

AN EVALUATION OF THE CHESAPEAKE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the Employment Plus Program in the Chesapeake(VA)Public Schools by determining the extent to which the program was effective in achieving its goals. Six questions were addressed: (1) What proportion of the students completed in each year between 1991 and 1997 all five parts of the GED test at a passing level? (2) To what extent did the program change the behavior of the students? (3) What pre-employment skills of the students were developed as a result of participation in the program? (4) What employment skills of the students were developed as a result of participation in the program? (5) What basic living skills of the students improved as a result of participation in the program? (6) To what extent did the program provide hope for the students to graduate in the Employment Plus Program?

Except for the data on the first question-- the proportion of students passing the GED between 1991-97, forty randomly selected students (50 percent) from the 1993-94 school year were the focus of this study. This was the first year that the program was in all five high schools in the school division.

Data were obtained through teacher, student, and employer interviews and through a review of written program materials. Data were analyzed thematically and findings were shared through tables and narrative summaries.

The researcher reported the Employment Plus Program findings to be (in order of importance): 71.6 percent of the students passed the GED in the years 1991-97, only two students were dismissed for discipline infractions in 1993-94, four of the Employment Plus students that started working in 1993-94 are still working in the same job today.

In the years 1991 through 1996, progress has been made in the number of students obtaining their GED. One year, 1996-97, showed a regression of students obtaining their GED. The researcher concluded as a result of the findings that the Employment Plus Program is meeting the majority of the stated goals.

The 1993-94 baseline data should be used for future comparisons. Variables which affect the Employment Plus Program that could be manipulated to increase the number of students in obtaining their GED would be to improve upon the

student truancy and drop-out rates. Educators should use this information to continue to help the students obtain their GED in the future.

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