Evaluation of the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time Initiative: 2008-09 Findings (Year 3 of a 5-year study)

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Summary of Findings about Implementation

Expanding Amount of Time

- Sufficient time for core subject area instruction (87%)
- Longer day improved students’ opportunities for enrichment activities (72%)
- Sufficient time for common teacher planning (58%)

22 of 26 schools integrated ELT into school schedule; four schools added separate ELT schools

- Students teaching the expanded day (10 of 26 schools)
- Some teachers teaching in expanded day schedule (16 of 26 schools)

Technical Assistance

- Staff from 24 of 26 ELT schools reported receiving some technical assistance for ELT implementation from a variety of providers

Core Academics and Instruction

- Most schools housed additional time on English Language Arts (ELA) and math instruction; 10 schools also reported more time on social studies and science

- About 50% of teachers reported that they could cover more material and use different instructional strategies because of the longer day

- Enrichment

22 of 26 schools offered both academic-focused and non-enrichment; each offered only academic or only non-academic

- 24 of 26 schools have partnerships with community organizations to provide enrichment activities.

Summary of Findings about Outcomes: Teachers

After one year of implementation

- More ELT than comparison teachers would become teachers if they could start over again (50 vs 82%)
- Fewer ELT teachers reported satisfaction with their job at this school (77 vs 91%)
- Fewer ELT teachers reported satisfaction with students (86 vs 44%)

- More ELT teachers reported that their respective principal is an effective manager (71 vs 91%), and this difference does not persist after two years of implementation

Next Steps for the Study

- Collect data for two more school years (2009-10 and 2010-11)
- Develop implementation index to assess level of ELT implementation
- Explore variation in implementation and outcomes across schools
- Conduct case studies of several high-performing ELT schools
- Conduct additional descriptive analyses of schools’ academic achievement outcomes using student growth percentiles and other state-collected data

**Behavioral outcomes:** all students (after one or two years of implementation)

- ELT students’ attendance rates were statistically lower, and ELT students’ suspension rates were higher than in the absence of ELT, although the magnitudes of estimated differences were so small they were not educationally meaningful

- **Behavioral outcomes:** IP graders (after one or two years of implementation)

- More ELT students reported using a school computer once a month or more than in the absence of ELT (after one year of implementation), and fewer ELT students reported spending time three or more hours per week on homework than in the absence of ELT (after two years of implementation)

**Analytic Approach to Modeling Effects**

- Separate analyses of (1) student outcomes across years beyond what is captured by school and year fixed effects

- (2) program data and

- (3) teacher level (based on self-report):

   - Attitudes towards teaching
   - Participation in ELT planning, activities
   - Perceptions of their students, of school and district leadership from site surveys

**Summary of Findings about Outcomes: Students**

After one and two years of ELT implementation:

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**Logit Model**

- **Planning and Implementing**

  - Plan for expanded learning time (ELT) implementation

  - **State level policy to improve instruction by adding more planning and professional development time for teachers.**

- **Key ELT Components**

  - More instructional time in core subjects

  - More time for planning, professional development, and analysis of student data

  - Increased enrollment opportunities for students

**Outcomes**

- Increased student achievement

**Difference Between ELT and non-ELT Schools (Effect Size)**

- Grade 3 Grade 4 Grade 5 Grade 6 Grade 7 Grade 8

- Effect size: a difference in differences between ELT and comparison schools over and above what one might expect given pre-program outcomes and other initiatives that affected all schools

**Student level**

- Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) scores (ELA, math, and science)

- Attendance, suspension, and truancy rates

- 8th grade students’ reported computer use, homework, and college plans

Teacher level (based on self-report):

- Attitudes towards teaching

- Participation in ELT planning, activities

- Perceptions of their students, of school and district leadership from site surveys

**Outcomes and Measures**

- What is the relationship between implementation and outcomes?

- How has the ELT Initiative been implemented?

- Changes in district

- Prior achievement (CPI, AYP, accountability status)

- Characteristics of the student population served

- Increased student engagement with core subjects

- Increased parental support expanded learning time

- Sufficient time for common teacher planning (58%)

- Variation in breadth of teacher participation

- Fewer ELT teachers reported satisfaction with being a teacher at this school (77 vs. 91%)

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- Early adoption of ELT

- Fewer ELT teachers reported that their respective principal is an effective manager (71 vs 91%), and this difference does not persist after two years of implementation

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