THE TUTORING PARTNERSHIP: IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOME EVALUATION

COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

The educational achievement gap in Minnesota is one of the largest in the country. Saint Paul Public Schools' student achievement data show that the majority of students are not meeting the minimum state educational standards in math and reading. Disparities in achievement are evident for students of color and students from low-income households, and the population of students requiring extra support is growing across the district.

PROMISING SOLUTION

The Tutoring Partnership was a network of 28 community-based programs that provided intentional academic tutoring interventions to students in Saint Paul and Minneapolis. In the 2013-2014 school year, with a Social Innovation Fund (SIF) award, the Tutoring Partnership further refined its service to improve program quality through professional development, tutor training, and technical assistance. Through SIF, the goal of the Tutoring Partnership was to ensure students who are more at risk for academic challenges have access to higher quality programs, and subsequently, better academic outcomes.

At-a-Glance

CNCS Program: Social Innovation Fund

Intervention: Tutoring Partnership

Subgrantee: Saint Paul Public Schools Foundation

Intermediary: Greater Twin Cities United Way

Focus Area: Youth Development

Communities Served: Saint Paul and Minneapolis, MN

Study Design: Difference in Difference

Evaluator: Child Trends & Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota

Level of Evidence Achieved: Preliminary

EVALUATION DESIGN

Child Trends, in partnership with the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota, conducted the study to build on previous research by examining both student-level and program-level outcomes. The study also documented and described the implementation by examining the selection of programs, up-take of services, implementation successes and challenges, and perceptions of the services' effectiveness.

EVALUATION RESULTS

- Tutoring programs were satisfied with the Tutoring Partnership services, and found them to be helpful to their programs
- Requiring participation in Tutoring Partnership services such as professional development workshops, technical assistance, and tutor training increased uptake compared to those who were not required to participate
- Overall, tutored students made greater gains in the year they were tutored. These gains were present for low-income and higher-income students, and for students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds
- Low-income and higher income students saw significant growth in reading skills when combined over the course of the 3 year study.

USING FINDINGS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Initiatives and programs offering tutor training may need to provide additional incentives, make trainings highly practical and hands on, and provide training at a variety of times and locations to boost tutor participation in training opportunities.

While tutors were highly educated, their language and racial/ethnic backgrounds did not match the students they were working with, who were primarily students of color, and more than 40 percent were English Language Learners. Tutoring programs should try building cultural competency, awareness of racial biases, and relationship building skills as a key aspect of their training.

Lastly, including measures for different domains of student outcomes, such as social-emotional, behavioral, and/or interpersonal outcomes, would provide a more comprehensive picture of the role of tutoring in students' lives.

> "Technical support made us thoughtful about the way we are looking at our data. It's influenced how we think about and make changes to our program."
> *-Program staff interview*

Full report and methodology:
nationalservice.gov/research

The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

The Social Innovation Fund (SIF), a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), combines public and private resources to grow the impact of innovative, community-based solutions that have compelling evidence of improving the lives of people in low-income communities throughout the U.S. The SIF invests in three priority areas: economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development.

The content of this brief was drawn from the full evaluation report submitted to CNCS by the grantee/subgrantee. The section of the brief that discusses evaluation use includes contribution of the grantee/subgrantee. All original content from the report is attributable to its authors.

To access the full evaluation report and learn more about CNCS, please visit nationalservice.gov/research.