

Project SUCCESS

EVALUATION REPORT SUMMARY

September 2004

Prepared by:

Amy Bemis, M.A.
Evaluation Consultant

Carol Freeman, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement
College of Education and Human Development
University of Minnesota

Summary of Important Findings

The results of the evaluation conducted at the end of the 2003-04 school year illustrate that Project SUCCESS is indeed a success. Responses from all groups participating in the surveys—students, core English teachers, staff, parents, and alumni; 4,900 in all—reflect very positive feelings toward the program and, more importantly, recognition of the many outcomes it achieves. For many of the survey items, the results were statistically significantly higher for students of color and for students from schools located in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods (i.e., Anne Sullivan Middle School, Franklin Middle School and North High School). Following are examples of survey results that address many of the program’s main objectives.

Future Planning

- More than 85% of Minneapolis middle school students in Project SUCCESS indicated the program “helped me think about my future.”
- Overall, nearly three-quarters (73%) of high school students reported that Project SUCCESS “helped me create a plan for after graduation.”
- When asked who assisted them in planning for their future, 88% of Minneapolis high school students rated Project SUCCESS ahead of friends, counselors and teachers and second only to parents or guardians.
- Nearly 82% of high school students said the program had “inspired and motivated” them to pursue their dreams.
- More than half of Project SUCCESS alumni from Minneapolis high schools said that the program had had an impact on what they had been doing since they graduated.

Impact on School Life

- Three-quarters (75%) of Minneapolis English teachers believed that Project SUCCESS had a positive impact on students’ relationships with teachers.
- Over 80% of Minneapolis and St. Paul English teachers believed that Project SUCCESS had a positive impact on students’ relationships with other students.
- Nearly half (45%) of Minneapolis English teachers and over one-third of their students perceived that the program had a positive influence on students’ overall attendance at school.
- Nearly 40% of English teachers and 25% of parents perceived Project SUCCESS as having a positive impact on students’ overall grades.

Understanding of Self and Others

- Nearly 80% of middle and high school students indicated that Project SUCCESS “helped me understand classmates who have different perspectives and experiences.”
- Three-quarters (75%) of middle and high school students said the program “helped me understand myself better.”

Theater Experience

- Project SUCCESS students are introduced to live theater, often for the first time. Of those who attended a play, 98% of Minneapolis high school students believed this had been a valuable experience, as did 99% of parents and 100% of teachers.
- Project SUCCESS students spend more time with their families as a result of being able to attend plays together. Nearly all (95%) of the parents who attended plays with their child(ren) reported that their family had discussed the plays after attending.

Other Program Components

- Over 92% of middle and high school students, parents, and alumni believed the in-class workshops had been a valuable experience, as did 100% of English teachers.
- Over 90% of parents and students who participated, as well as 100% of English teachers and alumni, believed that the college tours were valuable.
- Over 80% of students who participated, over 90% of parents and alumni, and 100% of English teachers reported that the after school activities had been valuable.

It is clear from the survey results that those who participate regard the program highly and value each of its components—plays, workshops, after school activities, and college tours. It will be critical to continue outreach and funding efforts so that even more students and families can benefit from the important opportunities that Project SUCCESS has to offer.