

Education Program Evaluation Reports

The foundation is committed to evaluating its education programs and making the results public on an on-going basis. The evaluations examine the effects of our grant-making on student achievement and school design, including the factors that support or inhibit the planning and development of new schools. Evaluation findings allow the foundation, grantees, educators, and decision-makers to refine their collective effort to reform high schools across the country.

Table of Contents

Summary of Topics	3
High Schools	4
National High School and District Grants Initiative.....	4
The National School District and Network Grants Program: Year 2 Evaluation Report.....	4
High Time for High School Reform: Early Findings from the Evaluation of the National School District and Network Grants Program.....	4
Mapping the Terrain: Year 1 of the Evaluation of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's.....	5
National School District and Network Grants Program.....	5
Charting a Course: Evaluation Design of the National School District and Network Grants Program.....	5
Targeted Literature Review of Major Constructs and Their Components: Evaluating the National School District and Network Grants Program.....	5
Evaluating the Gates Foundation National School District and Network Grants Program: Foundation Theory of Change.....	6
Chicago High School Redesign Initiative: A Snapshot of the First Year of Implementation.....	6
Notes from the Ground: Teachers, principals, and students' perspectives on the Chicago High School Redesign Initiative, year two.....	6
One-to-One Laptops in a High School Environment: Piscataquis Community High School Study.....	7
Three Years Down the Road: Small School Reform at the Manual Educational Complex.....	7
Early College High School Initiative.....	8
Early College High School Initiative: Evaluation Year End Report: 2003–2004.....	8
Early College High Schools: Early Recruitment and Selection Strategies.....	8
Early College High School Initiative: Intermediary Summary Report, 2003–2004.....	8
Washington State	9
Model School and District Grants Initiative.....	9
Exploring Assignments, Student Work, and Teacher Feedback in Reforming Schools: 2002-03 Data from Washington State.....	9
A Decade of Reform: A Summary of Research Findings on Classroom, School, and District Effectiveness in Washington State.....	9
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Model School Initiative.....	10
Cohort 1: Year 3 Summary Report.....	10
Constructivist Teaching and Student Achievement: The Results of a School-level Classroom Observation Study in Washington.....	10
Online Classroom Assessment Project: Evaluation Report #1.....	10
Classroom Instruction in Gates Grantee Schools: A Baseline Report.....	11
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Model District Initiative: Year 1 Evaluation Results.....	11
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Model School Initiative: Year 1 Evaluation Results.....	11

Washington State Achievers Program	12
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s Washington State Achievers High Schools Year 3 Evaluation Summary	12
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s Washington State Achievers Program: Year 1 Evaluation Summary	12
Classroom Instruction in Achievers Grantee High Schools: A Baseline Report	13
Scholarships	13
Gates Millennium Scholarship Program	13
Opportunity Answered: Early Research on the Gates Millennium Scholars Program	13
Washington State Achievers Program	14
The Impact of Financial Aid Guarantees on Enrollment and Persistence: Evidence from Research on Indiana’s Twenty-first Century Scholars and Washington State Achievers Programs	14
Who Applies for and Who is Selected for Washington State Achievers Scholarships?	14
Teacher Leadership and Professional Development	15
State Challenge Grants	15
TAGLIT Data Analysis: State Challenge Grants	15
State Challenge Grants: TAGLIT Data Analysis	15
Teacher Leadership Project	16
Mississippi Teacher Leadership Project: Year 1 Evaluation Report	16
Teacher Leadership Project Final Evaluation Report, 1998-2003	16
2000 Evaluation Report: http://www.esd189.org/tlp/images/eval_report99-00.pdf	16
Teacher Leadership Project – Impact Study	16
Evaluation of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Teacher Leadership Project: A Report of Post- Program Data Results for the 1999-2000 School Year	17
Technology Initiatives	17
Michigan Technology Integration Training Initiative	17
Rhode Island Model Classroom Initiative: Evaluation Report	17

Summary of Topics

- **High Schools**
 - **National High School and District Grants Initiative** –Do the school reform grants affect student attendance, course taking, persistence, student achievement, high school graduation, and college readiness rates? What factors influence the success of grantee schools? Have schools developed mechanisms to scale up and sustain reform efforts over time?
 - **Early College High School Initiative** –Do Early College High Schools (ECHSs) improve disadvantaged and minority students' postsecondary achievement and attainment? What are the demographic, structural, organizational, and instructional characteristics of ECHSs? What factors support or inhibit the planning and development of ECHSs?

- **Washington State**
 - **Model School and District Grants Initiative** – Do the school reform grants affect student achievement? Have the grants facilitated district and/or school change? Can changes be sustained over time?
 - **Washington State Achievers Program** –What is the effect of the school reform grants on student achievement and college awareness and attitudes? What are the best strategies for school reinvention? Has the nature of teacher assignments and the quality of student work changed?

- **Scholarships**
 - **Gates Millennium Scholarship Program** – What is the short-term and long-term impact of the GMS program on Scholars' educational, civic, and personal outcomes?
 - **Washington State Achievers Program** – What is the short-term and long-term impact of the Achievers program on Scholars' educational, civic, and personal outcomes?

- **Teacher Leadership and Professional Development**
 - **State Challenge Grants** – What is the effect of the grant on improving school leaders' use of technology? What is the effect of technology on teaching and learning?
 - **Teacher Leadership Project** – What impact has the Teacher Leadership Project (TLP) had on teaching and learning? What are the strengths and limitations of TLP as a model of professional development?
 - **Technology Initiatives** – How are teachers integrating technology into the curriculum? What is the effect of the initiative on instructional practices?

High Schools

National High School and District Grants Initiative

The following reports were written by researchers from the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and SRI International (SRI). AIR and SRI have partnered to conduct an eight-year evaluation of the foundation's National High School and District Grants Initiative.

The National School District and Network Grants Program: Year 2 Evaluation Report

American Institutes for Research and SRI International

April 2004

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/Yr3SynthesisReport.pdf>

This report is the second in a series of reports on the evaluation of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's National School District and Network Grants Initiative, a program which provides grants to organizations to assist in the creation of small schools around the country. It is based on data collected from 16 organizations, as well as the affiliated schools and school districts. While the report points out that it is still too early in the process to fully evaluate the foundation's strategy for education reform, lessons can be learned and key questions can be addressed. In general, the evaluation results matched the foundation's theories, and showed that intermediary organizations could, in fact, help create small high schools that foster personalization, high expectations, and teacher collaboration. The report also identifies key challenges for these small schools, including the effective implementation of innovative teaching approaches, the development of appropriate curriculum content, and the achievement of financial stability. Based on the findings, the report recommends a number of refinements to the program, including providing schools with more support in the development of curricula, creating a strategy to promote the new school culture among staff and students, and offering guidance on where to turn for financial support.

High Time for High School Reform: Early Findings from the Evaluation of the National School District and Network Grants Program

American Institutes for Research and SRI International

April 2003

http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/smallschools/Small_schools_eval_2003.pdf

This report, the first in a series of evaluations on the foundation's National School District and Network Grants Initiative, attempts to show whether these schools are able to implement the reform methods advanced by the foundation and if students are benefiting from being in small schools. Researchers found that relationships between students and teachers were substantially deeper than those in larger schools, and these relationships helped students feel more engaged with their studies and more committed to their schools. Teachers also felt more engaged and were able to participate in the decision-making process. The report identified a number of problems as well, including difficulty implementing innovative instruction practices, and not having the resources needed to operate the school effectively. The report offers a number of insights to both grantees and funders, suggesting, for example, that the foundation consider providing planning grants.

Mapping the Terrain: Year 1 of the Evaluation of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's National School District and Network Grants Program

Linda Shear, SRI International

Becky Smerdon, American Institutes for Research

April 2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/MapTerrain.pdf>

This report introduces the National School District and Network Grants Initiative by describing the foundation's reform strategies and operating assumptions, the goals of the foundation's grantees, and the experiences of these grantees in their first year of operation. The report found that the grantees' strategies match those of the foundation, the grantees have varying methods for implementing these strategies, and the grantees share common challenges, such as difficulty recruiting staff with the proper expertise, lack of support from the district and/or state, and the need to make instructional improvements.

Charting a Course: Evaluation Design of the National School District and Network Grants Program

Becky Smerdon, Mike Garet, Jennifer O'Day, and Luke Miller, American Institutes for Research

Barbara Means and Karen Mitchell, SRI International

April 2003

http://smallhs.sri.com/documents/Charting_a_Course.pdf

This report describes the methodology being used by the American Institutes for Research and SRI International for evaluating the foundation's National School District and Network Grants Initiative, as well as some of the challenges conducting such an evaluation. The report uses the metaphor of a journey to show how researchers identified the destination, mapped a course, and explored the terrain. In the section entitled, "Reading the Map While Driving," the report discusses the difficulties of taking on such a complex, sprawling subject.

Targeted Literature Review of Major Constructs and Their Components: Evaluating the National School District and Network Grants Program

American Institutes for Research and SRI International

October 2001

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/GatesLitReview.pdf>

This literature review provides an overview of the key elements of the foundation's National School District and Network Grants Initiative, and examines these elements in the context of the larger body of research about the small schools movement and education reform. It addresses the various reform strategies being used by organizations around the country, as well as the foundation's perspective on these strategies. It also discusses the factors that determine a reform activity's success or failure. There are two glossaries at the end of the report: one defining the different grants in the foundation's program, the other providing definitions of general terminology related to education reform.

**Evaluating the Gates Foundation National School District and Network Grants Program:
Foundation Theory of Change**

American Institutes for Research and SRI International

July 2001

http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/BMGF_Theory_of_Change.ppt

This PowerPoint presentation depicts the theories and strategies behind the foundation's National School District and Network Grants Initiative. It gives a brief overview of how the program works, the attributes of effective schools, and the expected outcomes.

The following reports are studies of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's school grantees. These studies are not a part of the foundation's overall evaluation efforts and were not commissioned by the foundation.

Chicago High School Redesign Initiative: A Snapshot of the First Year of Implementation

Susan E. Sparte, Macarena Correa, Joe Kahne, and John Q. Easton

Consortium on Chicago School Research, University of Chicago

August 2003

<http://www.consortium-chicago.org/publications/pdfs/p64.pdf>

This report documents the first year of the Chicago High School Redesign Initiative, which transformed three large, traditional high schools into five small schools in the fall of 2002. Based on interviews with principals, teachers, students, and others, the study identifies the program's successes, as well as challenges that can be addressed over the coming years. Positive results of the conversion include stronger relationships between students and teachers, and an improved professional community for teachers. Challenges include a lack of emphasis on instruction, inadequate time for planning, limited facilities, and tension between the small schools and the host schools.

Notes from the Ground: Teachers, principals, and students' perspectives on the Chicago High School Redesign Initiative, year two

Susan E. Sparte, Macarena Correa, and Joe Kahne

Consortium on Chicago School Research, University of Chicago

September 2004

<http://www.consortium-chicago.org/publications/pdfs/p74.pdf>

This report is a follow-up to the study conducted in August 2003, *Chicago High School Redesign Initiative: A Snapshot of the First Year of Implementation*, and includes data from the original five schools covered in the first report, as well as six additional schools that were opened in the fall of 2003. It examines whether the second wave of schools had similar experiences as the first, as well as the new issues facing the schools that are now in their second year of operation. This information was meant to assist in the planning and implementation of new small schools. Many of the sentiments voiced in the 2003 study were also voiced in the 2004 study, but new problems also arose, such as increased concern over professional development standards, the need for the schools to attract students who actively choose to be there rather than simply accept assignment to the school because of its location, and the need for greater flexibility and autonomy from the district.

One-to-One Laptops in a High School Environment: Piscataquis Community High School Study

Great Maine Schools Project

Senator George J. Mitchell Scholarship Research Institute

February 2004

<http://www.mitchellinstitute.org/research/finalLaptopreport.doc>

This report presents the results of a two-year program in which Piscataquis Community High School provided each of its 285 students and all faculty members with a laptop computer for use at school and home. It is based on surveys and/or interviews of students, faculty, administrators, and parents, as well as administrative data, and is meant to provide guidance to other high schools in Maine that may wish to implement a similar program. The report found that the computers and wireless Internet access provided to students and teachers enhanced their computer skills, increased student motivation and interest in school, improved the quality of student work and achievement, and created more opportunities for personalized learning, among other benefits. The program appears to have been most helpful to at-risk and low-achieving students, indicating that such a program could be used to promote greater equity in high schools.

Three Years Down the Road: Small School Reform at the Manual Educational Complex

Patrick J. McQuillan

Lynch School of Education, Boston College

Colorado Small Schools Initiative

August 2004

<http://www.coloradosmallschools.org/docs/Reports/ManualPM6-04.doc>

This case study examines the 2003-2004 school year of the Manual Education Complex (MEC), which was converted from a large comprehensive high school (Manual High) into three small schools three years ago. The author evaluates the success of the conversion process by measuring the schools' progress in seven key areas: personalized relationships, teachers as learners and innovators, common and clear educational focus, literate and numerate graduates, school autonomy, culture of communication, and high expectations for post-secondary attainment. While signs of success such as high graduation and college-going rates are noted, the schools still face many challenges, such as low expectations for students among faculty, poor student attendance, lack of student engagement in coursework, and a general lack of order within the schools.

Early College High School Initiative

The following reports were written by researchers from the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and SRI International (SRI). AIR and SRI have partnered to conduct a multi-year evaluation of the foundation's Early College High School Initiative.

Early College High School Initiative: Evaluation Year End Report: 2003–2004

American Institutes for Research and SRI International

March 2005

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/evaluation/ECHSI2005Synthesis.pdf>

This first annual evaluation report on the foundation's Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) focuses on the development of the initiative during the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 school years. The evaluation is based on surveys, interviews, and site visit data collected from 10 grantee intermediary partners and 22 ECHSs that are serving 3,500 primarily low-income and minority students. The report identifies several important issues at this early stage of the initiative, including broadening the ECHS support base among faculty at each of the participating higher education institutions and engaging high school and higher education faculty in professional development that fosters student-centered teaching and learning. The study also highlights several notable accomplishments of the initiative. Most ECHSs are striving to establish college-going cultures in which all students view themselves as college material, create academic and social supports that will allow students to accelerate through high school and earn college credits, and devise strategies to introduce ninth-grade students to college courses and/or college campuses.

Early College High Schools: Early Recruitment and Selection Strategies

American Institutes for Research and SRI International. October 2004.

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/evaluation/ECHSSRP04.pdf>

During the 2003–2004 school years, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation supported the creation or transformation of more than 20 Early College High Schools (ECHSs). This memo describes the strategies ECHSs have used to recruit students from groups that are traditionally underserved and underrepresented in higher education and addresses the impact of the recruitment and selection strategies on the demographics of the ECHSs' student enrollments. The evaluators found that a majority of ECHSs worked with middle and high schools to recruit students. The ECHSs selected students using varying criteria from school to school. Generally speaking, most schools enrolled either students similar to the district population or a greater proportion of students from racial/ethnic minority groups or low-income families.

Early College High School Initiative: Intermediary Summary Report, 2003–2004

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/evaluation/ECHSIntermediaryReport04.pdf>

American Institutes for Research and SRI International. December 2004.

This report draws upon qualitative data collected through interviews and site visits to summarize the early work of 10 ECHS grantee intermediaries. Findings are presented in four key areas. First, the report discusses the degree to which the intermediaries and the foundation share a vision for ECHSs and the ways in which intermediaries have personalized their vision. Second, the report notes the intermediaries' implementation strategies and the ways in which some intermediaries underestimated the breadth of activities that would be required of them. Third, the report describes some typical implementation activities and provides examples of ways that intermediaries both are and are not meeting the needs of their ECHSs. Fourth, the report discusses the intermediaries' capacity and how that capacity interacts with their ability to support ECHSs. Key lessons learned by the intermediaries during the first two years of the initiative include: developing the capacity to adequately support ECHSs in all areas is critical; formal

partner agreements create invaluable foundations; and, middle school outreach needs to be a higher priority.

Washington State

Model School and District Grants Initiative

Most of the reports described below were written by researchers from Fouts & Associates, the primary evaluator of the foundation's Washington state education grants programs.

Exploring Assignments, Student Work, and Teacher Feedback in Reforming Schools: 2002-03 Data from Washington State

American Institutes for Research and SRI International

January 2004

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/GatesStudentWork2004.pdf>

This report examines whether foundation-supported schools provide students with challenging learning opportunities and whether these opportunities foster student work that is intellectually complex. By collecting examples of the assignments given to students, as well as the actual work they do, researchers hoped to show how teaching and student work will evolve as the reform process progresses. The study began with eight large high schools in Washington state that were converting to small schools in 2003-2004. It will revisit these schools after conversion to see how teaching and learning have changed. The study will then expand, taking samples from schools nationwide. One key finding of the report is that students produced better, more complex work in response to challenging assignments than in response to conventional assignments.

A Decade of Reform: A Summary of Research Findings on Classroom, School, and District Effectiveness in Washington State

Jeffrey T. Fouts

Washington School Research Center

Research Report #3. April 2003

<http://www.spu.edu/wsrc/ADecadeofReformOctober192003v5.pdf>

This report synthesizes research from a number of sources in order to assess the effectiveness of the educational reform legislation that was passed in Washington state in 1993. The report summarizes the main elements of the reform legislation, including the new high standards, the idea that all students are expected to achieve at high levels, and the concept of first and second order changes. The report finds that while first order changes—such as smaller classes or teaching teams—are important, second order changes—or shifts in one's belief system—are essential for true reform that leads to increased achievement among students. The most successful schools cited in the report have strong leadership, encourage collaboration among teachers, offer decentralized decision making, and hold adults accountable. One of the most important elements of success is that teachers hold all students to the highest standards, and do not use race, ethnicity, or economic standing as an excuse for poor performance. The report includes a section detailing lessons learned from research and evaluation on Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Washington state grantees.

Please note that this study, which includes a section on findings from research and evaluation on Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Washington state grantees, was not directly funded by the foundation.

**The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Model School Initiative
Cohort 1: Year 3 Summary Report**

Shirley C. Riley and Jeffrey T. Fouts
Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.
December 2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/Cohort1Yr3Summary.pdf>

This report evaluates the progress of the first 13 schools to receive three-year Model School Initiative grants, which were given to schools to help them reinvent themselves in order to improve student learning. The report found that most of the first year of the grant was spent defining a purpose and establishing a collaborative atmosphere. During the second year, some schools became enthusiastic about the concept of reinvention and moved toward implementation, while others still struggled with the complexities of reinvention. While several schools were ready to focus on improving instruction and learning in year three, others became stalled, lacking a sense of urgency and real leadership. The report concludes that the schools with a common vision, collaboration among adults, a professional development program, and strong leadership were best poised to make progress under the grant.

Constructivist Teaching and Student Achievement: The Results of a School-level Classroom Observation Study in Washington

Martin L. Abbott and Jeffrey T. Fouts
Washington School Research Center
February 2003

<http://www.spu.edu/wsrc/ObservationStudy-2-13-03.pdf>

This report expands on the findings of the report entitled, *Classroom Instruction in Achievers Grantee High Schools: A Baseline Report*, which discusses the amount of "powerful teaching and learning," or constructivist teaching, taking place in the grantee schools of the Washington State Achievers Program. While that report shows that a small percentage of constructivist teaching took place, this report attempts to show a correlation between such teaching and student achievement. The report concludes that the presence of constructivist teaching does lead to higher achievement among students. A disturbing finding of the report is that low-income students were less likely to be exposed to such teaching.

Online Classroom Assessment Project: Evaluation Report #1

Carol J. Brown
Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.
July 2002

http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/OCIA_ProjectEval.pdf

This report evaluates the Online Classroom Assessment Project, an online assessment system designed to help teachers in Washington state improve their instructional strategies. Participating teachers were selected from the foundation's school district grantees. Teachers found the immediacy of the online assessments to be helpful in that it allowed the entire class to learn from their errors, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and receive extra help in the areas they need it most. Teachers said that problems with the program included technical glitches, compatibility issues, inconsistent servers, and formatting problems. They recommended that these problems be ironed out before expanding the program.

Classroom Instruction in Gates Grantee Schools: A Baseline Report

Jeffrey T. Fouts, Carol Brown, and Gayle Y. Thieman

Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.

September 2002

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/ClassroomInstruction.pdf>

This report is part of a larger evaluation of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Model Schools and Model Districts Initiative in Washington state and was designed to assess the amount of constructivist teaching taking place in grantee schools' classrooms. The results will also be used for a Teacher Perspectives Questionnaire study that is being used in both grant programs. The report shows that strong constructivist teaching took place in only 17 percent of lessons, and the most constructivist teaching was found in alternative schools and in classes with integrated subject matter.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Model District Initiative: Year 1 Evaluation Results

Jeffrey T. Fouts, Duane B. Baker, Shirley C. Riley, Martin L. Abbott, and Heather L. Robinson

Fouts & Associates, L.L.C. Washington School Research Center

October 2001

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/modeldistrictinitiativefinalreport.pdf>

This report evaluates the first year of the Model District Initiative in which the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave 11 grants to school districts in the state of Washington to increase student achievement through improved instruction and access to technology. This program is unique in its focus on district change rather than change within a single school. Researchers found that districts had only a vague understanding of the magnitude of the district reinvention process, and in some cases actually misunderstood the whole nature of the grant. Once full understanding was achieved, districts had to align the foundation's theories with the plans and strategies they had already developed. Districts also had to establish procedures and guidelines for distributing the funds to individual schools. Among the final recommendations outlined in the report is the suggestion that technical assistance in the form of leadership teams and project coaches should be continued.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Model School Initiative: Year 1 Evaluation Results

Jeffrey T. Fouts, Duane B. Baker, Shirley C. Riley, Martin L. Abbott, Heather L. Robinson

Fouts & Associates, L.L.C. Washington School Research Center

October 2001

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/schoolsfinalreport2001.pdf>

This report evaluates the first year of the Model School Initiative in which the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave 13 three-year grants to schools in the state of Washington to increase student achievement through improved instruction and access to technology. While each of the schools started the process of reinvention at different points and were found to be progressing at different rates, researchers found several common challenges among the schools, including leadership changes, district structures, parental and community support, community economic and cultural factors, teacher culture, and state regulations. In addition, the report recommends that the program managers provide schools with specific technical assistance, particularly in the area of classroom instruction.

Washington State Achievers Program

The foundation is working with a several partners to guide and carry out research and evaluation activities on the Washington State Achievers (WSA) Program. Fouts and Associates is conducting implementation and outcome evaluations of all of the program components, except for scholarship recipient and non-recipient outcomes. Reports on the program components are described below. Members of the foundation's Research Advisory Council (RAC), a panel of scholars and practitioners, are conducting research on the WSA Program's scholars and non-recipients. Reports on scholarship recipients and non-recipients are listed in the "Scholarship" evaluations section.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Washington State Achievers High Schools Year 3 Evaluation Summary

Duane B. Baker, Candace A. Gratama, Heather R. Stroh, Jeffrey T. Fouts, and Shawn D. Bachtler
Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.

January 2005

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/AchieversEvalYr3.pdf>

This study is an evaluation of the third year of the Washington State Achievers Program, which works comprehensively with 16 high schools that serve large low-income populations. The program supports high school redesign efforts that raise academic achievement and increase college-going rates of all students, especially low-income students. The evaluation finds that after three years of grant activities, school structures have improved; the majority of high schools have made progress in creating effective learning environments; and school personnel are committed to designing environments that foster better student outcomes. However, the extent to which student outcomes—student achievement, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, etc.—have improved is limited. The evaluators note that the third year of the program marked the first year of partial or full implementation in all 16 high schools. Therefore, by year 3, many of the schools had made only minimal redesign changes and consequently, many students had received little or no exposure to small learning communities, changes in classroom instruction, or other changes associated with the reinvention process. The evaluators do not expect to see significant changes in student outcomes until the students have experienced several years of a qualitatively different school environment.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Washington State Achievers Program: Year 1 Evaluation Summary

Jeffrey T. Fouts, Duane B. Baker, Candace A. Gratama, Shawn D. Bachtler, and Heather R. Stroh
Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.

February 2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/achieverfirstyearreport.pdf>

This report evaluates the first year of the Washington State Achievers Program, which provides disadvantaged, underserved students with the educational and economic assistance they need to attend college and earn a degree. The program's four main goals are to create small learning communities that encourage high achievement and college enrollment; help talented, low-income students attend college by providing financial assistance; offer mentoring and support to students once they enroll in college; and create a group of college-educated citizens and leaders in Washington state. While schools and faculty universally embraced the idea of their students receiving financial aid for college, some were wary about the requirement that the school must transform itself into a small learning community. This report shows a wide range of progress among the 16 schools that received the grant. The schools that already had fewer than 400 students were able to focus their attentions on improving instruction and promoting college awareness. Some of the larger schools struggled with the need to convert or reinvent themselves, leaving them without a strong, clear plan for reform.

Classroom Instruction in Achievers Grantee High Schools: A Baseline Report

Carol J. Brown and Jeffrey T. Fouts

Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.

June 2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/AchieversObservation03.pdf>

This report assesses the extent to which the grantee schools of the Washington State Achievers Program have promoted “powerful teaching and learning,” or constructivist teaching, in their classrooms and whether teachers are utilizing the “essential components” of active inquiry, in-depth learning, and performance assessment. Data revealed that students were exposed to challenging curriculum in only 40 percent of their lessons, and less than one-half of their work showed conceptual understanding. Strong constructivist teaching was detected in only 17 percent of lessons. In addition, observers were disconcerted by the impersonal nature of the larger schools, the way in which so many students “tuned out” during their classes, and the impression that many special education students had already been written off.

Scholarships

Gates Millennium Scholarship Program

The foundation has assembled a panel of highly regarded scholars, a Research Advisory Council (RAC), to carry out research and evaluation activities on the Gates Millennium Scholarship Program and the scholarship recipients. Additional reports from the RAC will be posted to this site in the months ahead.

Opportunity Answered: Early Research on the Gates Millennium Scholars Program

Gates Millennium Scholars Research Advisory Committee

2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Education/Scholarships/RelatedInfo/OpportunityAnswered-031022.htm>

This collection of seven research studies examines the effects of the Gates Millennium Scholars program, which is aimed at helping a diverse group of academically promising students attend college by providing financial assistance. These papers were written by members of the GMS Research Advisory Council and are based on their analyses of data collected by the National Opinion Research Center on the 2000 and 2001 classes of scholarship recipients and non-recipients. The reports examine the program’s impact on financial access to college and the attributes of GMS scholars, such as their ability to transition to college life, their participation in leadership activities, and their academic achievement. Findings from these studies were summarized in a slideshow

<<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/GMSprelimexam.ppt>

> presented at the 2003 American Educational Research Association annual meeting.

Washington State Achievers Program

The foundation is working with a several partners to guide and carry out research and evaluation activities on the Washington State Achievers (WSA) Program. The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago is primarily responsible for collecting and managing data on the long-term outcomes of WSA Scholars and non-recipients. Select members of a Research Advisory Council (RAC), a panel of scholars and practitioners, will use this data to conduct original analysis on scholars and non-recipients. Reports based on these analyses are described below. The NORC data will also be useful for informing Fouts and Associates' evaluation of the WSA Program components. Reports on the program components are listed in the "Washington State" evaluations section.

The Impact of Financial Aid Guarantees on Enrollment and Persistence: Evidence from Research on Indiana's Twenty-first Century Scholars and Washington State Achievers Programs

Edward P. St. John

Chapter Six in *State Merit Scholarship Programs and Racial Inequality* edited by Donald E. Heller and Patricia Marin. The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

2004

http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/meritaid/report04/8StJohn_INWAch_6.pdf

This chapter is featured in *Merit Scholarship Programs and Racial Inequality*, a collection of research on merit scholarship programs and their effects on students that evolved from a December 2001 Civil Rights Project conference called "State Merit Aid Programs: College Access and Equity." This chapter summarizes evaluations of Indiana's Twenty-first Century Scholars program and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Washington State Achievers program. Both are unique in that they are state-level programs that provide early guarantees of college financial assistance to students in middle or high schools. Taken in combination, findings from the evaluations indicate that receiving a guarantee appears to do the following: increases the odds that students will prepare for and enroll in college; influences low-income students to take the necessary steps to prepare for college enrollment—including taking advanced courses in high school, completing a high school diploma, and applying for college; and improves the likelihood of enrollment in four-year colleges (controlling for background and preparation). The author recommends that states interested in expanding access to higher education should consider policies that guarantee adequate grant aid to low-income students who take the steps to prepare for college.

Please note that this study on Washington State Achievers Scholarship Program, an initiative sponsored by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was not funded by the foundation.

Who Applies for and Who is Selected for Washington State Achievers Scholarships?

Amon Emeka and Charles Hirschman

University of Washington

July 2003

http://depts.washington.edu/uwbhs/Scholarships_Amon_Conference.pdf

This report identifies the characteristics of those who apply for the Washington State Achievers Program, as well as those who are ultimately selected, in order to shed light on the factors that impede low-income students from receiving a college education. Rather than simply choosing the best low-income students from schools around the state, this program targets large numbers of students from selected schools in order to establish a "culture of college attendance" at these schools, which will hopefully carry over in years to come and affect entire groups of students rather than a few select students. In the three high schools that were studied for this report, one in five students received a scholarship—a relatively high percentage. The study found that students who receive encouragement to attend college and are popular are significantly more likely to win awards because they are significantly more likely to apply than are other students. Students who spend more time on homework and have more contact with counselors also are significantly more likely to receive awards because they are more apt to apply AND because they are

avored in the selection process. Due to the small numbers of students considered, the authors caution that these results must be considered preliminary and tentative.

Teacher Leadership and Professional Development

Most of the reports described below were written by researchers from Fouts & Associates, the primary evaluator of the foundation's technology and professional development grant programs.

State Challenge Grants

TAGLIT Data Analysis: State Challenge Grants

Martin L. Abbott

Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.

September 2004

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/TAGLIT2004.pdf>

This report examines changes in teaching and learning with regard to technology between 2002 and 2004 within the schools participating in the national State Challenge Grant program. Such changes were detected through the use of an online data collection system called TAGLIT (Taking a Good Look at Instructional Technology). The report found that over the two-year period, technology skills improved and the use of technology in the classroom increased, but technology-related professional development decreased.

State Challenge Grants: TAGLIT Data Analysis

Martin L. Abbott

Fouts and Associates, L.L.C.

November 2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/TAGLITDataAnalysis.pdf>

This report provides baseline data about technology-related teaching and learning in schools participating in the national state challenge grant program. These data, collected through the TAGLIT (Taking a Good Look at Instructional Technology) online data collection system, will be compared with the data collected in subsequent years of the project. According to the report, teachers were more likely than students to believe that technology played a substantial role in the classroom. It also indicated a lack of skills with certain applications among teachers and students, and a lack of technology support. The report concludes that the amount that technology impacts a classroom depends mostly on the skill level of the teacher.

Teacher Leadership Project

Mississippi Teacher Leadership Project: Year 1 Evaluation Report

Carol J. Brown

Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.

July 2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/MSTLP2003.pdf>

This report presents findings from the first year of the Mississippi Teacher Leadership Project, which was designed to help teachers integrate technology into their curricula. Data showed an increase of technology in classrooms, but found that many teachers simply integrated the technology into their traditional lesson plans. The overall positive effects of the program included more student-centered classrooms; students who were more motivated, self-directed, and collaborative; and teachers who were more confident in their skills due to a solid training program. Problems included the late arrival of computer equipment, lack of time to prepare and explore new lesson plans, and technical glitches. One of the primary recommendations for improving the program was to increase the amount of training and support provided to teachers.

Teacher Leadership Project Final Evaluation Report, 1998-2003

Carol J. Brown and Amy Rojan

Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.

November 2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/TLP2003Final.pdf>

This report provides a final assessment of the Teacher Leadership Project, a program designed to help Washington state teachers integrate technology into their curricula. Evaluation of teacher and student surveys, case studies, classroom visits, journal entries, and sample lessons showed the positive effects of the program and bringing technology into the classroom. Classrooms took on a more student-centered atmosphere; students and teachers became more motivated; positive changes to teaching practices were made; and students' writing, problem solving and research skills improved. Teachers responded well to the training provided and many even remarked that it was the best professional development experience they had ever had. Teacher collaboration also contributed to the program's success. Teachers did express frustration about the lack of time they had to create appropriate lessons, leading researchers to recommend creating a resource library of technology-related lesson plans.

Teacher Leadership Project Evaluations, 2000-2002:

2002 Evaluation Report: <http://www.esd189.org/tp/images/tp2002report.pdf>

2001 Evaluation Report:

<http://www.esd189.org/tp/images/TLP%20FINAL%20REPORT%20FULL%20TEXT%207-24-01.pdf>

2000 Evaluation Report: http://www.esd189.org/tp/images/eval_report99-00.pdf

Teacher Leadership Project – Impact Study

David E. Dean

Spring 2001

<http://www.esd189.org/tp/documents/deantlp2001impact.pdf>

This report discusses the impact that the graduates of the Teacher Leadership Project have had on their schools and communities using data gathered from the graduates themselves, their principals, and their teaching peers. Teachers who participated in the program reported that they were providing both informal and formal training to their fellow teachers; participating in technology leadership activities in their districts; and acting as role models in their schools. Principals and fellow teachers agreed that the

graduates made a positive impact on the schools and were sharing their newly gained knowledge of technology with their peers and students.

Evaluation of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Teacher Leadership Project: A Report of Post-Program Data Results for the 1999-2000 School Year

David E. Dean

June 2000

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/TLP2000PostProgramResults.pdf>

This report describes post-program data results for teachers who participated in the Teacher Leadership project during the 1999-2000 school year. Program results show that teachers became much more comfortable with technology after participating in the project and student learning improved. Teachers reported receiving very little support from their districts regarding infusing technology into their curricula and said the districts did not provide training.

Technology Initiatives

Michigan Technology Integration Training Initiative

Carol J. Brown and Jeffrey T. Fouts

Fouts and Associates, L.L.C.

July 2003

<http://www.gatesfoundation.com/nr/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/MITech2003.pdf>

This report presents findings from the evaluation of the Michigan Technology Integration Training Initiative, which aimed to train over 8,000 Michigan teachers on how to integrate technology into their classrooms. The initiative was made up of three distinct programs, the Intel Teach to the Future program, the ATA (Ameritech Technology Academy) Scholars program, and the Teacher Leadership Seminars, all of which provided a different approach to technology integration, but worked together to achieve the stated goal. Data showed that teachers did, in fact, begin to use technology in their lessons, particularly with writing projects, student presentations, and research.

Rhode Island Model Classroom Initiative: Evaluation Report

Carol J. Brown

Fouts & Associates, L.L.C.

September 2001

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/NR/downloads/ed/researchevaluation/RhodeIslandMCI2001.pdf>

This report presents findings from the evaluation of the Rhode Island Model Classroom Initiative (RIMCI), which was designed to help Rhode Island teachers integrate technology into their classrooms. Each teacher received enough hardware to achieve a 4:1 student to computer ratio, as well as rigorous training and software. Data showed substantial integration of technology, with teachers and students using a variety of software applications in subjects ranging from literature to math. Student motivation increased, as did the quality of their work. Classrooms became more student-centered and teachers found training to be very helpful. Challenges and problems were relatively few, and included technical glitches and lack of time to prepare appropriate lessons. Recommendations for improving the program included providing teachers the opportunity to share their experiences and collaborate and to attend follow-up training sessions.