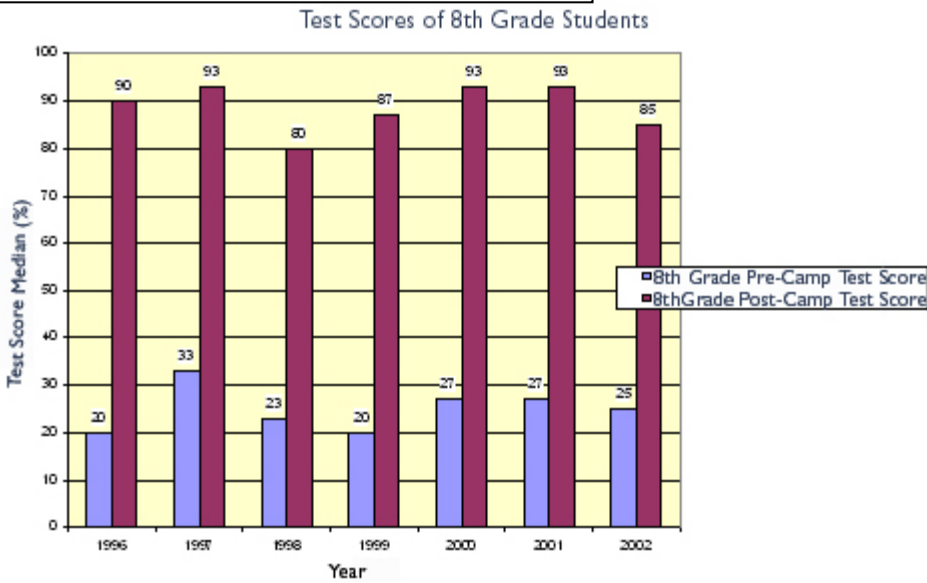


Figure 2. Test Scores of 8th Grade Students from 1995 - 2002



Math Corps is an innovative program that has proven results. To further develop two crucial areas that inner-city students desperately need help with in order to develop

student's skills to increase their probability of a successful career and the tools to do so, special attention must be given to math and reading. Programs in math and reading should be mimicked after the successful Wayne State Math Corps Program. These programs would be required for freshmen, sophomore and juniors who attend the four pilot schools by mixing it into their curriculum. Teachers, counselors and curriculum directors from the four schools will collaborate to create separate camps for the students in math and reading. In order to give the students the special attention they need in these subjects, the schools will reach out to Colleges of Education at universities in Metro Detroit (Wayne State, Oakland, Eastern Michigan, University of Detroit-Mercy, Marygrove, Michigan-Dearborn, Michigan-Ann Arbor) and ask for students to participate to get classroom experience. Having students volunteer will keep these programs at a low cost. College students are always looking for more experience and as we see with the Wayne State Math Corps program there is not a shortage of volunteers for their program.

If students are able to strengthen their skills in these key areas they will do much better in college or career and technical training and ultimately excel in a career. If a region is to be successful in economic development, it must have a talented labor force. Education and training are imperative; skills must be developed and reinforced early on to increase their probability of being successful in a career.

MENTORING

Mentoring is another method to increase educational attainment and encourage success for high school students. Given the high number of single parent families and

families with two working parents, many children are unable to receive support, encouragement and advice from their own parents. High school students are especially susceptible to the benefits of mentoring since they are at an age of transition. By presenting the student with a mentor, they have someone keeping them accountable and helping them through life's twist and turns without the stigma of going to a parent or teacher for help.

Mentorship goes far beyond the act of tutoring. They are not required to assist their students with their homework, but provide them with guidance on how to find the answer. Mentors are responsible for helping their student grow and mature, sharing the skills needed to succeed in this economy. Students are given a role model to encourage them to work hard in school and be a contributing member of society. In distressed school districts like Detroit, it can be easy for students in large classes to "slip through the cracks." By giving individualized attention to these students, they will have a reason to be motivated and work hard in school and afterwards. By increasing the skills of the average student, the local labor force will be supplemented by an increase in young and talented workers.

There are many examples of mentoring organizations that have been effective in Detroit and the surrounding metropolitan region. Since 1994, one such program, Winning Futures, has been operating in Warren, Detroit, Sterling Heights, Oak Park, and Pontiac. The program matches 8th – 12th grade students with a mentor to assist them in the development of "life skills, goal setting, and strategic planning" ("About Us"). During the school year, mentors meet with their matched students for a minimum of 20 hour-long sessions in both individual and group sessions. VIP Mentoring operates out of

Detroit, but services 12 counties in Michigan. Parents can request tutors for their struggling children. Once matched up to a student, mentors meet between one and two hours weekly for a year. Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) is set up in a similar manner to VIP Mentoring, but meetings occur three times a month.

Other mentoring organizations have taken a different approach. The Art of Leadership Foundation takes middle to high school students and matches them up for an indefinite time period, allowing the mentor and mentee to stay together for an extended period of time. Student Mentor Partners, based out of St. Clair Shores, gives scholarships to students in disadvantaged school districts (predominately DPS) to attend a private school in the near suburbs. These students are paired with a mentor for their entire high school career and held to high levels of performance to remain in the program. There is a strong emphasis on promoting higher education with 99% of the students attending college ("Our History"). However, simply exporting Detroit students into parochial schools is not cost-efficient or politically feasible. Public education is a valuable asset to society and should be improved and supplemented, not haphazardly abandoned. Students at Wayne State University run another interesting program in the City of Detroit. The 38 student members of Smart Kids Tutoring/Mentoring Organization meet with Detroit high-school children on WSU's campus and provide them with a combination of tutoring and mentoring. They have meetings in group sessions and individually, though this fledgling program has many areas to improve on.

A major study in 1995 by Public/Private Ventures showed that Big Brothers Big Sisters makes a significant impact on the students involved. Mentees are more confident in their schoolwork performance and able to get along better with their

families. They are 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs and 27% less likely to begin using alcohol. Additionally, they are 52% less likely to skip school and 37% less likely to skip class ("Big Impact"). In the 2009 annual report published by BBMS, 77% of mentees reported that they had done better in school because of their mentor. 65% said their mentor helped them achieve a higher level of education than they had previously thought possible. The survey statistics have overwhelmingly shown the benefits of having a stable, positive role model in the life of a student. 86% of mentees reported that their relationship with their mentor encouraged them to make better choices in throughout their adult life ("Annual Report").

Despite the number of organizations serving the area, there are severe gaps in program theory for most. By placing a time length on mentoring partnerships, it does not ensure that students have consistent support as they continue to develop in their high school career. Organizations that have a yearlong program are likely to see high turnover rates as mentors or mentees drop out. However, it was found that in BBBS, mentors remained with their mentees for a significantly longer portion than the required time and longer than most other mentoring programs. However, the impact of BBBS is most felt among the younger students; less than 1/3 of the students involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters are in high school ("Annual Report"). A majority of the other organizations either do not have or have not posted any information regarding evaluation of their methods and actually measured their impact. In order to determine whether or not students are actually benefitting from different models of a mentorship program, it is necessary to encourage advanced statistical studies to determine their



group in terms of mentoring rates. In terms of education, those with a post-graduate degree are the most likely to be mentors. Although Detroit has a large percentage of young adults, they have relatively low education levels and are thereby less likely to be a mentor (or to be a quality mentor). Most of the post-graduates in the area do not live in the city and would need to commute a distance in order to help the at-risk youth in this distressed school district. Encouraging these target populations to volunteer would increase the overall quality and quantity of mentors, thereby increasing the number of high school students that would be able to benefit from being a mentee.

Lastly, there has been little connection between mentoring programs and existing education systems. On the website for Detroit Public Schools, there is not a single reference or link to mentoring organizations in the area to help their students succeed. With the exception of 38 students in Smart Kids Tutoring/Mentoring Organization, there is not a single other long-term mentoring program through Wayne State University. With a high concentration of young yet educated students, the urban universities in the Detroit Metro area can be a substantial source of quality mentors. However, without involving the largest educational institution in the city, DPS, it will be difficult to ensure that students that are in the greatest need of a mentor get one.

Implementing a more efficient mentoring program to target Detroit requires multiple changes, though for the most part, they are fairly inexpensive. Most programs operate with an application then matching process for both mentors and mentees. However, if a mentor/mentee lives substantially far away from each other or have a timing conflict, it will take more time to find a match. By increasing communication between mentoring organizations, possibly by providing a framework for an umbrella

organization to gather and match mentors and mentees without regard to the exact program, it would be possible to increase the number of matched students and mentors. A connection to DPS could serve as an umbrella to allow mentors and mentees to sign up without having to pick a specific organization. In order to maximize efficiency, a program of this sort must limit the actual or perceived “competition” between organizations to obtain high quality mentors. Otherwise, mentoring programs will be unwilling to participate if they feel they could potentially lose the number of mentors working with their organization. This could be beneficial in that high-functioning and effective programs will be more likely to have mentors working through their organization, resulting in a more efficient allocation of resources, though smaller, specialized mentoring groups might suffer.

However, even by organizing mentors and mentees, there will still be a shortage of mentors. One way to increase the number of mentors is by connecting to the local universities, specifically, Wayne State University. With an undergraduate student body of 2,000 and equal number of graduate students in the College of Education alone, there is a significant amount of students with the desire to improve the academic attainment and promote future success in the K-12 community (“About Us (2)”). These students are required to volunteer hours by student teaching. In order to improve resumes, professors and advisors could suggest that students enroll in a mentoring program as a freshman and continue until their junior year when classes and student teaching play a bigger role in their lives. The college students will have learned how to be better prepared for dealing with their future classrooms as well as enhancing their own experiences and knowledge to apply to their schoolwork. Even other students that

are not in the College of Education would be willing to participate in order to give back to the community and expand their own abilities. DPS students will have a relatable mentor near their age who has recently gone through similar coming-of-age situations. A college mentor can show the DPS student, regardless of age, that college education is a feasible goal, and encourage them to succeed in their current studies to make sure they are well prepared. One benefit of partnering with WSU is that low-income high school students who have subsidized bus passes can easily go to WSU's campus with the current bus routes. These students can get a taste of what college life is and can be for them. When placed in a new atmosphere where scholastic achievement is expected and attainable, high school students will be in a healthy, safe and supportive environment to learn without regard for bullies or a fear of failure.

Another way to reach out to the educated community could be through a partnership with businesses in the downtown and midtown regions. Many companies reward their philanthropic employees who create a positive association with the business name through recognition and awards. Companies with employees participating in the DPS Reading Corps (a tutoring organization that pairs up students from K – 5 to improve reading skills) have been known to allow the participants to leave work early on certain days or take extended lunch breaks in order to give back to the community. With this precedent, it is likely that creating a connection to businesses with a stake in the community will be willing to provide minor incentives or in the least eliminate some disincentives for their employees to serve as a long-term mentor.

In order for these methods to be successful, there must be significant social emphasis on and knowledge of expanding these mentorship programs. Advertising and

promotion are of key importance for increasing the number of mentors and mentees. Conventional forms of advertisement such as TV commercials, radio announcements and newspaper ads are likely to be effective, but come at a high price. Targeting the populations that are most likely to volunteer is easiest with TV commercials, but is also the most expensive. Other forms of promotion include social media sites and other websites. Creating an inexpensive viral video is an effective way to reach a large population and increase conversation about mentoring programs. A website that contains a comprehensive collection of mentoring programs in the Detroit area would be advantageous to all organizations involved. Interested members of society would be able to learn more about the various opportunities as well as the great need. All of these methods could be easily paid for with corporate sponsorships. Companies seeking to lower their tax burden are frequent donors to non-profit organizations. Federal and state financial contributions might be necessary, but the increase in educational attainment will impact not only the present generation of students, but all future generations as well. The children of today are the parents of tomorrow, and with better life skills and an emphasis on encouraging success will be passed on to their children.

In addition to public advertisement, local universities also need to increase their own promotion for student involvement. General class advisors should be given information and other resources necessary to encourage students to participate in mentoring programs. This comes at a relatively low cost. The universities will need to decide which mentoring programs best coincide with their own missions and then provide training to counselors to share this information. Wayne State University already has in place awards for students that give back to their community. Although there is no

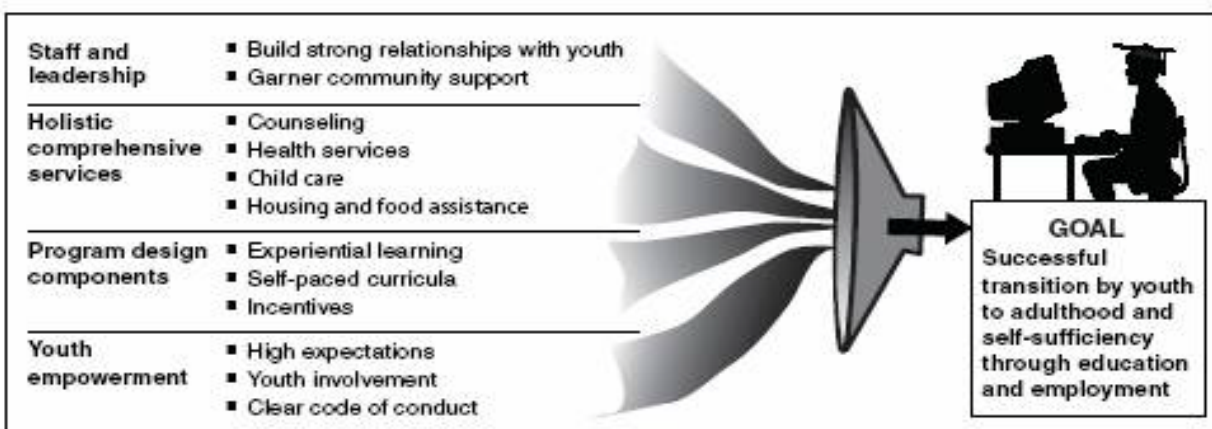
financial award, recognition is desired and can be a substantial motivating factor on its own.

Generally speaking, enhancing mentoring programs is extremely cost effective. Infrastructure requirements are minimal since mentor partners can meet in virtually any location and do not require a substantial amount of overhead. The most expensive factor in this process would be labor, but all of the mentoring organizations listed are based on unpaid volunteers. With the exception of increasing monitoring of partnerships and processing paperwork, expanding these organizations would not have any further increased costs. Increased public awareness can result in an increase of mentors and an increase in charitable donations to fund the growing programs. Government funding would be minimal, but coordination efforts on their part to encourage participation between DPS and existing mentoring programs are essential. Without involving the school district, it is unlikely that the high number of struggling students will decrease. Since the state expenditure per child is partially based on academic achievement, DPS should actively pursue this exceptionally cost-effective model with the goal of obtaining additional state funding in the future to turn around this devastated school district. This model is not restricted to Detroit and the surrounding metropolitan area. In other struggling schools or school districts, mentoring programs still retain the cost-efficiency experienced in Detroit. In fact, expanding these programs in cities with higher concentrations of educated young adults might even be more effective than in Detroit given the local demographics.

INTERNSHIPS

One method of improving both the levels of graduation and the post high school educational attainment is through the use of mandated internships for individuals in high school. Through the use of internships, students can be exposed to the working world and achieve a sense of accomplishment. This experience can be useful in the encouraging students to complete their studies as they are exposed to more successful individuals. With the high prevalence of un-employment in the City of Detroit, the exposure to successfully employed individuals can have a profound impact on these students.

Key Elements of Local Programs Cited by 39 Program Directors in Reconnecting Youth to Education and Employment



Source: GAO analysis of information provided by 39 local program directors; Images (Art Explosion).

The implementation of internships into the high school population typically involves the premise that learning in the real-world context not only makes academic learning more accessible to many students but also increases the individual's engagement in schooling. One such example of this is a five-year study of 3.4 million

Texas high school students. This study found that “Tech Prep students had higher attendance and on-time graduation rates and lower dropout rates than both non-Tech Prep CTE students and the general population of secondary students” (Brown 2000). Furthermore the “positive effects were not limited to persistence, but Texas Tech Prep students completed more academic courses than non-Tech Prep counterparts.

In addition to the academic boost that internships and Work-Based Learning provides to students, there are many other reasons to participate in internships. Stasz and Brewer compared two work-based learning programs (yearly unpaid internships and one-semester paid work experience in one large urban school district) and found “that students in both programs reported the greatest benefit to be in developing appropriate work-related attitudes and behaviors such as following directions, getting along with others, and taking responsibility” (Stasz and Brewer 1998). Since these programs have been repeatedly proven to have positive impacts on both the academic performance as well as the career performance of individuals, the question arises as to why are they not more widely implemented, especially in struggling communities such as Detroit.

David Neumark and Donna Rothstein conducted another study of the impact of the school-to-career programs and its impact on employment and higher education. Their study employed information provided from the 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to assess the effects of School to career programs on transitions to employment and higher education among youths leaving high school. The evidence indicates that some STC programs (school enterprises) boost post-high school education, and other STC programs (cooperative education and

internships/apprenticeships) boost post-high school employment (Neumark, and Rothstein 374-393).

The first problem that arises is the funding of these programs. The programs were previously funded at the federal level. The 1994 Federal School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) provided more than \$1.5 billion over five years to support increased career preparation activities in the country's public schools. However, the STWOA was not re-authorized, so state governments face decisions about levels of funding support for school-to-career (STC) programs. Congress passed the STWOA in response to three areas of particular concern for public education identified by researchers and educators. These were: (1) a lack of connection between school and work that led many youths to be unmotivated in school and to experience subsequent difficulty moving out of low-wage jobs; (2) youths completing school with insufficient skills needed for the labor market; and (3) increasing labor market demands for complex thinking, close teamwork, and the ability to learn on the job (Neumark, and Rothstein 374-393). However, without a secured funding source, school districts now must determine how to fund these programs independently.

Our solution for the funding the expansion of internships would be a combination of public and private funds. A good example of this public-private partnership to foster economic growth and increase in educational attainment is the Detroit Cornerstone Schools. The students at this schools are paired with devoted business and community leaders who have generously committed to sponsor a student and provide an internship at a place of business. This allows the students to receive a multifaceted educational experience that involves a blended approach to learning, which

includes the classroom and real world professional experience in diverse industries, working alongside today's top industry professionals. By getting the local business community to buy into the notion of these partnerships as a means of further growing their companies while also improving the quality of the neighborhood, we feel we can procure the needed funding for the program. Employers benefit from these internships, as experienced interns need little or no training when they begin full-time regular employment. Using the pilot program in the four high schools that are described above, we have access to a large number of companies within a small area.

In addition to the creation of a new funding source to expand the implementation of these internships from our initial four test pilot schools to all Detroit public high schools, the implementation of these internships will build upon the lessons from previous internship programs in particular the Boston Compact and the Oakland YEP program. The hardest part of the implementation of these programs beyond the procurement of the necessary funding is the issue of getting the business community to accept these students as interns into their place of business. This is where the lessons from the Boston Compact come into play. Our ultimate goal is to encourage the majority of these internships to be paid, allowing for a direct economic impact. The Boston Compact showed that the usage of unpaid internships allowed for the business community to build trust in the student population and be willing to place more trust in them; the plan would be to start with unpaid internships and work to the goal of maintaining paid internships as this trust grows.

The second aspect that is important to have would be to have the internships serve a wide population of students. A good example of this to build off of is the YEP

Oakland Program. Established in 1973, the Youth Employment Partnership, Inc. (YEP) is the largest and most experienced private nonprofit youth and young adult employment training agency in the San Francisco Bay Area. YEP's mission is to enhance the employment and educational opportunities of underserved Oakland youth and young adults by providing training, job placement, access to education, and comprehensive support services. The aspect that translates best to the our ideal program is the after school jobs program for individuals between the ages of 15-18. These individuals can participate in a 10-hours per week afterschool job as an incentive to maintain satisfactory grades and attendance at school. The afterschool job can also be an "incentive for a disconnected student to substantially improve attendance through our partnership with OUSD to provide special circumstances work permits to students not otherwise eligible to work" ("Young Adult Career Try-Out"). Students with a "special circumstances work permit have a semester to improve attendance and to attain at least a 2.0 GPA" ("Young Adult Career Try-Out"). In addition to the support provided to individuals still in school, the program goes further by providing support to individuals between the ages of 18-24 through the young adult career try-out program. Under this program "young adults 18-24 participate in up to 20 hours per week of subsidized employment, with each work hour matched with an hour of education. Participants may choose construction, customer service, office, or nonprofit job experience. Those individuals without a high school diploma receive GED instruction on-site, and their teachers provide support and guidance to students as they complete financial aid and enrollment processes for community college." ("Young Adult Career Try-Out")

A final important aspect of the program is the support of the parents which is often one of the biggest pitfalls in traditional internship programs. The problem that arises most often is that parents do not feel as if their child is being offered adequate choices when it comes to internships. The perception is that their child is being forced into a career path without an adequately varied experience. To overcome this problem, our goal is to get a wide variety of businesses involved from such large organizations such as Compuware and Quicken Loans, to the smallest of local start up business, allowing for both a wide variety of experience, but also provides economic stimulus to a wider variety of companies, allowing for the most economic growth in Detroit.

The way in which our internship program would be different than current approach in the Detroit Public School system is through a holistic approach, combining a varied type and length of opportunities. The current system is fragmented and difficult for students to use without much searching, since most internships in Michigan are currently geared towards college students and not high school internships. By making these internships mandatory, much like community service requirements, we seek to better connect Detroit students to the job market, expanding the options available to them. This will provide experiences to the students that were previously unavailable, showing them the potential wealth of jobs available to them. This should serve as a catalyst for economic growth and, if applied correctly, serve to ignite the entrepreneurial spirit of the students allowing for economic innovation. The largest change that we have proposed for the internship program in Michigan is outlined in the implementation plan above. By increasing accessibility and variety, we feel that the fullest impact of these internships will be achieved.

CONCLUSION

The economic revitalization of the City of Detroit must come from a variety of sources. While many of these sources of revitalization can be applied in a much quicker manner that creates instant gratification for real reform to take place in the city the root problems must be addressed. One of the most basic problems in the city is the low level of education among residents. The Detroit Regional Workforce Fund found the functional illiteracy rate of the city is nearly 47 percent. The Fund's Director, Karen Tyler-Ruiz, explained exactly what this means, "Not able to fill out basic forms, for getting a job — those types of basic everyday (things). Reading a prescription; what's on the bottle, how many you should take... just your basic everyday tasks," she said. Without addressing that problem, the future generations are doomed to repeat history. Addressing the problem goes beyond just educational reform, as this has been proven to be unsuccessful time after time. Reform requires a new, innovative approach to education that focuses on creating a stronger link between education and real world application. In particular, this application needs to be focused on the attainment of both higher education and the better paying jobs that come with it. We seek to fundamentally change the education system in Detroit by providing students with greater access to educational resources in terms of academic programs geared in particular towards reading and mathematics at an early age to ensure that they are at or above their grade levels. In addition to these academic programs we want to see and improve mentorship programs that provide children with a stable environment where they can express their concerns and be shown ways of dealing with problems by individuals that have similar

experiences. Overall, we want to improve access to internships at the high school level allowing for students to gain real world experience, and achieve the associate academic success that these programs have been repeatedly proven to provide. Our group feels that these steps, if implemented, will not only bring about economic innovation in the short term but also build a stronger Detroit that will remain viable and vibrant for years to come.

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