

SUMMER DESIGN PROGRAM

2014-2015 REPORT

THE CHICAGO PUBLIC EDUCATION FUND





ABOUT THE FUND

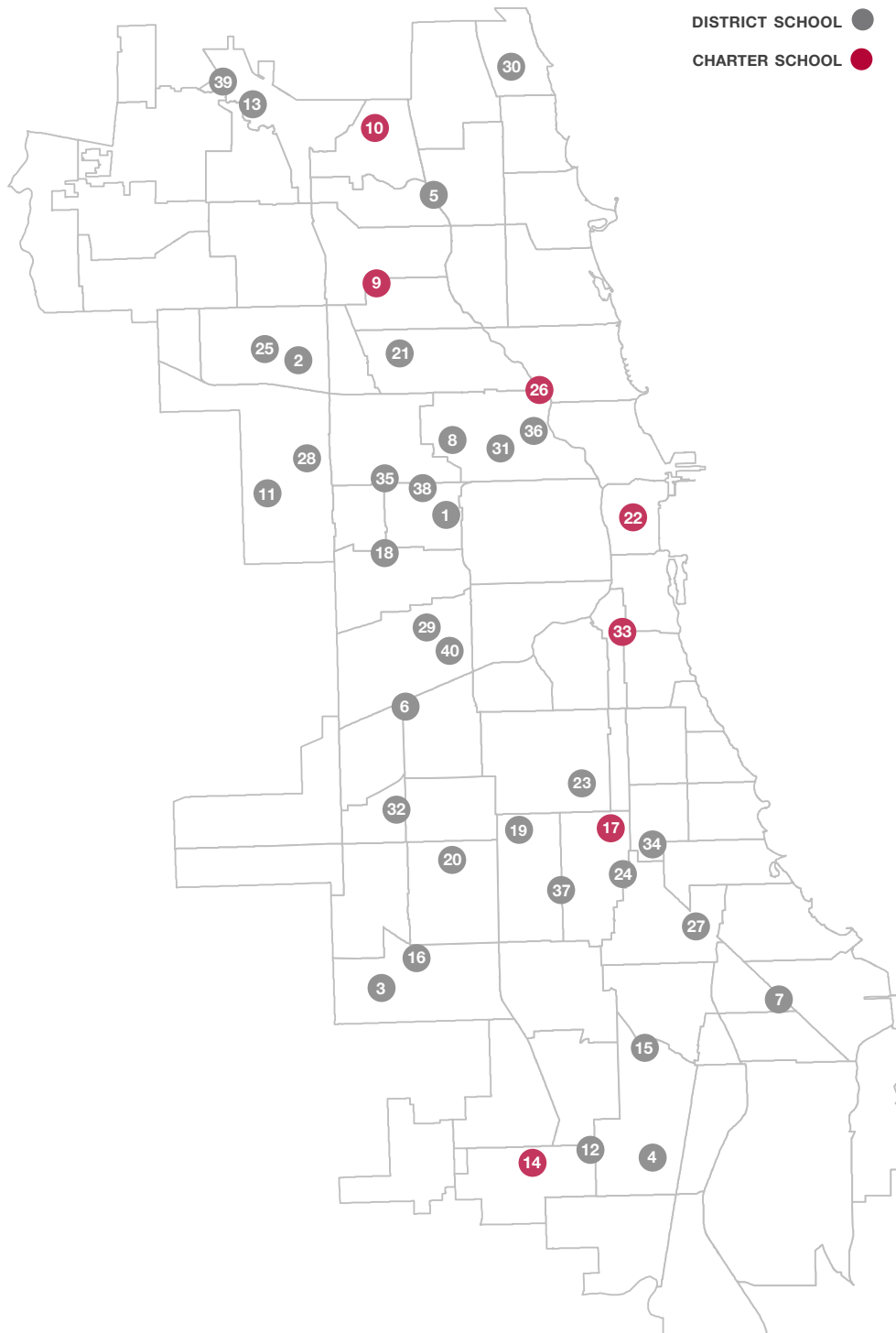
The Chicago Public Education Fund (The Fund) is a nonprofit organization working to increase the number of great public schools in Chicago by supporting talented principals and enabling effective educator teams to reinvent classroom learning. Our current efforts seek to more than double the number of top principals in Chicago's public schools by 2018 and to enable the city's best educators to redefine what's possible for our schools and students.

We recognize that creating great public schools requires a citywide culture of strong school leadership, and we remain committed to our belief that talented educators are the key to student success. We use our profiles, reports and case studies to regularly share principal stories and champion best practices used by strong leaders in Chicago. This report shares stories from schools who participated in the 2014 Summer Design Program (SDP) Cohort. We have since conducted another SDP cycle and plan to share updates on the innovations from those schools after collecting and analyzing impact data in 2016.

Visit www.thefundchicago.org for more information.

SUMMER DESIGN PROGRAM 2014 SCHOOLS

In the summer of 2014, 40 principal-led teams from schools across Chicago participated in the Summer Design Program (SDP) in a series of workshops designed to help them innovate around a challenge they faced in their schools.



1. Beidler (ES)
2. Belmont-Cragin (ES)
3. Bogan (HS; IB)
4. Brooks (HS)
5. Budlong (ES)
6. Calmeca (ES)
7. Chicago Vocational (HS)
8. Chopin (ES)
9. CICS Irving Park (ES)
10. CICS Northtown (HS)
11. De Priest (ES; IB)
12. Dunne (ES; STEM)
13. Edgebrook (ES)
14. Foundations College Prep (MS)
15. Gillespie (ES)
16. Goode (HS; STEM)
17. Johnson (HS)
18. Lawndale (ES)
19. Lindblom (HS)
20. Marquette (ES)
21. Monroe (ES)
22. Muchin College Prep (HS)
23. Nicholson (ES; STEM)
24. Parker (ES)
25. Prieto (ES)
26. Rowe (ES)
27. South Shore (ES)
28. Spencer (ES)
29. Spry (ES)
30. Sullivan (HS)
31. Talcott (ES)
32. Tonti (ES)
33. Urban Prep Bronzeville (HS)
34. Wadsworth (ES; STEM)
35. Ward (ES; STEM)
36. Wells (HS)
37. Wentworth (ES; STEM)
38. Westinghouse (HS)
39. Wildwood (ES; IB)
40. York (HS)

IB: International Baccalaureate School
STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math School
ES: Elementary School
MS: Middle School
HS: High School



IN THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF SDP



96 school
teams impacted



64 educator-
designed
solutions piloted



6,000+ students
impacted by
Innovation
Implementation
pilots



\$500,000+
from The Fund
to support SDP
pilots in Innovation
Implementation

EDUCATOR-LED INNOVATION

SDP launched in 2013 driven by the belief that, while no single device, technology approach or personalization method works in every school, we simply need to provide time, resources and support for educators to determine what works best for the students they serve. Rather than tap into a crowded marketplace of unsustainable and non-scalable solutions, The Fund supports locally-relevant and educator-driven solutions that provide high-quality, personalized learning experiences for all students.

There are many ways to engage educators in innovation. From the outset, we used design-thinking to help educators create solutions schoolwide because it relies on the connection between educators, students and communities. As implemented in SDP, design-thinking prompts educators to start by understanding the real experiences of the students and communities they serve. They ask questions about the identified challenge through different research activities, such as interviews, observations and forums. Educators use the findings from their research to create solutions that meet the unique needs of their students, schools and communities.

THE SDP APPROACH

In 2014, The Fund invited 40 schools to participate in the second cycle of SDP. Each school completed three design-thinking sessions over the summer. During SDP, all school teams approached their school-based challenge through four steps:

Step 1

Defining the Problem

Teams entering SDP brainstorm about the challenges they confront in their classrooms, schools and communities.

Step 2

Using Empathy

Teams conduct interviews, create surveys, shadow students, talk with parents and members of the community, and observe classrooms to understand their community's needs.

Step 3

Designing a Solution

Teams work together and collaborate with experts to design a solution to their defined challenge. They refine their solution to address their findings from their empathy-building research.

Step 4

Piloting the Innovation

Supported by The Fund and our partners, teams implement their innovations in a pilot year to prepare to scale sustainable solutions.



INNOVATION IMPLEMENTATION SCHOOLS

Upon completion of SDP 2014, all 40 schools had a solution ready for implementation – up from 12 schools ready in 2013. At the end of the summer, 23 schools received grants ranging from \$2,000 to \$7,500, in addition to programmatic support from TrueSchool Studio for school year (SY) 2014-15. Eighteen schools fully implemented their pilots, and nearly all of them reported a direct, positive impact on student achievement.

THIS REPORT

In this report, we profile four schools to demonstrate the challenges, successes and overall impact of the SDP and Innovation Implementation process:

1. BELMONT-CRAGIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Belmont-Cragin improved literacy by redesigning its schedule to better utilize resource teachers and personalize reading instruction.

2. JOHN SPRY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

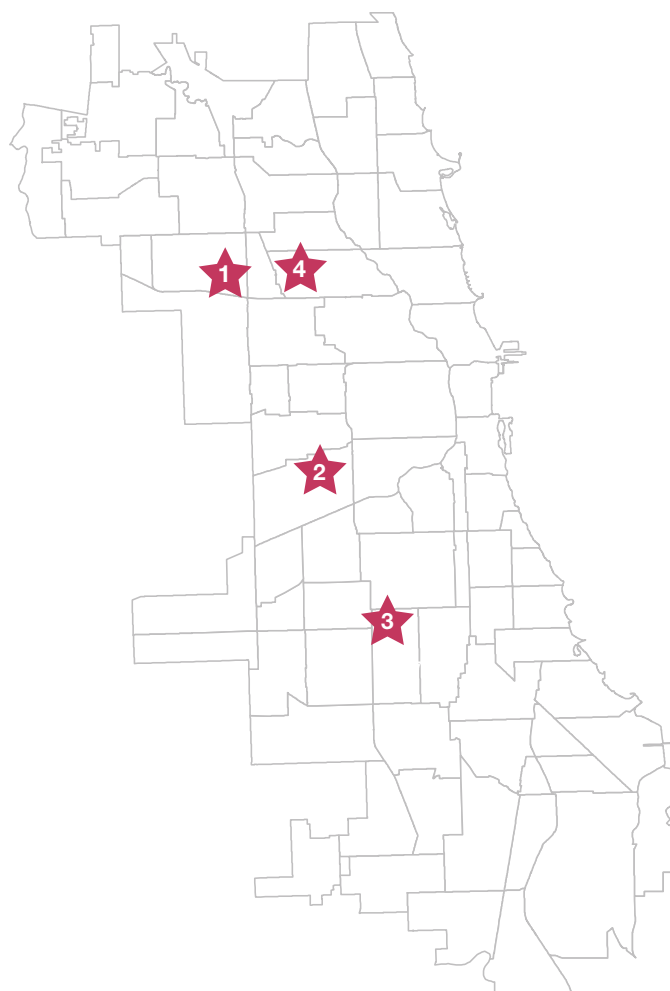
Spry grew the number of proficient primary readers by involving parents and technology to help increase reading time at home.

3. LINDBLOM MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY

Lindblom empowered families to navigate the selective enrollment process through a mentoring partnership with a local elementary school and informational open houses.

4. JAMES MONROE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Monroe ensured 100 percent of its eighth grade class enrolled in a best-fit high school option using personalized high school counseling supports.



BELMONT-CRAGIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SCHEDULING FOR PERSONALIZED LEARNING

School Info

Level 1 Neighborhood Elementary
School in Belmont-Cragin
91% Hispanic/Latino
92% Economically Disadvantaged

Outcomes

- Second graders outperformed **96 percent** of students nationally on literacy scores.
- Third to eighth graders outperformed **46 percent** of students nationally, compared to **31 percent** the year before.



Steps 1 & 2:

Defining the Problem and Using Empathy

Principal Stacy Stewart and her team wanted to improve literacy at Belmont-Cragin Elementary. They focused on personalizing reading instruction to meet the needs of each student after recognizing the literacy attainment in second graders only outperformed 36 percent of schools nationally. The numbers were similar for third through eighth graders, who outperformed 31 percent of schools nationally.

After talking with students, parents and community members, the team found that students struggled with reading, even though they enjoyed it. They found this to be especially true among English language and diverse learners, who required individualized interventions to help improve their outcomes. Teachers needed additional time and resources to make this level of support possible.

Steps 3 & 4:

Designing a Solution and Piloting an Innovation

In order to achieve their goals, the team rethought the use of time and talent in their building. They wanted to create an “all-hands-on-deck” period, where they would leverage resource teachers to help with guided reading time. The additional staffing would allow students to receive personalized instruction with more frequent interventions.

To implement these changes schoolwide, the team utilized collaboration time with scheduling experts at SDP to overhaul their master schedule. In doing so, they created a five-week rotation plan with a longer literacy block and resource teachers available to work in the classroom. Even though this required significant adjustment for the whole staff, the combination of strong change management from leadership and quick, positive results created buy-in among teachers and students.

Scaling and Sustaining

Belmont-Cragin was selected as part of the second cohort of Breakthrough Schools: Chicago to build on its SDP pilot. The team plans to design and execute a full-school personalized learning model. In addition to personalized learning in reading, the team later implemented guided mathematics instruction.

Belmont-Cragin adjusted its schedule to meet student needs, giving instructors more targeted time for guided math and reading instruction.

2013-14

| | |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| 8:00 - 8:30 | Homeroom |
| 8:30 - 9:40 | Math |
| 9:55 - 11:55 | Language Arts and Social Studies |
| 11:55 - 12:15 | Lunch and Recess |
| 12:15 - 1:00 | Writers Workshop |
| 1:00 - 2:00 | Specials |
| 2:00 - 3:00 | Science |

2014-15

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 8:00 - 8:30 | Homeroom |
| 8:30 - 9:15 | Reading Content and Literacy |
| 9:15 - 10:45 | Literature Circles, Guided Reading and Literacy Centers |
| 10:45 - 11:30 | Lunch and Recess |
| 11:30 - 12:30 | Specials |
| 12:30 - 2:00 | Math |
| 2:00 - 3:00 | Five-Week Social Studies/Science Rotation Course |

2015-16

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 8:00 - 8:30 | Homeroom |
| 8:30 - 9:15 | Reading Content and Literacy |
| 9:15 - 10:45 | Literature Circles, Guided Reading and Literacy Centers |
| 10:45 - 11:30 | Lunch and Recess |
| 11:30 - 12:30 | Specials |
| 12:30 - 2:00 | Math Block, Guided Math and Blended Learning |
| 2:00 - 3:00 | Three-Week Social Studies/Science Rotation Course |

**Red shading denotes additional time allocated for personalized learning.*

JOHN SPRY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

PARENTS LEADING LITERACY SUPPORT

Steps 1 & 2:

Defining the Problem and Using Empathy

Principal Laura Garcia-Graham and her team entered SDP to improve reading proficiency. They knew that in two primary classrooms, only 35 percent of students were reading at a proficient level. They wanted to launch an initiative to help students build a strong foundation in reading.

Through conversations with parents and students, they found that students with involved parents typically performed better in reading class. However, the school faced barriers to consistent, effective communication with families. The team identified a group of the parents who were comfortable reaching out to other parents to serve as a bridge between the classroom and the household, hoping to boost effectiveness of a new reading initiative.

Steps 3 & 4:

Designing a Solution and Piloting an Innovation

The team designed their innovation to leverage the group of most-involved parents. This group served as parent coordinators who run workshops on a new reading technology—Raz-Kids, a bilingual program that reads aloud with students—meeting critical community needs.

The team worked with parent coordinators to plan creative outreach, which included *charlas*, or chats, that gave parents an opportunity to connect with teachers and administrators in an informal environment, and raffles for prizes to encourage better attendance and more communication. These activities attracted parents to the Raz-Kids workshops and opened lines of communication; approximately one-third of the primary parents attended the workshops.

Scaling and Sustaining

Empowered by the parent coordinator role and the relationships they forged with teachers, the kindergarten parent coordinators decided to independently continue this role as their students matriculated into first grade.

School Info

Level 1 Neighborhood Elementary School in Little Village

99% Hispanic/Latino

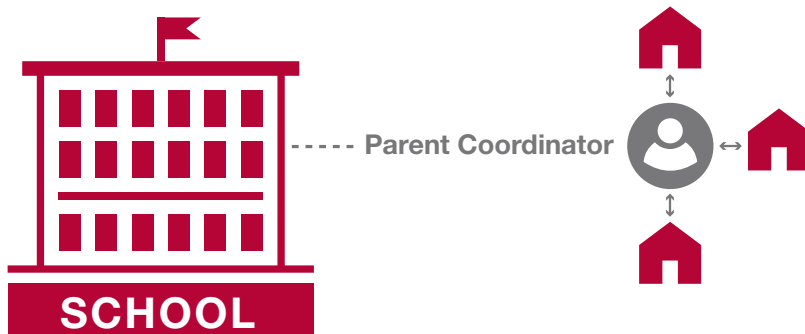
97% Economically Disadvantaged

Outcomes

- Grew reading proficiency in two pilot primary classrooms by **34 and 78 percent** compared to the year before. The third classroom saw a decrease in the proficiency rate compared to the year before.
- Six parent coordinators facilitated several workshops about Raz-Kids, the primary grade's bilingual literacy program.



Parent coordinators bridged the gap between learning at school and home.



Parent Coordinator Role

- Facilitated communication between teachers and parents
- Ran workshops about Raz-Kids to teach parents the bilingual literacy software
- Developed a strong relationship between parents and teachers
- Helped improve literacy proficiency and learning at Spry

LINDBLOM MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY

STUDENT MENTORS TEACHING CODING

School Info

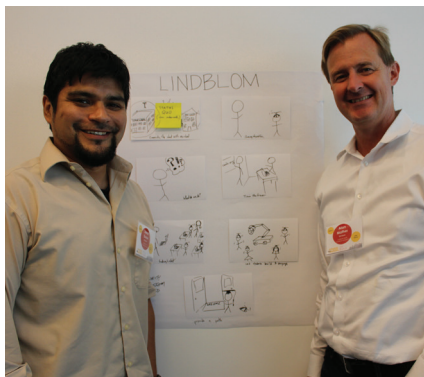
Level 1+ Selective Enrollment High School in Englewood

70% African American

68% Economically Disadvantaged

Outcomes

- Increased the percentage of parents familiar with the selective enrollment process from **14 percent to 83 percent**, with **100 percent** of parents aware where to look for further resources.
- Improved Henderson students' average attendance, NWEA math scores and GPAs.



Steps 1 & 2:

Defining the Problem and Using Empathy

Principal Alan Mather and his team entered the SDP 2014 cohort hoping to increase the number of elementary students from the Englewood neighborhood who knew about Lindblom and applied to attend. The team conducted internal research on Lindblom's enrollment data and sought out the perspective of Englewood elementary students. They also talked to students at Lindblom, educators at nearby Henderson Elementary School and Englewood community members.

The team found that Englewood students were underrepresented at Lindblom; only 10 percent of the student body lived in the neighborhood. Further, members of the community told the team that they did not see Lindblom, a selective enrollment high school with a math and science focus, as a viable option, even though they expressed interest in digital literacy and more STEM involvement for their children. In response, the team decided to create a community engagement program to both meet the community's needs and generate awareness about Lindblom.

Steps 3 & 4:

Designing a Solution and Piloting an Innovation

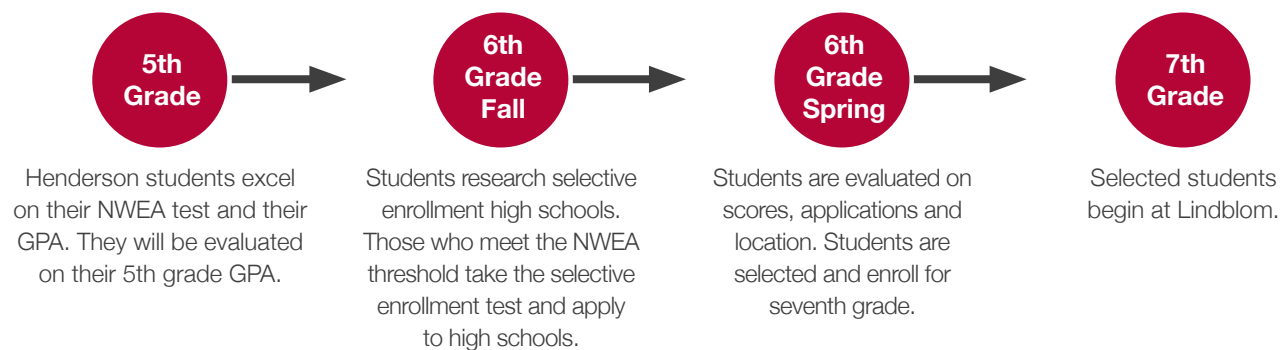
Alan and his team created a pilot program that allowed fourth and fifth grade students from Henderson Elementary to attend Lindblom for one class period a week to learn coding. The team then recruited a group of Lindblom students interested in STEM to serve as instructors for the Henderson students and taught them basic instructional methods. Throughout SY 2014-15, 17 Lindblom student-instructors taught 31 Henderson students once a week using the Code.org curriculum. The team also hosted two open houses to broaden the Englewood community's awareness about the program and to share information about the selective enrollment application process.

Sustaining and Scaling

In SY 2015-16, the team expanded the coding program, developing a partnership with Nicholson Elementary to reach even more students. In the coming year, they will be able to see the results of their increased engagement in this innovation.

Lindblom worked closely with Henderson students to improve academic outcomes and to make Lindblom an excellent local option.

THE LINDBLOM APPLICATION PROCESS



For more information about the selective enrollment process, contact the CPS Office of Access and Enrollment at oe@cps.edu.

JAMES MONROE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

IMPROVING THE TRANSITIONS TO HIGH SCHOOL

Steps 1 & 2:

Defining the Problem and Using Empathy

Principal Rick Trujillo and his team applied to SDP to improve transitions from Monroe to high school. Much like high school seniors preparing for college, eighth grade students in Chicago must research high schools and submit a separate application for each school – even those in the same charter network. In discussions with parents, graduating eighth graders and teachers, the Monroe team discovered that students and families were not well-informed about the high school application process, and that counselors were not given enough time to work directly with students to help them find their best-fit high schools. Only about seven percent of the 2014 graduating class applied to more than one high school. However, the team knew they had eighth grade teachers determined to prepare their students with the information they needed.

Steps 3 & 4:

Designing a Solution and Piloting an Innovation

The team empowered eighth grade teachers to create a tracker to record each student's current high school eligibility status, identifying gaps and opportunities for them. They then created a workbook to inform parents about the application process and to help students find available high school options. The team also hosted an open house, where more than 40 high schools connected with Monroe students and their families. Through these opportunities and resources, students explored each distinct type of high school program before beginning the application process.

The team and counselors encouraged students to apply to at least five high schools that would serve their unique needs. They created plans for each student to find the best-fit school for him or her, including nearby, underutilized district options like the Prosser Career Academy's Career Technical Education (CTE) program and International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme. They also focused on Diverse Learners, earning them strong opportunities at Vaughn Occupational High School.

Sustaining and Scaling

The Monroe team will continue to engage teacher leaders and update their high school workbook. The Monroe team expanded the program in SY 2015-16, including seventh grade students in the high school application process.

School Info

Level 2+ Neighborhood Elementary School in Logan Square

96% Hispanic/Latino

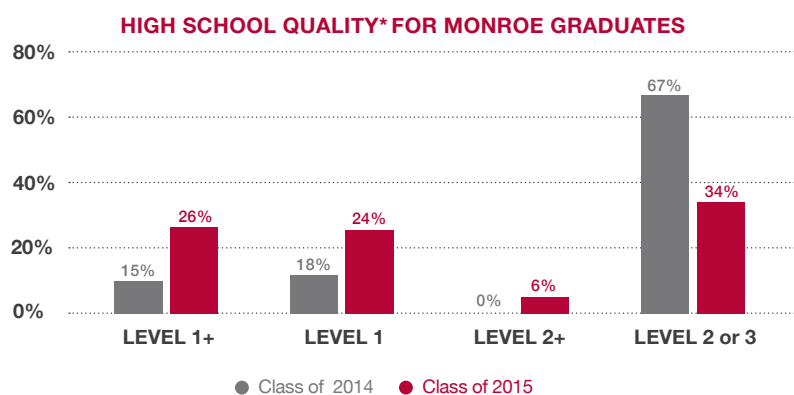
98% Economically Disadvantaged

Outcomes

- Increased the percentage of students who applied and were accepted to best-fit high schools from **seven percent** in SY 2013-14 to **100 percent** in SY 2014-15.
- Ensured that zero Monroe graduates attended Level 3 high schools.



Personalized support helped more Monroe students attend a diverse range of schools that best fit their needs.



*Quality levels are based on CPS' School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP).

No 2015 Monroe graduates attended Level 3 schools.

Groups were combined to meet a threshold sample size.

| TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL | % OF CLASS OF 2015 STUDENTS ATTENDING |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE | 37% |
| CHARTER | 32% |
| NEIGHBORHOOD | 19% |
| SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT OR MAGNET | 12% |



The strongest leaders empower their teachers and staff to make key decisions about the changes they want to see in their schools.

Schools that complete SDP are poised to leverage other innovation-focused opportunities, including our partnership with the LEAP Innovations Pilot Network and Breakthrough Schools: Chicago, the Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) groundbreaking whole-school innovation pilot.

LESSONS LEARNED

Since 2013, The Fund collected stories and learned lessons that continually improved SDP. We saw an excellent display of educator-led innovation that impacted student outcomes in significant and long-lasting ways over the past three years. In 2014 alone, innovations designed and supported through SDP positively impacted more than 3,000 students.

EDUCATORS HAVE GREAT SOLUTIONS; THEY NEED TIME, SPACE AND RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT THEM.

Between SDP 2013 and SDP 2014, The Fund made a conscious decision to bolster the support we provided to schools. We see more consistent outcomes when we pair programmatic support with financial support to ensure that teams can both work with an expert partner and cover minor expenses. In SDP 2015, we further differentiated supports for schools through Innovation Implementation, providing tailored options to fit their needs.

INNOVATION GOES BEYOND TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM.

The innovations designed during SDP range from fully technology-based to low- or no-technology solutions. SDP schools use technology as one of many tools to help improve student outcomes. Successful innovations are commonly characterized by an educator team dedicated to creating a solution that meets real student needs using the available resources.

SMALL-SCALE INNOVATION CREATES PATHWAYS TO WHOLE-SCHOOL REDESIGN.

Participating in SDP gives educators a low-risk opportunity to experiment with innovation before determining if they are ready to apply it in whole-school redesign. Since the launch of Breakthrough Schools: Chicago, 12 of the 23 schools that were selected for planning grants also participated in SDP. We built a network of some of the most innovative educators in the city, and continue to monitor their efforts as they grow to influence students on a broader scale.

STRONG LEADERSHIP IS CRITICAL FOR ANY INNOVATION EFFORT.

In each iteration of SDP, the strongest leaders empower their teachers and staff to make key decisions about the changes they want to see in their schools. Participation in SDP can help a school build a culture of distributed leadership.

EMPATHY IS KEY TO SUCCESS IN SDP.

Time and time again, educators cite empathy as the key to success in SDP. Taking time to dig into the root cause of challenges by talking to students, teachers and members of the community helps deliver a solution that avoids making assumptions about the cause of the challenge for students. As a result, teams directly address the obstacles identified by students, teachers and community members themselves.



CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The Fund built on our lessons from SDP 2014 for the third cycle of SDP, which engaged 40 more educator teams in summer 2015, bringing the total number of SDP schools to 96. We made strategic modifications to 2015 SDP based on educator feedback.

We continue to rethink the programmatic support for teams selected for Innovation Implementation. In 2015, we choose 25 schools to receive \$3,000 each in financial support through Innovation Implementation. In addition to The Fund's financial investment, we responded to the 2014 cohort's preference for tailored support to fit their innovation goals. We offered each school a content expert partner (TrueSchool Studio, LEAP Innovations or Sensible Innovation) who will support their pilot.

In 2016, The Fund will publish a third edition of our case studies to follow this report and the *Summer Design Program 2013-2104 Report*. The next report will analyze the impact of the SDP 2015 innovations and share lessons learned and policy implications.

For more information about the excellent work happening in Chicago's public schools, please visit our blog at www.thefundchicago.org/blog.

THE CHICAGO PUBLIC EDUCATION FUND

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