

EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

Thinc Camp 2019

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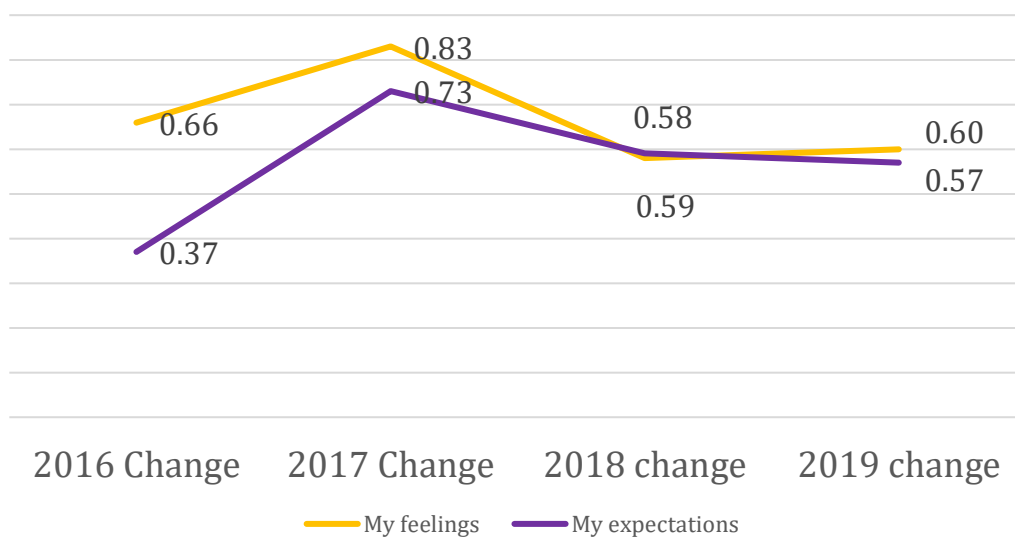
INTRODUCTION

During late July and early August 2019, 41 students from Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and a few more communities participated in a survey following Thinc Camp. The camp assembled these students at a Pennsylvania college campus, some for their first experience, and others who were returning. One of the final action items for these students was to sit down for a post-Thinc camp survey of student attitudes including a retrospective line of questioning that asked the students to consider change during the weeklong immersion.

STUDENT CAMPER INDEX RATINGS

The student survey was organized to allow for general index scores in two areas: “My feelings” and “My expectations.” The “My Feelings” index investigated student perceptions of themselves as learners, while the “My Expectations” index focused on student perceptions of their academic and professional future. Following data aggregation we compared the mean student response for change on an item on each of the scales. As shown in Figure 1, student camper ratings for both “My Feelings” and “My Expectations” increased following participation in the Thinc camp and its activities by an average of 0.6 points. Growth was similar for both scales and similar to that reported in 2018.

Figure 1. Mean per-item change reported by the average camper on each index



CAMPER RESPONSES: MY FEELINGS

The “My feelings” section was comprised of 14 statements for which a camper provided a numeric response indicating their agreement. Two responses were negatively coded, and as we have needed to do in the past, these items were removed from analysis due to participant struggles in understanding how to rate them.

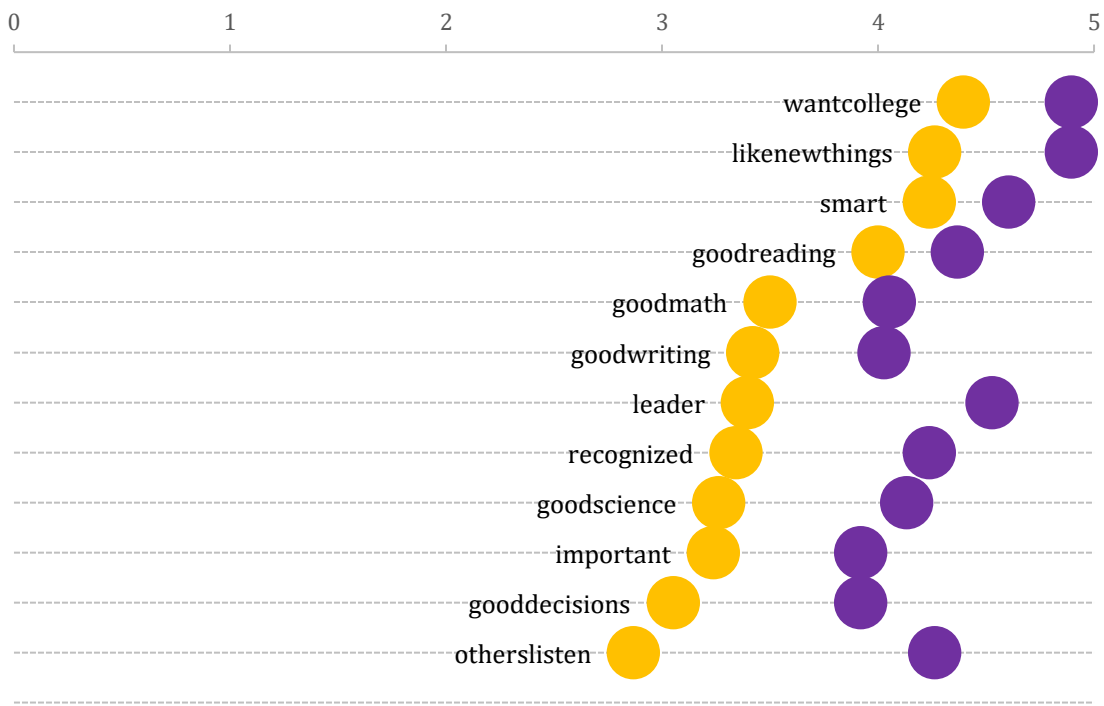
As shown in Figure 2, survey participants reported an immediate positive change as a result of the Thinc camp for all statements. At this year's camp, “I like learning new things,” and “want college” showed the highest end status, and “I see myself as a leader”, and “Others listen to my ideas” were the areas that saw the most growth.

These two statements have been the top two areas of growth for four consecutive years. As has been the case since 2016, campers rated “Others listen” as among the lowest coming into the camp. As a result, it could again be argued that the camp made a differential impact for these participants in that area. Students rated themselves higher in entering camp for “want college” and “like new things.”

Figure 2. Camper reported change in agreement for “My Feelings” statements

Participant Self-Reported Change in Feelings: Pre- to Post-

Camp efforts resulted in growth across all components, though more in some



In general, change scores were a bit higher in 2019 than in 2018. The largest areas of acceleration in score change across the past two years was for the prompt about others listening in school, but also for “I am good at writing,” and “I am good at science.” The largest deceleration seen in change scores across the two years was for “I am smart.”

CAMPER RESPONSES: MY EXPECTATIONS

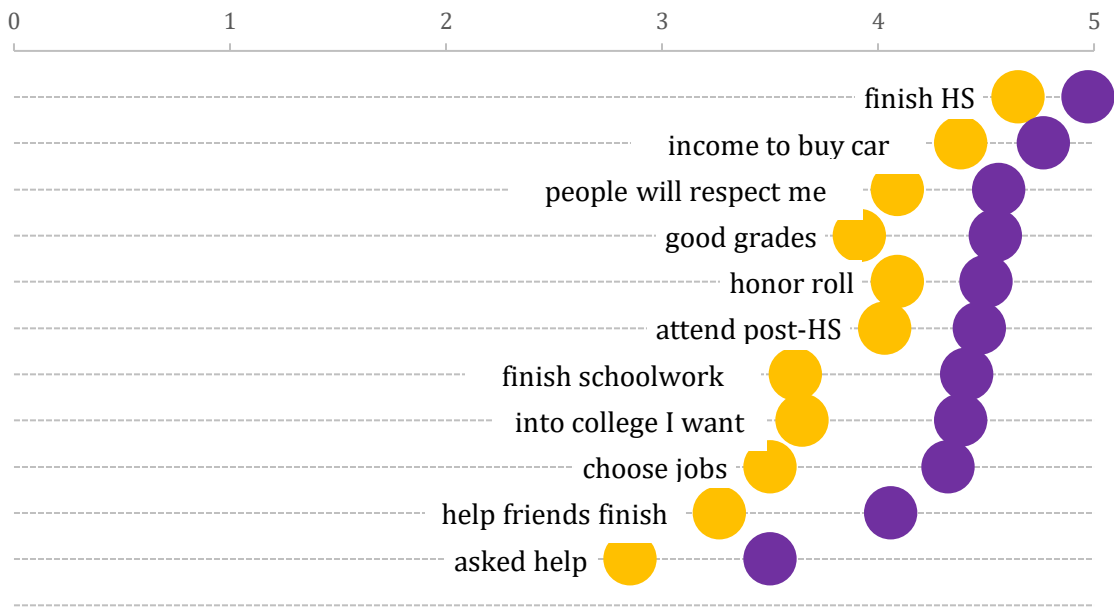
The “My expectations” section consisted of 11 statements for which a camper rated their level of agreement. As shown in Figure 3, the survey participants reported positive growth for each of the statements, and as mentioned before, at about the same rate as that reported for the “My feelings” section.

The reported growth was highest for the following statements of “I expect”: “that I will be able to choose between a number of different jobs someday,” “help others finish,” and, “respect me.” This is the third consecutive year that a choice of jobs was selected by students as one of the highest growth areas. It should also be noted that all students continue to fully expect to finish high school, as it was rated a nearly perfect average of 4.9 of 5.

Figure 3. Camper reported change in agreement for “My Expectations” statements

Participant Self-Reported Change in Expectations: Pre- to Post-

Camp efforts resulted in growth across all components, though more in some



For three prior years one of the statements that campers typically entered with the lowest scores ended up with the highest ratings. This was for the statement, "that I can help friends and peers finish high school." Though, campers experienced the second most growth for this statement, scores were so low prior to the camp in 2019, that it remained low as compared to the scores received by other statements.

This year, change scores were even for both the statement about attending college after high school and the statement about attending a college "I want to attend." During the previous year, campers had expressed less change for the statement about attending school where they wanted to.

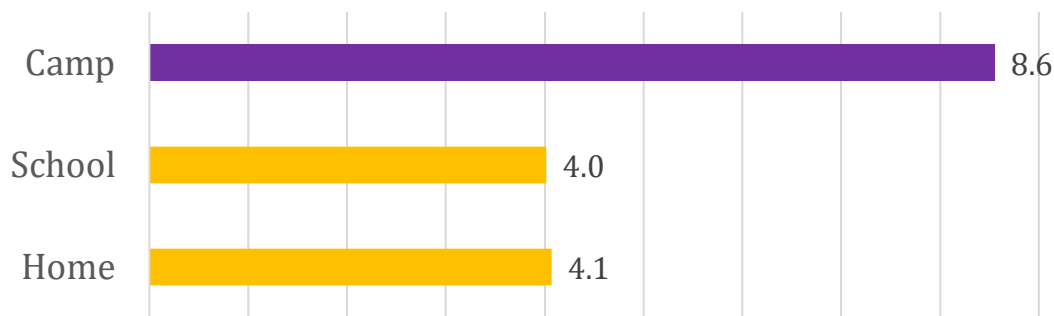
The average change reported across all statements was identical for both the 2018 and 2019 camps. The greatest acceleration in the change was reported for "I expect to": "buy car" and "to make the honor roll at school." The statement about finishing homework during the coming school year showed the most deceleration in change scores from year to year.

STUDENT WELLNESS

For the second consecutive school year we asked students about their wellbeing, and then compared the values they provided to those that they also provided for while they in school, and while they are at home in the summer. This particular scale, developed by Ed Diener and colleagues at the University of Illinois-Champaign in 1985 requires participants to share their agreement with how they feel compared to a series of words describing positive and negative emotions. They are: happy, pleased, joyful, enjoyment/fun, unhappy, depressed/blue, frustrated, angry/hostile, and worried, anxious and fearful.

The findings both years show that these students had improved well-being, and by a wide margin as compared to when at home or when at school. Values for wellness continue to be low for students when at school, though reported values for this summer's campers were higher than those for last year's campers. Positive words that resonated most with students at camp were "happy" and "enjoyment/fun." Negative words that resonated most with students at both home and school were "unhappy" and "frustrated." The most positive change shown at camp both years was for the term "enjoyment/fun." The difference between camp and both home and school continues to be positive for every term presented to students. Results are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Campers reported being twice as “well” at camp as compared to other settings



YEAR-TO-YEAR CHANGE IN SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

Campers who were returnees responded to questions about their engagement in school during the 2018-2019 school year as compared to other years. Students were asked to drag a slider bar between “much less” true and “much more” true to rate their agreement on a number of prompts during this past school year. The objective was to better understand whether the changes experienced at past Think Camps were lasting throughout the school year.

More than 90 percent of these students responded that three statements were at least “more” true during the 2018-2019 school year than in past school years. The reported rate for involvement in extra-curricular was twenty percentage points higher than during any previous year. There was similar improvement year-over-year for the statement “I was absent from school.”

Progress reported for the 2018-2019 school year was slightly less positive than that which was reported for the 2017-2018 school year. However, progress during both of these school years outpaced those reported during 2016-2017 and 2015-2016. As shown above in Figure 6, progress since the 2016-2017 school year was present for all but one prompt. **Fewer students appear to be reading more.** The rate of students who were more actively involved in extra-curricular activities has progressed from one of the lower rates among the prompts, to a rate of nearly 100%.

We do note that it is likely that as students age and mature that they might say that they make progress on some of these statements due to changes in the way students

experience high school versus middle school. In other words, these changes may have been present in the absence of any intervention.

Figure 5. Percent of returning participants that reported particular school engagement-related statements were at least “more” true in 2018-2019

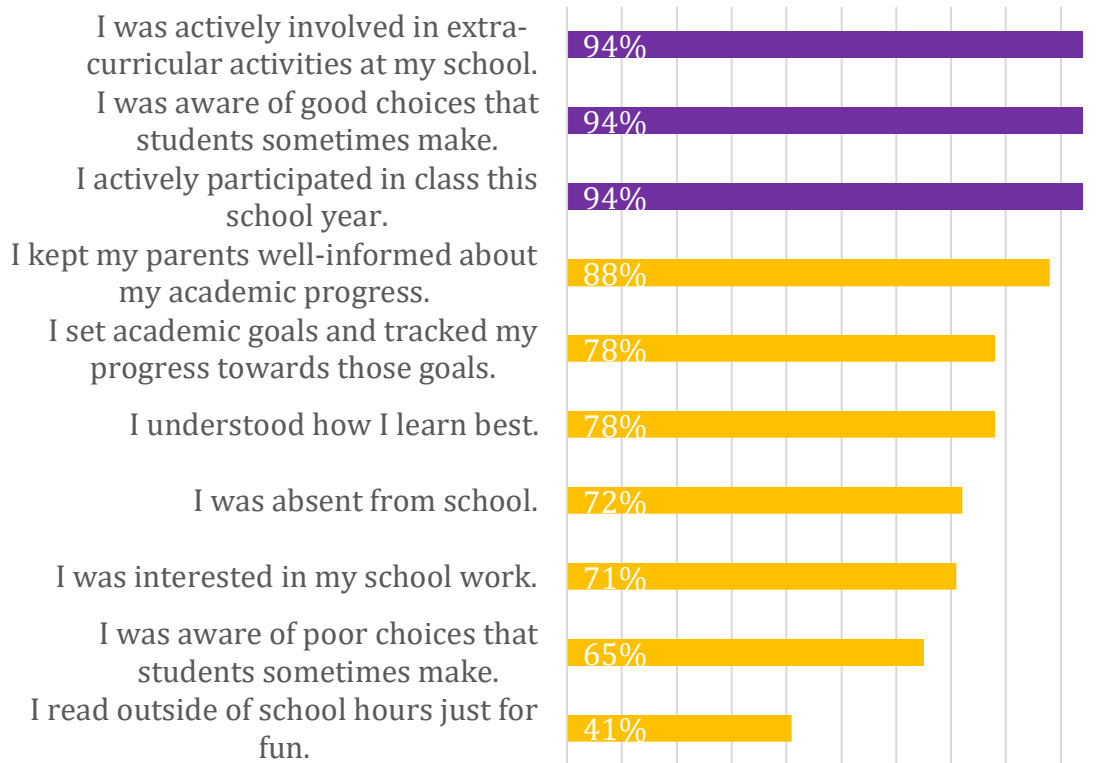
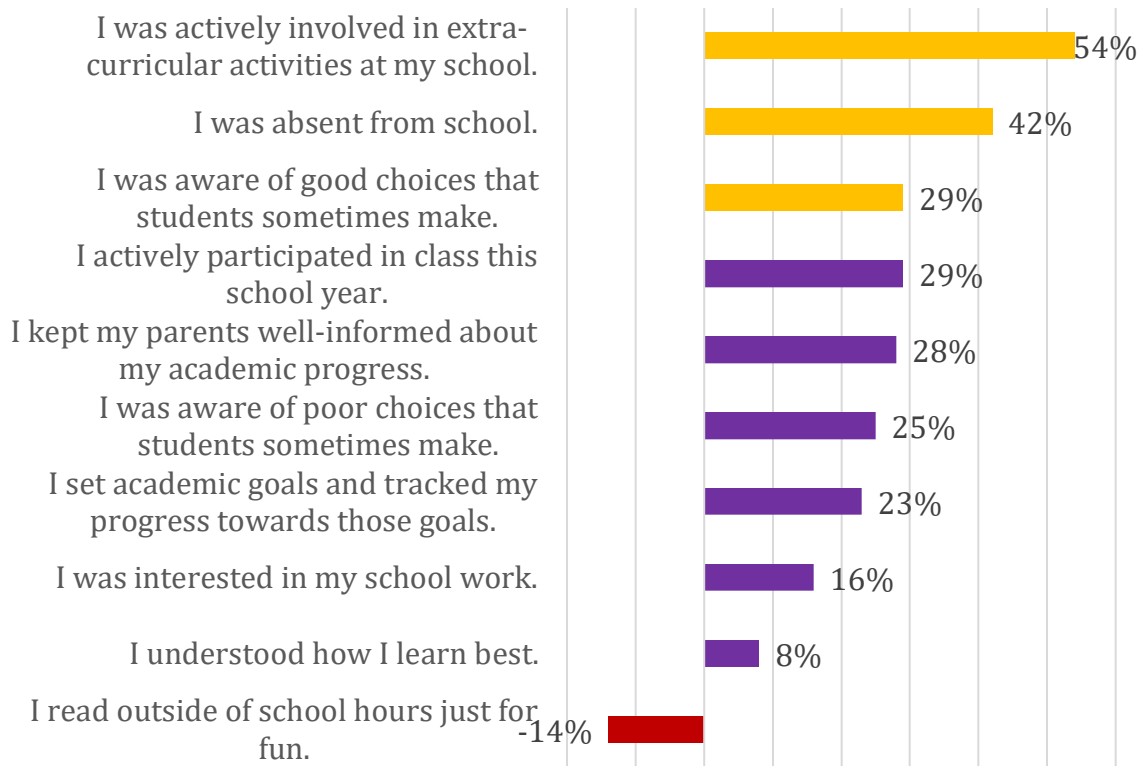


Figure 6. Students reported positive change in school engagement during the 2017-2018 school year



INDEX SCORE SUB GROUP ANALYSES

Please review the report of findings from the 2018 camp for a detailed and scientifically robust analysis of data collected about students on four potential outcomes. These analyses determined that higher expectations entering camp were a negative predictor of change in feelings, while they were a positive predictor of change in student engagement. Student grade was also shown to be a negative predictor of change in feelings.

For this report, we share 2019 summer camp outcome data disaggregated by a few key variables. Figures 7, 8, and 9 show the disaggregation of key camper outcomes by four student variables collected at camp. Only the differences seen between changes on the feelings scale (Figure 8) on pre-camp academic expectations were statistically significant.

Figure 7. Camper reported desire to attend college disaggregated by key variables

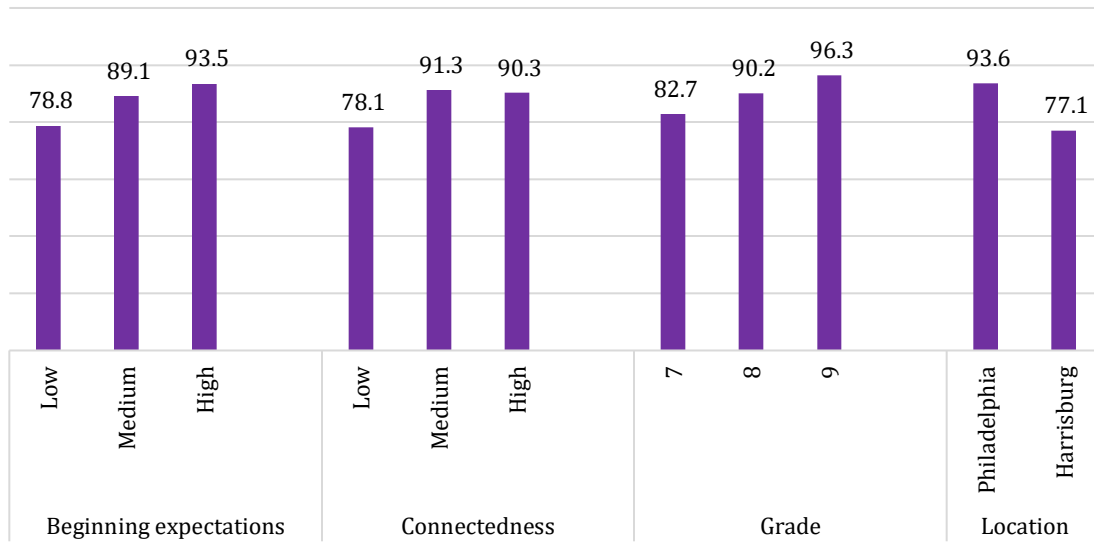


Figure 8. Camper reported change in agreement for “My Feelings” statements by key variables

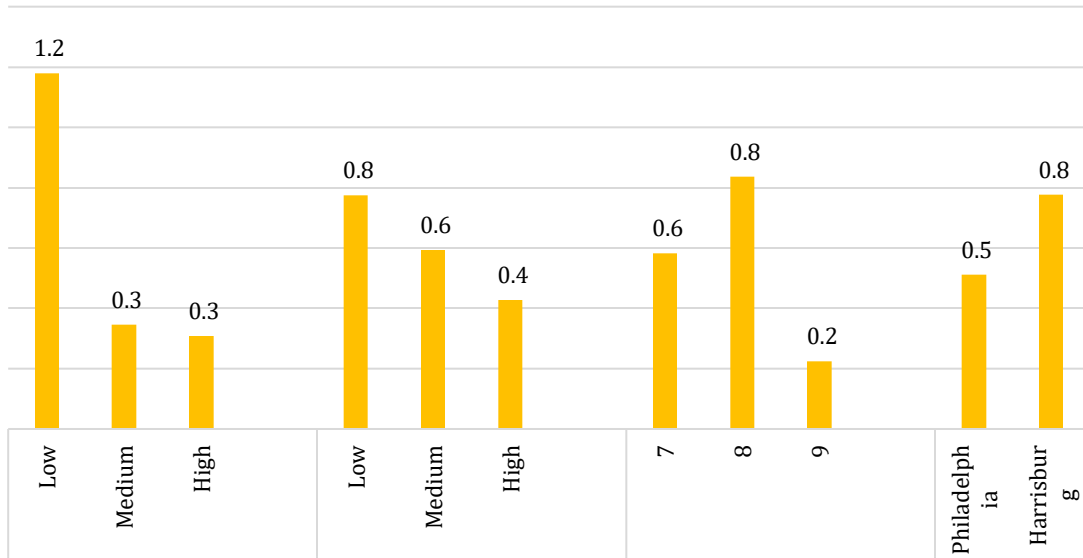


Figure 9. Camper reported change in agreement for “My Expectations” statements by key variables

