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ESL Newcomer Academy

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

- The ESL Newcomer Academy began in 2006-2007 and serves Jefferson County Public Schools' (JCPS) middle and high school students who are at the beginning levels of their English proficiency.
- Students typically are in their first year of instruction in the United States and often have had no formal schooling or interrupted formal schooling prior to enrolling in JCPS. The goal of the academy is to help transition students by providing a welcoming learning environment that utilizes targeted resources and research-based strategies to best serve this unique population.
- The goal of this analysis is to examine the short and long-term impact of the students that have attended the ESL Newcomer Academy since its inception.

Demographics

- A total of 1,049 students have been served by the ESL Newcomer Academy since it began in 2006-07 with an average annual enrollment of 262 between 2006-2007 and 2009-2010.
- The modal student was male (55%), Latino (42%), and from a low-income background (91%).
- The most common languages spoken were Spanish (40%), Karen (9%), and Arabic (9%).
- The majority of students had no formal schooling or had an interrupted formal schooling experience (54%).
- Only 23% of students had at least 170 days enrolled in a given school year (compared to a district average of 81%). The average number of days enrolled was 111 days.

Comparison Group

- Fifth-grade students ($n = 76$) enrolled in JCPS during the same time period and with similar levels of English proficiency scores were utilized as a comparison group.
- The students were similar to the students who attended the ESL Newcomer Academy except in the following ways: more likely to speak Somali, less likely to speak Arabic, and less likely to have no formal schooling prior to enrollment. Similar to the students at the Newcomer Academy, a small percentage (18%) had at least 170 days enrolled in school in a given school year.

Major Findings: Attendance, Suspensions, and Achievement

- Only students with at least 100 enrollment days were examined for outcomes. Attendance, suspensions, and achievement were examined between the students who were enrolled at the ESL Newcomer Academy and the 5th grade comparison students for attendance, suspensions, and achievement in the year after they enrolled in JCPS. Analyses showed no statistically significant differences in attendance, suspensions, KCCT Reading, KCCT Math, or ACCESS for ELLs composite proficiency score.
- Controlling for free/reduced lunch and previous formal schooling, more days attended at the ESL Newcomer Academy was significantly related to higher reading and math scores, $r(173) = .16, p < .05$, and $r(173) = .15, p < .05$, respectively. More days attended at the ESL Newcomer Academy was also significantly related to higher ACCESS for ELLs scores, $r(374) = .13, p < .05$. Days attended was not related to outcomes for the comparison group.
- Exploratory analysis by language spoken shows that the ESL Newcomer Academy may be having a larger positive impact on non-Spanish speaking children.

ESL Newcomer Data: Overview

The chart below depicts the number of students by grade who attended the ESL Newcomer Academy during the past 4 years. On average, the enrollment each school year has been 262 students with the majority of students being in 9th or 10th grade (57%).

Count of Number of Students

School Year	Grade						Grand Total
	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	
2006-07	36	33	34	88	45		236
2007-08	29	37	35	91	62		254
2008-09	41	41	39	106	55		282
2009-10	37	47	41	100	50	2	277
Grand Total	143	158	149	385	212	2	1049

Demographics of Students from ESL Newcomer Academy

VARIABLE	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Gender		
Female	473	45.1%
Male	576	54.9%
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian	251	23.9%
Black	244	23.3%
Latino/Hispanic	437	41.7%
Other	1	0.1%
White	116	11.1%
Lunch Status		
Free	902	86.0%
Reduced	57	5.4%
Paid	90	8.6%

Count of Languages Spoken

VARIABLE	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Language		
Spanish	397	39.62%
Karen	91	9.08%
Arabic	88	8.78%
Somali	73	7.29%
Nepali	60	5.99%

Other	57	5.69%
Kirundi	44	4.39%
Burmese	32	3.19%
Vietnamese	19	1.90%
Chinese (Mandarin)	18	1.80%
Swahili	15	1.50%
English	14	1.40%
Creole	12	1.20%
French	12	1.20%
Turkish	12	1.20%
MaiMai	11	1.10%
Oromo	10	1.00%

Formal Schooling Experience

VARIABLE	Number of Students	Percent of Students
No Formal Schooling	208	20.74%
Interrupted Schooling	172	17.15%
No Formal Schooling and Interrupted Schooling	166	16.55%
Formal Schooling/No Interruption	457	45.56%

Students enter the Newcomer Academy at different points in the school year. The following chart shows the average number of enrolled days for students by grade and year. The maximum number of enrolled days is between 175-177 days in a given school year. The data show that students at the ESL Newcomer Academy are well below the maximum number of school days with an average of 111 days enrolled. Over the past 4 years, only 23% of the students who attended the ESL Newcomer Academy started and ended the year at the ESL Newcomer Academy (>170 days enrollment). In comparison, the JCPS average for 6th-11th graders for students who started and ended the year at the same school is 81%.

Average Number of Membership Days

School Year	Grade						Grand Total
	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	
2006-07	111	122	106	92	98		102
2007-08*	85	97	99	93	90		93
2008-09	122	129	127	120	128		124
2009-10	136	105	129	115	129	133	121
Grand Total	115	113	116	106	111	133	111

*Note: Membership for the 2007-08 school year was impacted by data quality issues. These numbers are lower than the actual number of membership days. The actual numbers are likely similar to the other years shown in the chart.

ESL Newcomer Data:

Demographics of Students with Less than 100 Days Enrolled

Count of Languages Spoken by Students with < 100 Days Enrollment

VARIABLE		
Language	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Spanish	147	38.48%
Arabic	46	12.04%
Nepali	29	7.59%
Karen	28	7.33%
Somali	27	7.07%
Other	21	5.50%
Kirundi	18	4.71%
Burmese	14	3.66%

Formal Schooling Experience of Students with < 100 Days Enrollment

VARIABLE		
	Number of Students	Percent of Students
No Formal Schooling	72	18.85%
Interrupted Schooling	75	19.63%
No Formal Schooling and Interrupted Schooling	70	18.32%
Formal Schooling/No Interruption	165	43.19%

COMPARISON GROUP DATA

One comparison group for the ESL Newcomer Academy are the 5th grade students who score at a similar level on the W-APT screener (<2.0). Elementary age students are not eligible to attend the ESL Newcomer Academy. Data on the 5th grade students for the 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 school years were utilized for the comparison.

Comparison Group: Demographics of Students

VARIABLE		
Gender	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Female	34	44.7%
Male	42	55.3%
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian	16	21.1%
Black	23	30.3%
Latino/Hispanic	29	38.2%
Other	2	2.6%
White	6	7.9%
Lunch Status		
Free	67	88.2%
Reduced	4	5.3%
Paid	5	6.6%

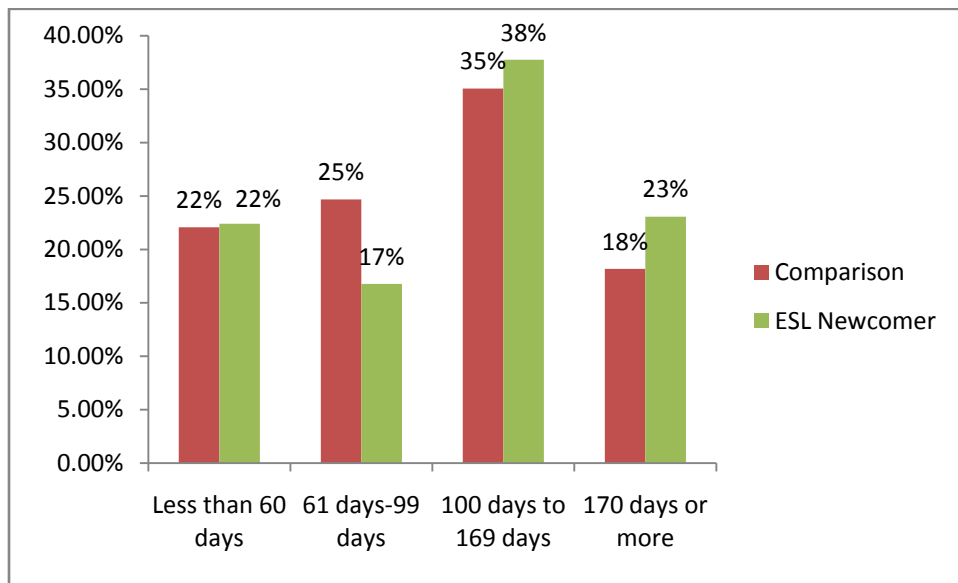
Comparison Group: Count of Languages Spoken

VARIABLE		
Language	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Spanish	30	38.96%
Karen	8	10.39%
Somali	8	10.39%
Mai-Mai	7	9.09%
Nepali	4	5.19%
Turkish	2	2.60%
Vietnamese	2	2.60%

Comparison Group: Formal Schooling Experience

VARIABLE	Number of Students	Percent of Students
No Formal Schooling	11	14.47%
Interrupted Schooling	21	27.63%
No Formal Schooling and Interrupted Schooling	7	9.21%
Formal Schooling/No Interruption	37	48.68%

Comparison vs. ESL Newcomer Membership Days



Demographic Analysis of Students Enrolled at Least 100 Days (ESL Newcomer Academy and Comparison Group)

Because of the variability in enrollment, when examining the impact of the ESL Newcomer Academy, it is particularly important to look at the number of days enrolled at the school. For the purposes of this report, only students who were enrolled in the Academy and 5th graders enrolled at their elementary school at least 100 days were analyzed for outcomes.

Count of Number of Students with At Least 100 Days Membership

School Year	Grade						Grand Total	Comparison Group (5 th grade)
	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th		
2006-07	23	24	17	41	21		126	3
2007-08	18	25	24	58	41		166	23
2008-09	26	26	27	62	36		177	15
2009-10	27	23	28	57	33	1	169	---
Grand Total	94	98	96	218	131	1	638	41

**Demographics of Students from ESL Newcomer Academy and Comparison Group
with at Least 100 Enrolled Days**

VARIABLE	ESL Newcomer		Comparison	
	Number of Students	Percent of Students	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Gender				
Female	289	45.3%	19	46.3%
Male	349	54.7%	22	53.7%
Race/Ethnicity				
Asian	159	24.9%	9	21.9%
Black	150	23.5%	10	24.4%
Latino/Hispanic	268	42.0%	18	43.9%
Other	1	0.2%	0	0.0%
White	60	9.4%	4	9.8%
Lunch Status				
Free	559	87.6%	34	82.9%
Reduced	35	5.5%	4	9.8%
Paid	44	6.9%	3	7.3%

Count of Languages Spoken: ESL Newcomer vs. Comparison Group (100 Days+)

VARIABLE	ESL Newcomer		Comparison	
	Number of Students	Percent of Students	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Spanish	250	40.32%	18	43.90%
Karen	63	10.16%	4	9.76%
Somali	46	7.42%	3	7.32%
Arabic	42	6.77%	1	2.44%
Other	36	5.81%	0	0.00%
Nepali	31	5.00%	1	2.44%
Kirundi	26	4.19%	1	2.44%
Burmese	18	2.90%	0	0.00%
Chinese (Mandarin)	13	2.10%	1	2.44%
Vietnamese	13	2.10%	2	4.88%
Swahili	11	1.77%	0	0.00%
English	10	1.61%	0	0.00%
Turkish	10	1.61%	2	4.88%

Formal Schooling Experience: ESL Newcomer vs. Comparison Group (100 Days+)

VARIABLE	ESL Newcomer		Comparison	
	Number of Students	Percent of Students	Number of Students	Percent of Students
No Formal Schooling	136	21.9%	4	10.0%
Interrupted Schooling	97	15.6%	8	20.0%
No Formal Schooling and Interrupted Schooling	96	15.5%	1	2.5%
Formal Schooling/No Interruption	292	47.0%	27	67.5%

Analysis Outcomes: Achievement

When comparing to students who attended the ESL Newcomer Academy and the Comparison group, no significant differences were found in demographics, except in the area of students with no formal schooling. Students who attended the ESL Newcomer Academy were much more likely to not have any formal schooling than students who were in the Comparison group.

Examining the year after students attended the ESL Newcomer Academy showed no statistically significant differences in Reading or Math.

KCCT Reading Score

Group	Novice	Apprentice	Proficient or Distinguished
Comparison (n=38)	47.37%	26.32%	26.32%
ESL Newcomer (n=190)	42.11%	42.63%	15.26%

KCCT Math Score

Group	Novice	Apprentice	Proficient or Distinguished
Comparison (n=38)	42.11%	28.95%	28.95%
ESL Newcomer (n=183)	49.18%	33.33%	17.49%

If students with no formal schooling are removed from the analysis, there are still no statistically significant differences, but the gaps in math Novice and P/D above are reduced.

ACCESS for ELLs (Cohort 07-08 only)

Group	Proficiency Composite
Comparison (n=28)	3.19
ESL Newcomer (n=32)	3.03

Controlling for free/reduced lunch and previous formal schooling, more days attended at the ESL Newcomer Academy was significantly related to higher reading and math scores, $r(173) = .16, p < .05$, and $r(173) = .15, p < .05$, respectively. More days attended at the ESL Newcomer Academy was also significantly related to higher ACCESS for ELLs scores, $r(374) = .13, p < .05$.

Outcomes: Attendance and Suspensions

There were no significant differences in attendance or suspensions with both groups averaging about 93%. When looking at suspensions, students in the ESL Newcomer Academy were less likely to be suspended in the year following attending the Newcomer Academy than comparison students (7% vs. 10%), but this did not reach statistical significance.

Outcomes: Graduation and Dropout

In order to examine outcomes in terms of graduation and dropout, two cohorts of students were tracked in the JCPS database to examine their outcomes 2-3 years after attending the ESL Newcomer Academy. The 9th graders at the ESL Newcomer Academy in 2006-07 and the 10th graders at the ESL Newcomer Academy in 2007-08 were examined in 2010. Of the 82 students followed, 77 students had outcome data.

Outcome	ESL Newcomer		Comparison	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Retained	12	15.58%	18	9.14%
Graduated	32	41.56%	112	56.85%
Moved outside of district	10	12.99%	15	7.61%
Moved, Unknown	12	15.58%	24	12.18%
Dropout	11	14.29%	23	11.68%

Outcomes by Language Spoken

KCCT Reading Score (Only Spanish Speakers)

Group	Novice	Apprentice	Proficient or Distinguished
Comparison (n=16)	35.29%	17.65%	47.06%
ESL Newcomer (n=43)	28.77%	45.21%	26.03%

KCCT Reading Score (Only Non-Spanish Speakers)

Group	Novice	Apprentice	Proficient or Distinguished
Comparison (n=17)	43.75%	43.75%	12.50%
ESL Newcomer (n=73)	41.86%	41.86%	16.28%

KCCT Math Score (Only Spanish Speakers)

Group	Novice	Apprentice	Proficient or Distinguished
Comparison (n=18)	27.78%	22.22%	44.44%
ESL Newcomer (n=178)	19.66%	19.66%	8.43%

KCCT Math Score (Only Non-Spanish Speakers)

Group	Novice	Apprentice	Proficient or Distinguished
Comparison (n=16)	50.00%	37.50%	12.50%
ESL Newcomer (n=45)	40.00%	28.89%	31.11%