

# Success of Study Technology Inner-City Projects Leads to Grant Award Memphis, Tennessee



## The Pilot Project

In 2001 a grant was obtained from Memphis City School Board by LEAP (Literacy, Education and Ability Program), an Applied Scholastics group, for a pilot program to introduce Study Technology to the Memphis Schools. Additional funding from local businessmen and community leaders was used to purchase a set of *Study Skills for Life* books and workbooks. The subjects were ninth-grade students in a remedial English class. Many had a continuous history of discipline problems, juvenile delinquency and school failure. Approximately 80% fell at or near the poverty level. As the project high school was not achieving mandated State testing levels, the school was under scrutiny by the State of Tennessee Education Department as well as the Memphis Board of Education. The school had increased testing scores over the prior three years, but still remained below the required testing levels. Academic failure was commonplace. Teacher and parent frustration was evident.

Project Parents were notified by letter that *Study Skills for Life*, based on the work of educator and humanitarian, L. Ron Hubbard, was to be introduced to students. Taken together as a body of knowledge the methods developed by Mr. Hubbard are known as Study Technology. The pedagogy includes both structural and strategic components. The Study Technology concept was introduced to the faculty at a faculty meeting. Three teachers were recruited and trained in Study Technology.

All students in ninth-grade remedial English classes were invited to participate. Fifteen students (approximately one-half) participated and completed the *Study Skills for Life* course as part of their in-class activity. *Study Skills for Life* is a self-paced course of instruction that teaches the student how to learn in step-by-step fashion and ensures full application of the materials taught. A major breakthrough for the student occurs when he realizes that learning is simply a matter of applying the technology and he becomes able to guide himself through the learning process. All students started during the second 6 weeks in the first semester. Fourteen of the 15 students completed the course in six weeks. The final student completed a few weeks later. Several of the students attended an after-school study period as well as the in-class training.

### Academic Results

The table shows first-semester grade-point averages (GPAs) for both the students who did the study

First Semester Grade Point Averages (GPA)	
Experimental Group	Control Group
1.6	1.4
2.2	1.4
3.0	0.0
2.0	0.0
2.0	0.0
2.3	1.2
2.2	1.0
2.0	0.7
1.6	0.6
1.0	1.2
1.7	0.6
2.0	1.2
1.7	0.7
1.0	0.2
2.2	1.0
Average: 1.9	Average: .075

skills training and those who did not. Grade point averages do not include the remedial English class itself, for which no grade was given.

The GPA range for the students who completed *Study Skills for Life* was 1.0 to 3.0, with an average of 1.9. The GPA range for the other students in the same class was 0.0 to 1.4, with an average of 0.7.

### Reduction in Disciplinary Actions

It is evident that the Study Technology training produced a sharp reduction in disciplinary problems among students who received the training. For example, during the 12 weeks before Study Technology training there were 47 disciplinary actions on file for those students. During the 12 weeks after, there were 27 disciplinary actions on file, a 43% reduction.

The improvement for the 15 trained students had a positive effect on the entire class. In the same period of time disciplinary actions were reduced for the control students by 34%.

### Results Lead to Expansion

Subsequent to the success of the Study Technology pilot project in 2001, interest in Study Technology grew throughout the city of Memphis. After school

tutoring programs were established by LEAP and many community groups trained by LEAP adopted Study Technology as a tool for achieving various social betterment objectives. In 2003, another small pilot project was initiated in another under-performing Memphis inner-city high school.

### The Second Pilot Project

The project taught literacy and study skills to ninth- and tenth-grade “at-risk” students during one class period per week. The students were tested with the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) in late October at the start of the project. Their reading levels at that time ranged from first to third grade level. During the one weekly class session between November and March they received tutoring in phonics and in Study Technology, using the *Learning How to Learn* textbook. After approximately 20 hours of tutoring the students were post-tested on the WRAT in early April.

### Results

Both pre- and post-test scores were available for five of the students. The scores and amount of change for each student are shown in the table below. After only 20 hours, the students had gained from 1.9 to 3.6 grade levels in reading. The average gain in literacy was greater than 2.5 grade levels, but this is only part of the story. There was a marked change in each of the students. Each had a much greater interest in reading and studying. They were much more focused. They stated they

<b>Wide Range Achievement Test Grade-Level Scores and Amount of Change on Pre- and Post-Tests</b>			
Student	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Change
1	2.8	5.8	3.0
2	1.8	3.8	2.0
3	1.8	4.0	2.2
4	3.6	7.2	3.6
5	1.8	3.7	1.9
Average	2.36	4.90	2.54

were learning. They each tried harder and attempted words they did not know and could not sound out, where previously they would have given up easily.

### Discussion

The outstanding results of this project, combined with those of the earlier project, were sufficient to persuade the federal government to fund a program for the entire ninth and tenth grade of this high school. Averaging five years below grade level in reading ability, these ninth- and tenth-grade students will receive Study Technology training and individual help in academic subjects by tutors trained in the precise remedial tools of Study Technology.

### Attachments:

Letter, Tennessee State Representative  
Letter, Superintendent, Memphis City Schools  
Letter, Principal, Memphis City Schools



© 2005 Applied Scholastics International. All Rights Reserved. The Applied Scholastics open book design and the Effective Education Publishing design are trademarks and service marks owned by Association for Better Living and Education International and are used with its permission. Applied Scholastics International is a non-profit, educational organization and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, nationality or ethnic origin in administering student admissions or any of its administrative policies.

**Attachments:**  
**Letters from Supporters**



**BARBARA COOPER**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

HOME:  
683 HARBOR EDGE CIRCLE  
APT. 101  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38103  
(901) 578-7008

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE:  
38 LEGISLATIVE PLAZA  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0186  
(615) 741-4295  
FAX (615) 741-8752

E-MAIL:

rep.barbara.cooper.@legislature.state.tn.us

**House of Representatives**  
**State of Tennessee**  
NASHVILLE

ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP

**MEMBER OF COMMITTEES**  
EDUCATION  
HIGHER EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
SECRETARY  
TOURISM CAUCUS

July 1, 2002

Mr. Eric Everett  
Board of Directors  
Literacy, Education  
& Ability Program  
1440 Central Avenue  
Memphis, TN 38104

Dear Mr. Everett:

I am very pleased to hear about the success of the pilot project using the Hubbard method of study in the Memphis city Schools. I have been following this project for some time now. Without a doubt, this method of learning is the key ingredient to make Tennessee's education system one that will be emulated across the country once it is established.

I want to express my enthusiastic endorsement of these methods and encourage everyone to support the efforts to get as many educators trained in this method as quickly as possible. The speed at which results are achieved by students using study technology begs that we act fast to get many, many teachers applying these techniques now. This program will secure a prosperous future for the youth under our watch!

Sincerely,

Barbara Cooper  
State Representative

BC/as

Cc: Johnnie B. Watson, Superintendent  
Memphis City Schools

86<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT  
SHELBY COUNTY



2597 Avery Avenue • Memphis, Tennessee 38112-4892 • (901) 325-5300

*Reply to the office of:*

**Johnnie B. Watson**  
**Superintendent**

Phone (901) 325-5444 / FAX (901) 325-5578

EMAIL: [superintendent@mcsk12.net](mailto:superintendent@mcsk12.net)

WEBSITE: [www.mcsk12.net](http://www.mcsk12.net)

July 1, 2003

The Honorable Harold Ford, Jr.  
Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
9<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Tennessee  
1523 Longworth Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Ford:

I recommend support of allocated federal funding for the Literacy, Education and Ability Program (LEAP) in Memphis.

LEAP is a community-based literacy program that provides tutoring and study and life skills courses to children and their parents. In addition, LEAP has been authorized as a post secondary institution by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and as such is able to train teachers and grant college credits for the training they receive.

The center has also trained at-risk youth as tutors so they can use these skills to help their peers and younger students. Research has shown that the difficulty many students experience with reading and learning stems from the inability to apply what they are studying. To address this problem, LEAP provides an effective and rapid phonics-based reading program for students to overcome this barrier. Also, the center provides a study skills program that teaches the student how to learn. The goal of the program is to provide tools for life-long learning, which is vital to success and growth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

There is a strong need for supportive programs such as LEAP that can work in cooperation with the public school system and address the needs of students and their parents. Consequently, I encourage your support of funding for the LEAP fiscal year 2004 appropriations request.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Johnnie B. Watson".

Johnnie B. Watson



2597 Avery Avenue • Memphis, Tennessee 38112-4892 • (901) 325-5300

Raleigh Egypt High School  
3970 Voltaire Avenue  
Memphis, TN 38128

Ms. Lisa Green  
Grants and Policies  
Memphis City Schools Board of Education

Dear Ms. Green,

I am pleased to announce the results of the Study Skills project completed by Mrs. Jaquess and her English classes. It improved the grades of the participants across the board. GPA improved by 1.2 and the disciplinary actions decreased by approximately 66%. In addition, it greatly increased the parental involvement with our school. Several parents came by to write their own success stories. These are part of the goals we have set for Raleigh Egypt High School.

I enjoyed the success stories written by both students and parents. I certainly endorse this project and recommend its use by other schools. Both Mrs. Jaquess and I recommend that it be started at as early an age as possible to increase the benefits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Mayo", written over a horizontal line.

Dan Mayo  
Principal, Raleigh Egypt High School

Attachment: Full report