Evaluation Report

Notre Dame-AmeriCorps Program

2014-2015

Conducted by

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Introduction

In the spring of 2014, the national office of Notre Dame Mission Volunteers-AmeriCorps (NDMVA) hired Dr. Peter R. Litchka of Loyola University Maryland to conduct an independent evaluation of its K-12 education support programs. These programs can be found in more than 100 schools and community organizations across 23 program sites in cities throughout the United States, serving more than 13,000 students.

The purpose of this particular evaluation was to assess the impact of the services provided by NDMVA in Chicago, one of the largest of the program sites, as well as very representative in terms of student demographics across all sites. In order to examine the impact of such services, student attitudes were measured in terms of their perceived levels of engagement and attitudes in school, using a reliable and validated survey, which was administered early in the fall of 2014 (pre) and again in later in the spring of 2015 (post). Both the treatment groups of students (those being provided with services) and comparison group of students (those not being provided with services) from three schools within the Chicago site participated in the surveys. In addition, randomly selected students from the treatment groups were interviewed as part of the process, following the post-survey.

As was found with evaluations completed in 2012-13 and 2014-15, the impact of the NDMVA services provided to students was found to be statistically significant in most every area that was analyzed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter R Litchka   July 23, 2015

Peter R. Litchka, EdD

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Context

The Notre Dame Mission Volunteers Program was established as a nonprofit volunteer organization in 1990 by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDN), a Catholic religious order founded in 1804. The Order, which includes approximately 900 sisters across the United States and 1,500 around the world, has a mission of providing educational services to the poor. A goal of the Notre Dame Mission Volunteers Program was to enhance work of SNDN through full-time secular volunteers and, in part, to mitigate the impact of the declining number of women making lifetime commitments to service in its order. Under the leadership of Sister Katherine Corr, the program applied for and received its first AmeriCorps grant in 1995. With the first grant, the Notre Dame Mission Volunteers Program was able to place 46 service members in four communities: Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, and Apopka (FL).[1]

During the 2012-13 academic year, NDMVA had programs in 22 locales across the United States. There were more than 400 full-time AmeriCorps service members providing various services to more than 9,000 students at 116 sites, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Overview of Programs, Sites and Students Served.[2]

Program	Partnering Sites (n)	Service Members (n)	Students Receiving Services (n)
Apopka, FL	7	31	515
Atlanta, GA	1	5	160
Baltimore, MD	8	17	695
Bend, OR	1	8	73
Boston, MA	3	15	89
Boulder, CO	9	18	355

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[1] Corporation for National Community Service (2011). *Serving Communities: How four organizations are using national service to solve community problems.* Washington, D.C.: Author.

[2] Source: Notre Dame Mission Volunteers AmeriCorps (2013).

Chicago, IL	7	14	775
Cincinnati, OH	4	18	231
Dayton	8	14	300
Hartford, CT	2	12	169
Los Angeles, CA	4	12	310
Nativity Affiliates[3]	16	95	1,268
New Orleans, LA	4	14	1,334
New York City, NY	2	9	131
Philadelphia, PA	6	16	397
Phoenix, AZ	3	9	574
Rochester, NY	1	6	52
San Francisco, CA	11	19	2,006
Seattle, WA	2	15	1,986
Thoreau, NM	1	10	153
Washington, DC	6	11	509
Watsonville, CA	8	14	1,158
Wilmington, DE	2	7	99
Total	116	389	13,339

Organizational Structure

Within the individual program sites, a NDMVA site director oversees the members' services, coordinates with local partnering sites where the members serve, and is the primary liaison between the national office (Baltimore) and the members. Partnering sites include public schools, charter schools, private religious schools, and other community agencies in economically disadvantaged communities. AmeriCorps members provide services to students by

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[3] Nativity Affiliates are located in the following cities: Baltimore, Boston, Denver, Hartford, San Diego, San Jose, St. Petersburg, and Tampa. In order to avoid double-counting, Nativity Affiliates are listed as a separate program.

serving as teachers' assistants, providing one-on-one or small group instruction and supporting after-school programs, helping to coordinate education and youth development activities.

Of note are the Nativity Affiliates which are located in 8 cities across the United States (Baltimore, Boston, Denver, Hartford, San Diego, San Jose, St. Petersburg, and Tampa). Nativity Schools, which began in the early 1970s, are small middle schools found primarily in urban settings. These schools provide services to low-income students who may be at a risk of eventually dropping out of school, with an emphasis on a small student-to-teacher ratio. In addition, extended academic attention, including evening and weekend support, extra tutoring after school, and increasing parental involvement, are just some of the services provided. The Director of Nativity Affiliates oversees this part of the NDMVA program, reporting directly to the NDMVA Executive Director. As shown in Table 1, more than 1,200 students in 16 sites are provided with various services from the Nativity Affiliates.

The foundation for the NDMVA focuses on increasing the academic achievement levels of children who are involved in the program activities. Academic and social support are provided during the regular school day and after school as well, depending on the needs and available resources found at the various partnering sites. According to NDMVA, the following services are provided:

- Providing in-school and after-school academic tutoring and small group instruction for children in elementary, middle, and high school, focusing on reading and math.
- Creating and managing out-of-school enrichment programs in areas such as sports, drama, visual arts, creative writing, environmental education, and debating.
- Providing intern teaching services for small groups of students, typically 6-12 in number, under the direction of a master teacher.
- Providing general classroom assistance to teachers.[4]

Chicago Site

In Chicago, NDMVA supports four unique educational settings. The KIPP Chicago Charter Schools is part of a national network of free, open-enrollment, college preparatory public schools. KIPP Chicago serves more than 1000 students in grades K-8 within four schools: KIPP

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[4] Notre Dame Mission Volunteers AmeriCorps (2012). Application for Federal Assistance.

Ascend Primary, KIPP Ascend Middle, KIPP Bloom and KIPP Create. In these four schools, the NDA members serve as Personalized Learning Assistants (PLA) , helping to integrate technology into the curriculum as part of the Blended Learning Program (BLP).

LEARN Charter School is a network of public, college preparatory elementary schools serving almost 2,000 underserved students in grades K-8 across five campuses. NDMVA partners serve at the LEARN South Chicago campus, LEARN Campbell campus and LEARN 8 campus. NDA members serve as academic interventionists working one-on-one and in small groups with students performing below grade level in reading and writing. Members also assist in the classroom and provide support during after-school activities.

The Marillac Social Center is committed to strengthening and empowering those most in need to reach their potential. To fulfill this mission, the Marillac Center offers programs and services to children, teens, families and seniors, including an afterschool program that helps students with homework, mentoring and other small group activities.

The San Miguel network has campuses in two areas of Chicago, and its mission is to transform lives and neighborhoods. NDMVA members serve in classrooms as teaching assistants, assists students in the process of applying to high school, and provide graduate support to San Miguel alumni..

The three sites that were selected as part of this evaluation were the LEARN 8 site, LEARN Campbell site, and LEARN South. As shown in Table 1, the enrollment in these schools ranges from 200 to almost 500 students, and each has very high levels of students living in poverty, as measured by the participation rates in the federally funded Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) program.

Table 2
Individual School Site Student Demographics

School	Grades	Enrollment	FRL	First Year with NDMVA
LEARN 8	6-8	200	97%	2013-14
LEARN Campbell	K-6	440	97%	2009-10
LEARN South	K-7	439	??%	2014-15

*Not*e. FRL=Percent of Students Receiving Free/Reduced Lunch

Methodology

Students from three of the Chicago sites were selected to be part of this evaluation study.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect the data.

Quantitative: Survey

The quantitative portion of the evaluation was conducted through the use of a pre and post survey, "The Engagement versus Disaffection with Learning Scale" (Skinner, Kindermann, and Furrer, 2009). This instrument was designed to assess student motivation that includes the construct of engagement vs. disengagement in terms of the impact that such motivation can have on student learning, success and achievement. The conceptual framework of student motivation suggests that student engagement in the learning process is enhanced when the social setting supports students' basic needs, both in a behavioral as well as emotional manner. When met, such needs provide students with a sense of support, structure, involvement and opportunity. Conversely, when such needs are not met, often students feel neglected, not supported or "forced to learn", which can have a serious impact on student learning and achievement.

The instrument contains 24 items, divided into four subscales:

- Behavioral Engagement (5 items): makes an effort, pays attention, and is persistent.

- Emotional Engagement (5 items): motivated, taps emotions, and enjoys learning.

- Behavioral Disaffection (5 items): lack of effort, withdraws, and pretends to pay attention.

- Emotional Disaffection (5 items): feeling discouraged, dislikes learning, feels frustrated during the learning process (see Appendix A).

For each item, the response scale ranges includes 1 (not at all true), 2 (not very true), 3 (sort of true) to 4 (very true). Thus, the higher the ratings for Behavioral Engagement and Emotional

Engagement, the more positive the student is motivated in school. Conversely, the higher the ratings for Behavioral Disaffection and Emotional Disaffection, the less motivated the student feels about school.

Structural analyses conducted by Skinner, Kindermann, and Furrer (2009) suggest that the items can be analyzed in various combinations, including separating the four subscales, combining both engagement subscales in comparison to both disaffection subscales.

Below are examples of items for each domain:

- Behavioral Engagement: "When in class, I listen very carefully."

- Emotional Engagement: "I enjoy learning new things in class."

- Behavioral Disaffection: "When in class, I just act like I am learning."

- Emotional Disaffection: "When we work on something in class, I feel discouraged."

Skinner, Kindermann, and Furrer (2009) report internal reliabilities from a sample of students in grades 3-6 of .61-.85. In addition, when combining behavioral and emotional engagement items, levels of consistency were found to be from .79 to .86 for student reporting. In addition, Skinner, Kindermann, and Furrer report that factory analyses find that the four-factor model was the best fit and correlated as expected: the behavioral and emotional subscales correlated positively and the engagement and disaffection subscales correlated negatively.

The pre-survey (fall) was administered in early October, while the post-survey (spring) was administered in May. Students who had access to computers and the internet were able to take both surveys during school time via *Survey Monkey*, a web-based, on-line survey tool. Once the on-line surveys were completed, the results were immediately made available only to the evaluator. For those students who did not have access to computers and/or the internet, a paper-pencil version of the survey was provided under the supervision of a teacher or NDA member.

The site director transformed these into the web-based format, and additionally, made copies of the paper results and sent them onto the evaluator. A two-week window was provided to each site for completion of the survey both in the fall and spring.

In order to analyze differences in the perceptions of both engagement and disaffection as well as to provide anonymity of students, demographic items were added to the survey. Specifically, the following information was requested:

1. Unique identification number

2. Gender

3. Name of school

4. Grade

5. Ethnicity

6. Comparison or Treatment group

Once both the pre-and post-surveys were completed, data was entered in to SPSS, a software package used for statistical analyses. Descriptive data was completed, and then a comparison between pre-and post-survey means was completed, using a combination of independent sample t-tests, ANOVA, and regression analysis.

Qualitative: Focus Groups

The purpose of the qualitative portion of the evaluation was to develop a better understanding of the meanings constructed students who participate in the NDMVA program in the three Chicago sites. Unlike the quantitative portion, this part of the evaluation sought to interpret, translate, and assess student experiences, particularly as it relates to the unique features of the context found within.

The evaluator contacted the site director to set up focus group interviews with the evaluator. The focus group interviews were conducted via Skype, an online telecommunications application software produce that provides video chatting and conference calling from computers, tablets and mobile devices via the internet. Students from the treatment groups were selected to participate in these focus group discussions. The discussions were semi-structured in their format, in that the interviews included a mix of predetermined quested and less structured questions, which allowed for the evaluator to probe deeper, and for the interviewees to provide examples and share experiences. The structured portion focused around the following questions for students:

1. Please describe the services you receive as a student from the NDMVA staff?

2. What do you see as the benefits of receiving such services?

3. What concerns do you have about the program?

4. What would your life as a student be like if you were not part of the program?

Interviews were recorded and then transcribed for analysis purposes.

Evidence of Success

Two of the subscales-Behavioral Engagement (BE) and Emotional Engagement (EE)-are considered to be positive in nature (the higher the rating, the more positive the student feels about her/himself in the school environment), while the other two subscales-Behavioral Disaffection (BD) and Emotional Disaffection (ED)-are negative in nature (the higher the score, the less positive the student feels about her/himself in the school environment). Thus, if both Behavioral Engagement and Emotional Engagement increase, as well as Behavioral Disaffection and Emotional Disaffection decrease over time, it can be concluded that the student's perception of behavioral and emotional engagement in school over this period has become more positive,

and conversely, if the Behavioral Engagement and Emotional Engagement decrease, and/or the Behavioral Disaffection and Emotional Disaffection increase, it can be concluded that the student's perception of their behavioral and emotional engagement has become more negative.

Since there was a Fall (pre) survey and Spring (post) survey given to students who were receiving services from NDA (treatment group) and those students not receiving services (comparison group), evidence of success would be determined by comparing the results of the Fall and Spring surveys for both the Treatment groups and the comparison groups in the following ways:

- Did the ratings of students from the treatment group change in the Behavioral Engagement and Emotional Engagement? If so, to what extent and was the change significant?

- Did the ratings of students from the comparison group change in the Behavioral Engagement and Emotional Engagement? If so, to what extent and was the change significant?

- In comparing the changes for both the treatment group and comparison, were the changes similar or different? To what extent? Were the differences statistically significant?

- Did the ratings of students from the treatment group change in the Behavioral Disaffection and Emotional Disaffection? If so, to what extent and was the change significant?

- Did the ratings of students from the comparison group change in the Behavioral Disaffection and Emotional Disaffection? If so, to what extent and was the change significant?

- In comparing the changes for both the treatment group and comparison, were the changes similar or different? To what extent? Were the differences statistically significant?

Data Presentation

Descriptive Data

Three schools from Chicago were involved in this evaluation: LEARN 8, LEARN Campbell, and LEARN South. The "Engagement versus Disaffection with Learning Scale" (Skinner, Kindermann, and Furrer, 2009) was the survey instrument used, and it was given to students in each of the three schools during early October 2014 (fall) and May 2015 (spring). Students selected to participate in both surveys were grouped according to those who receive services from AmeriCorps (treatment group) and those students who do not receive services (comparison group). Each student had a unique identification number so that survey results from the spring could be paired up with results from the fall. This would allow for statistical analysis, including but not limited to paired-sample t-tests.

As shown in Table 3, more than 300 students from the three schools took both the fall and spring survey. There was a decrease in the number of students taking the survey in the spring as compared to the fall, with the treatment group decreasing from 154 to 128. One of the reasons for this decrease is that some of the students have become proficient in reading and have reached their grade-level, thus no longer requiring academic support from NDA members.. Overall, the percentage of students in the treatment group as compared to the comparison group from fall to spring did not change significantly.

Table 3

Student Survey Participants by School-Fall and Spring, by Groups (%)

	Fall			Spring		
School	Comparison	Treatment	Total	Comparison	Treatment	Total
LEARN 8	53 (56.4%)	41 (43.6%)	94 (100.0%)	41 (53.9%)	35 (46.1%)	76 (100.0%)
LEARN Campbell	120 (53.8%)	107 (47.2%)	227 (100%)	136 (61.0%)	87 (39.0%)	223 (100.0%)
LEARN South	6 (50.0%)	6 (50.0%)	12 (100.0%)	6 (50.0%)	6 (50.0%)	12 (100.0%)
All Schools	179 (53.8%)	154 (46.2%)	333 (100.0%)	183 (58.8%)	128 (41.2%)	311 (100.0%

Demographic data was also collected from the survey, including gender, grade level, and ethnicity of the students who participated in the study. As shown in Table 4, overall participation according to gender was relatively even, with some slight disparities among the individual schools.

Table 4

Gender of Student Participants by School (%)

	Gender		
School	Female	Male	Total
LEARN 8	43 (56.5%)	33 (43.5%)	76 (100.0%)
LEARN Campbell	106 (47.5%)	117 (52.5%)	223 (100.0%)
LEARN South	5 (41.7%)	7 (58.3%)	12 (100.0%)
All Schools	154 (49.5%)	157 (50.5%)	311 (100.0%)

As shown in Table 5, the range of grades for students participating in the surveys was from grade 3 through grade 6, with an overall proportionate number of students from each grade.

Table 5

Grade Levels of Student Participants by School

School	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total
LEARN 8	0	0	0	76	76
LEARN Campbell	74	83	66	0	223
LEARN South	5	4	3	0	12
All Schools	79	87	69	76	311

The final demographic data that was collected from the students was ethnicity. As shown in

Table 6, more than 90 percent of the students who participated in the survey were African-

American.

Table 6

Ethnicity of Student Participants, by School (%)

School	African-American	Asian-American	Caucasian	Hispanic	Other	Total
LEARN 8	71 (93.4%)	2 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.3%)	2 (2.6%)	76 (100.0%)
LEARN Campbell	206 (92.3%)	3 (1.3%)	2 (0.89%)	3 (1.3%)	9 (3.9%)	223 (100%)
LEARN South	7 (58.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (33.3%)	1 (8.3%)	12 (100.0%)
All Schools	284 (91.3%)	5 (1.6%)	2 (0.6%)	8 (2.6%)	12 (3.8%)	311 (100.0%)

Survey Data and Analysis

In order to examine the differences in student perceptions between the fall and spring surveys, mean scores and standard deviations were computed according to each of the subscales and grouping of students (comparison and treatment). As shown in Table 7, the treatment group's difference in the mean ratings between the fall and spring was more positive in three of the four subscales (BE, EE, BD and ED).

Table 7

All Schools Fall/Spring Survey Results by Subscale and Groups

Subscale	Comparison Group (n=134)			Treatment Group (n=177)		
	Fall mean (SD)	Spring mean (SD)	Difference	Fall mean (SD)	Spring mean (SD)	Difference
Behavioral Engagement	3.02 (.54)	3.05 (.54)	.03	2.95 (.57)	3.24 (.63)	.29
Emotional Engagement	2.52 (.53)	2.59 (.63)	.07	2.40 (.58)	2.97 (.71)	.57
Behavioral Disaffection	2.09 (.60)	1.99 (.58)	(.10)	2.15 (.54)	1.90 (.60)	(.25)
Emotional Disaffection	2.35 (.64)	2.27 (.66)	(.14)	2.43 (.57)	2.13 (.60)	(.30)

In order to determine if such differences in the mean ratings between fall and spring were statistically significant or not, two statistical tests were applied. First, a comparison of the change in means for the comparison group alone, and then with the treatment group alone. For each group, a paired-sample t-test was used to determine if changes between the fall and spring surveys were significant or not. As shown in Table 8, the comparison group's changes were all positive but the changes were not statistically significant.

Table 8

All Schools Fall/Spring Survey Differences by Comparison Groups for Each Subscale

Subscale	Fall Mean (Standard Deviation)	Spring Mean (Standard Deviation)	t	Sig.*
Behavioral Engagement	3.02 (.54)	3.05 (.43)	.933	.352
Emotional Engagement	2.51 (.53)	2.59 (.52)	1.384	.168
Behavioral Disaffection	2.05 (.60)	1.99 (.43)	1.365	.174
Emotional Disaffection	2.35 (.64)	2.27 (.51)	1.403	.162

*Note. *$p<.05$

The statistical test for the treatment groups found that, for each of the four subscales, the difference between the fall and spring survey were found to be positive *and* statistically significant.

Table 9

All Schools Fall/Spring Survey Differences by Treatment Groups for Each Subscale

Subscale	Fall Mean (Standard Deviation)	Spring Mean (Standard Deviation)	t	Sig.
Behavioral Engagement	2.96 (.57)	3.25 (.63)	9.28	.001*
Emotional Engagement	2.39 (.58)	2.96 (.71)	11.61	<.001*
Behavioral Disaffection	2.28 (.54)	1.88 (.60)	7.69	.002*
Emotional Disaffection	2.42 (.57)	2.12 (.70)	7.64	.003*

*Note. *p<.05*

The next test was the General Linear Model (GLM) was used. As shown in Table 10, the difference in the means was found to be statistically significant in each of the four subscales

Table 10

All Schools Mean Difference in Fall/Spring Survey: Levels of Significance by Subscale.

Subscale	Group	Fall/Spring Difference	*F*	Sig.
Behavioral Engagement	Comparison	.03		
	Treatment	.29	*10.3*	.001*
Emotional Engagement	Comparison	.07		
	Treatment	.57	*18.2*	<.001*
Behavioral Disaffection	Comparison	(.10)		
	Treatment	(.25)	*9.78*	.003
Emotional Disaffection	Comparison	(.14)		
	Treatment	(.30)	*4.93*	.027*

*Note. *p<.05*

The General Linear Model was used in a similar manner with two of the three schools:

LEARN 8 and LEARN Campbell. However, it was not used for LEARN South, since the

number of participants in the survey was too low for statistical analysis (n=12).

As shown in Table 11, the results of the statistical analysis for LEARN 8 was that the

Treatment Group's change in their perceptions were both more positive and statistically

significant in three of the four subscales: Behavioral Engagement, Emotional Engagement, and

Emotional Disaffection.

Table 11

LEARN 8 Mean Difference in Fall/Spring Survey: Levels of Significance by Subscale.

Subscale	Group	Fall/Spring Difference	*F*	Sig.
Behavioral Engagement	Comparison	.09		
	Treatment	.27	*4.97*	.045*
Emotional Engagement	Comparison	.07		
	Treatment	.34	*5.62*	.049*
Behavioral Disaffection	Comparison	(.18)		
	Treatment	(.22)	*1.94*	.168
Emotional Disaffection	Comparison	.02		
	Treatment	(.31)	*6.62*	.027*

*Note. *p<.05*

At LEARN Campbell, an analysis of the GLM found that the treatment group's change in the mean score from fall to spring was greater than the comparison group's in each of the four subscales, and as shown in Table 12, the differences was statistically significant in each subscale as well.

Table 12

LEARN Campbell Mean Difference in Fall/Spring Survey: Levels of Significance by Subscale.

Subscale	Group	Fall/Spring Difference	*F*	Sig.
Behavioral Engagement	Comparison	.06		
	Treatment	.29	*20.41*	<.001*
Emotional Engagement	Comparison	.05		
	Treatment	.30	*9.95*	.002*
Behavioral Disaffection	Comparison	.06		
	Treatment	(.43)	*47.86*	<.001*
Emotional Disaffection	Comparison	(.05)		
	Treatment	(.30)	*14.43*	<.001*

*Note. *p<.05*

In addition, further statistical analyses were completed to determine whether ethnicity, gender or grade of the student had a significant impact on the change in perceptions from fall to spring. Ethnicity as a variable was not used in this analysis since more than 90 percent of the student participants were of one ethnic group-African American (91.3%), while no other ethnic group of students made up more than 4 percent of the sample.

Furthermore, gender and grade of student participants were used as covariants to determine their impact on student perceptions for each of the four subscales. As shown in Table 13, neither the gender of the students or the grades of the students had a significant impact on their perceptions for each of the four subscales.

Table 13

Gender and Grade as Covariant

Subscale	Gender as Covariant		Grade as Covariant	
	F	Sig.	*F*	Sig.
Behavioral Engagement	.099	.753	.048	.826
Emotional Engagement	.687	.408	1.293	.256
Behavioral Disaffection	.111	.739	1.723	.178
Emotional Disaffection	.122	.727	.006	.939

Interviews and Observations

A number of students receiving the services from AmeriCorps were interviewed by the evaluator as part of the qualitative portion of the evaluation. Students were interviewed in small focus groups at the school which they attended.

The semi-structured nature of the interviews focused on the following questions:

1. What types of services do you receive from AmeriCorps?

2. How often do you receive such services?

3. What benefits do you receive from such services?

4. Having received these services for most of the school year, has it changed how you feel about school and about yourself? If so, how and why?

As shown in Table 14, twenty-one students were interviewed by the evaluator.

Table 14

Student Interview Groups by Grade

Grade	Students Interviewed
3	6
4	5
5	3
6	7
Total	21

Student comments were transcribed and then were categorized into general trends of how the students perceived the support they were receiving, as shown in Table 15. A total of 109 comments were categorized into services, frequency of services and benefits of services.

Table 15
Student Interview Comments by Categories

Grade	Services	How Often	Benefits
3	Help with reading and sometimes other subjects. (3) Individual help. (3) Small groups. (2) Pull-out. (2)	Every day. 20-30 minutes per day. (4)	Better grades. (5) Working harder. (5) Having adults who care. (4) Enjoying school. (5)
4	Help with reading. (4) Fun activities with other students. (3) Group work. (2) Pull-out. (3)	Usually 4 days per week; 20-30 minutes per day. (4)	Better grades. (5) Getting along with others. (3) Learning how to study better. (4) Feel better about myself. (4)
5	One-on-one Reading and math help. (2) Small reading groups and help with homework. (3) Pull-out. (2)	4-5 days per week, 30-40 minutes each day. (3)	Being in a smaller class for part of the day makes school better. (3) Help with problems. (4) More positive about school (3).
6	Small groups and individual help with reading and homework. (4) Pull-out. (4)	Everyday. 20-30 minutes per day; sometimes longer. (6)	Adult support. (3) People who care about us. (3) More friends (3). Feel better about school. (3) Helping us be better to ourselves and others. (4)

Discussion

Results of various statistical analyses demonstrate the significant impact the NDMVA program is having on students in three selected sites in Chicago. In comparing the change in student perceptions over time between the comparison group (those students not receiving services) and the treatment group (those receiving services) among all three schools together, the treatment group's change from fall to spring was more positive in three of the four subscales, and in each of these, the difference was found to be statistically significant. The three subscales in which this occurred were Behavioral Engagement, Emotional Engagement, and Emotional Disaffection. In the one subscale in which the comparison group's improvement was greater than the treatment group (Behavioral Disaffection), the difference was not found to be statistically significant.

Similar results were found at LEARN 8, with the same three subscales showing changes that were statistically significant for three subscales (Behavioral Engagement, Emotional Engagement, and Emotional Disaffection) for the treatment group, but the difference was not found to be statistically significant for the comparison group, which had a greater change than the treatment group.

At LEARN Campbell, the change in student perceptions for the treatment group was greater in each of the four subscales than that of the comparison group, and in each case, the difference was statistically significant.

In addition, neither the gender or the grade level of the students, regardless of whether they were in the treatment or comparison group, had impact on the changes in the perceptions over time.

Finally, data collected from LEARN South was not disaggregated due to the small number of participants.

Small focus groups were held in order to provide students who receive services with the opportunity to discuss their perceptions. At total of 21 students participated in the focus group discussions.

Students, in small groups, were asked to respond to the following structured questions:

1. Please describe the services you receive as a student from the NDMVA staff?

2. What do you see as the benefits of receiving such services?

3. What concerns do you have about the program?

4. What would your life as a student be like if you were not part of the program?

The interviewer then asked students to elaborate and provided examples and/or reasons for such responses.

As shown in Table 15, students provided evidence of the services received, how often the services occurred and the benefits from receiving services from AmeriCorps. Below is a sample of quotes from students regarding the benefits of their participation in this program:

Without the help of Miss ___ [NDMVA member]*, I would not be passing onto the next grade. She understood me, helped me with my reading and some math, and helped me deal with some of my problems I had with my teacher and other students.* (Male student R, 5th grader)

I was pulled-out of my class every day. In the beginning, I didn't want to go but then I began to like it. Miss ___ [NDMVA member] *gave me lots of help that many of my friends in other classes were not able to get. I didn't like school, but I like it better now.*

My grades are better and I am getting along better with others. (Female student R, 5th

grader)

We really trust Miss ___ [NDMVA member]. We have been with her for the whole year

and she really believes in us-not all our teachers do. We all think school is very good

place to be and we want to be good students. (Female student T, Male student L, Male

student K, all 6th graders.

I was not doing well in school, but Miss ___ [NDMVA member] made reading and math

fun for me. I like school much better now and I really want to do well. My reading is

getting better, and math is too…but I like reading with Miss ___ [NDMVA member] the

most. (Female student Z, 6th grader).

Conclusions

In this report, two approaches were used to examine the effectiveness of the NDMVA

program for the three selected schools in Chicago. The first approach was the use of a survey

administered to students-both treatment and comparison groups-in the fall (pre) and the spring

(post). The survey instrument used was "The Engagement versus Disaffection with Learning

Scale" (Skinner, Kindermann, & Furrer, 2009), which contained 24 items within four subscales:

Behavioral Engagement, Emotional Engagement, Behavioral Disaffection, and Emotional

Disaffection). The theoretical framework supporting this instrument suggests that student

engagement in behavioral and emotional terms has a direct impact on student learning and

achievement, as well as the ability of students to interact in their school social setting. In

addition, a sample of students were interviewed in small focus groups in order to elaborate on

their perceptions of the support they receive, particularly in the areas of academic and social needs for success.

The data collected from this examination provide overwhelming and compelling evidence about the significant impact that the NDA Chicago program has on students who receive such services and support.. As shown in Tables 8 through 12, students receiving services increased their behavioral and emotional engagement between the fall and spring surveys in a higher and more positive in a manner that was found to be statistically significant in every example except one (LEARN 8 Behavioral Disaffection). Of note, the gender and grade level of students did not impact their perceptions of their behavioral and emotional engagement in schools.

The evaluator finds that the interviews of students (n=21) confirm the positive changes of student attitudes found in the surveys. Students felt supported, attached to the NDMVA members and appreciative of the services. They also felt that they would not have had such success during this current school year without the support of the NDMVA members.

All of these students come from very challenging backgrounds, in which poverty is abundant and a lack of opportunities for success can often be limiting. Yet these students feel successful and demonstrate their positive outlook in terms of both personal and school growth. In particular, this success in Chicago is through in-school support provided by NDMVA members in small group and individual support sessions, usually on a daily basis.

The evaluator concludes that NDMVA and its members are providing a significant contribution and supplement to the success of these students through various instructional and social support. Of critical importance, the results of this evaluation support the conclusions found in previous evaluations (Fenzel, 2009; Litchka, 2013) of the statistically significant impact the NDMVA program has on students who receive services.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Survey Instrument (*Survey Monkey*)

1. In the space below, write down the initial of your first name, middle name, and last name. Then, wait for your teacher to give you a special number to write down as well.

2. What is the name of your school?

○ Learn Campbell

○ Learn Middle

○ Learn South

3. What grade are you in?

○ 1

○ 2

○ 3

○ 4

○ 5

○ 6

○ 7

○ 8

○ 9

4. What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

5. What is your ethnicity?

○ African American

○ Asian American

○ Caucasian

○ Hispanic

○ Other

Read each of the following items and select the answer that best describes how true the statement is about you.

6. I try hard to do well in school.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

7. I enjoy learning new things in school.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

8. I worry that I won't be able to do well in school.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

9. When I am in school, I don't feel like doing much.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

10. I enjoy school.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

11. I listen very carefully to my teacher.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

12. I get upset when I make a mistake in school.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

13. I am interested in what we are learning in school.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

14. It bothers me when I can't answer a question in class.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

15. I like to work with other students in class.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

16. When in class, I like to think about other things than what we are learning.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

17. I enjoy learning new things in school.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

18. I get upset when other students do well in class and I don't.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

19. In class, I don't try very hard.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

20. I feel safe when I am at school.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

21. In class, I pretend to be working hard.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

22. I want to be a good student.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

23. School is boring to me.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

24. Working hard in school is a waste of time.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

25. I pay attention when I am in class.

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Most of the time

○ All of the time

Appendix B:
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Project Approval, Loyola University Maryland

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND

— 1852 —

July 29, 2014

Dr. Peter R. Litchka
Department of Education Specialties
Loyola University Maryland
2034 Greenspring Drive, Suite 26D
Timonium, Maryland 21093

Dear Dr. Litchka:

IRB Log Number:	**HS-3598**
Proposal Title:	**An Evaluation of In-School Academic Tutoring Services Provided by Notre Dame Mission Volunteers Americorps (NDMVA) in Four Charter Schools in Chicago**

This letter is to officially notify you of the approval of your project by the Loyola University Maryland Institutional Review Board (IRB) on Human Subjects Research. It is the Board's opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in the study. Your proposal appears to be in compliance with the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as eligible for **expedited review**.

You are authorized to implement this study beginning on the <u>Date of Final Approval</u>: 7/29/2014.
This approval is <u>Valid Until</u>: 07/28/2015.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the Loyola University Maryland *Policies and Procedures for Research Involving Human Participants*, and the IRB must be notified immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the status of your research project. You are required to report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

A copy of the *Policies and Procedures for Research Involving Human Participants* can be located at: inside.loyola.edu/academics/research/orsp/compliance/human_subjects/HSpoliciesandprocedures.pdf

For projects that continue beyond one year from the starting date, the IRB will request continuing review and update of the research project. Your study will be due for continuing review as indicated above.

You are required to retain copies of documents related to the use of human participants in your research project including but not limited to all signed consent and assent documents and complete records of any adverse incidents that occurred during the research as well as any follow-up correspondence or actions taken in response to the adverse incident. You are also responsible for maintenance and retention of such records for a <u>minimum of three years</u> after the completion of the research. If you leave Loyola University Maryland within this period, all records must be provided to your department so that they can be retained for the required three-year period.

If you have any further questions, please contact Derek Bowden, Assistant Director of Research and Sponsored Programs, at (410) 617-2188 or dbowden@loyola.edu.

THE UNIVERSITY'S GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN PARTICIPANTS APPLY TO ALL RESEARCH, WHETHER OR NOT IT HAS BEEN DECLARED EXEMPT.

> **APPROVED**
> **Institutional Review Board**
> **Loyola University Maryland**
> **FWA00013527**
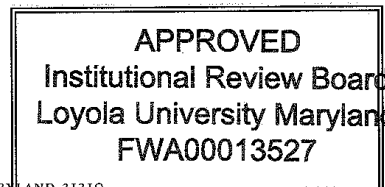
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