

Dearborn Community Foundation

Project Connect!

Two-year Evaluation

Submitted January 2008 by



STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP INCORPORATED

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Executive Summary

Two-Year Evaluation Report

This is the fourth six-month evaluation report on Project Connect, Dearborn County's CAPE III project. It was launched in January 2006.

Project Connect, whose creation was overseen by the Dearborn Community Foundation (DCF), covers the county's three school corporations: Sunman-Dearborn, South Dearborn and Lawrenceburg.

The project's long-term goal is that all high school students graduate so that Dearborn County can compete in a modern, knowledge-based economy. Short-term goals include reducing the dropout rate, improving attendance rates and increasing the academic success of at-risk youth. Project Connect has two components.

The first, Connect Counselor, started in January 2006. In this project, counselors assist families whose children have too many unexcused absences. The counselors work with the families to discover the obstacles preventing their children from attending school and then find local services to assist the families.

The second component, Homework Connection, began in the fall of 2006. It is an after-school tutoring program to assist at-risk students in completing their homework and succeeding in school. Students work with teachers and other mentors. It is an extension of an existing, successful program at Lawrenceburg High School.

Strategic Development Group (SDG) was hired by DCF to evaluate Project Connect. After meeting with representatives from DCF and the school corporations, SDG designed a three-part evaluation program: implementation, participation and impact.

This report, which covers the six-month period ending in December 2007, focuses on getting initial, baseline information on the programs through surveys and other evaluation instruments. The end-of-year report, due in July, will include the results of a follow-up survey and other instruments to determine students' progress.

Implementation

Both of the program components have been implemented as outlined in the grant application.

For Connect Counselor, two of the three counselors as last year remain in their positions; one for each school corporation. Lawrenceburg has a new connect counselor, Shawn Lightner, and a new administrator, Bill Snyder. All have been working with students with unexplained absences.

School Corp.	Number of Schools Covered	Intervention After
South Dearborn	5	3 unexcused absences or under 95% attendance rate
Sunman-Dearborn	6	7 absences
Lawrenceburg	4	More than 1 unexcused absence; D or F in one or more classes; or students/parents ask for support

The connect counselors cover two high schools, four middle schools and nine elementary schools across the three school corporations.

For Homework Connection, the after-school program is being offered at 11 schools across Dearborn County. Schools either direct the student toward the sessions based on performance problems or make attendance entirely voluntary.

School Corp.	Staff Utilized	Schools Offering Program	Days Offered Per Week
South Dearborn	26	4	4
Sunman-Dearborn	24	6	2
Lawrenceburg	8	1	3

Participation

For Connect Counselor, the three counselors have worked with about 243 students in the county. These numbers represent only those students who received face-to-face help over a period of time, and not the many children who had shorter-term contact with the counselors.

School Corp.	Students Served	Number of Schools	Referrals Made
South Dearborn	48	5	21 - Probation Dept. 6 - Child Services 1 - Counseling
Sunman-Dearborn	70	5	6 - Counseling 1 - Pregnancy services
Lawrenceburg	125	4	7 - Probation Dept.

Additionally, 42 students were referred for additional help to child services, counseling or other agencies.

For Homework Connection, about 150 students are served on days when homework sessions are offered at all 11 schools.

School Corp.	Average Number of Students Served Daily
South Dearborn	58
Sunman-Dearborn	74
Lawrenceburg	18

Impact

Because this is the “mid-year” report, this evaluation will focus on implementation and participation. The June report will focus on impact.

Although these two projects serve the same goal, they have different staff, locations, participating students, etc. This report maintains that distinction by dedicating Part 1 to Connect Counselor and Part 2 to Homework Connection.

Looking ahead to June, two of the school corporations have provided the initial surveys and other baseline data to make meaningful comparisons in the end-of-the-year report. SDG will continue to work with the third school corporation to improve the data flow.

Micro and Macro Performance Indicators

Project Connect's evaluation program has two types of assessments – micro and macro. Micro instruments, such as the surveys, interviews and test scores, provide immediate information on how Project Connect programs impact the lives of individual residents.

Macro instruments, on the other hand, take a larger view – how do the programs affect the community as whole? It must be mentioned, though, that as the evaluation moves to a more macro level, it becomes increasingly difficult to separate Project Connect's influence from many other factors in the community.

The original grant application listed both micro and macro performance indicators. Evaluation of micro level assessments can be found under the reports for the two projects.

This section of the report covers macro items. Some information is contingent upon reporting cycles from the schools and the Indiana Department of Education.

Please note that any influence Project Connect has on students is unlikely to show up in macro indicators until later rounds of data.

Graduation Rate

Year	East Central HS	South Dearborn HS	Lawrenceburg HS	State Average
2005-06*	83.5%	81.0%	75.4%	76.5%
2004-05	94.3%	90.1%	86.0%	89.8%
2003-04	90.5%	85.8%	84.9%	89.8%
2002-03	90.7%	84.8%	81.5%	91.2%
2001-02	92.9%	88.5%	81.5%	91.1%
2000-01	90.6%	87.7%	93.7%	90.1%

Source: Indiana Department of Education

*Cohort rate

The above table shows the graduation rates for all three corporations dropped about 10 percent from the previous year. However, that information is misleading due to a new state-required method of tabulating graduation rates.

The graduation rate is calculated from the number of students who drop out in each of the grades 9 through 12. A school with no dropouts in a given year has a graduation rate of 100. Graduation rates can fluctuate from year to year, especially in small schools.

Indiana began using this new graduation rate calculation starting with the 2005-06 school year (Class of 2006). The Indiana General Assembly adopted a “cohort rate” in 2003. This method allows for precise measurement of dropouts, using unique student identification numbers. The Class of 2006 was the first group of high school students who could be tracked since their freshman year.

The new rate is lower because it is calculated based on the actual number of students who graduate divided by the actual number of students who are expected to graduate.

While Indiana’s graduation rate of 76.5 percent seems low, only 11.2 percent of Indiana students were considered dropouts for the 2005-06 school year. A non-graduate category includes students who earned a GED (3.2 percent), a special education certificate (1.1 percent), a non-diploma course completion certificate (0.7 percent) or are still enrolled in school (7.4 percent).

In summary, the 2005-06 rates should be considered the new baseline for tracking changes in the future. Graduation rates for the 2006-07 school year have not yet been released by the Indiana Department of Education at the time of this report.

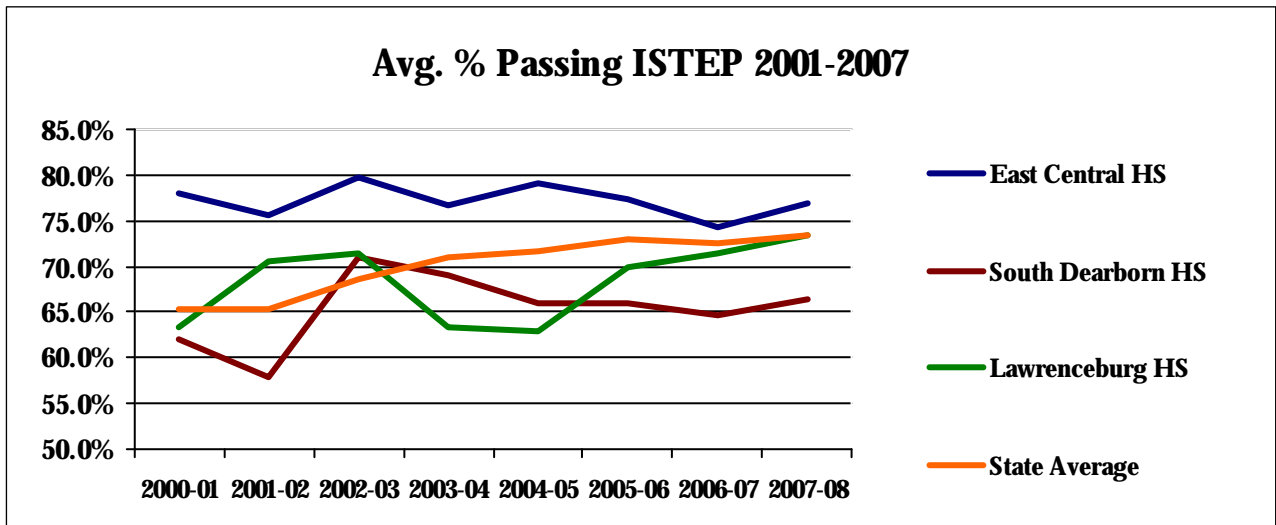
Average Percent Passing ISTEP (all tested grades)

Year	East Central HS	South Dearborn HS	Lawrenceburg HS	State Average
2007-08	76.8%	66.4%	73.5%	73.3%
2006-07	74.3%	64.6%	71.5%	72.6%
2005-06	77.3%	66.0%	70.0%	72.9%
2004-05	79.2%	65.9%	62.9%	71.7%
2003-04	76.7%	69.1%	63.3%	71.0%
2002-03	79.7%	71.0%	71.4%	68.7%
2001-02	75.6%	57.8%	70.6%	65.4%
2000-01	77.9%	62.0%	63.4%	65.4%

Source: Indiana Department of Education

The above table gives percentages for students in all grades who passed the ISTEP exam for East Central, South Dearborn and Lawrenceburg school corporations.

East Central is well above the state average. South Dearborn’s rate has continued to grow but is still well behind the Indiana rate. The most recent results show that Lawrenceburg has surpassed the state average by a small amount.



Percent of Graduates Pursuing College Education

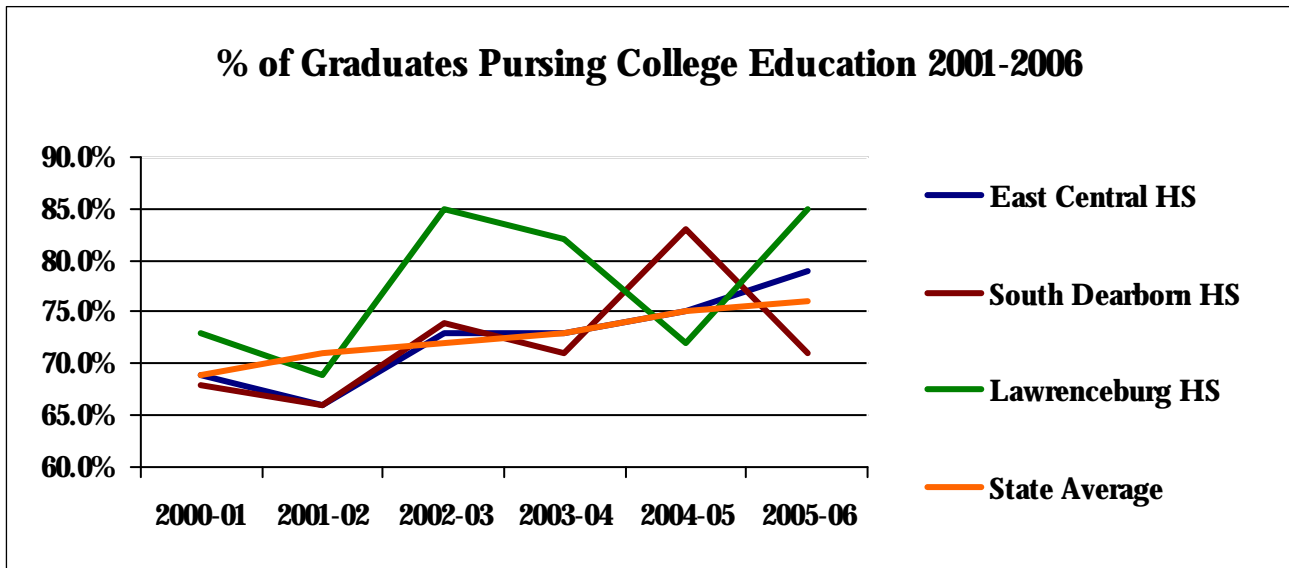
Year	East Central HS	South Dearborn HS	Lawrenceburg HS	State Average
2005-06	79%	71%	85%	76%
2004-05	75%	83%	72%	75%
2003-04	73%	71%	82%	73%
2002-03	73%	74%	85%	72%
2001-02	66%	66%	69%	71%
2000-01	69%	68%	73%	69%

Source: Indiana Department of Education

The above table shows the percentage of high school students who have announced their intention to attend college. The Indiana Department of Education has not yet released the data for the 2006-07 school year.

The rates increased for East Central and Lawrenceburg, both of whom remain above the state average. The rate dropped considerably for South Dearborn, which is below the Indiana average.

The graph below is interesting in that it contrasts the steady increase of the state average (in orange) versus the fluctuating rates of the local school corporations.



Educational Attainment – Age 25 & Over

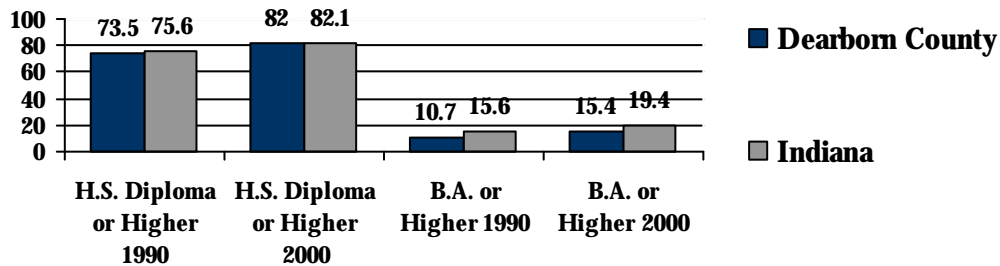
Place	H.S. Diploma or Higher		B.A. or Higher	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Indiana	75.6	82.1	15.6	19.4
Dearborn County	73.5	82.0	10.7	15.4
Caesar Creek township	82.1	96.2	7.2	7.5
Center township	71.8	79.0	10.1	15.7
Clay township	71.0	73.8	5.3	6.6
Harrison township	72.6	83.2	10.6	16.1
Hogan township	69.1	80.9	6.8	11.8
Jackson township	70.2	75.3	6.7	12.0
Kelso township	75.5	84.8	7.2	16.3
Lawrenceburg township	70.9	78.8	14.4	15.6
Logan township	80.4	87.6	9.7	14.5
Manchester township	67.8	81.0	7.8	8.9
Miller township	83.2	92.2	18.2	25.2
Sparta township	72.8	76.3	4.6	10.7
Washington township	78.2	77.1	3.5	8.9
York township	68.8	84.9	6.5	9.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

The above table shows educational attainment levels for Dearborn County as a whole. The high school graduation rate is only slightly below the state average by a fraction of a percentage point. The percent of adults with a college degree, however, remains less than the state number.

Certain townships in Dearborn County exhibit higher numbers of educational attainment. Caesar Creek, Harrison, Kelso, Logan, Miller and York townships all have higher percentages of high school graduates than the state (as shown in **green** in the table). Only Miller township has a higher percentage of graduates than the state.

Educational Attainment 1990-2000



Number of Students who have Dropped Out				
Year	East Central HS	South Dearborn HS	Lawrenceburg HS	State Average
2005-06	27	31	9	N/A
2004-05	31	27	17	N/A
2003-04	35	36	18	N/A

Source: Indiana Department of Education

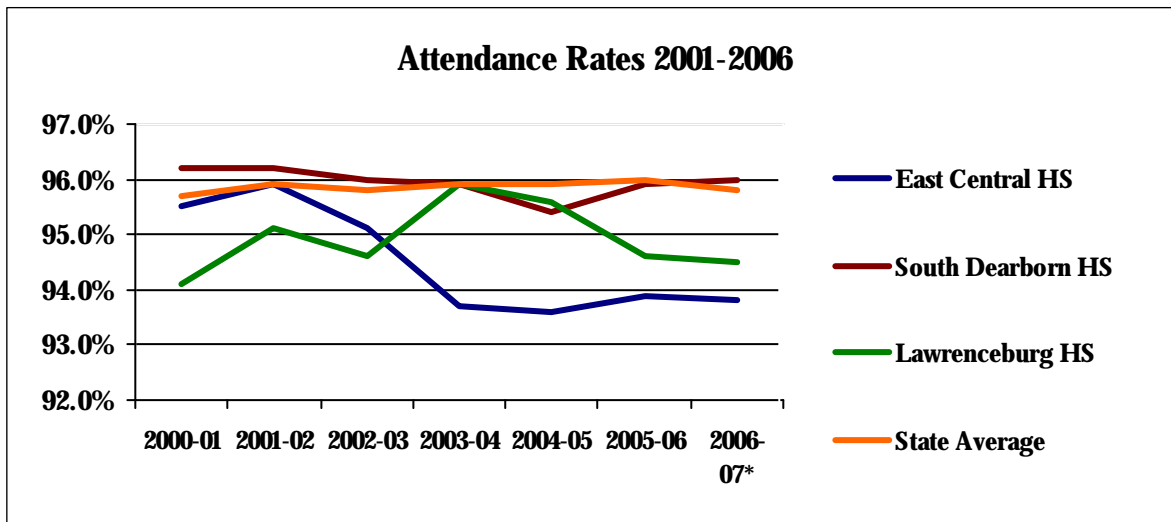
Lawrenceburg experienced a notable decline in the number of students who dropped out in the 2005-06 school year. The other two high schools had very little change.

Attendance Rates				
Year	East Central HS	South Dearborn HS	Lawrenceburg HS	State Average
2006-07*	93.8%	96.0%	94.5%	95.8%
2005-06	93.9%	95.9%	94.6%	96.0%
2004-05	93.6%	95.4%	95.6%	95.9%
2003-04	93.7%	95.9%	95.9%	95.9%
2002-03	95.1%	96.0%	94.6%	95.8%
2001-02	95.9%	96.2%	95.1%	95.9%
2000-01	95.5%	96.2%	94.1%	95.7%

Source: Indiana Department of Education

*Preliminary Data

Attendance rates refer to the percentage of days attended by all students. Preliminary data suggests that attendance rates improved slightly for South Dearborn and dropped slightly for Lawrenceburg and East Central. Only South Dearborn is above the state average attendance rate.



Attendance-Related Suspensions

Number of Students with More than 10 Unexcused Days Absent

Year	East Central HS	South Dearborn HS	Lawrenceburg HS	State Average
2005-06	300	47	34	N/A
2004-05	296	50	28	N/A
2003-04	234	28	11	N/A

Source: Indiana Department of Education

Number of Students Suspended

Year	East Central HS	South Dearborn HS	Lawrenceburg HS	State Average
2005-06	105	93	54	N/A
2004-05	38	100	59	N/A
2003-04	51	98	71	N/A

Source: Indiana Department of Education

Because the school systems vary greatly in size, there is no point in comparing unexcused absences and suspensions *between* schools. But these numbers will make a solid baseline for tracking countywide changes in the future.

Part 1

Connect Counselor

Summary: Connect Counselor

Implementation

Two of the three connect counselors who were hired at the start of the program in January 2006 remain on the job and continue running their programs as outlined in the grant application. Lawrenceburg has a new connect counselor, Shawn Lightner, and a new school corporation program administrator, Bill Snyder. No counselor reported large shifts in their goals or strategies.

Details on the counselors and how they administer their programs can be found in the following pages.

Participation

The three connect counselors have worked with about 243 students in the county. These numbers represent only those students who received face-to-face help over a period of time, and not the many children who had shorter-term contact with the counselors. For example, the South Dearborn counselor contacted 406 students and worked closely with 48.

School Corp.	Students Served	Number of Schools	Referrals Made
South Dearborn	48	5	21 - Probation Dept. 6 - Child Services 1 - Counseling
Sunman-Dearborn	70	5	6 - Counseling 1 - Pregnancy services
Lawrenceburg	125	4	7 - Probation Dept.

Compared to the June-December reporting period from a year ago, South Dearborn counselors served 18 more students and Sunman-Dearborn served 23 less. Lawrenceburg provided an estimate, not an exact count, of 125, which would be a substantial increase over the 45 reported last year.

Impact

For the most part, both the quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed at the year-end report in June. In the meantime, the counselors are recording baseline data by doing initial (pre-treatment) surveys of students and counselors. A summary of the initial surveys can be found under the section, Stakeholder Surveys: Connect Counselor.

The following tables shows the initial surveys recorded so far on the Web site provided by SDG.

Number of Initial Surveys Turned In - Overview

Survey Type	All Schools - Initial
Connect counselor	38
Student	39

Observations & Recommendations: Connect Counselor

Observations

- ❑ Many referrals are received late in the semester after the student has accumulated enough absences to draw the attention of school administrators. This means the counselor has little time to establish a relationship with the student before winter break (when an evaluation report is due). For this reason SDG shifted the impact evaluation to the end of the school year.
- ❑ The new connect counselor has not had the chance to meet with the two experienced ones; a sit-down among the three would probably be useful.
- ❑ SDG appreciates the work of connect counselors Nani Schwier and Jennifer Wilhelm in creating Excel sheets to assist with tracking students.
- ❑ Sunman-Dearborn has recently implemented, with the help of an outside grant, counseling for those students who test positive in a school regulated random drug screen program. The counseling program is run by the connect counselor and provides the counseling at no charge, at the school. Drug use/abuse can be a factor in poor academics and attendance. It is hoped that this program will provide assistance to students and thus result in increased student success.

Recommendations

- ❑ In selecting the students to survey, be careful to get a mix of gender, nationalities, tough cases, easy cases, etc.
- ❑ Connect counselors will be responsible for getting attendance figures for the students they are tracking from the main office.
- ❑ Lawrenceburg should make an exact count of the students who see the counselor at least several times.

Methodology: Connect Counselor

The grant application outlined specific performance indicators. The overall goal of the Connect Counselor program is to improve attendance rates of at-risk students. The outcomes to be measured during the grant cycle are:

- Reduction in dropout rates
- Reduction in unexcused absences
- Improvement in overall attendance rates
- Improvement in graduation rates
- Reduction in attendance-related suspensions

Most of these outcomes will be measured at the *macro* level. That is, they will track the combined rates of all the schools in Dearborn County, not individual students. The specific performance indicators as outlined in the grant application are:

- Number of students who drop out of school before graduating
- Number of unexcused absences
- School attendance
- Graduation rates
- Number of suspensions
- Number of F's
- Number of seniors who graduated

Some of these indicators will be tracked for individual students. Before the program started, SDG met with representatives from the school corporations to review goals and design evaluation tools.

Besides the evaluation goals listed in the grant application, the group decided it would be beneficial to track the progress of individual students using only their student identification numbers as identifiers.

A system of “initial” and “final” surveys were created and refined online. The surveys included:

CC Survey – Connect Counselors – Initial is completed by the connect counselor at the start of their relationship with the student.

CC Survey – Connect Counselors – Final is completed by the connect counselor at the completion of their work with the student.

CC Survey – Student - Initial is completed by the student as they enter the program.

CC Survey – Student – Final is completed by the student when the connect counselor has completed their work with the student and their family.

Implementation: Connect Counselor

The following tables show how each corporation customized implementation of the Connect Counselor program.

Sunman – Dearborn School Corporation	
Name of counselor	Jennifer Wilhelm
E-mail & phone number	jwilhelm@sunmandearborn.k12.in.us 812-676-4811 Ext: 1908
Date of hire	-
Background information	Licensed by the Ohio Social Work and Counselor Board. Bachelor of Social Work, Northern Kentucky University 1999. 2000-2005 – School-Based Services Case Manager, Family Service.
Schools to be involved	Sunman-Dearborn Community Schools: Bright Elementary School K-4 North Dearborn Elementary School K-4 Sunman Elementary School K-4 Sunman-Dearborn Intermediate School 5-6 Sunman-Dearborn Middle School 7-8 East Central High School 9-12 (The primary school involved is EC but she is available to all schools in the corporation.)
Criteria for selecting students for program	At the seventh absence the counselor will intervene.
Number of students anticipated in program	125 is an estimate (we already have 78 at EC and 8 S-DMS).

Lawrenceburg School Corporation	
Name of counselor	Shawn Lightner
E-mail & phone number	slightner@lburg.k12.in.us 812-537-7219 ext. 1117
Date of hire	August, 2007
Background information	Worked as a school coach for five years and as a teaching assistant and substitute.
Schools to be involved	Lawrenceburg Schools: Greendale Middle School 6-8 Lawrenceburg High School 9-12 Central Elementary School 3-5 Lawrenceburg Primary School PK-2
Criteria for selecting students for program	One criteria is working with seniors to make sure they stay in school. At the middle and high school look at the number of absences and target students at the high school who are in danger of losing credits.

Number of students anticipated in program	Anticipate 10-15 serious cases per building with maybe as many as 25-30 at the high school and middle school to begin the year until he gets some of them on track rather quickly.
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South Dearborn School Corporation	
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Name of counselor	Nani Schwier
E-mail & phone number	nani.schwier@sdsc.k12.in.us 812-926-1140; 812-584-2996/812-432-5438
Date of hire	Jan. 1, 2006
Background information	1996 – BA in Social Work & Social Psychology 1996-1997 – Community Mental Health Center Intensive Youth Services Home and school based case manager 1997-2005 – George Junior Republic Preventative Aftercare Home and school based case manager 2005-2006 – Lifeline Youth and Family Services Home and school based case manager All above cases were Probation and DCS referrals.
Schools to be involved	South Dearborn Community Schools: Aurora Elementary K-6 Dillsboro Elementary K-6 Manchester Elementary K-6 Moores Hill Elementary K-6 South Dearborn Middle 7-8
Criteria for selecting students for program	Criteria for selecting students for program (number of absences, etc): 1. Unexcused absences are monitored and counted per school year. 2. Connect counselor continues to meet regularly with selected students who received these interventions last year and will meet regularly with those new students selected this year. Parent contacts are made as needed. 3. At 3 unexcused absences a notice/letter is sent to parent and connect counselor's services are offered. 4. At 6 unexcused absences a notice/letter is sent to parent and a request made to conference. 5. At 9 unexcused absences a notice/letter is sent to parent, parent warned of potential probation referral, and request made to conference. 6. Continued chronic absenteeism results in a probation referral.
Number of students anticipated in program	8-10 selected students per school

Stakeholder Surveys: Connect Counselor

The evaluation system was designed to survey students when they first entered the program, and then again when the connect counselor finished working with them. Before and after surveys would also be given to the student's connect counselor.

Not much useful information can be gained if there is no final survey. Recognizing the difficulty in getting both before and after survey sets, SDG has recommended a compromise. Instead of trying for all participants, connect counselors should select and track about 25 percent of the students. For this compromise to work, the connect counselors must make sure to get complete sets for the smaller sample size.

The table below provides an overview for all Connect Counselor surveys turned in by the three school corporations.

Number of Initial Surveys Turned In - Overview

Survey Type	All Schools - Initial
Connect counselor	38
Student	39

Number of Initial Surveys Turned In - By School Corporation

	Lawrenceburg	Sunman – Dearborn	South Dearborn
Connect counselors - Initial	10	14	14
Student – Initial	12	14	13

The same students will be asked to complete a final survey at the end of the school year. Ideally, there would be the exact same number of surveys for counselors and students. For example, the inequity for Lawrenceburg means that the counselor has not recorded any baseline opinions about two of the students who completed initial surveys. This will make it harder to track progress for the next report.

The following table summarizes the results of the initial surveys. The same students and counselors will evaluate their progress for the next report in June.

Connect Counselor and School Information			
	Lawrenceburg	South Dearborn	Sunman-Dearborn
Connect Counselor:	Shawn Lightner	Nani Schwier	Jenny Wilhelm
School (# of Surveys):	Lawrenceburg High School (10)	Dillsboro Elem. (4) Manchester Elem. (3) Moores Hill Elem. (3) S. Dearborn MS (4)	East Central HS (14)
Grade Level:	9 th (1) 10 th (6) 11 th (3)	3 rd (2) 5 th (4) 6 th (4) 7 th (3) 8 th (1)	9 th (5) 10 th (4) 11 th (4) 12 th (1)
Dates Submitted:	1/15/2008	8/30/2007 – 9/26/2007	9/10/2007 – 12/3/2007

Connect Counselor Survey Questions

How would you rate this student at the start of your relationship?				
	Lawrenceburg	South Dearborn	Sunman-Dearborn	All School Corporations
General Behavior				
Very Satisfactory	20%	29%	0%	16%
Satisfactory	70%	50%	93%	71%
Unsatisfactory	10%	21%	7%	13%
Cooperative Skills				
Very Satisfactory	30%	29%	0%	18%
Satisfactory	60%	71%	93%	76%
Unsatisfactory	10%	0%	7%	6%
Self-esteem				
Very Satisfactory	20%	0%	0%	5%
Satisfactory	70%	71%	100%	82%
Unsatisfactory	10%	29%	0%	13%

In one example from the table above, only 16 percent of all the students who took part in the program had “very satisfactory” general behavior, according to the three connect counselors.

In the following table, the counselors list their reasons for giving unsatisfactory marks to some students.

What factors went into any behaviors you noted were unsatisfactory e.g., defiance, apathy, disorganization, etc?	
Lawrenceburg:	Immaturity
	Lack of motivation to succeed.
	Lack of social skills and knowing of social norms.
South Dearborn:	Behavior appropriate at school
	Behavior is appropriate
	No behavioral concerns at school.
	No behavioral concerns at school.
	No behavioral concerns at school.
	No behavioral concerns at school.
	No behavioral concerns in classroom. Student does not take advantage of educational opportunities.
	Sleeps in class. Little interaction with other students. Frequent office referrals for behavior.
	Sleeps in class. Little interaction with other students. Frequent office referrals for behavior.
Student is not very verbal in class. Student will verbally participate when called on however will not raise her hand, ask questions or speak in class unless directly asked to do so.	
Student presents sad. Student off task in classroom at times and presents preoccupied.	
Sunman- Dearborn:	Student has displayed numerous behavioral problems at school.

The following table shows that only 16 percent of the students' parents were considered "very supportive" by the three connect counselors.

How would you rate family involvement in the education of this student?				
	Lawrenceburg	South Dearborn	Sunman- Dearborn	All School Corporations (Total %)
Very Supportive	30%	0%	21%	16%
Somewhat Supportive	50%	43%	43%	44%
Not Very Supportive	0%	7%	36%	16%
Unknown	20%	50%	0%	24%

The following table lists the counselors' observations about the family involvement.

What are your initial observations about family involvement?	
Lawrenceburg:	A big family that does try to stay up with child's involvement.
	A very involved family, who keeps up with children's lives. Active here at school with volunteer groups.
	Parent is very involved in student's life.
	They communicate with each other and are aware of the student's involvements.
	They get involved when it becomes a crisis, not a constant.
	They will take the time to conference regarding this student's education.
	They will try any measure to get his attention to make him see the light.
South Dearborn:	Biological father abandoned family and fails to pay child support. Step-father and mother being investigated by Department of Child Services. Mother has failed to respond to requests to contact counselor. Student reports staying with friends after younger siblings were removed from home. Student reports mom may be going to jail soon.
	Guardian communicates high interest in student's education however this is not reflected in past attendance. Attendance has improved after probation's investigation initiated.
	In past, parent has not responded to requests to contact counselor.
	Mother did not respond to requests to contact counselor during the 06/07 school year. Mother has responded to these requests this school year.
	Mother does not consistently contact counselor when requested to do so, however communicates interest when contact is made.
	Mother is cooperative and shows interest in child.
	Parent has not contacted Connect Counselor as requested.
	Parent has not contacted Connect Counselor when requested to do so.
	No successful contacts have been made yet.
	Parent did not respond to requests to contact counselor regarding attendance during the 2006/2007 school year.
	Parent failed to contact Connect Counselor when requested during the 06/07 school year. Parent has volunteered to help at a school function this year.
	Parent has contacted and spoke with counselor on one occasion regarding attendance. Parent has not contacted worker when requested to do so on three other occasions.
	Parent has contacted and spoke with counselor on one occasion regarding attendance. Parent has not contacted worker when requested to do so on two other occasions.

	Parents have not responded to requests to contact counselor in the past. Student's attendance did improve by 8.61% from 05/06 to 06/07 after interventions. Continued Connect Counselor support being provided.
Sunman- Dearborn:	Father is responsive and committed to student's best interest.
	Father is responsive to school's concerns.
	Mother attends to students needs but communication with school is minimal.
	Mother does not respond.
	Mother has not responded to counselor.
	Mother has not responded to school/counselor.
	Mother responds, but in a reactionary manner.
	Mother supports student, but does not respond to school.
	No response from family.
	Parents have not responded and seem to be contributing to absenteeism.
	Parents have not responded to counselor.
	Parents have not responded to counselor.
	Very poor communication, does not respond to school concerns.

Part 2

Homework Connection

Summary: Homework Connection

Implementation

The after-school program is being offered at 11 schools across Dearborn County. The sessions are held several times a week and are run by staff. Volunteers have not played a major role. Schools either direct the student toward the sessions based on performance problems or make attendance entirely voluntary.

School Corp.	Staff Utilized	Schools Offering Program	Days Offered Per Week
South Dearborn	26	4	4
Sunman-Dearborn	24	6	2
Lawrenceburg	8	1	3

Participation

About 150 students are served on days when homework sessions are offered at all 11 schools.

School Corp.	Average Number of Students Served Daily
South Dearborn	58
Sunman-Dearborn	74
Lawrenceburg	18

Compared to the June-December reporting period from a year ago, the number of students served has decreased. Sunman-Dearborn worked with 29 fewer and Lawrenceburg 10 fewer. South Dearborn worked with two more.

Impact

For the most part, both the quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed at the year-end report in June. In the meantime, the counselors are recording baseline data by doing initial (pre-treatment) surveys of students and tutors. The following tables shows the initial surveys recorded so far on the Web site provided by SDG.

Number of Initial Surveys Turned In - Overview

Survey Type	All Schools - Initial
Tutors	118
Student	131

Observations & Recommendations: Homework Connection

Recommendations

- ❑ The evaluation system for this new program should include surveys and grades, attendance, etc. for individual students.
- ❑ Survey 25%-30% of the students with a continuing level of involvement in the program. Individual schools can decide which students to track. For example, one school may select from students who have signed the attendance sheet more than three times. Please be careful to get a mix of gender, nationalities, tough cases, easy cases, etc.
- ❑ Only one survey was submitted for students from the Lawrenceburg program and only 11 for South Dearborn. SDG will work with the schools to fill those data gaps. Also, to make a complete set and get the most accurate information, there should be an initial and final survey for every student who is being tracked and the tutor who is working on them.
- ❑ Some tutors continue to identify students by name. Please use only their student identification number.

Methodology: Homework Connection

The grant application outlined specific performance indicators. The overall goal of Homework Connection is to improve attendance rates of at-risk students.

The outcomes to be measured during the grant cycle are:

- Students will show gains of one grade level per year in reading and mathematics
- Students will improve attendance in school
- Students will improve ISTEP+ and other standardized test scores
- Reduction in dropout rates
- Reduction in unexcused absences
- Improvement in overall attendance rates
- Improvement in graduation rates

The specific performance indicators as outlined in the grant application are:

- Number of students who drop out of school before graduating
- Number of unexcused absences
- School attendance

- Graduation rates
- Number of suspensions
- Student attendance in tutoring program
- Students' grades in school
- Teachers' observations
- Standardized test scores in reading and mathematics
- ISTEP+ scores grades 3,4,5,6,7,8,9
- Number of F's

Some of these indicators will be tracked for individual students. Before the program started, SDG met with representatives from the school corporations to review goals and design evaluation tools.

Besides the evaluation goals listed in the grant application, the group decided it would be beneficial to track the progress of individual students using only their student identification numbers as identifiers. Despite the recommendation to track students with identification numbers, some tutors and students entered their names as identifiers.

A system of "initial" and "final" surveys were created for the major stakeholders, who had the option of completing them on-line or on hard copies. The surveys included:

Tutor - Initial is completed by the student's instructor at the start of the student's work with the Homework Connection

Tutor - Final is completed by the student's instructor after the student has completed their work with the Homework Connection.

Student - Initial is completed by the student as they first enter the program.

Student - Final is completed by the student when the Homework Connection program is completed.

Implementation: Homework Connection

The following tables show how each corporation customized the Homework Connection program.

Sunman-Dearborn					
Program director		Lenore Hynes			
E-mail & phone number		ldhynes@yahoo.com 812-623-2291			
Staff					
School	Staff*	Volunteers	Students a Day (average)	Days Offered Per Week	Percent to be Tracked
Bright K-5	3	0	17	2	20%
North Dearborn K-5	4	0	27	2	20%
Sunman K-5	3	0	11	2	20%
S-D Intermediate 5,6	6	0	12	2	20%
S-D Middle 7,8	4	0	19	2	20%
East Central 9-12	4	0	17	2	20%

*Staff number are different at the schools because we have 2 nights of tutoring, at some schools one teacher does both nights and at other schools, teachers only tutor one night. This number includes both certified teachers and instructional assistants.

Sunman-Dearborn uses test scores (ISTEP+) and grades as criteria for selecting students for the program.

South Dearborn					
Program director		Jack Heller			
E-mail & phone number		jheller@seidata.com 812-926-2090			
Staff					
School Corp.	Staff	Volunteers	Students a Day (average)	Days Offered Per Week	Percent to be Tracked
Moores Hill ES	*	0	15	4	25%
Manchester ES	*	0	11	4	25%
S. Dearborn MS	*	0	4.7	4	25%
Aurora ES	*	0	25	4	25%

*26 staff members cover the four schools.

South Dearborn sends students to the program with a teacher's recommendation after they have failed or tested below grade level in the ISTEP test or have an F in a subject. Attendance at South Dearborn MS may be lower than the other schools because it serves a wider area, making after-school transportation difficult for some parents.

Lawrenceburg					
Program director		Shawn Lightner			
E-mail & phone number		slightner@lburg.k12.in.us 812-537-7219 ext. 1117			
Staff		Missy Tedesco, Amanda Purcell, Pete Arnold, Barb McGill, Sharon Sturgeon, Kay Bohman, Crystal McBride and David Selmeier.			
School	Staff*	Volunteers	Students a Day (average)	Days Offered Per Week	Percent to be Tracked
Lawrenceburg HS	8	0	18	3	21%

Attendance at the Lawrenceburg program is strictly voluntary. It is recommended to students by Lightner (who also is a connect counselor) and the guidance department. Homework assistance is placed on the speaker announcements every day.

Stakeholder Surveys: Homework Connection

The evaluation system was designed to survey students when they first entered the program, and then again after the tutors have worked with them. Before and after surveys would also be given to the student's tutor.

Not much useful information can be gained if there is no after survey. Recognizing the difficulty in getting both before and after survey sets, SDG has recommended a compromise. Instead of trying for all participants, connect counselors should select and track about 25 percent of the students. For this compromise to work, the connect counselors must make sure to get complete sets for the smaller sample size.

Since the start of this school year, the counselors have been gathering initial surveys from the students, teachers, etc.

The following table illustrates that the school corporations have been administering the surveys unequally.

Number of Initial Surveys Turned In - By School Corporation

	Lawrenceburg	Sunman – Dearborn	South Dearborn
Tutor – Initial	0	112	6
Student – Initial	1	119	11

Ideally, a complete set would be one student survey and one tutor survey for every child that takes part in the program. There is no way to completely evaluate progress unless both the student and tutor turn in initial and final surveys.

Other problems with the initial tutor surveys include three submissions which did not identify the student (making it difficult to match them to the final survey) and seven students identified by name (for confidentiality, student identification numbers should be used).

For the initial student surveys, 12 students had at least two submissions and six identified themselves by name.

SDG will compare the answers to these initial surveys to a final survey that students and tutors will complete this spring.