High School and Post-Secondary Student Success

FY2021-2022 Strategy Summary

Prepared by Social Policy Research Associates | October 2022

The eight programs funded under OFCY's High School and Postsecondary Success (HSPSS) strategy are designed to support student success and persistence through school and community-based programming that aims to support achievements in learning, increase attachment to school, and facilitate transitions into high school and postsecondary education. To summarize strategy achievements and progress to date, this report draws on participant surveys, administrative data, quarterly narrative reports, and one focus group with OUSD's Student Engagement in Restorative Justice and Catholic Charities of the East Bay's Experience Hope.

Strategy Results

3,064 Youth
participated in programming

84,416 Hours
of academic services and college access support provided

28 Average Hours
per youth participant

8 Programs
Received funding

77% of Youth
agreed that the program helped them feel more motivated to learn in school

$1,164,300
granted to programs

"[We] provide avenues for connection for ninth graders specifically because the highest rate of drop out is ninth grade, and we want to provide connection and caring loving spaces for them where they are more likely to want to come to school, rather than drop out."

- OUSD Student Engagement in Restorative Justice

Funded Programs

ACCASA Mentors for Oakland African American Male Achievement: College and Career Performance Program - Oakland Unified School District

EMERGE - The Mentoring Center

Empowering Oakland Students To and Through College - College Track

Experience Hope - Catholic Charities of the East Bay

Knight Success: College Ready, Career Ready and Community Ready - Oakland Kids First

OIHS: Refugee & Immigrant Wellness, Leadership and Restorative Justice Initiative - Oakland Unified School District

Student Engagement in Restorative Justice - Oakland Unified School District

Youth Law Academy (YLA) - Centro Legal de la Raza, Inc.

Strategy Results

Beginning in the 2019-2022 funding cycle, OFCY adopted a Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework to assess its role in contributing toward city-wide goals. The RBA model is a comprehensive approach for assessing the quantity of services provided by programs, the quality of those services, and the effect of those services on the lives of children, youth, and families. It does this by addressing **three guiding questions: (1) How much did we do? (2) How well did we do it? (3) Is anyone better off?** Results related to these three questions are displayed in the table on the following page.

> **"We train youth in restorative justice practices and support them in engaging in it, which means helping them plan for circles and facilitate the circles and ultimately debrief them as well."**
>
> –Staff, OUSD Student Engagement in Restorative Justice

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FY21-22 Results-Based Accountability Results

How much did we do?	
Number of Programs Funded	8
Number of Youth Served	3,064
Total Hours of Service Provided	84,416
Average Hours of Service per Youth	28
Number of High Schools Served	7

How well did we do it?	
Enrollment: Average progress toward projected number of youth served[1]	159%
Total Service Hours: Average progress toward projected total hours of service	104%
Average Hours of Service: Average progress toward projected average hours of service	67%
Safety: Youth who agreed that they felt safe in their program	91%
Caring Adults: Youth who agreed that there is an adult at their program who really cares about them	87%
Positive Engagement: Youth who agreed that they are interested in what they do at their program	85%

Is Anyone Better Off?	
Motivated to Learn: Youth who agreed that they are more motivated to learn in school	77%
Academic Skills: Youth who agreed that they learned skills that help with their schoolwork	74%

The remainder of this report includes the following sections aligned with this RBA framework:

1) Overview of Programs and Participants
2) How much did the programs provide?
3) How well did programs do it?
4) Is anyone <u>better off</u> as a result of the strategy's work?

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[1] At the start of the fiscal year, programs estimate their annual enrollment and the total number of hours of service they will provide. Progress is calculated as the actual enrollment divided by the projected enrollment.

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Programs and Participants

High School and Post-Secondary Success programs provide academic support, enrichment opportunities, and social emotional support to older youth.

During FY21-22, 3,064 unduplicated youth participated in High School and Post-Secondary Success (HSPSS) programs. Under this strategy, programs focused on supporting high school and older youth, particularly in neighborhoods and school sites where students experience high levels of environmental stress. HSPSS programs are varied by design, serving distinct priority populations with diverse intervention models. Services included academic support, transition services, therapeutic case management, career exploration, enrichment opportunities, and social support. For example, Oakland International High School provided on-campus wellness services, leadership training, and restorative justice programming to immigrant students. The Mentoring Center's EMERGE program helped reentering girls and young women recover school credits and prepare for postsecondary education and/or permanent employment. Additionally, Catholic Charities held an annual summer bridge program for eighth grade students that were transitioning to high school as well as school-based, trauma-informed restorative justice services to promote youth healing.

Program Spotlight

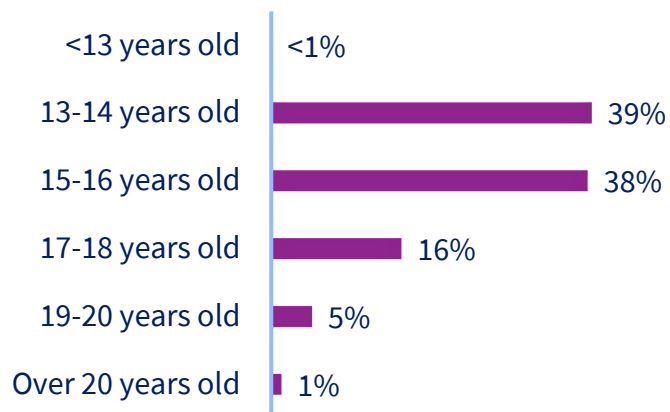To inform this report, SPR conducted a focus group with staff from two programs:

OUSD's Student Engagement in Restorative Justice Program trained student leaders from three OUSD high schools to design and lead restorative justice circles with ninth graders to support their transition to high school and welcome new students.

Catholic Charities of the East Bay's Experience Hope Program provided transition services to students moving from eighth to ninth grade as well as trauma-informed restorative justice services to promote youth healing.

About 80% of participants were between 13 and 16 years old.

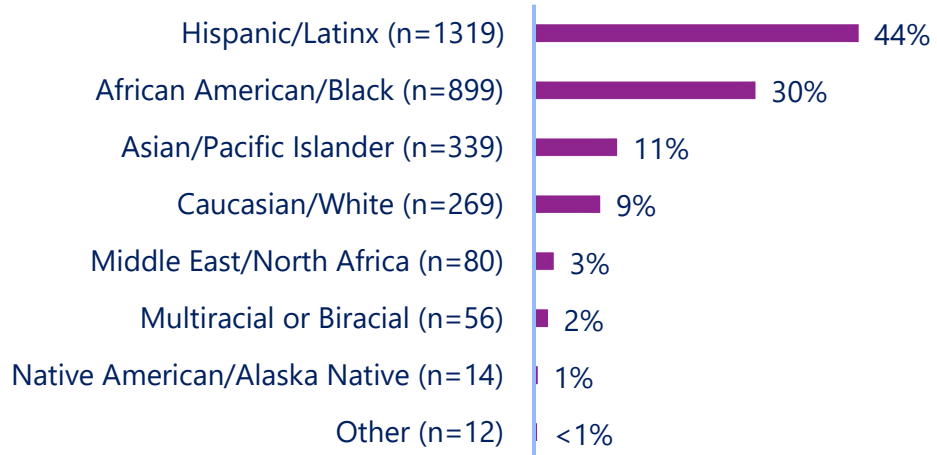Most participants were in high school or would soon transition into high school. As shown below, youth ages 13 to 16 represented close to 80% of participants served by this strategy.

Age of Participants

Age	Percentage
<13 years old	<1%
13-14 years old	39%
15-16 years old	38%
17-18 years old	16%
19-20 years old	5%
Over 20 years old	1%

Latinx and Black youth comprised about three-quarters of participants.

In alignment with OFCY's goal of reducing race-based disparities in postsecondary access, 74% of participants identified as Hispanic/Latinx or African American/Black.
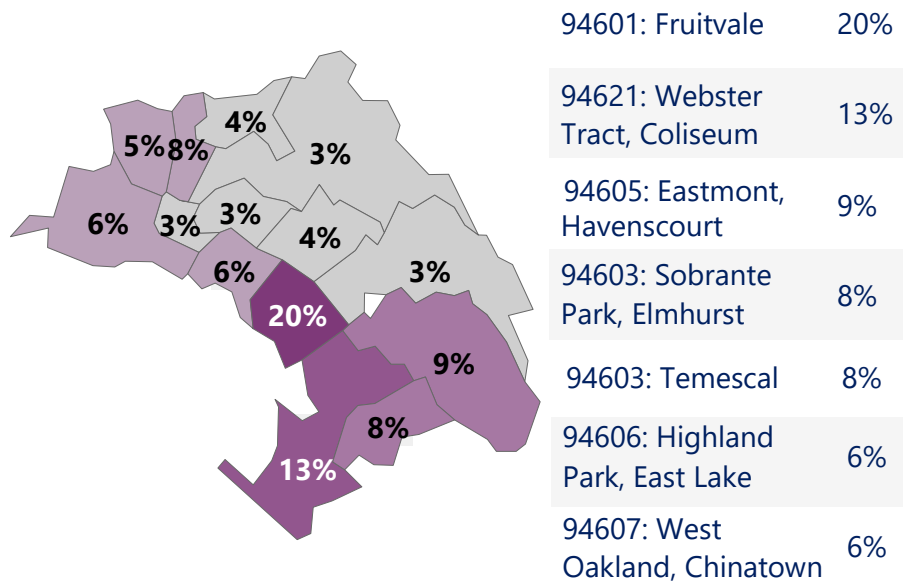
Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic/Latinx (n=1319) — 44%
African American/Black (n=899) — 30%
Asian/Pacific Islander (n=339) — 11%
Caucasian/White (n=269) — 9%
Middle East/North Africa (n=80) — 3%
Multiracial or Biracial (n=56) — 2%
Native American/Alaska Native (n=14) — 1%
Other (n=12) — <1%

As illustrated below, most participants lived in zip codes that experience high levels of community stress, including Fruitvale, Webster Tract, Eastmont and Sobrante Park.

Zipcode of Residence

94601: Fruitvale	20%
94621: Webster Tract, Coliseum	13%
94605: Eastmont, Havenscourt	9%
94603: Sobrante Park, Elmhurst	8%
94603: Temescal	8%
94606: Highland Park, East Lake	6%
94607: West Oakland, Chinatown	6%

Table lists zip codes where at least 5% of participants live.

Map percentages: 5%, 8%, 4%, 3%, 6%, 3%, 3%, 4%, 6%, 20%, 3%, 9%, 8%, 13%

How Much Did Programs Do?

HSPSS programs provided 84,416 hours, offering both in-person and virtual programming to support students as schools transitioned back to in-person learning.
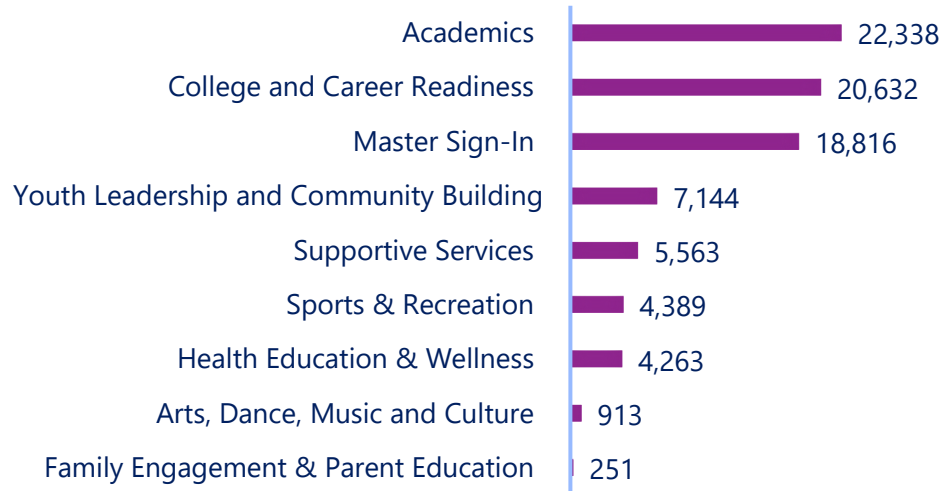
Programs provided 84,416 hours of service. In FY21-22, HSPSS programs moved towards a hybrid model to support students as schools transitioned back to in-person learning. Many programs provided most of their services in person and offered classes and tutoring virtually. For in-person programming, COVID-19 precautions, such as weekly testing, masking, social distancing, vaccination requirements, and outdoor activities, helped curb the spread of the virus and safely reengage students experiencing remote learning fatigue.

Still, the ongoing and evolving nature of the pandemic impacted participants' attendance and retention at several programs. Common challenges included low engagement in virtual components due to Zoom fatigue, students missing sessions or dropping out of programming because they took part-time employment to help support their family, general apathy and low morale on school campuses, and concerns among students and families about in-person programming. Additionally, COVID-19 outbreaks and staffing shortages forced some to temporarily pause programming or shift the program structure at their school sites. In response to outbreaks, programs were able to pivot and leverage their existing infrastructure for providing virtual activities and services to allow them to continue serving youth. A few programs also engaged in more follow up and outreach than they traditionally did, which helped increase enrollment. The chart on the following page provides an overview of the total hours of service provided by type of activity. As shown, programs provided over 20,000 hours of academic support, as well as college and career awareness activities.
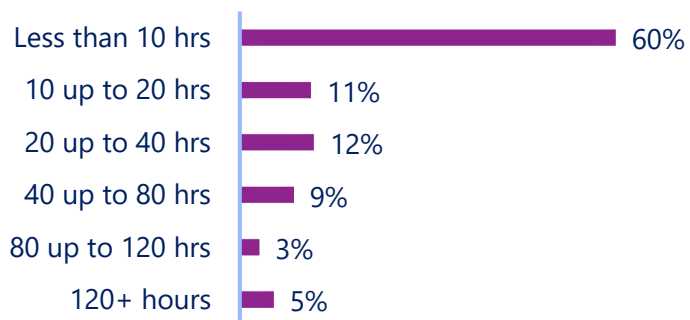
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Programs provided over 20,000 hours of academic services, as well as college and career readiness activities.

Total Hours of Service Provided, by Type of Activity

Activity	Hours
Academics	22,338
College and Career Readiness	20,632
Master Sign-In	18,816
Youth Leadership and Community Building	7,144
Supportive Services	5,563
Sports & Recreation	4,389
Health Education & Wellness	4,263
Arts, Dance, Music and Culture	913
Family Engagement & Parent Education	251

*   *Master Sign-In is a generic activity category that was used by OUSD's African American Male Achievement program.*

HSPSS programs varied in duration and intensity of services offered. For example, participants OUSD's African American Male Achievement: College and Career Performance program spent 106 hours in program on average. In comparison, 93% of students in OUSD's Student Engagement in Restorative Justice spent less than 10 hours engaged in restorative justice circles, which were organized and facilitated by student leaders who received up to 50 hours of service. A shown below, 83% of youth participants attended programs for 40 hours or less. On average, youth spent 28 hours in programming.
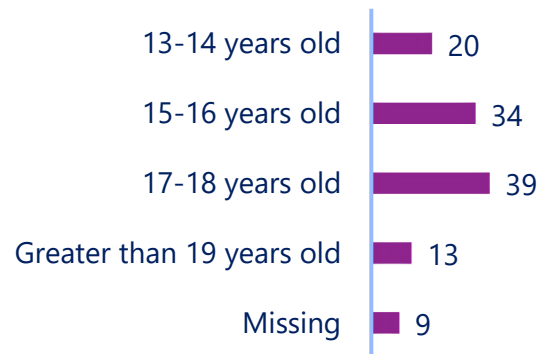
Hours of Attendance

| Hours	Percent
Less than 10 hrs	60%
10 up to 20 hrs	11%
20 up to 40 hrs	12%
40 up to 80 hrs	9%
80 up to 120 hrs	3%
120+ hours	5%

In line with the strategy's focus on older youth transitioning to adulthood, youth in the target age range (15-18) had the highest hours of service.

Average Hours of Participation by Age

Age	Hours
13-14 years old	20
15-16 years old	34
17-18 years old	39
Greater than 19 years old	13
Missing	9

The number of hours spent in programming varied somewhat by race/ethnicity. As shown below, Native American/Alaska Native and Black youth had the highest average hours of participation.

**Average Hours of Participation by Race/Ethnicity**
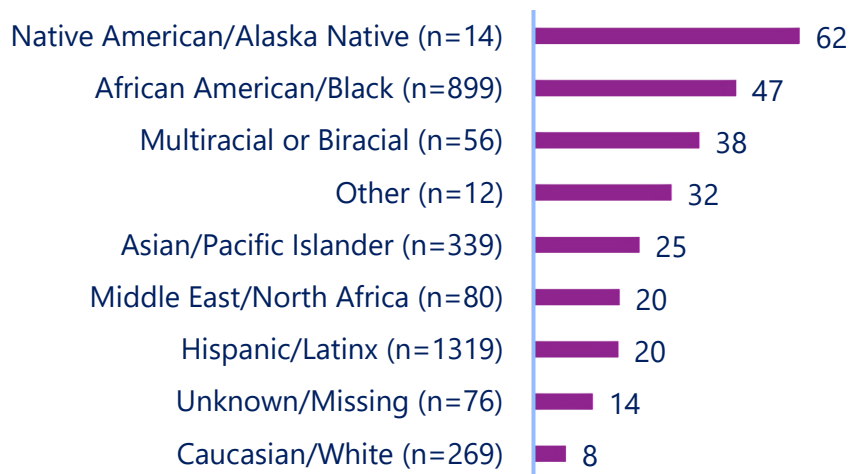
Native American/Alaska Native and Black youth had the highest average hours of participation.

Race/Ethnicity	Hours
Native American/Alaska Native (n=14)	62
African American/Black (n=899)	47
Multiracial or Biracial (n=56)	38
Other (n=12)	32
Asian/Pacific Islander (n=339)	25
Middle East/North Africa (n=80)	20
Hispanic/Latinx (n=1319)	20
Unknown/Missing (n=76)	14
Caucasian/White (n=269)	8

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How Well Did Programs Do It?

OFCY tracks a series of indicators to assess how well grantees implemented their programming. The first three indicators include progress toward projected enrollment, total hours of service, and average hours of service per participant. Enrollment was strong: On average, programs enrolled close to 160% of the youth they anticipated. Despite the attendance challenges several programs faced, as previously described, on average programs provided 104% of the total hours of service they anticipated providing. On the other hand, the average attendance per participants was 67% of what programs projected on average. As noted previously, several programs reported struggling with retention and consistent attendance and, in response, boosting recruitment and enrollment.

Program Performance: Progress Toward Projections
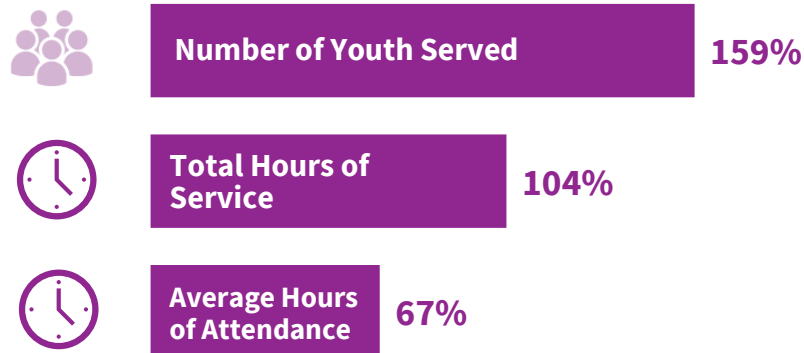
Programs enrolled close to 160% of the youth they anticipated and exceeded the total hours of service they anticipated providing.

Number of Youth Served	**159%**
Total Hours of Service	**104%**
Average Hours of Attendance	**67%**

In addition to these measures, OFCY uses youth survey results as indicators of program quality. As shown on the following page, the 307 participants who completed surveys generally felt safe, interested in their program, and connected to adults that cared about them in their programs.

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Program Quality: Youth Survey Responses (n=307)

Safety

91%

Youth who agree that they feel safe in their program.

Caring Adults

87%

Youth who agree that there is an adult who cares about them at their program.
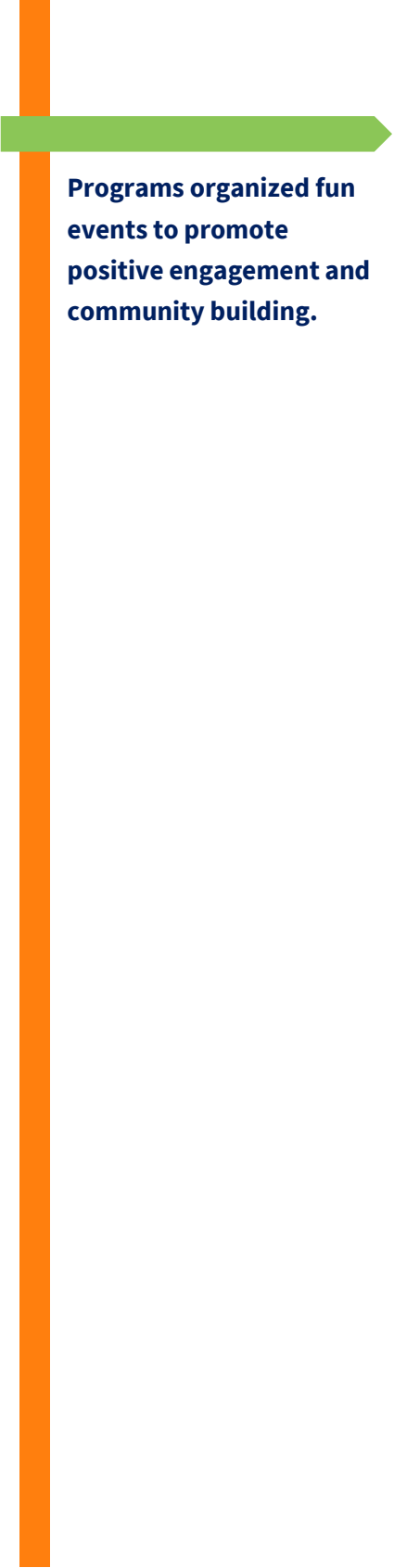
Positive Engagement

85%

Youth who agree that they are interested in what they do at their program.

To create a safe environment, programs engaged students in restorative justice practices and support circles that fostered positive relationships with peers. Programs also tended to participants' basic needs (e.g. housing, food, medical, etc.) and implemented COVID mitigation protocols to support physical safety amid the pandemic. Some ran a hybrid model to be inclusive of youth who were apprehensive or unable to attend in-person programming. Others reported switching to mostly virtual programming when youth expressed concern about their health and safety during COVID surges.

> We give youth the option to not only express themselves but express themselves differently in ways that they never even thought they could have the opportunity to express themselves. It's deepening relationships so these youth learn to count on each other. Those things you just can't quantify.
>
> –Staff, Catholic Charities of the East Bay's Experience Hope

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Programs organized fun events to promote positive engagement and community building.

To encourage positive engagement, HSPSS programs resumed in-person activities which helped students who experienced Zoom fatigue and burnout from remote learning. Lunchtime and First Friday events at school also helped promote positive engagement. These activities included community building, college preparation, peer academic support, and paid internship opportunities. One program provided translation and interpretation to English Language Leaner and newcomer youth to support positive engagement.

Finally, the return of in-person programming also created opportunities for young people to connect with and build relationships with caring adults. HSPSS programs conducted one-on-one wellness checks with participants, provided case management to connect and follow up with students in need of services, and built trust with youth and families to reduce stigma related to mental health supports.

Is Anyone Better Off?

To assess if HSPSS participants are better off because of their participation, OFCY uses surveys general youth development and academic outcomes. As shown below, most of the 307 youth who completed the survey reported gaining the academic motivation and skills that the strategy aims to provide.

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Participant Outcomes: Youth Survey Results (n=307)

Motivated to Learn

77%

Youth who agree that they are more motivated to learn in school

Support with School

74%

Youth who agree that they learned skills that help with their schoolwork

78% of surveyed youth agreed that the program helped them feel more confident about going to college.

In addition to these outcome indicators, participant survey data and program interviews tell a more comprehensive story about the ways that programs prepared youth for success during and after high school, as described on the following pages.

Academic Preparedness and Engagement

A key area of focus for HSPSS programs was academic preparedness and engagement. For example, OUSD's African American Male Achievement program focused on completing courses required for admission to California's public colleges, college acceptance, and college attendance rates. In this program, African American and Latinx student athletes received peer tutoring, attended study hall and enrichment activities, participated in the college application process, and engaged in financial planning for college. Similarly, Oakland Kids First's Knight Success: College, Career, and Community Readiness Initiative supported Black, Latinx, and Newcomer students with transitioning to high school, completing graduation requirements, and accessing postsecondary opportunities. The return to in-person programming allowed staff to support ELL/newcomer students with translation and interpretation during the school day and engage

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bilingual students to serve as peer interpreters in classrooms. The program also offered on campus tutoring to help student athletes maintain their GPA and online credit recovery and dual enrollment opportunities.

"You know you have AP exams, you have PSATs, you have a huge college push. But what is success in those areas if we haven't given young people the tools that they need to advocate [for themselves] and express their thoughts and feelings…to be reflective?"

–Staff, OUSD Student Engagement in Restorative Justice

92% of surveyed youth agreed that they felt supported and respected at their program.

Sense of Belonging and Mental Wellness

Recognizing the importance of belonging and mental wellness, especially during the pandemic, HSPSS programs continued to incorporate these key components in their intervention model. Programs facilitated conflict resolution and restorative justice practices and offered individual and group therapy, case management, and one-on-one wellness checks. OUSD's Student Engagement in Restorative Justice program engaged student leaders in facilitating meditation circles. To foster belonging, the program engaged students of all learning styles, including youth with IEPs and disabilities, in restorative justice work on school campuses, such as community building circles and consensual decision making. Additionally, the program held multilingual student-led circles in Spanish, Arabic, and Mam to celebrate students' personal identities.

Decision-Making and Goal Setting

HSPSS programs supported decision-making and goal setting in different ways. For example, Youth Law Academy helped seniors move towards their postsecondary goals by providing guidance on crafting their personal statement and completing their college applications. College Track engaged students with cumulative GPAs below 3.25 in their Affinity

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Group workshops to strengthen their executive funding skills like prioritization and time management. The program also hosted a summer activity fair to help students identify opportunities to spend their out-of-school time in a meaningful way, such as applying for internships and enrichment programs.

> **"Everything revolves around relationships. We do see the social awareness and the responsible decision making…these areas of social emotional development that you see if you take the time to nurture those things in the same way that you English, History, Math and Science… You can see those changes for sure when you are sitting in a restorative justice circle with young people and hear them say things that are reflective and honest."**
>
> –Staff, OUSD Student Engagement in Restorative Justice

84% of youth surveyed agreed that they learned how to set goals and meet them.

Outcomes by Youth Subgroups

An analysis of survey responses by subgroup revealed that Latinx/Hispanic youth reported stronger progress in two outcome areas tied to this strategy: *Academic Engagement and Preparedness* and *School Connectedness*. There were no other statistically significant differences across ethnicity, age, gender, or sexual orientation.

Conclusion

In summary, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, High School and Post-Secondary Student Success Strategy continued to provide academic support, transition services, enrichment opportunities, and social support. HSPSS programs moved towards a hybrid model to support students as schools transitioned back to in-person learning. Many programs provided most of their services in person and offered classes and tutoring virtually, allowing them to continue engaging youth despite COVID-19 outbreaks, Zoom

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fatigue and trepidation about in-person activities. Still, programs reported struggling with low engagement in virtual components due to Zoom fatigue, low attendance due to competing demands, low morale on school campuses, and staffing shortages. Despite these challenges, programs were able to exceed both the number of youth they projected serving and the total number of hours they anticipated providing by focusing recruitment efforts throughout the year. As a result of the activities and services offered to students, about three-quarters of surveyed youth agreed that they were motivated to learn in school as a result of their program and that they learned skills that will help with their schoolwork.