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Bilingual College Preparation in Mount Vernon, Ohio: A Community Based Learning Project with the Salvation Army

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Bilingual College Preparation in Mount Vernon, Ohio

A Community Based Learning Project with the
... Salvation Army

Andres Herrera, Alexa McElroy,
Bridget Murdoch, Mary Sturgis

Introduction to Chicano Studies, Fall 2015
Professor Clara Román-Odio



Situation at hand: Demographics

- *Knox County, Ohio*
 - Population: 61,167
 - Population (Mount Vernon): 16,788
- Mount Vernon Median income (Annual)
 - \$35,162
 - Lower than state average (\$48,000)
- 2010:
 - only 1.8% Hispanic/Latino
- Number has grown, but resources remain scarce
 - Partially lack of knowledge
- LiRA project as response
 - Increase awareness
 - What does the community need in return?

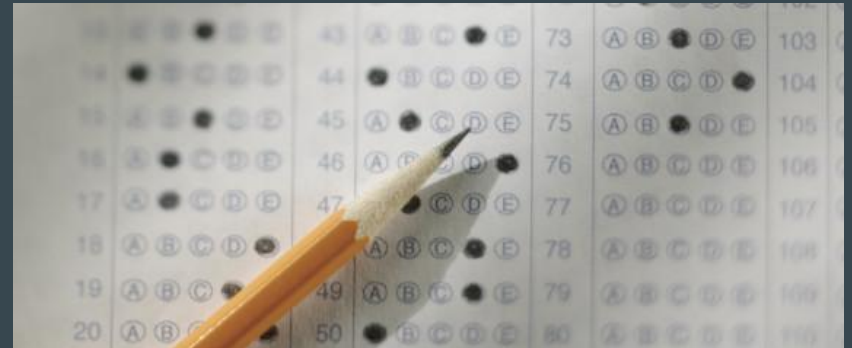


Demographics: Mount Vernon High School

- Hispanic students represent the smallest ethnic group at this school and have achieved the **lowest level of math and reading proficiency** out of the two ethnic groups represented at this school.
- Mount Vernon High School Testing Statistics
 - Average SAT Score: 1652
 - Average ACT Composite Score: 22

Importance of Standardized Testing in College Admissions

- Many sources believe that the importance of standardized testing is becoming less important in the College admissions process.
- Many colleges and universities **still require at least one.**

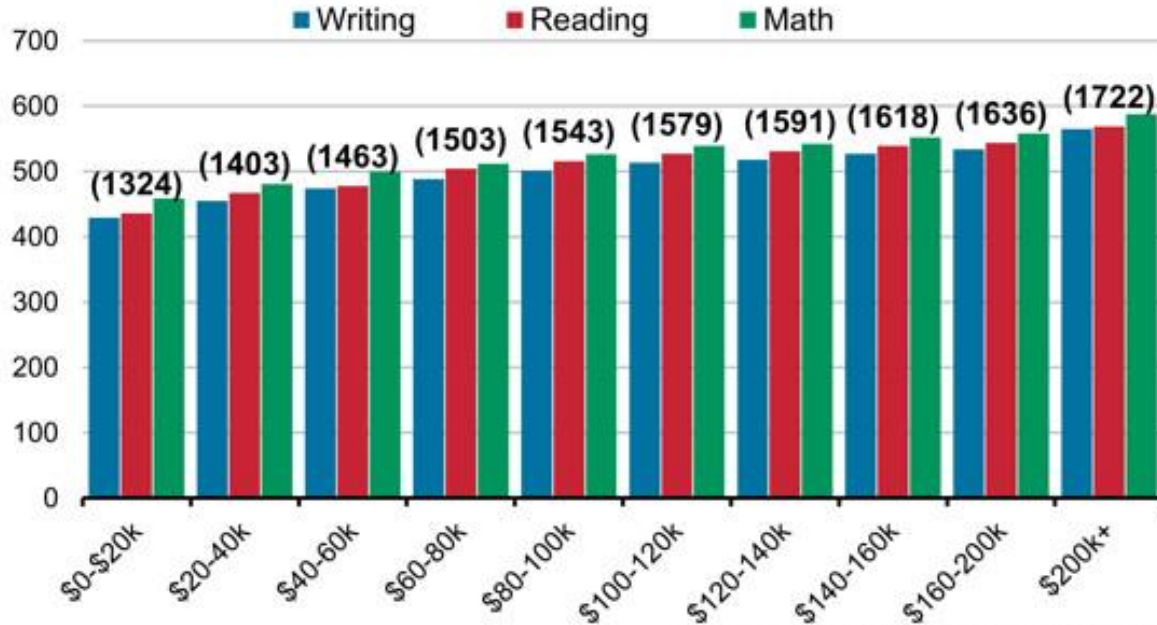


Access to Resources

- Direct correlation between SAT score and affluence
- Latino students struggling with language proficiency are at even higher disadvantage.
- **Lack of resources** in Knox County schools
 - Difficult to accommodate ESL students
 - Very few college counselors to guide students through the college admissions process.

SAT: Student Affluence Test

Average scores on each section of SAT (and combined) by parental income



Source: FairTest, College Board | WSJ.com



We want our kids to go to



CBL Project

- Community Based Learning Project
 - Engagement with the surrounding community
 - Introduction to Chicano Studies course
 - Part of growing movement within Kenyon towards experiential learning
- Team members
 - Mary Sturgis
 - Alexa McElroy
 - Bridget Murdoch
 - Andres Herrera
- Journals
 - Offer an opportunity to reflect
- Curricula Development
 - Plays a key role in program development



Objectives

- Boost our students' test scores
 - ACT/SAT
 - Reading and proficiency
- Guide them through the college admissions process.
 - Test prep
 - Researching colleges
 - Applying for financial aid/ scholarships
- Academic Empowerment
 - Collaboration with peers
 - Interactive engagement



Memorandum of Understanding

An agreement to a **Partnership.**

A way of **establishing expectations** from both parties.

Note: All of the Memorandum of Understanding was written by Professor Clara Roman-Odio for the purposes of this project.

This presentation borrows and adapts from this document.

Purpose

“As a Kenyon College and Salvation Army of Mount Vernon Partnership, we will work together to enrich and support the *Latino Youth Prep-College* program to be held twice per week at the Salvation Army from October 7, 2015 to April 22, 2016. “

(Roman-Odio, 1)

- orientation session
- 30 hours during the semester
- I commit to help participating Latino youth to improve their verbal and math skills in preparation for the ACT and SAT exams.
- scheduling meetings in a timely manner.
- open lines of communication
- communicate immediately to the Kenyon faculty any problems beyond our ability to manage

Reciprocal Expectations

. The Salvation Army will provide:

- A student orientation about the nature of the work or the need to be addressed
- Student supervision and support with teaching materials targeting relevant skills
- A system for tracking hours of service
- Assessment of student work and outcome (exit evaluation)
- Assessment of the impact the educational intervention has on Salvation Army students
- A mechanism for Kenyon student to provide feedback to the school

Kenyon's Contribution

- Commitment to certain number of hours per week or hours per project
- Student supervision by faculty member
- A system for tracking hours of service
- Assessment of the impact the program has on Kenyon students
- A faculty meeting every six months to open and close each semester session's projects
- A mechanism for the school to provide feedback to the student and faculty member.

Kenyon students are expected to:

- Perform their service learning work to the best of their ability
- Follow the Salvation Army's policies, procedures, and standards
- Meet time commitments and give reasonable notice if unable to attend

Partnership with Salvation Army

- Lt. “Gigi” Adriana Gonzalez-Cottrell
 - newer to the Salvation Army
 - our main point of contact
- Kaitlin
 - curricula developer for the Salvation Army
 - teaching experience

Facilities and Resources

- Salvation Army
 - multi-purpose spaces
 - computer lab
 - small classrooms (15 student maximum)
 - overcrowding during afterschool hours
- Resources
 - printing at Kenyon
 - bound curricula at end of trial period
 - lack of other materials
 - pens, paper
 - college prep books for students

Overview of Curricula Development: Key Components

- Development of vocabulary
 - Basic and advanced
- Reading comprehension
- Practice test-taking
 - Timed practice tests
 - Learn test-taking strategies
- Grammar and essay writing
 - Components of essay (intro, thesis, etc.)
 - Forming and explaining argument

The SAT

- Aptitude Test
- Mathematics
- Critical Reading
- Writing

Benefits of Preparation

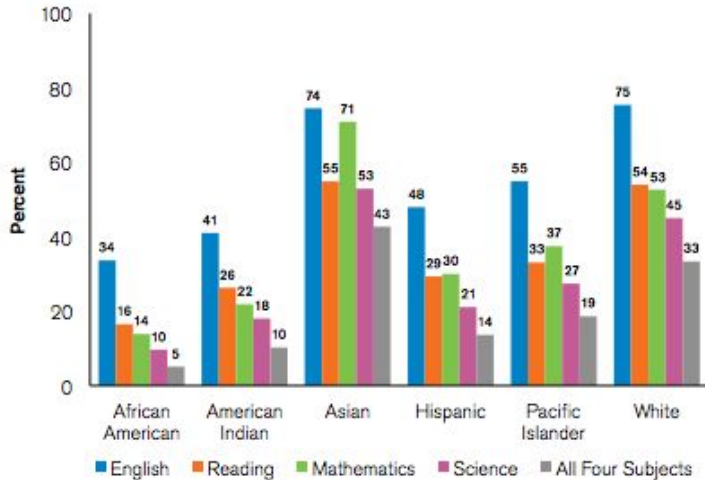
- Vocabulary
- Testing Rules and Strategies

Mean SAT Scores by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Group	Critical Reading	Mathematics	Writing
American Indian	481	482	460
Asian-American	525	598	531
Black	431	428	418
Mexican-American	448	457	438
Puerto Rican	456	449	442
Other Hispanic	449	457	439
White	529	534	513

The ACT

Percent of ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity, 2013



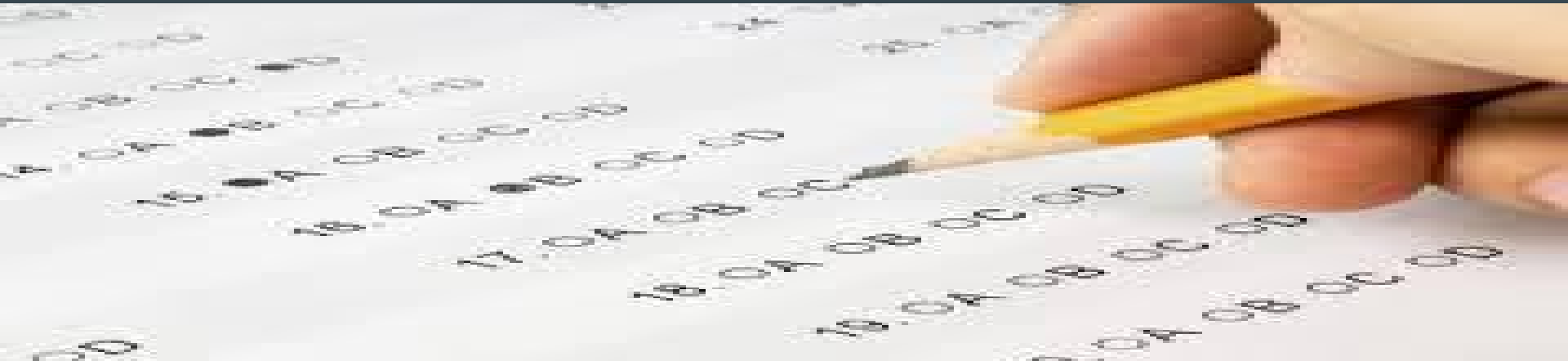
- Achievement Test
- English
- Reading
- Mathematics
- Science

Benefits of Preparation

- Test taking strategies are applicable to classroom skills
- Learning how “to test”

Specific Challenges with the SAT/ACT

- Inequality in access to resources
- Vocabulary-building strategies
- Overall literacy and reading comprehension
- Parent involvement in the process



Our (Working) Solutions for SAT/ACT Preparation

- Role of KILM Techniques
- Individualized Attention
- Community building
- Bilingualism as a tool for success
- Parent inclusion
- Goal setting
- Repetition
- Application of strategies to broader academic achievement

ACT Sample Lesson Plan: ACT Science

1. Pair share to come up with definitions for the following terms in your own words. Then, the entire class will define them in a group. Recap in Spanish.
 - a. Scientific Method
 - b. X-Axis
 - c. Y-Axis
 - d. Hypothesis
 - e. Thesis

2. Pair an older student with a younger one. Read over the provided ACT Science Section. Then, the entire class will talk through the activity in a group. Recap in Spanish.
 - a. Define any words you do not know using *context clues*.
 - b. Star the thesis. Underline supporting details. Circle the main take-aways.
 - c. Talk through each question using supporting material *from the text*. Why is the answer false? Why is the answer true?

Sample Lesson Plan: SAT Writing

1. Read the question. Come up with your own answer.

2. There is no doubt that Larry is a genuine -----: he excels at telling stories that fascinate his listeners.

2. Look at the answers. Are there any words that are *synonyms*? How would you define each word? Do any of the words sound like a word in Spanish?

(A) braggart (B) dilettante (C) pilferer
(D) prevaricator (E) raconteur

- A **braggart** may or may not excel at telling stories and may actually annoy listeners.
- A **dilettante** is someone who dabbles at a career or hobby and so may not excel at anything.
- A **pilferer** steals repeatedly, in small quantities; this has nothing to do with storytelling.
- A **prevaricator** tells lies, but not necessarily in an accomplished or fascinating way; and the sentence refers to stories, not lies.

You should choose the word that best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole, and only choice (E) does so.

Correct answer: (E) / Difficulty level: Hard

Who is this serving?

- Kids between 6th-12th grade
 - Students from families with no college graduates
 - Lower income
 - Struggle academically in local school system
 - motivated students

How do we get parents on the same page?

- Open forum discussion with student leaders
- First generation latino student Q&A session
- Sitting in on prep sessions
- Maintain open communication
 - Email, phone, etc.

Prospective Publicity

- Continue partnership with Salvation Army
 - Advertise the program all year
- Kenyon advertising the program
 - Increase number of volunteers
 - Increase awareness of need
- Connect with high schools and libraries

What does this look like in 5 years?

1. Program run in conjunction with Kenyon students [Spanish speakers] and the Salvation Army.
2. Successful curriculum [quantifiably measured] distributed to Latino/a students, public libraries, institutions of higher learning, and high schools.
3. Larger Kenyon partnership with Salvation Army : bilingual child and young-adult mentorship, ESL, Bilingual GED Preparation for adults

Conclusion and Further Questions

- The program will provide students a sense of empowerment
- The program will provide current and future high school students the means for academic success
- Incorporate a greater portion of the community within the program
- How will the program lead to a greater empowerment of the overall Latino community in Mount Vernon?
- Will the program be enough to ensure that the Latino community continue to have access to education and achieve academic success?
- Is the program a viable way to reform the current educational and economic systems in the area so that they include the Latino community?

Citations

First slide:

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Second Slide:

"Mount Vernon (city) QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau." *Mount Vernon (city) QuickFacts from the US Census Bureau*. United States Census Bureau, n.d. Web. 02 Nov. 2015.

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Third Slide:

"Mount Vernon High School in Mount Vernon, Ohio." *Mount Vernon High School in Mount Vernon, Ohio*. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 Nov. 2015.

Fourth Slide:

Unigo. "How Important Are Test Scores to College Applications?" *US News*. U.S.News & World Report, 14 Dec. 2011. Web. 02 Nov. 2015.

N.d. Web. 2 Nov. 2015. <<http://i.huffpost.com/gen/1331804/images/o-STANDARDIZED-TEST-facebook.jpg>>.

Fifth & Sixth Slide:

Zumbrum, Joshua. "SAT Scores and Income Inequality: How Wealthier Kids Rank Higher." *Real Time Economics RSS*. Wall Street Journal 7 Oct 2014. Web. 02 Nov. 2015.

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7th Slide: <http://campuspartners.osu.edu/assets/images/ohio-state-university.jpg> (OSU Campus)

(wooster) <http://www.centralfarm.com/user/files/photos/wooster-campus.jpg>

<http://catalog.oberlin.edu/mime/media/33/3/cataloghomeimage.jpg> (Oberlin)

(Kent State) https://dulux2871uqv.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/styles/huge/public/administrative-group/DA50_038_0.jpg?itok=Rlyuay8O

(graduates) <http://i.huffpost.com/gen/1801184/images/o-GRADUATION-facebook.jpg>

(denison) http://www.ctcl.org/files/images/denison/denison_univ1000x360.jpg

(miami u) <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/62/Muohioharrison.jpg>

http://ives-arch.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/IMG_7927to32-ISnL-Dorm-3-o.jpg (dorm)

Citations (Continued)

8th Slide: <http://www.mvnu.edu/MtVernon/photos/2.jpg> (Mt. Vernon sign)

(kenyon sign) <http://www.kenyon.edu/files/middlepath/sign.jpg>

17th Slide: "SAT Scores Drop and Racial Gaps Remain Large | Inside Higher Ed." *Inside Higher Education*. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Nov. 2015.

18th Slide: "ACT Profile Report-National: Graduating Class 2009." *PsycEXTRA Dataset*(n.d.): n. pag. 2013. Web. 1 Nov. 2015.

22nd Slide: *SAT Practice Test*. 2012.