

Piloting Enhanced Career Education and Financial Incentives to increase access to Post-Secondary Education

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Agenda for presentation

- Background: testing two “early interventions” to promote PSE access
- Design of “Future to Discover” and its interventions
- Evaluation design for “Future to Discover”
- Early implementation and participation results
- Longer-term impact and other analyses

Background

- Research project operating as partnerships between the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation and each of two provinces: New Brunswick and Manitoba
- Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) contracted to undertake evaluation of the impact of the interventions
- Designed in 2003-4
- Recruited two cohorts of Grade 9 students randomly sampled from 51 schools through in-home interviews: 2003-4 (New Brunswick) and 2004-5 (New Brunswick and Manitoba) [n=5,429]
- Implementation of interventions in 2004-7 (first cohort) and 2005-8 (second cohort)

The policy problem

- High school students who could go on to access PSE are not doing so: Canada may face future shortage of skilled working-age adults.
- Problem could be due to:
 - lack of information about careers and relative benefits and costs of PSE
 - inaccurate information
 - inadequate preparation/ability to use information
 - anticipated unaffordability of PSE
- Interventions:
 - Explore Your Horizons - Enhanced early career education that includes PSE as part of post-secondary planning in Grades 10,11,12
 - Learning Accounts - Early guarantee of \$8000 financial support to pursue PSE for students with family income below median

Future to Discover Pilot Project

- A test of the two interventions - Explore Your Horizons (EYH) and Learning Accounts (LA) – in two provinces
- Both EYH and LA in New Brunswick
- Only EYH in Manitoba
- Integrated implementation and evaluation
- Randomized controlled trial

Explore Your Horizons

- Offered to cross-section of all students. Research interest on first generation students from lower-income families (LILE).
- Six career education components:
 - Career Focusing (G10)
 - Lasting Gifts (G11)
 - Future in Focus (G12)
 - Post-secondary Ambassadors (G10-G12)
 - F2D Magazine (G10-G12)
 - Exclusive (members only) Web site (G10-G12)
- Ordered by developmental sequence

Explore Your Horizons

| Grade Ten (16 hours) | | Grade Eleven (12 hours) | | Grade Twelve (12 hours) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fall | Spring | Fall | Spring | Fall | Spring |
| Career Focusing * (12 hours – 6 workshops of 2 hours) | | Lasting Gifts** (8 hours – 4 workshops of 2 hours) | | Future in Focus * (8 hours – 4 workshops of 2 hours) | |
| Post- Secondary Ambassadors (1 workshop of 2 hours) | Post- Secondary Ambassadors (1 workshop of 2 hours) | Post- Secondary Ambassadors (1 workshop of 2 hours) | Post- Secondary Ambassadors (1 workshop of 2 hours) | Post- Secondary Ambassadors (1 workshop of 2 hours) | Post- Secondary Ambassadors (1 workshop of 2 hours) |
| Website, magazine | Website, magazine | Website, magazine | Website, magazine | Website, magazine | Website, magazine |

*Parents/guardians are invited to take part in an orientation session at the beginning of grade 10, an overview session at the beginning of grade 12 and to participate in the final session of Career Focusing in grade 10 and Future in Focus in grade 12.

**Lasting Gifts is an intervention involving parents/guardians and their child.

Explore Your Horizons

- Program logic: Changes whether, when and how students think about and plan for life after high school
- Research question: Does EYH result in more students accessing PSE than existing school programming alone?

Learning Accounts

- Only New Brunswick families with income below provincial median
- \$2,000 deposited at the end of Year 1 (G10) if still in high school
- \$2,000 at end of Year 2 (G11) if still in high school
- Then \$4,000 once G12 is successfully completed, for a total of \$8,000
- \$2,000 is paid to the student upon enrolment in a PSE program
- \$2,000 each semester if they complete at least 60% of a full-course load the previous term
- Maximum \$4000 per year for two years of PSE
- Those in a one-year PSE program (or less) will receive their money in two equal disbursements at the start and end of their academic year

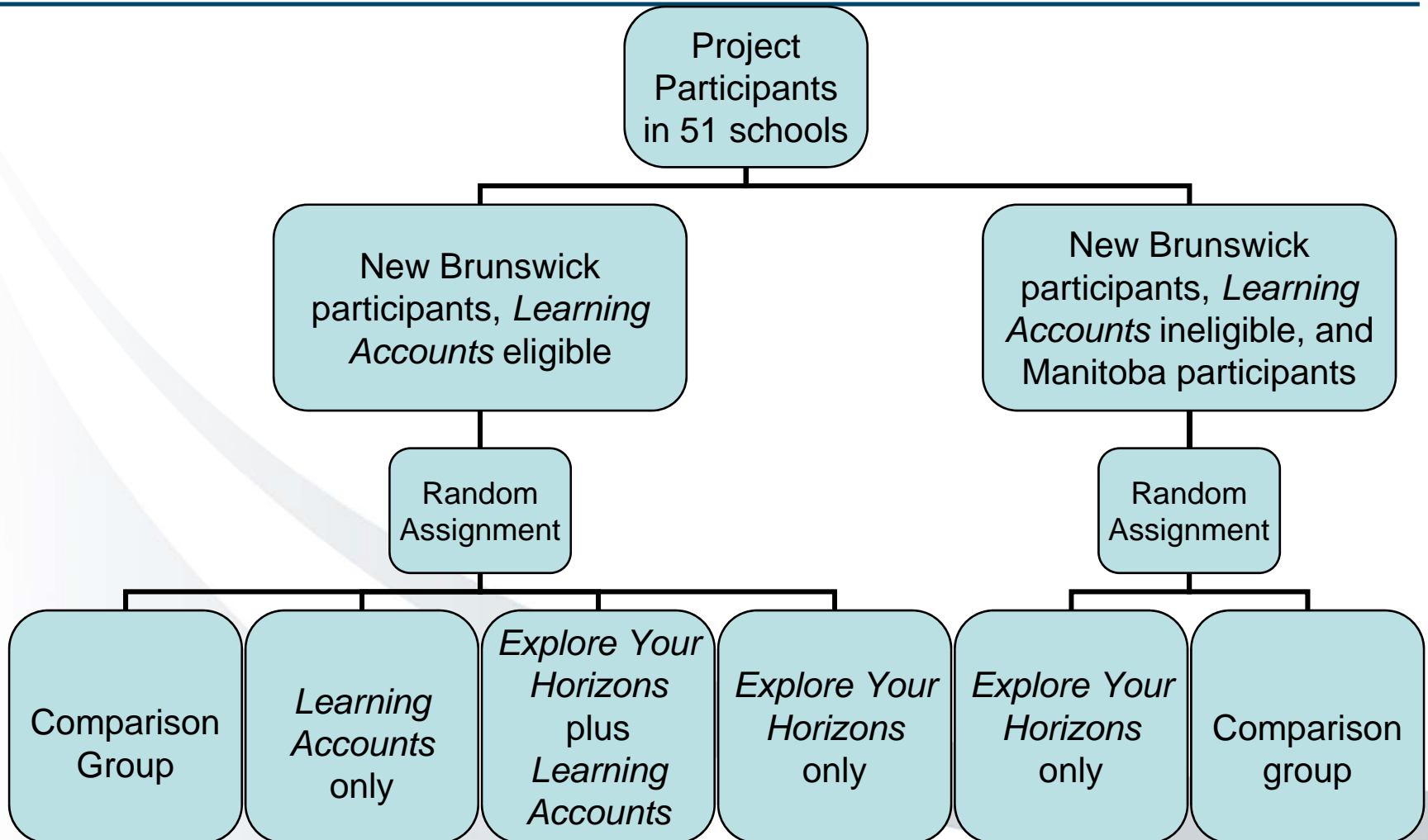
Learning Accounts

- Program logic
 - Changes whether and how students think about and plan for post-secondary
 - Increases affordability of post-secondary education
- Incremental aid versus early notice of aid?
- Income-based not need-based?
- Research questions:
 - Does the offer of:
 - a Learning Account
 - a Learning Account alongside EYH
 - result in more students accessing PSE than:
 - existing school programming and the current system of student financial aid?
 - the offer of EYH alongside existing school programming and the current system of student financial aid?

Randomized controlled trial over six years

- Long-term research collecting evidence of program effectiveness from Grade 9 through to start of second year of PSE. Surveys and administrative records. Impact analysis based on random assignment of participants to different experimental groups.
- Implementation research on the operation of the programs to serve as a source of practice “lessons learned”. Observation, focus groups and depth interviews.
- Benefit-cost analysis.

Recruitment and random assignment



Report timelines

- **Early Implementation Report (October 2007)**
Full report http://www.srdc.org/uploads/FTD_EIR_full_report_EN.pdf
Executive summary http://www.srdc.org/uploads/FTD_EIR_Ex_Sum_EN.pdf
- **Interim Impact Report (2009)**
- **Final Impacts Report (2012)**

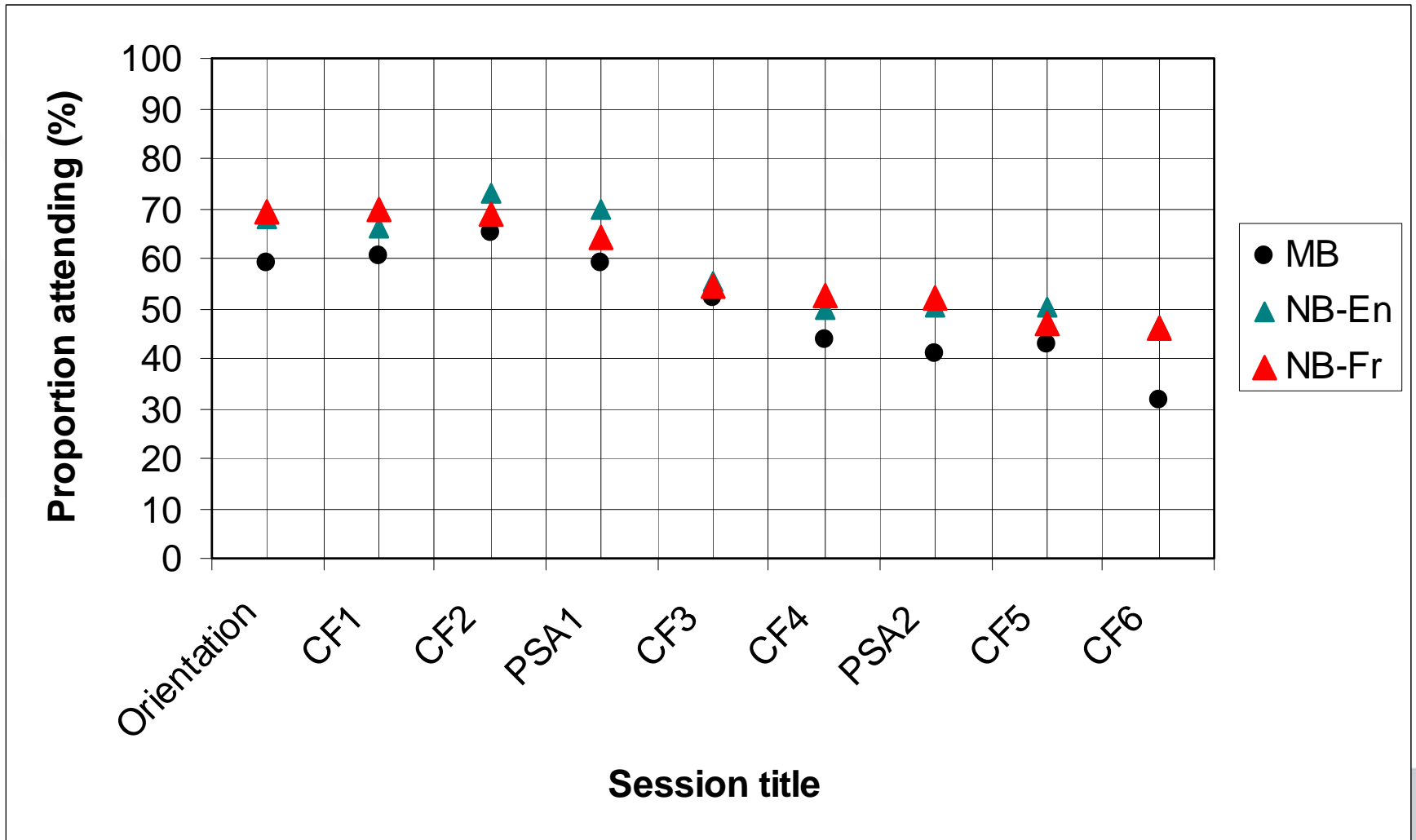
Analysis of early implementation

| | 2003-4 | 2004-5 | 2005-6 | 2006-7 | 2007-8 |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| NB cohort 1 | Recruit Grade 9 | Year 1 Grade 10 | Year 2 Grade 11 | Year 3 Grade 12 | PSE 1 |
| NB cohort 2 | | Recruit Grade 9 | Year 1 Grade 10 | Year 2 Grade 11 | Year 3 Grade 12 |
| MB | | Recruit Grade 9 | Year 1 Grade 10 | Year 2 Grade 11 | Year 3 Grade 12 |

Explore Your Horizons Year 1 implementation

- Year 1 of Explore Your Horizons received a “fair test” by being delivered as designed.
- Delivery of Explore Your Horizons components across sites and time was consistent. Scripts and other materials prepared for the workshops including the Operations Manual were adhered to. Activities were monitored by Province and observed by researchers.
- Staff involved in the implementation of Explore Your Horizons were aware of implementation objectives and prepared to facilitate the activities accordingly
- Participation in activities was encouraged. Efforts were made to maximize participant exposure to Explore Your Horizons components.

Attendance began strongly but declined during the year.



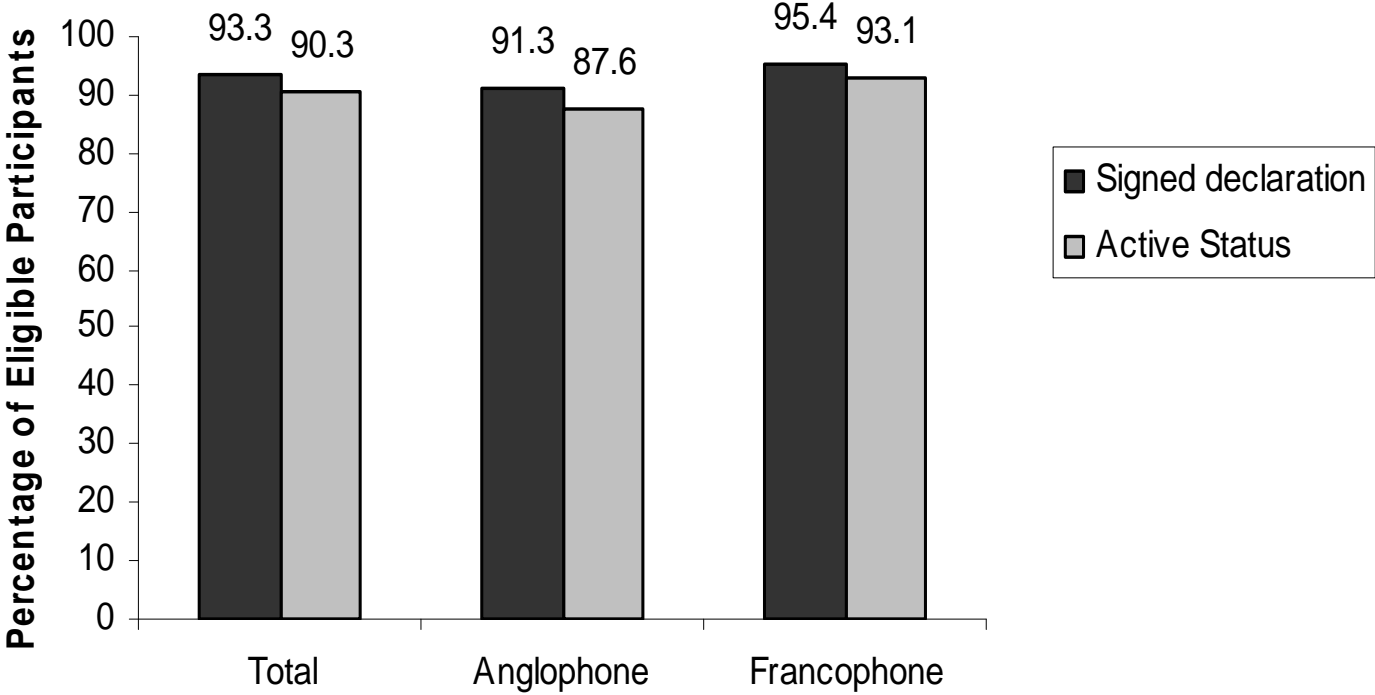
Intensity of attendance by different groups

| | | All | LILE | Non-LILE | Difference | EYH +LA | EYH | Impact |
|-------|-----------------------|------|------|----------|------------|---------|------|--------|
| MB | Attended any sessions | 78.4 | 68.9 | 82.8 | *** | | | |
| | Attended 7+ sessions | 39.8 | 28.2 | 45.0 | *** | | | |
| NB An | Attended any sessions | 83.9 | 82.5 | 85.5 | | 85.6 | 79.7 | * |
| | Attended 7+ sessions | 48.1 | 45.8 | 50.9 | | 51.1 | 41.9 | ** |
| NB Fr | Attended any sessions | 84.1 | 82.7 | 85.7 | | 89.7 | 77.1 | *** |
| | Attended 7+ sessions | 46.7 | 43.8 | 49.9 | * | 55.1 | 35.2 | *** |

Learning Accounts Year 1 implementation

- Participant and parent were notified by mail, supplemented by telephone if required, about the eligibility rules for accumulating instalments
- Notification took place early in Grade 10 in order for the long-term effects of the *Learning Accounts* offer to be fully tested
- Adequate time and *Future to Discover* office support was offered to participants to enable them to take part in the intervention
- Eligibility for first year \$2000 instalments was verified
- Notifications of Account balances were sent at the end of the first year, along with reminders of ongoing eligibility status

Learning Accounts Participation



Impact analysis 2009

Interim impacts:

- Change in future orientation
- Increased knowledge of PSE options
- Changes in course choices
- Increase in school attendance
- Lower school drop out rates
- Improved knowledge of PSE costs and financing
- Greater parent and student saving for PSE
- Improved academic achievement
- Increased graduation from high school

Impact analysis 2011

Principal outcome:

- Successful enrollment and completion of the first year of chosen PSE program
- [Program aim] Successful completion of the chosen PSE program