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ABSTRACT

Project Dropout Reduction through Employment, Achievement, and Motivation (DREAM) provided 445 Spanish-speaking limited-English-proficient students with English-as-a-second-language (ESL), Native Language Arts (NLA), and bilingual content area courses at South Bronx High School (New York) during the 1989-90 school year. Project DREAM met its objectives in the following areas: (1) NLA; (2) attendance; (3) dropout prevention; (4) improving student self-image; (5) guidance counseling; (6) staff development; (7) curriculum development; and (8) parent involvement. The program partially met its objectives for ESL and content area subjects. A lack of statistical data prevented the assessment of the objective for suspension rate. The project's strength lay in providing support services which helped ease the students' transition to life in the United States and fostered pride in themselves and their native cultures. Statistical data are presented in one table. (FMW)

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OREA Report

DROPOUT REDUCTION THROUGH EMPLOYMENT,
ACHIEVEMENT, AND MOTIVATION
(PROJECT DREAM)

Grant Number: T003A90063

1989-90

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT



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8/90

DROPOUT REDUCTION THROUGH EMPLOYMENT,
ACHIEVEMENT, AND MOTIVATION
(PROJECT DREAM)
1989-90

SUMMARY

- Project DREAM was fully implemented. During the 1989-90 school year, students of limited English proficiency (LEP) received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), and bilingual content area subjects.
- The project met its N.L.A. objectives and its objectives for attendance, dropout prevention, student self image, guidance counseling, staff and curriculum development, and parental involvement. It partially met its E.S.L. and content area objectives. OREA could not assess the objective for suspension rate because of a lack of data.

Dropout Reduction Through Employment, Achievement, and Motivation (Project DREAM) completed the first year of implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII funding. Project DREAM provided E.S.L., N.L.A., and bilingual content area classes to Spanish-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP) at South Bronx High School.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of Dropout Reduction through Employment, Achievement, and Motivation (Project DREAM), a program funded under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.). Project DREAM provided Spanish-speaking, limited English proficient (LEP) students with English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), and bilingual content area courses at South Bronx High School.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

The project served 445 students during the course of the year. Of this number, 310 attended both semesters, 106 attended fall only, and 29 attended spring only. (Total fall attendance was 416; total spring attendance 339.) Program students were recent immigrants from Puerto Rico and Latin America, most of whom were eligible for the federally funded free-lunch program.

STAFF

Project DREAM's staff consisted of a project director, a resource teacher, a case manager, and three educational assistants. All were bilingual in Spanish and English. The project director had a master's degree and a professional diploma in administration and supervision; the resource teacher, case manager, and one educational assistant had bachelor's degrees; the two other educational assistants were working toward a bachelor's degree.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

Students were eligible for the program if they scored at or below the fortieth percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) or were referred by a guidance counselor or other school staff member.

Participating students enrolled in E.S.L.; N.L.A.; and bilingual courses in social studies, mathematics, and science. The program also offered specialized courses in native language and computer literacy.

Project DREAM provided students with extracurricular activities and career and personal counseling. It also offered curriculum and staff development and parental involvement activities.

III. OUTCOMES

INSTRUCTIONAL

English as a Second Language

- As a result of participating in the program, E.S.L. students will make statistically significant gains in English language proficiency.

Matching LAB data were available for 239 students. The mean gain was 5.1 Normal Curve Equivalent (N.C.E.s) (s.d.=9.9), and analysis indicated a significant ($p<.05$) improvement from pretest to posttest. Project DREAM met its first E.S.L. objective.

- At least 70 percent of the students will score at or above the passing criterion of 65 in E.S.L. and E.S.L. reading each semester.

Data were available for 272 students in E.S.L. classes in the fall semester and 256 in the spring. In the fall, 69 percent of these achieved a passing grade of at least 65; in the spring, 66 percent did so.

Data were available for 256 students in E.S.L. reading classes in the fall semester and 223 in the spring. In the fall, 70 percent of these achieved a passing grade of at least 65; in the spring, 72.6 percent did so.

The project partially met its second E.S.L. objective.

Native Language Arts

- As a result of participating in the Native Language Arts class for illiterate students, designed specifically to improve literacy in Spanish, 75 percent of the students will show statistically significant gains in reading and writing in Spanish.

Matching data were available for five of eight students who took an N.L.A. literacy class. The mean gain was 22.4 points (s.d.=11.4), and analysis indicated a significant ($p<.05$) improvement from pretest to posttest scores. The project met its first N.L.A. objective.

- At least 70 percent of the students will score at or above the passing criterion of 65 in native language arts each semester.

Data were available for 365 students in the fall semester and 290 in the spring. In the fall, 84 percent of these achieved a passing grade of at least 65; in the spring, 82 percent did so.

The project met its second N.L.A. objective.

Content Area Subjects

- Students participating in the program will score at or above the passing criterion of 65 in bilingual math, science, and social studies at a rate that is equal to that of non-program students in comparable mainstream classes.

During both semesters, the program students' passing rates in mathematics and science were equal to or greater than ($p < .05$) those of mainstream students. This was not the case in social studies. (See Table 1.) The project partially met its first content area objective.

- The percentage of program students passing their Regents Competency Tests (R.C.T.s) in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and global history will be equal to that of mainstream students.

Project DREAM met its second content area objective for mathematics in the spring, and for science in the fall (although only one program student took the R.C.T. in science). (See Table 1.) The project did not provide any data for reading or writing R.C.T.s.

- The percentage of students passing the Regents examination in Sequential Math and Biology will be equal to or higher than that of mainstream students.

The passing rates of program students taking the Regents in mathematics and biology were equal to or greater than ($p < .05$) those of mainstream students. The project met its third content area objective.

TABLE 1

Student Achievement in Content Area Courses and Examinations

Subject	Fall Semester			Spring Semester		
	Program		Mainstream	Program		Mainstream
	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Percent Passing
<u>Content Area</u>						
Mathematics	205	57.3 ^a	55.1	249	55.8 ^a	57.0
Science	212	75.0 ^b	67.8	228	59.2 ^a	63.8
Social Studies	21	72.2	80.1	272	56.2 ^a	57.0
<u>R.C.T.</u>						
Math	30	50.0	67.6	156	45.5 ^a	46.0
Science	1	100.0 ^a	43.8	128	53.1	65.0
History	7	14.3	80.6	45	42.2	81.0
<u>Regents</u>						
Biology	N/A	N/A	N/A	26	23.1 ^a	20.0
Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	59	54.2 ^b	37.0

^aPassing rate does not significantly differ from that of mainstream students.

^bPassing rate is significantly greater than that of mainstream students ($p < .05$).

- Student achievement in mathematics and science was fairly consistent; it was less consistent in social studies/history.
- The project partially met its objectives for content area subjects and R.C.T.s. It fully met its objective for Regents examinations.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL

Attendance

- As a result of participating in the program, students' attendance will be significantly higher than the attendance of mainstream students.

The program students' (N=319) attendance rate of 90 percent was significantly greater ($p < .05$) than the 76 percent attendance rate of mainstream students. The project met its attendance objective.

Dropout Prevention

- As a result of participation in the program, the dropout rate of program students will be lower than that of mainstream students.

The dropout rate of program students was four percent in the fall and two percent in the spring. During both semesters, the dropout rate was significantly lower than that of mainstream students ($p < .05$). The project met its dropout prevention objective.

Suspension Rate

- As a result of participating in the program, students will improve their interpersonal skills, which will result in fewer suspensions and incident reports.

The total number of incident reports involving project students fell from five in the fall to four in the spring. However, the project did not report the number of suspensions. Therefore, OREA could not evaluate this objective.

Student Self-Image

- As a result of participating in the program, students will develop a more positive self-image.

Upon entering the program, students filled out an attitudinal survey which assessed their level of positive feelings about themselves. They then filled out the survey again after the program year was completed. A comparison of scores indicated that the students' self-esteem had increased significantly ($p < .05$). The project met its objective for students' self-image.

Guidance and Counseling

- The case manager will conduct weekly group guidance sessions and monthly individual guidance sessions.

The case manager provided 166 program students with individual guidance counseling at least once and as often as five times. The case manager also provided twelve group guidance sessions on subjects ranging from basic school orientation to AIDS awareness and drug abuse. The project met its objective for guidance and counseling.

Staff Development

- One hundred percent of staff members will be trained in educational aspects related to E.S.L., N.L.A., bilingual education, and content areas through attendance at a minimum of two workshops, conferences, or courses at institutions of higher education.

All project staff attended at least two workshops, conferences, or courses on pertinent topics. Project DREAM met its staff development objective.

Curriculum Development

- By the end of the first semester, a curriculum will be developed for a Native Language Arts class for students illiterate in their native language.

Program staff developed an N.L.A. curriculum for those illiterate in their native Spanish. The curriculum covered basic grammar to essay writing. The project met its objective for curriculum development.

Parental Involvement

- The Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee will hold at least two meetings per year of the project, and the case manager will provide monthly parent support group meetings.

The Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee met once each semester. The case manager held monthly parent support group meetings on various topics. Parents also attended trips, award ceremonies, a luncheon, and a parents' retreat. Project DREAM met its parental involvement objective.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In its first year, Project DREAM provided more than 400 Spanish-speaking LEP students at South Bronx High School with supplementary instruction in E.S.L., N.L.A., and the content area subjects. The project met its N.L.A. objectives and its objectives for attendance, dropout prevention, student self-image, guidance and counseling, staff and curriculum development, and parental involvement. It partially met its E.S.L. and content area objectives. OREA could not assess the objective for suspension rate because of a lack of data.

Project DREAM's strength lay in support services which helped ease the students' transition to life in the United States and fostered pride in themselves and their native cultures.