

Learning to Give

Learning from the Pilot Schools

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Report by the MSU Evaluation Team

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LTG/MSU: An Evolving Partnership Evaluation Strategy

MSU/LTG

- Formative phase: 1997-2000
 - Teacher experiences
 - Early stakeholders
- Outcomes phase: 2000-2006
 - Student learning—knowledge, behavior, attitudes
 - Teacher experiences
 - School climate

Formative Phase

1997-2000

- Teacher surveys—baseline and follow-up
 - Pioneer teachers and summer institute teachers
 - Teacher understanding of philanthropy, recruitment, motives, interest shown at schools, communication and training, technology use
- Teacher journals
 - Pioneer teachers and summer institute teachers—five administrations
 - Areas of satisfaction, materials, computer training, progress, school support, new lessons, student understanding and actions

Formative Phase 1997-2000

- Stakeholder interviews
 - Project directors, educators, funders, nonprofit organizations
 - Expectations, desired impact, curriculum integration, insights
- Lessons learned, impact on project
 - Teachers strongly committed
 - Need for technology training
 - “Paired” more effective than “only” teachers
 - Growing confidence and competence
 - Service-learning increase from 25% to 48%

Outcomes Phase 2000-2006 Schools

- Pilot
- Research
- CHESP
- “LTG”

Outcomes Phase 2000-2006

Evaluation Strategies

- Student learning
 - Classwork
 - Student survey
 - Standardized tests
 - Teacher observation

Outcomes Phase 2000-2006

- Schools
 - Classroom observation
 - School climate survey
- Teacher experiences
 - Surveys
 - Journals
- School administrator interviews



Strategies for Determining Effects of Participation in the LTG Lessons

Student Learning

- Assessment of LTG student classwork
 - K-12 students
 - Teachers had at least one previous year's LTG teaching
 - Classwork: artwork, worksheets, creative writing
- Student Survey of Philanthropic and Civic Activities and Attitudes
 - Grades 6-12
 - Third administration (previous spring 2002, spring 2003)
 - National comparisons—Some questions from
 - CIRCLE (Center for Information and Research on Civil Learning and Engagement)
 - National Household Education Survey
 - Independent Sector's "Measuring Volunteering" toolkit

Student Learning

- Standardized tests of philanthropic knowledge
 - Elementary, middle, and high school levels
 - Two forms each for elementary, middle, and high schools
 - Items on tests keyed to LTG objectives
 - Teachers reviewed for clarity, fairness, sensitivity
 - Items assessed for quality, reliability and precision, difficulty
 - Conducted as pre-test and post-test

School and Classroom Instruction

- Classroom observations
 - Purpose to capture processes related to student learning and teaching
 - Used narrative observation and qualitative analysis
- School Climate Survey
 - Conducted fall 2004
 - Purpose to collect pre-test data on schools that had just begun 3-year relationship with LTG
 - Items taken from variety of measures, including
 - Opinion Survey for Students
 - Vessels' School Climate Scale for Children

Teacher Experiences

- Current LTG Teacher Perspective Surveys (mailed survey)
 - Used since the beginning years of LTG
 - Distribution involved largest group ever, with 75% having taught LTG at least one prior year
 - Main topics explored:
 - Understanding of and commitment to philanthropy
 - Preparation, training, materials, and Web site
 - Experience with LTG lessons and service-learning activities
 - Overall assessment
- Long-Term Impact Survey of Former LTG Teachers (online survey)
 - Directed at all teachers associated with LTG since start
 - Purpose to learn ongoing association with LTG and philanthropy content



Evaluation Results

Student Learning Results

- Assessment of student classwork
 - Total of 141 LTG lessons
 - Distribution of ratings similar to last year
 - Increased sophistication of lessons
 - Moving beyond definitions
 - Integration with history, government, literature

Student Learning Results

- Student Survey of Philanthropic and Civic Activities and Attitudes
 - Responses from 370 middle and high school students
 - 11 schools and 25 teachers
 - 80% doing service learning well above national average of about 50%
 - Percent participating regularly doubled from 2003
 - 60% of students started service learning through school
 - Other attitudes steady
 - New items on civic participation
 - From CIRCLE National Survey
 - CIRCLE sample is age 15-25
 - Results show above average commitment to civic participation among LTG students

Student Learning Results

- Student Survey of Philanthropic and Civic Activities and Attitudes (cont.)

Have you ever written a letter to a newspaper or government official?

	<i>Percentage of students selecting each option</i>		
	LTG HS	LTG MS	CIRCLE
Yes, within the last 12 months	9%	18%	6%
Yes, but not within last 12 months	20%	17%	16%
No, haven't done	57%	47%	72%
I don't know or can't remember	14%	18%	5%

HS = High School, MS = Middle School

Student Learning Results

- Student Survey of Philanthropic and Civic Activities and Attitudes (cont.)

Have you ever worked together informally with some one or group to solve a problem in the community where you live?

	<i>Percentage of students selecting each option</i>	
	LTG	CIRCLE
Yes, within the last 12 months	26%	7%
Yes, but not within last 12 months	21%	14%
No, haven't done	34%	71%
I don't know or can't remember	18%	7%

Student Learning Results

- Student Survey of Philanthropic and Civic Activities and Attitudes (cont.)

Imagine you went to a community meeting and people were standing up to make comments and statements. Do you think you could make a comment or a statement at a public meeting?

	<i>Percentage of students selecting each option</i>	
	LTG	CIRCLE
Yes, would be comfortable	29%	41%
Yes, but would be uncomfortable	30%	28%
No, would not want to make a statement	19%	17%
I don't know	21%	14%

Student Learning Results

- Standardized tests of philanthropy knowledge
 - Completion of reliable forms for three levels
 - Old forms used in pre-test; new forms for post-test
 - Gains repeat pattern last year
 - Significant gain in elementary (gain of 5 items out of 30)
 - No significant gain for middle or high school

School and Classroom Instruction

- Classroom observations
 - 20 classroom observations – mostly K-5
 - Teachers enthusiastic; lessons lively
 - Emphasis on sharing and giving; links outside classroom
 - Teachers model respect and democratic process
- School Climate Survey
 - Initial measure in CHESP schools
 - Scales for
 - Adult-student relationships
 - Peer relationships
 - Commitment to the common good and helping
 - Rules and expectations
 - Safety and belonging
 - 739 responses
 - Elementary responses more positive than middle or high

Teacher Experiences

- Current LTG teacher surveys
 - 126 responses: 75% elementary, 15% middle school, 10% high school
 - Understanding of and commitment to philanthropy
 - Only 12% understood philanthropy very well before starting LTG
 - 57% stated understanding had been enhanced “a great deal”
 - 41% “somewhat enhanced” with involvement in LTG
 - 93% said it is “vitally important” to make education in philanthropy a part of standard school curriculum

Teacher Experiences

- Current LTG teacher surveys (cont.)
 - Preparation, training, materials, and Web site
 - Analysis of responses across several questions suggests that greater socialization or training time will be useful for teachers new to LTG.
 - Communication about the project and recognition is more often horizontal or collegial than vertical or administrative, a finding consistent across several years of surveys.
 - In context of other tools and resources, the LTG Web site was useful to 80% of the teachers, on par in helpfulness with other project teachers and colleagues.

Teacher Experiences

- Current LTG teacher surveys (cont.)
 - Experience with LTG lessons and service-learning activities
 - Strong endorsement of the curriculum—98% somewhat or very satisfied
 - 70% implemented the service-learning component; more did not do so due to time, MEAP expectations, and resource constraints
 - Overall assessment
 - 99% of teachers rated the project as good or very good

Teacher Experiences

- Long-Term Impact Survey of Former LTG Teachers
 - About 10% response, probably due to old e-mail addresses
 - Reasons for participating in LTG
 - Belief in subject matter
 - “I liked what I believed the program stood for.”
 - “My interest in service learning.”
 - Influence of colleagues and administrators
 - “The building principal offered it to the faculty. We were all interested.”
 - “I was asked by another teacher to try it.”

Teacher Experiences

- Long-Term Impact Survey of Former LTG Teachers (cont.)
 - Current practice
 - All but 4 continue to teach philanthropy:
 - 25% have revised lessons
 - 27% teach new content created by others
 - 23% have developed new content
 - LTG Web site
 - Two-third currently use the LTG Web site
 - Accessing and searching for lessons
 - LTG Newsletter
 - Project Overview
 - Information on philanthropy curriculum

Teacher Experiences

- Long-Term Impact Survey of Former LTG Teachers (cont.)
 - Student responses
 - Most saw changes in student understanding, improved behavior, and community participation
 - “Students are much more aware of the world community and know the philanthropy vocabulary.”
 - “More respectful of each other and their surroundings.”
 - “Students started and run a volunteer club.”

Overall Conclusions

- Work samples show understanding of the concepts of philanthropy; sophistication increases over time
- Elementary students showed large test gains in understanding; middle and high school students did not
- Compared to national samples, LTG students are:
 - more involved in service learning
 - more committed to future giving and serving
 - more willing to speak up in public forums
- Teachers report:
 - positive student response
 - application of concepts in interactions
 - students taking responsibility for a clean and happy classroom community



Evaluation Plans for 2005-2006

(final year)

Evaluation Plans for 2005-2006 (final year)

- Student learning
 - Standardized tests
 - Focus on postsecondary gains
 - Standard setting
- School climate
 - Post-test in same school sample (CHESP schools)
 - Focus Group Conversation with school administrators
- Web versions of all evaluation tools



Your Views

Question 1

Service learning

Compared to national samples, LTG students are more involved in service learning, and now are at 70% participation (the benchmark year was 25% participation). As laudatory as this is, we are puzzled why the participation is not 100%, given the requirements of the curriculum. Suggestions?

Question 2

Test results

On the standardized tests, the elementary students showed big gains, but the middle- and high-school students did not show gains. We are continuing to look at the possible explanations for this, including the tests and unit objectives. Your ideas?

Question 3

Advice

The pilot phase is over and LTG is planning to move the program to national implementation. What advice do you have for the LTG staff and board, and what advice for us as evaluators as we prepare a final report?

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The Closing Words

A teacher says:

“I saw my students were finally able to make a connection to what we were doing in the classroom and their local community. Many of them for the first time in their lives had the feeling that they were a valued member of the community.”

A student says:

“I care more and I want to share more.”

Samples of Student Work

