



DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESEARCH

## **'Fifth Block' Evaluation**

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The quantitative analyses focuses on the demographics of the student population served by Fifth Block during the summer of 2008 and results of surveys given to parents, principals and teachers. Also, we examine Fifth Block data from assessments that were administered at the end of Fifth Block. A full evaluation of effectiveness of Fifth Block in raising academic proficiency will be determined following the return of the 2008 CSAP results. Those data will allow us to examine performance gains above and beyond that which would be expected based on historical performance and academic instruction.

Qualitative analyses include the results of open-ended responses obtained from the parent, principal, and teacher surveys along with information gathered from student focus groups.

A final analysis is included that examined the fiscal impact of Fifth Block.

### Participant Demographics

Of the 3,541 students enrolled at some point in Fifth Block during the summer of 2008, 3,138 students were actively enrolled on the final day. The reported percentages for Native American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and African American students were similar to the district percentages during the 2007-08 school year. Hispanic and free/reduced meal percentages were 15%-20% above the district 2007-08 enrollment and the English Language Learner (ELL) percent was 19% below the district 2007-08 enrollment.

**Table 1. Student Demographics**

Ethnicity	5th Block	District 207-08
Afr. Amer.	18.6%	20.0%
Asian/PI	2.7%	4.0%
Hispanic	65.6%	50.5%
Nat. Amer.	0.8%	0.9%
White	12.2%	24.5%
F/R lunch	75.4%	55.9%
Paid	24.6%	44.1%
ELL	56.3%	37.3%

**Note.** District values obtained from Budget Services and 2007 October count reports.

The students selected for participation in Fifth Block were targeted based on CSAP performance that generally indicated a need for additional time (see Table 2). Specifically, the percentage of Fifth Block students scoring *partially proficient* or *unsatisfactory* on the 2007 CSAP was 77% in reading, 90% in writing, and 76% in Math.



**Table 4. Final Ten Day Enrollment and Attendance: 5<sup>th</sup> Block**

Day		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Rate	
Elementary	Enrolled	1967	1974	1984	1994	1995	1996	1998	1998	1999	2001	93.6%	
	Present	1778	1902	1907	1890	1842	1890	1893	1840	1866	1823		
K-8	Enrolled	137	137	137	137	138	138	138	138	138	138	94.2%	
	Present	126	127	132	124	132	130	133	133	128	131		
Middle	Enrolled	714	717	730	732	732	732	732	732	732	732	92.4%	
	Present	657	673	690	674	661	687	693	661	659	675		
High	Enrolled	251	263	265	265	267	267	267	267	267	267	91.2%	
	Present	212	231	235	244	255	234	247	253	252	251		
District Totals		Enrolled	3069	3091	3116	3128	3132	3133	3135	3135	3136	3138	93.1%
		Present	2773	2933	2964	2932	2890	2941	2966	2887	2905	2880	

Note. All data obtained from IT. Rate: represents average attendance for the final ten days of 5<sup>th</sup> block.

### Parent Survey Results

Surveys were sent to the parent(s) of students along with the students' Fifth Block report card. Responses were received from 486 households. Results of the survey are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Parent Survey Responses**

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree/Strongly Agree
1. My child's school provided me sufficient information throughout 5th block.	4.7%	10.1%	12.1%	40.7%	32.3%	73.0%
2. I believe that 5th block was academically beneficial for my child.	1.6%	2.1%	6.8%	37.9%	51.5%	89.4%
3. I believe that 5th block was a positive experience for my child.	1.4%	1.6%	5.2%	39.8%	52.0%	91.8%
4. I understand why my child was selected for participation in 5th block.	2.3%	1.4%	4.8%	46.6%	44.9%	91.5%
5. The meals that were provided were an important part of my students 5th block experience.	2.3%	3.7%	17.4%	41.4%	35.2%	76.6%
6. If 5th block were offered next year, I would want my child to participate.	1.0%	2.1%	7.2%	33.1%	56.5%	89.6%

Note: A total of 486 parents responded. 34% responded in Spanish; 66% responded in English



From open-ended questions, Principals reported that the following worked well during Fifth Block:

- The curriculum materials and pacing guides provided;
- The ability to hire their own highly qualified staff;
- The criterion for student selection;
- The transportation and nutrition services provided;
- Having Para educator support;

In regard to challenges, principals reported the following:

- Maintaining full enrollment;
- Enrolling only those students who met the initial criteria and the consequences of accepting students that did not meet the initial criteria;
- The time and planning required for recruiting staff and students;
- The lateness/incompleteness of some information such as transportation, grading and assessments;
- Keeping students engaged throughout the length of Fifth Block;
- Alignment of pacing guides with assessments and the appropriateness of the assessments at the lower grade levels.

Suggestions by principals on ways to improve Fifth Block generally addressed the challenges noted above. Other suggestions given included:

- Shortening of the school day or moving to a four day week to support keeping students engaged;
- Offer Fifth Block to more students at elementary;
- Possibly expanding the student selection criterion but having more classes at a building to allow for differentiation of instructional grouping;
- Offer more training for teachers before the beginning of the program.



In regard to challenges, the most frequently mention by teachers were the following:

- A wider than expected range of student achievement levels in their classrooms;
- Keeping students engaged throughout the length of the day and throughout the length of Fifth Block;
- Alignment of pacing guides and classroom instruction with the assessments, and the appropriateness of the assessments, particularly at the third grade;
- Dealing with discipline issues of a few students;
- Poor attendance of some students that progressively worsened.

Suggestions by teachers on ways to improve Fifth Block generally addressed the challenges noted above. Other suggestions given included:

- The elimination of multi-grade classrooms which created more challenges in meeting the diverse needs of students;
- Combining several elementary schools into one school which reduces costs and allows for more collaboration among teachers;
- Modifications to the curriculum so the materials are new to the students;
- Request stronger commitments from families;
- Allow for specials times or other incentives for students;
- Allow students to attend half-day if they need support in only one academic area.

### **Student Focus Groups**

During the last week of Fifth Block, focus groups were held with four classes of high school students. The major themes gathered from students included:

- Students were attending Fifth Block for the most part because they wanted to improve their academic knowledge and grades. In a few cases, students noted that their parents were requiring them to attend.
- Students frequently did not know why they had been chosen for Fifth Block.
- Students like the small class sizes and it enjoyed it most when they could work in groups rather than individually.
- Students felt they were being pushed academically although one group did find their math class to be challenging enough.



**Table 9. 5th Block Reading Performance with Historical Interim Comparisons**

5th Block Interim	Matched n	Total Points	Mean Score*		% of Students	
			5th Block	Prior	Improved	Same
Grade 4	574	6	3.89	2.59	70.2%	17.8%
Grade 5	471	23	13.79	10.87	74.1%	7.9%
Grade 6	262	22	13.34	10.62	74.8%	8.4%
Grade 7	175	24	14.42	10.85	76.0%	8.6%
Grade 8	142	24	14.21	11.10	75.4%	8.5%
Grade 9	73	24	15.22	10.19	87.7%	4.1%
Grade 10	101	24	13.93	11.41	70.3%	7.9%

**Note.** Grade 4 reading comparisons include five items only; \*: statistical significance testing (i.e., t-test) indicates the probability of the obtained change in scores being due to chance as less than 1 in 100.

The obtained data should not be attributed as being growth resulting from Fifth Block participation alone. Academic growth from both the preceding six months and fifth block participation are reflected in the data. The most accurate gauge of effects on achievement will be obtained once we obtain CSAP scores for 2009. We would expect that Fifth Block participants will show CSAP proficiency and growth percentiles that exceed the performance of a demographically matched group of Fifth Block non-participants.

## Budget

**Table 10. Cost Analysis for Fifth Block**

Expense	Description	Cost
June – Inst. Salaries and Benefits	salaries, PERA, Medicare	\$603,900
July (est.) – Inst. Salaries and Benefits	salaries, PERA, Medicare	\$603,900
Assessment	printing	\$2,310
Instruction	curricular support	\$32,500
Transportation	fuel, maintenance, salaries/benefits	\$72,042
Nutrition Services	loss experienced by the enterprise fund	\$21,100
Utilities	gas/electric	\$73,476

**Total Costs for 5th Block: \$1,409,228**  
**Per Pupil Cost for 5<sup>th</sup> Block: \$431.09**

**Note.** The per pupil cost for 5<sup>th</sup> block was derived based on the total number of grade reports issued (i.e., 3,269).



## References

Farban, D. & Kaplan, (2005). Time for a Change: The promise of extended-time schools for promoting student achievement. Massachusetts 2020 Education Opportunity Report.

Zimmerman, J. (1998). Improving Student Achievement by Extending Schools: Is it Just a Matter of Time? San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

