

## Starczewski, Leslie

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**Sent:** Wednesday, March 26, 2014 10:05 AM  
**To:** Kronberger, Paul  
**Subject:** Digital Divide Pilot Project idea

Sorry for the length here, but I put a lot of thought into this one....

### # How to use the Digital Divide Funding

I propose using the Scientific Method, which has five steps, each requiring "invention, sagacity, and genius:" Formulation of a Question, Hypothesis, Prediction, Testing, and Analysis. Granted, we should keep in mind the realities of our citizens and recognize that implementing something good in the near-term may be better than something perfect in the long-term.

### ## Formulation of a Question

Our Committee's charter states, in part, that we are tasked in "...making studies and recommendations relative to the facilitating the provision of internet access to all citizens with special attention to low income families...." Further, the budget item provides funding "for a pilot program to provide assistance to low income neighborhoods and families to obtain Internet access." To that end, I propose the question "\*\*\*How can we enable Internet access to low-income citizens in a way that is meaningful for said citizens and scalable for citywide implementation?\*\*\*"

### ## Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a falsifiable, proposed explanation for a phenomenon. In our case, this phenomenon can be characterized as "\*\*\*aiding meaningful access to the Internet for the City's low-income neighborhoods and families is scalable to the whole city.\*\*\*"

### ## Prediction

To address the near-term, I believe a focus on providing access and education for adults will be most effective in increasing wages, decreasing unemployment, and increasing the likelihood of the creation of small businesses over a time scale of 2 years.

To address the long-term, we should focus on augmenting the Madison Metropolitan School District's Strategic Framework, with special attention to their one-to-one plan. Providing Internet access at home for disadvantaged schoolchildren should elevate grades across disciplines, strengthen graduation rates, and increase the economic outlook of our youth over a time scale of about 5 years.

The secondary effects of these predictions include an overall economic benefit for the tested region, including a higher quality of life, lower municipal costs, and better tax base which all aid in scalability.

Combining both approaches—focusing on both students and adults—should have symbiotic effects that result in better outcomes than either approach can achieve alone.

### ## Test

Assuming sufficient funding is available, I propose three regions for the pilot: one with a student focus, one with an adult focus, and the last with both focuses. To ensure compatibility with the MMSD Strategic Framework, the regions including a student focus should be within areas where one-to-one is implemented. The technology partner used should be excited about the project and should have a track record of innovative solutions to constrained problems. I think more discussion needs to occur to determine what other aspects of the testing phase should be.

## ## Analysis

As alluded to in the prediction, we should be able to use grades, graduation rates, wages, unemployment, small business growth, municipal costs, and tax base as metrics to evaluate success. From these numbers, we may be able to determine whether the hypothesis holds.