

Baseline Evaluation Report: OSPI/AESD ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Evaluation

May 2023

Puget Sound Educational Service District Strategy, Evaluation and Learning

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Puget Sound Educational Service District Strategy, Evaluation, & Learning. (2023). *Baseline Evaluation Report: OSPI/AESD ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Evaluation*. Renton, WA: Puget Sound Educational Service District. Please contact Nathalie Jones, Project Director, for additional information at njones@psed.org or 425-917-7719.

BACKGROUND

OSPI/AESD ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project

Since late 2021, the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD) have led the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund Attendance & Reengagement Project in partnership with Educational Service Districts (ESDs), school districts, and State-Tribal Education Compact (STEC) schools across the state.

Purpose and Goals

The Attendance & Reengagement Project seeks to address the crisis of engagement and disengagement students experienced during and after the COVID pandemic, particularly students and families furthest from educational justice. The project aims to do this by expanding attendance and reengagement supports across the education system.

During the COVID-19 pandemic in Washington State, students experienced disengagement from school particularly students identifying as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), English language learners, students receiving migrant services, youth experiencing homelessness, students with disabilities, students identifying as nonbinary, and students from economically disadvantaged households. With \$15.9 million invested in school districts, STEC schools, and ESDs in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years, the Attendance & Reengagement Project aims to:

- Expand staff capacity for direct service reengagement
- Proactively increase attendance by building or enhancing school and district systems¹

Expanding staff capacity for direct service reengagement supports includes a range of services, such as:

- Outreach, locating students, family visits
- Creating relationships and building a bridge back to an educational pathway
- Mentoring, guidance, coaching
- Case management
- Connection to community resources, wrap-around supports, and reduction of barriers
- Academic and postsecondary advising
- High dosage tutoring (academic support)

Proactively increasing attendance by **building or enhancing school and district systems** includes:

- Funding to ESDs to deploy Attendance Coordinators for coaching, technical assistance, and peer learning networks to identified districts and school teams on the following topics:
 - o Enhancing tiered supports and interventions when students are absent
 - o Early Warning Systems and teaming on attendance
 - o Partnering with students, families and communities to address barriers to attendance and increase opportunities for engagement

¹ From ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project, draft Theory of Change and feedback from statewide Attendance & Reengagement Coordinators meeting.

- Funding for OSPI staff to manage the project, administer funds, support and monitor school districts, lead the ESD team, and co-design the evaluation.
- Funding to contract with national experts to provide professional development to project participants (e.g., Attendance Works and Everyone Graduates Center).²
- Professional Development & Networking
 - o ESDs and OSPI coordinate supports to districts and STEC schools, including:
 - Quarterly statewide trainings with Attendance Works
 - Statewide Network for Reengagement Specialists
 - Regional training and peer learning sessions
 - Regular district monitoring with OSPI, including monthly reports and quarterly check-in meetings
 - o OSPI supports ESDs through regular networking, workgroups, and monthly one-on-one check-in meetings.
- Technical tools for ESDs, districts, and STEC schools including a project dashboard, a Padlet with project resources, and evaluation reporting tools.

Participant Map

The ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project includes ESDs, districts, and STEC schools from across the state. The project includes the following grantees:

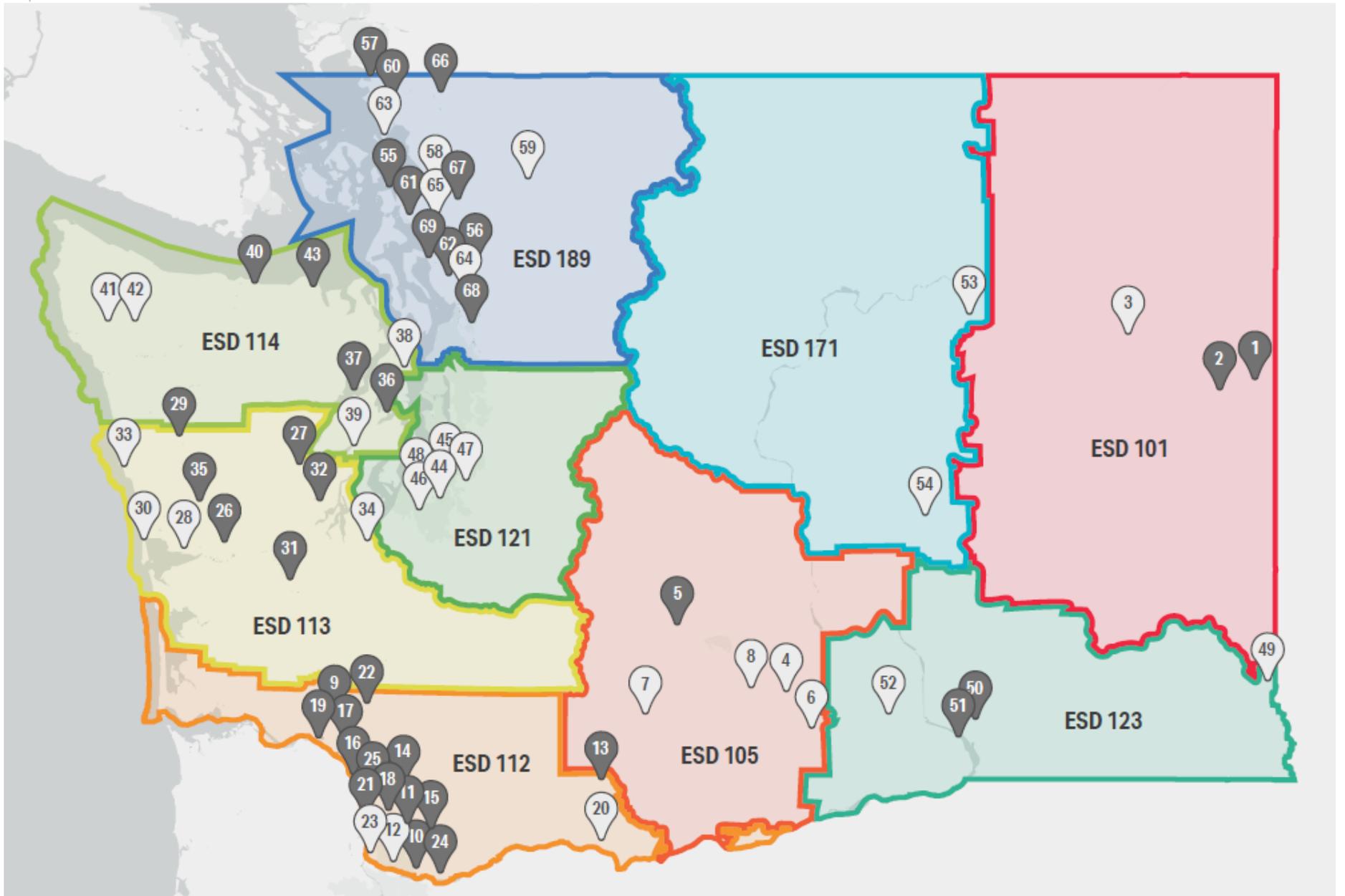
- **23 school district grantees (“priority” districts)**
- **39 school districts have project funded ESD direct service staff (“targeted districts”)**
- **6 STEC schools**
- **9 ESDs**

All districts and schools are included in professional development opportunities offered as part of the project.

² From ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project Explainer, https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/attendance/pubdocs/OSPI_AESD%20ESSER%20Attendance%20and%20Reengagement%20Project%20Explainer.pdf. Accessed January 30, 2023.

MAP OF PARTICIPATING DISTRICTS/STEC SCHOOLS/ESDS

Priority District /STEC schools # Targeted District



ESD 101

- 1 East Valley SD
- 2 Spokane SD
- 3 Wellpinit SD

ESD 105

- 4 Granger SD
- 5 Highland SD
- 6 Mabton SD
- 7 Mount Adams SD
- 8 Yakama Nation Tribal School

ESD 112

- 9 Battle Ground SD
- 10 Camas SD
- 11 Castle Rock SD
- 12 Evergreen SD
- 13 Glenwood SD
- 14 Green Mountain SD
- 15 Hockinson SD
- 16 Kalama SD
- 17 Kelso SD
- 18 La Center SD
- 19 Longview SD
- 20 Lyle SD
- 21 Ridgefield SD
- 22 Toutle Lake SD
- 23 Vancouver SD
- 24 Washougal SD
- 25 Woodland SD

ESD 113

- 26 Aberdeen SD (Harbor Learning Only)
- 27 Hood Canal SD
- 28 Hoquiam SD
- 29 Lake Quinalt SD
- 30 North Beach SD
- 31 Oakville SD
- 32 Southside SD
- 33 Taholah SD
- 34 Wa He Lut Indian School
- 35 Wishkah Valley SD

ESD 114

- 36 Bremerton SD
- 37 Central Kitsap SD
- 38 Chief Kitsap Academy
- 39 North Mason SD
- 40 Port Angeles SD
- 41 Quillayute Valley SD
- 42 Insight School of Washington (statewide online school)
- 43 Sequim SD

ESD 121

- 44 Chief Leschi Schools
- 45 Federal Way SD
- 46 Franklin Pierce SD
- 47 Muckleshoot Tribal School
- 48 Tacoma SD

ESD 123

- 49 Clarkston SD
- 50 Columbia (Walla Walla) SD
- 51 Finley SD
- 52 Kiona-Benton City SD

ESD 171

- 53 Grand Coulee Dam SD
- 54 Moses Lake SD

ESD 189

- 55 Anacortes SD
- 56 Arlington SD
- 57 Blaine SD
- 58 Burlington-Edison SD
- 59 Concrete SD
- 60 Ferndale SD
- 61 La Conner SD
- 62 Lakewood SD
- 63 Lummi Nation School
- 64 Marysville SD
- 65 Mount Vernon SD
- 66 Nooksack Valley SD
- 67 Sedro-Woolley SD
- 68 Snohomish SD
- 69 Stanwood-Camano SD

Priority District/STEC schools

Targeted District

Attendance & Reengagement Evaluation

The ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Evaluation seeks to tell the story of how this project served, supported and re-engaged students with high rates of absences and disengagement. The evaluation also seeks to understand how project districts and STECs built or enhanced systems to support engagement and reduce inequities. Evaluation questions address **what implementation has looked like, why students are disengaging** as well as **what keeps them engaged**, how the **project is helping to improve attendance**, and how this **work can be sustained into the future**.

The Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) Strategy, Evaluation and Learning (StEL) Team serves as the evaluator for the Attendance & Reengagement Project. Power-sharing and relationships are central to our evaluation work. These values have guided several practices for the Attendance & Reengagement Evaluation, as described below. (See Appendix for more on the PSESD StEL Team.)

Implementation/Evaluation Partnership

The Evaluation Team has worked in close partnership with those implementing this project, including OSPI, school districts, STEC schools, and ESDs. The Attendance & Reengagement Project is complex, with many components. The evaluation has formed hand-in-hand with evolving project implementation. We have gathered feedback from ESDs, districts, and STEC schools to inform the design of the evaluation and have also aimed to reduce the burden of evaluation activities where possible. We also share emerging findings with evaluation participants. Participants shape the evaluation results by reflecting on how the data do or do not relate to their experiences and perspectives and identifying implications for learning and improvement.

Co-Design with STEC Schools

Because STEC schools are uniquely situated as sovereign nations that often operate in ways that are responsive to unique cultural needs, an essential component of the development of this project has been co-designing the evaluation process with the STEC schools. The co-design process has allowed our team to honor tribal data sovereignty, which is the inherent right of Tribal Nations to govern the collection, ownership and application of their own data. It has also been an opportunity to collaborate with school representatives to craft an evaluation plan that tells the story of each school's implementation in a way that is driven by their values and goals. As the collaboration process to initiate the work is ongoing, data from the participating STEC schools are not included in this report.

Evaluation Questions

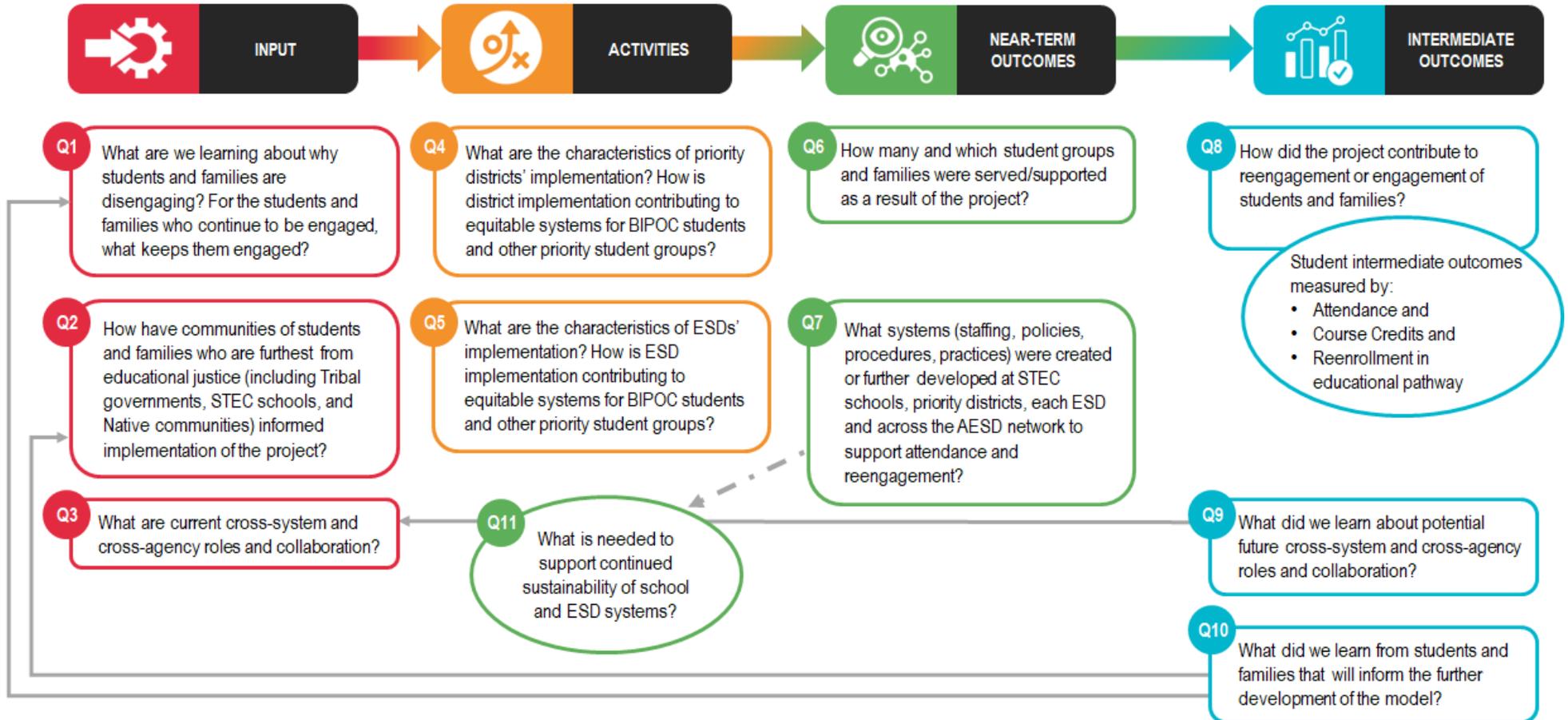
The evaluation focuses on how the education system (including districts, STEC schools, ESDs, and OSPI) is using a racial equity lens to address historic and current inequities. The overarching question the evaluation seeks to address is:

To what extent and in what ways did the project build capacity and create systems change to support engagement and reduce the persistent inequities in push out of students furthest from educational justice?

More detailed questions reflect how the work is designed (inputs), what districts, STEC schools, ESDs, and OSPI are doing (activities), and the difference this work makes for systems and students (outcomes). See visual on the following page.

Overarching question:

To what extent and in what ways did the project build capacity and create systems change to support engagement and reduce the persistent inequities in push out of students furthest from educational justice?



Baseline Report

This baseline report provides an overview of early work, specific to school districts and ESDs given the ongoing co-design of the STEC schools evaluation. These preliminary results reflect district and ESD implementation in Summer 2022 and the students served in fall of the 2022-23 school year. Future evaluation reporting will build on baseline results to deepen our understanding of how the work is unfolding and the difference it is making for students and families across the state.

METHODS

Baseline results reflect data from priority/grantee districts and ESDs participating in the ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project. In future phases of the evaluation, additional data will be collected and reported from participating STEC schools. Methods for the baseline report include:

➤ **Direct service reporting**

Purpose: understand students/families served, reasons for disengagement and engagement among students/families, and how project is contributing to reengagement

District and ESD staff reported data for enrolled students they were working with, including demographic information and progress toward reenrollment.

➤ **District survey**

Purpose: understand students served, priority outcomes and Tier 1/universal supports

This source includes data reported by ESDs (on behalf of targeted districts) and priority/grantee districts via a Qualtrics survey about students served in each district.

➤ **Document review**

Purpose: understand characteristics of early implementation in districts and ESDs and system-building efforts

This process involves the review of several documents that ESDs and priority/grantee districts submit to OSPI.

➤ **Interviews**

Purpose: understand characteristics of early implementation in districts and ESDs and system-building efforts (and build from and triangulate with document review)

This approach elicited data about early implementation and project aims with priority/grantee districts, ESDs and OSPI.

➤ **Statewide training survey**

Purpose: understand how statewide training relates to system-building efforts (and build from and triangulate with document review and interviews)

The data examined are related to 69 completed surveys received after an Attendance Works training session hosted in September 2022.

➤ **Meaning-making sessions**

Purpose: Share and interpret preliminary results and discuss implications for practice and further learning

A meaning-making session with evaluation participants was a culmination and sharing back of preliminary baseline results by the Evaluation Team.

Feedback from the meaning-making sessions is highlighted in callout boxes throughout the report.

A detailed description of the various methods for data collection and the associated analytical approaches can be found in the Appendix.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

Priority/grantee districts and ESDs are working to increase participation in school. Improved attendance and reenrollment in school are the most common measures of success. Other measures of success include:

- Sense of belonging, connection, and building relationships (relates to Tier 1/universal supports)
- Reduction in the number of students in need of Tier 2 and 3 (small group and individualized, more intensive) supports
- Family and community engagement
- Credits earned
- Flexible definitions of success, aligned to individual students' situations and needs

Baseline evaluation results reflect efforts to serve students and families and build systems in pursuit of these project aims. The summary links below connect to more detail on each result.

Supporting Students/Families Results Summary

1. [Nearly 3,600 students have been served through direct service as of November 2022.](#)
2. [The most common reasons for disengagement from school are health issues, not having the support needed with schoolwork, not feeling comfortable/welcome at school, and home situations that make it difficult to attend school.](#)
3. [Students' most common positive experience at school is being with friends.](#)
4. [Through this project, staff supported 218 students to reenroll in school in September/October 2022.](#)

Implementation, System Building, and Sustainability Results Summary

1. [Throughout summer, districts and ESDs were laying the foundation for the Attendance & Reengagement Project, including relationship-building and hiring and training staff.](#)
2. [Districts are building and strengthening their structures and processes, including through teams, tiered approaches, and the use of attendance and other data.](#)
3. [Developing partnerships within and across organizations was an early focus, and ESDs and districts are interested in expanding and deepening their partnerships.](#)
4. [Districts and ESDs are also thinking about and planning for what is required to sustain this work.](#)
5. [There is an overarching focus on integrating attendance and reengagement work into current practices, including in defining/clarifying roles and responsibilities across positions and entities and as an approach to sustainability.](#)

Students Served

Nearly 3,600 students have been served through this project as of November 2022, including 1,357 unenrolled students and over 2,241 enrolled students.

Most grantees began serving students at the start of the 2022-23 school year, while some ESDs and districts were serving students late in the 2021-22 school year or in the summer.³

Supports for Students

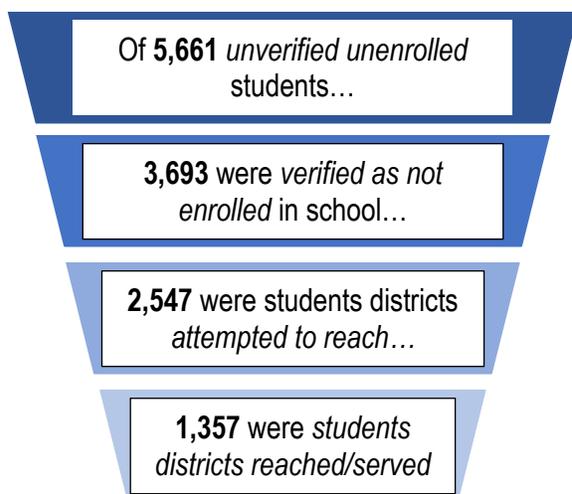
These are students supported through direct service, including supports such as one-on-one case management, group supports (for enrolled students), or light touch support (such as a one-time phone call or visit to walk a student/family through the process to reenroll in school). Students have been served in each region of the state and in districts that range widely in size, from very small (total district enrollment of 200 or less) to very large (total district enrollment of more than 20,000).

At the baseline meaning-making session, evaluation participants reviewed data on students served by ESD region, which prompted interest in the wide range of numbers served across regions. The Evaluation Team will provide regional data to ESDs on a regular basis.

Process for Determining Unenrolled Students to Support

It is helpful to understand the context of the 1,357 **unenrolled** students served, as school systems have a range of approaches to identify which students may need support and who is ultimately provided individualized supports. See Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1. Unenrolled Students Served



Unverified unenrolled students are identified by districts before any process to confirm if those students are truly unenrolled or may be enrolled elsewhere (e.g., students with Unknown (U) and Dropout (D) codes in the state data system).

Verified unenrolled students are those students who are confirmed to be unenrolled (i.e., not enrolled elsewhere).

Students attempted to reach are those that a district has attempted to serve and may or may not have made contact with them.

Students reached/served are those that a district made contact with and for whom they had provided support as of November 2022.

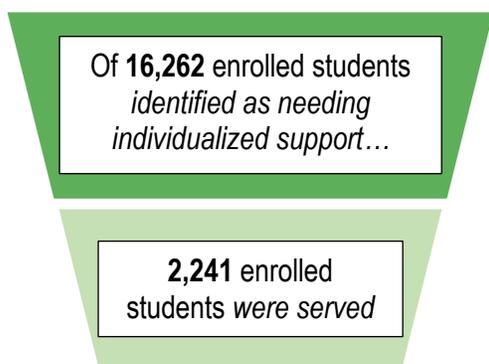
³ Counts of students served were reported by 22 priority/grantee districts and by ESDs for 16 targeted districts in November 2022. Counts do not include data from two priority/grantee districts. Counts will be collected again in Spring 2023 and will include additional targeted districts that have direct service staff support from ESDs.

Enrolled Students Served

Among enrolled students, 2,241 students were served out of over 16,000 who were identified as being in need of support (e.g., students who met a threshold of number of days absent).

The difference between those enrolled students identified for support and those served is particularly large in three large districts. These three districts collectively identified 14,005 students in need of support and had served 835 of them as of November 2022. See Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2. Enrolled Students Served



Enrolled students identified as needing support is based on district criteria for identifying students (e.g., number of days absent). Individualized supports can include case management or group supports.

Enrolled students served are those who received individualized supports (e.g., case management, group supports) as of November 2022.

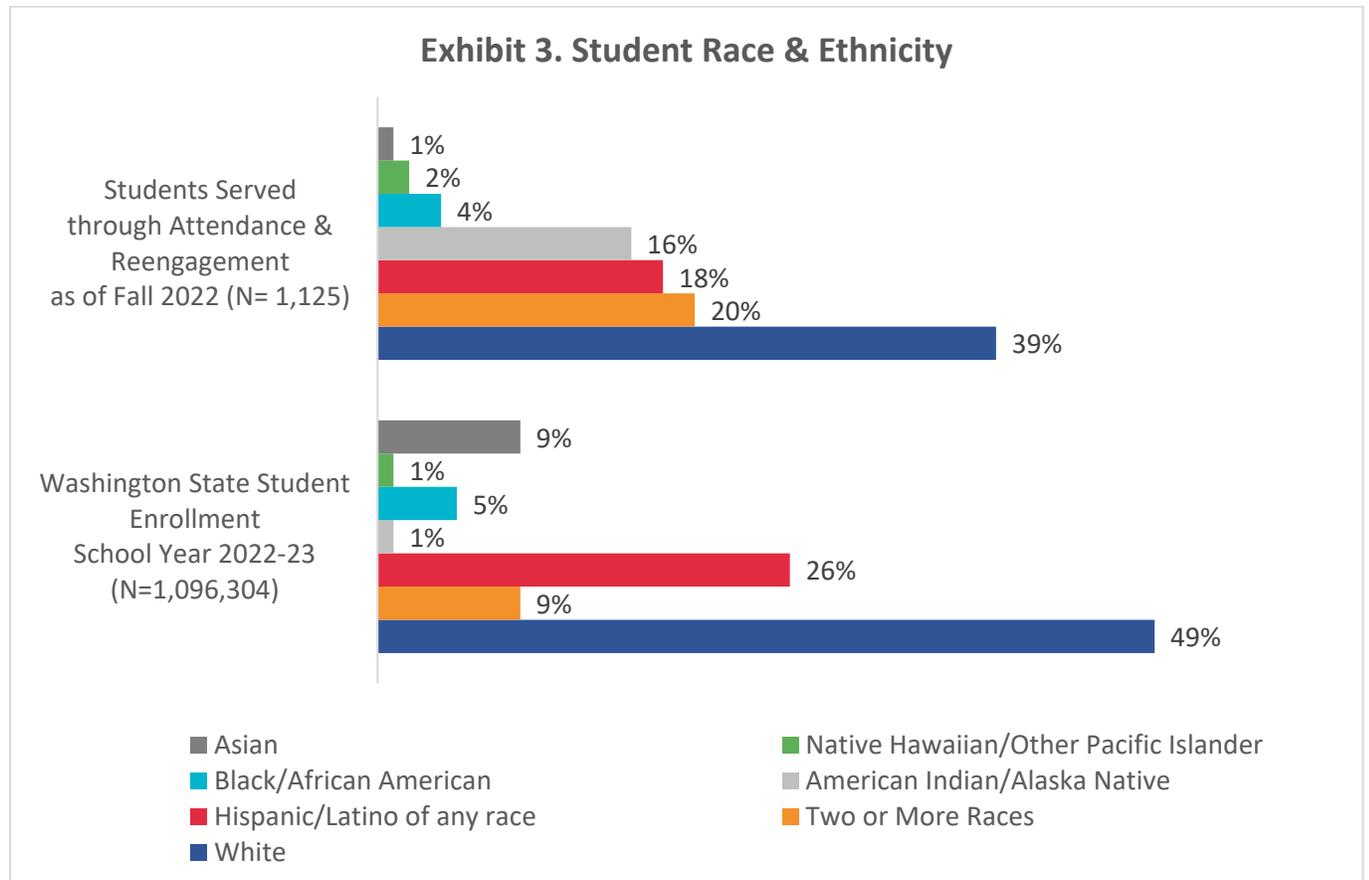
Student Characteristics

In addition to the counts of students served (reflected in Exhibits 1 and 2), direct service staff at districts and ESDs reported on students' race/ethnicity and other contextual factors.⁴ Among the 1,339 students for whom more detailed data were reported, 63 percent are high school students, and most are White (39%), Bi/Multiracial (20%), Hispanic/Latino (18%) or American Indian/Alaskan Native (16%).⁵ See Exhibit 3 for

⁴ Direct service data were not reported by three districts. This contributes to the difference in the students served by total counts (Exhibits 1 and 2) and the amount of individual level data that was reported on students served (Exhibits 3 and 4). Additionally, ESD staff reported individual-level data for both unenrolled and enrolled students for whom they provided support, while reporting for district staff was required for unenrolled students and optional for enrolled students.

⁵ From the reported direct service data, 1,125 students had any demographic data (grade, race/ethnicity, gender, low income, etc.) included. Each demographic category had different numbers of students for whom data was reported, which is in part based on whether the information is already collected and readily available to staff. For example, 954 records included data on whether a student was in Special Education, and 239 included data on whether a student identifies as LGBTQ+.

race/ethnicity data.⁶ When compared to Washington State enrollment data⁷ the numbers of students served by the project reflect the intentional attention and outreach to BIPOC students who disproportionately experience push out from the education system.



Meaning-making participants noted the connection between demographics of students served and the focus of reengagement efforts. For example, one district staff noted they have focused their efforts on high school students given the short-term nature of the ESSER Attendance & Reengagement grant. Several others noted the students served by the schools/districts reflect the student populations of districts that are part of this grant, including several that largely serve Native American students.

⁶ The Evaluation Team is exploring how to reflect the range of racial/ethnic identities of students who identify with more than one group and its implications. The exploration includes deliberating on approaches that will help ensure that clarity and integrity in response data reporting are maintained either when students are counted once (i.e., under Two or More Races) and when they are counted in multiple categories with which they identify. See Appendix for more information.

⁷ Washington State Report Card, <https://washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/ReportCard/ViewSchoolOrDistrict/103300>

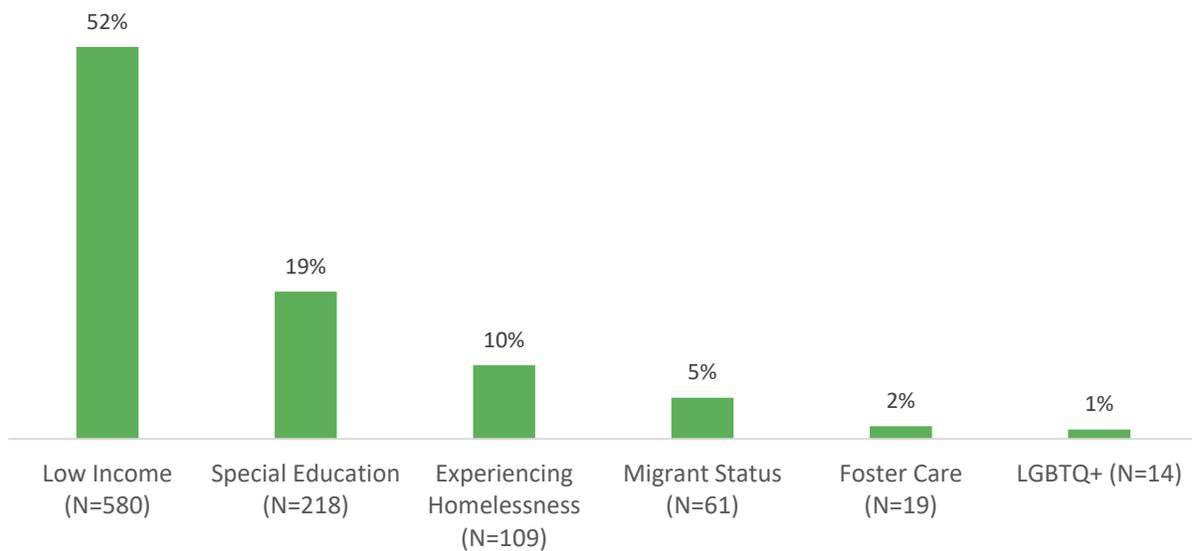
Additionally, over half of students served are low-income, one-fifth are in special education, and one-tenth are experiencing homelessness. See Exhibit 4 for data on these student demographics. In terms of gender, 54 percent are male, 44 percent are female, 1 percent are nonbinary, and less than 1 percent have another gender identity.

Compared to state data, the numbers highlight how project efforts have been reaching large proportions of students who are prioritized in the Attendance & Reengagement Project. Following is a list of statewide demographic data of students enrolled compared to the percentages of students that have been served through the Attendance & Reengagement Project as of November 2022:

- 47.4% **low-income** (versus 52% low-income students served through the project)
- 4.1% **Section 504** students & 14.5% have disabilities (versus 19% in special education)
- 2.8% **experiencing homelessness** (versus 10% students experiencing homelessness)
- 1.9% **migrant** (versus 5% migrant students)
- .3% **foster care** (versus 2% foster care students)

Note that students can be included in multiple categories of programs/characteristics.

Exhibit 4. Student Program/Characteristic (N=1,125)



Reasons for Disengagement

Of the individual-level data that was collected through October 2022, data on reasons for disengagement was reported for 459 students.

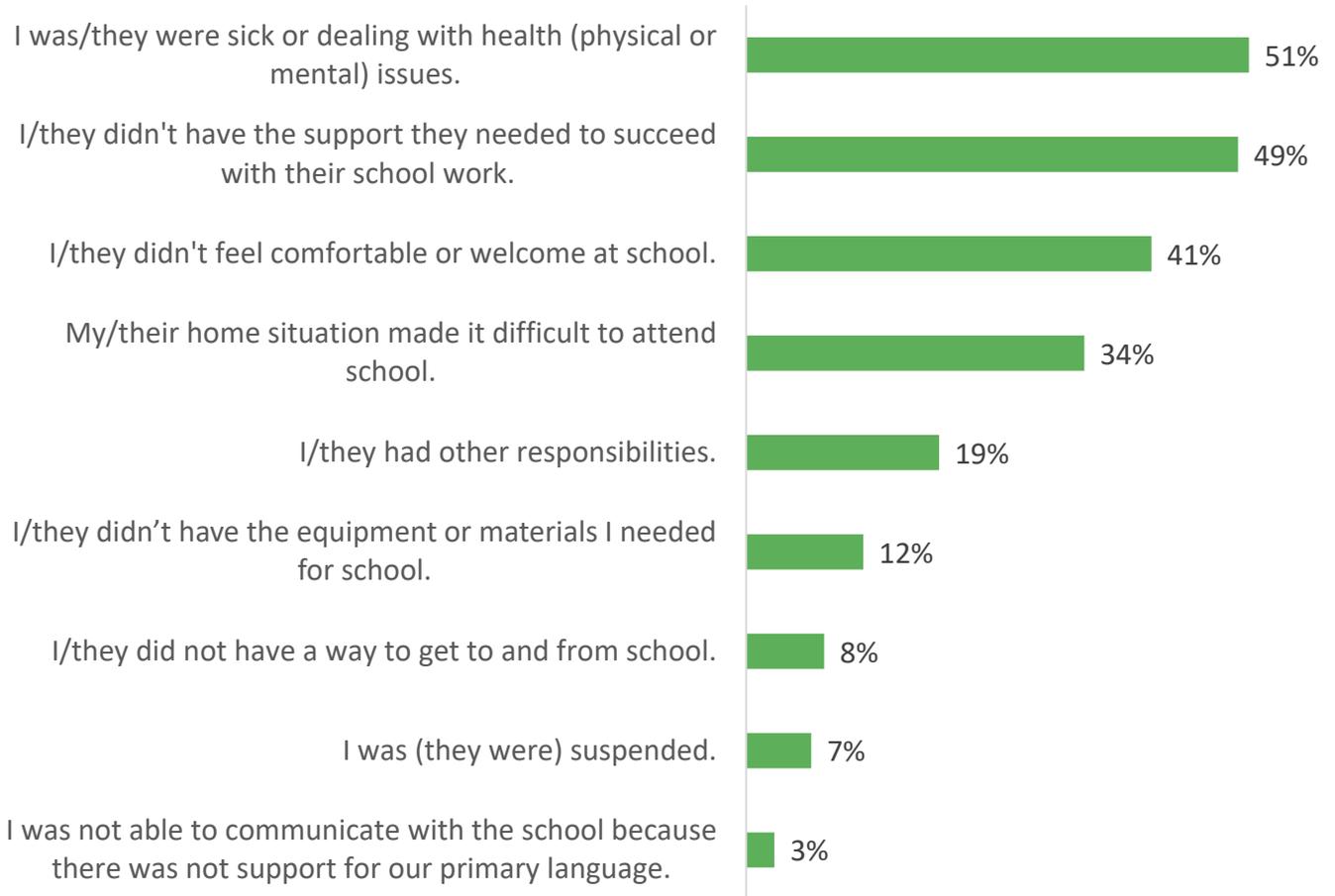
The most common reasons for disengagement are:

- *Dealing with health (physical or mental) issues*
- *Not having the support students need to succeed with schoolwork*
- *Not feeling comfortable or welcome at school*

See Exhibit 5. (Note: Data on reasons for disengagement were reported by direct service staff based on one-on-one conversations they had with students and/or their families, as relevant).

Meaning-making participants also reflected on the ways they have noticed that COVID-19 has impacted students' disengagement in school, including students falling behind in school and having increased anxiety about catching up, and lack of confidence caused by missing years of being in a school building as well as graduation milestones.

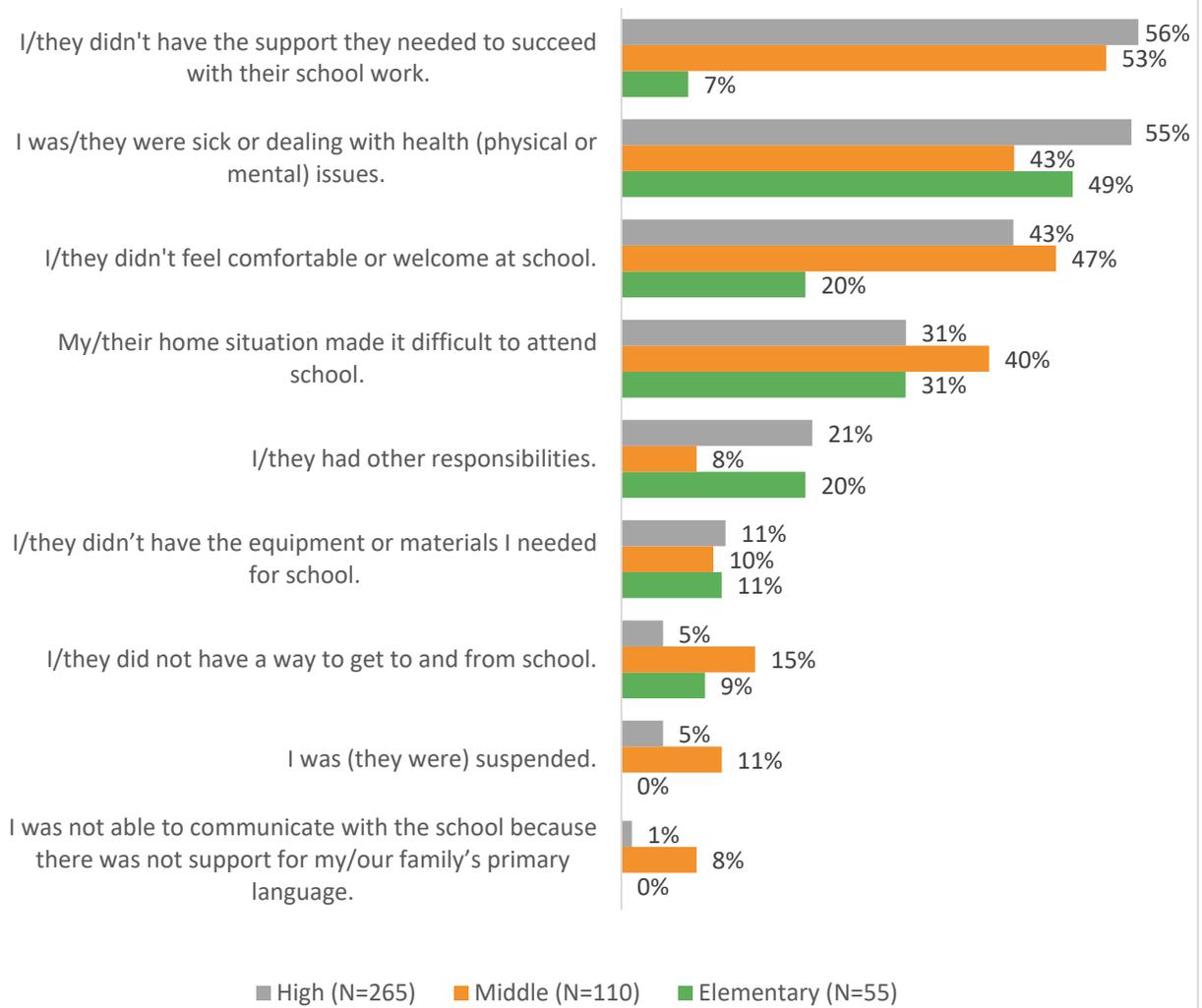
Exhibit 5. Reasons for Disengagement (N=459)



Reasons for Disengagement by Grade

Being disengaged due to health issues was experienced at similar rates across all grade bands. Not having the support needed to succeed with schoolwork was much more common for middle and high school students. See Exhibit 6 for reasons for disengagement by grade band.

Exhibit 6. Reasons for Disengagement by Grade Band

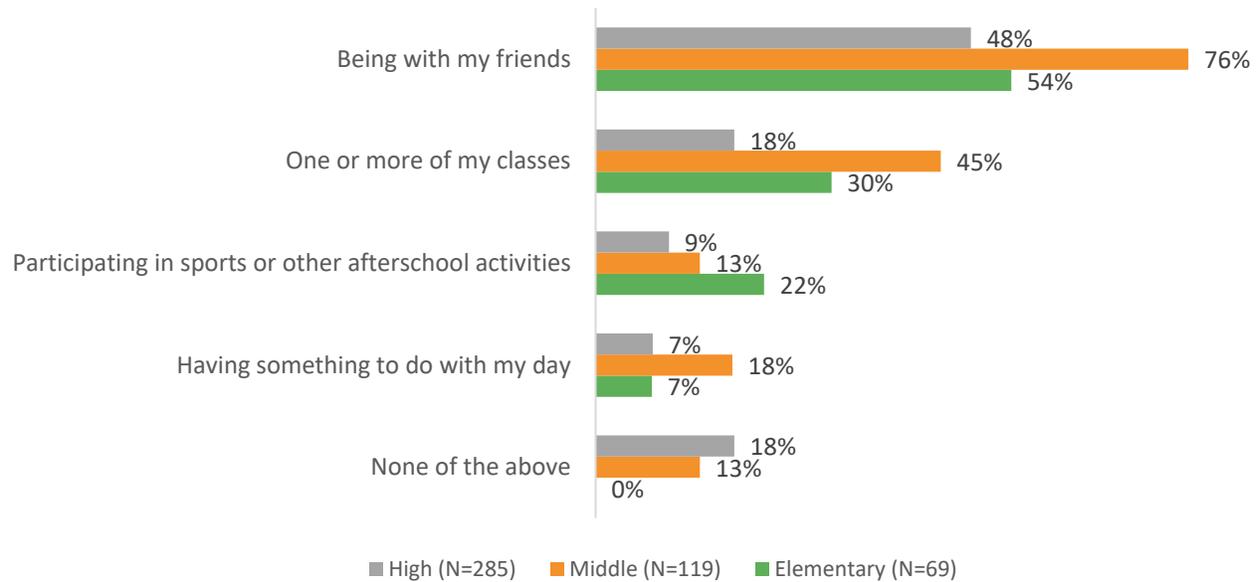


Positive Experiences at School

In addition to reasons for disengagement, individual-level data included students' positive experiences in school.

Being with friends was the most common positive experience across all grade bands. See Exhibit 7.

Exhibit 7. Positive Experiences at School by Grade Band



Reenrollment

Reenrollment data was reported for 585 students.⁸ Of those students, staff supported 218 to reenroll in school as of November 2022. (Note that staff do not report reenrollment data for those students whom they did not support to reenroll in school.) The majority of students (119) reenrolled in Open Doors Youth Reengagement programs.

Pathway	# Students Reenrolled by Pathway
Open Doors 1418 Youth Reengagement	119
Comprehensive elementary/middle/high school	46
Alternative elementary/middle/high school	20
GED	7
Home school	1
Other (online programs, STEC school, another district without program/school specified)	23
Total	216⁹

⁸ The Evaluation Team identified data about unenrolled students based on whether direct service staff indicated they had made contact with them about reenrollment, or if they were progressing toward reenrollment (e.g., had been referred to and/or accessed wraparound supports, or reenrolled in an education pathway). This information was used as a proxy to identify if a student was unenrolled from school. Though the direct service reporting tool includes whether a student was enrolled or unenrolled at the start of their work with direct service staff, it was not consistently reported. As we collect additional data over time, we hope to have more complete data from staff about whether students are enrolled or not enrolled when they begin working with them.

⁹ A specific pathway was not reported for two students.

Students who identified as Hispanic/Latino alone, students in high school, and students who are low-income reenrolled at the highest rates.

See Exhibits 8 and 9 for data on reenrollment by race/ethnicity (Exhibit 8) and other demographic groups (Exhibit 9).¹⁰

Reenrollment data are for students who reenrolled during the first two months of the school year (September-October 2022). The data are partial and preliminary, as many staff were new to their positions and developing relationships with students and families. Supporting students to reenroll can often take time depending on the student's circumstances. We are also collecting data on students' progress toward reenrollment to understand if and how students are making progress towards reenrolling. We expect to have additional data to report as the evaluation continues.

Meaning-making participants discussed the range of educational pathways available to high school-aged students, such as GED and Open Doors programs, whereas younger students have more limited options to reenroll in school. They suggested that the number and range of opportunities for high school students to reenroll may have contributed to the higher rates of reenrollment among high school students.

¹⁰ Exhibits 8 and 9 reflect students for whom progress toward reenrollment and data about the given demographic category were reported. For example, in Exhibit 8, the N below each bar reflects the number of students in each racial/ethnic category with progress toward reenrollment data. The bar label (%) reflects the percentage of students in that racial/ethnic category who reenrolled with staff support. N sizes smaller than 10 are not suppressed as they typically would be at the school or district level, given that these data are aggregated statewide.

Exhibit 8. Reenrolled Students by Race/Ethnicity

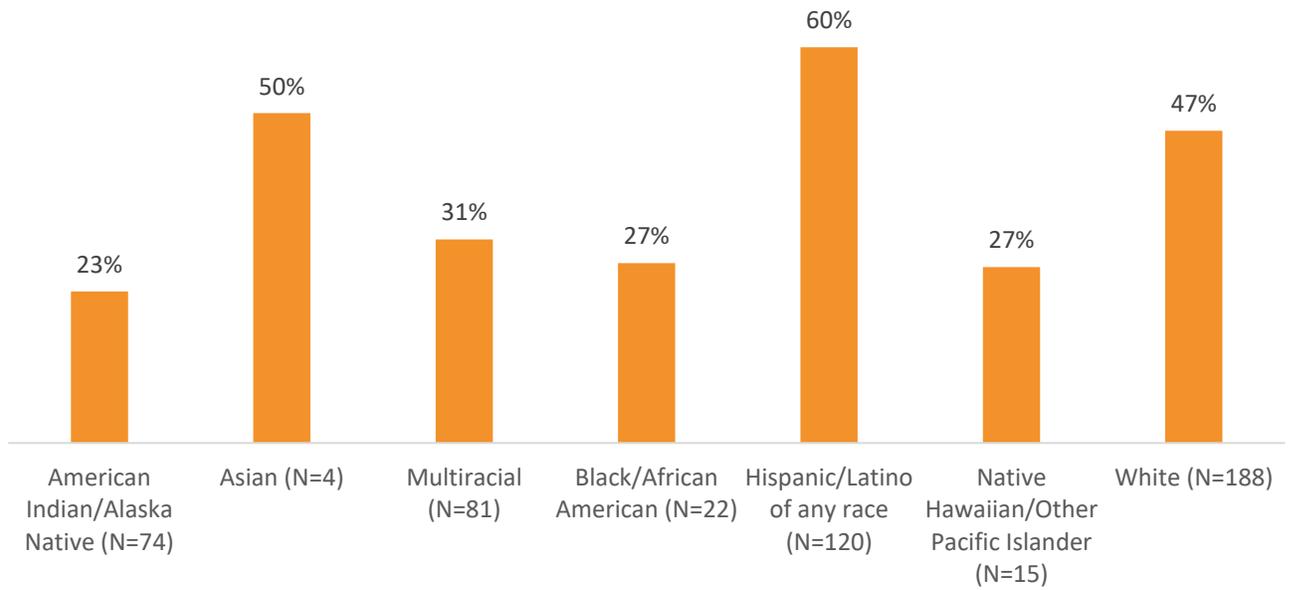
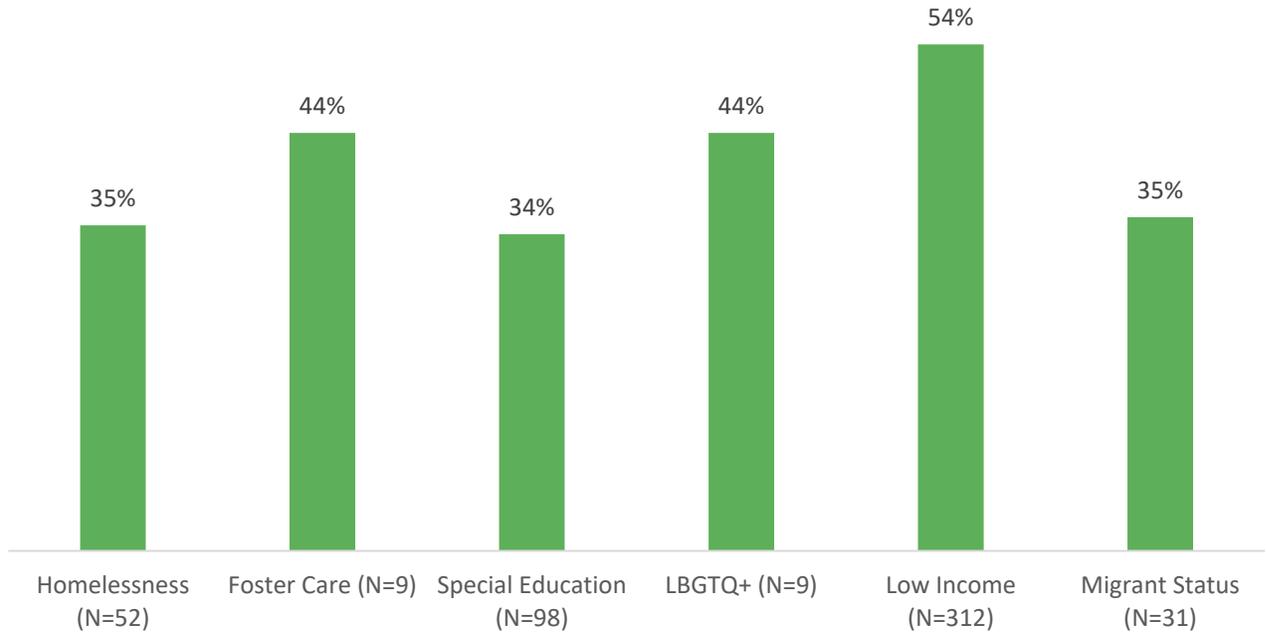


Exhibit 9. Percentage Reenrolled By Program/Characteristic



Implementation, System Building, and Sustainability Foundation Building: Staffing and Relationships

Throughout Summer 2022, most districts and ESDs spent time developing a foundation for the Attendance & Reengagement Project with an initial focus on hiring and onboarding staff members to support attendance and reengagement efforts.

Staffing

As staff members were onboarded, districts and ESDs began to explore the role attendance and reengagement specialists maintain within their respective districts.

Relationship Building

Priority/grantee districts and ESDs expressed a commitment to integrating attendance and reengagement staff members into the communities that they serve. More specifically, districts and ESDs are working to build trust among the schools, students, and the broader community.¹¹

Relationship-building efforts included the expansion of training and professional development opportunities to develop literacy on community needs and creating connections with Tribal communities. Some ESDs highlighted attendance and reengagement staff members' prior roles and existing relationships as a valuable resource.

Attendance Structures and Processes¹²

Districts are focused on building and strengthening structures and processes around attendance, including teams, tiered approaches/interventions, and the use of attendance data.

Many districts were focused on incorporating attendance into existing structures and teams (such as Multi-Tiered System of Supports, or MTSS), Resource Management Teams, and Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) structures) instead of creating a separate or additional structure.¹³

In some cases, direct service work with students and families serves as an avenue for building systems or processes. Many districts are using data to attend to the individual needs of students and families to be able to provide effective supports. For example, one ESD considers referrals to an Open Doors program, informed by a student's age and truancy status. While districts often use data from

"We couldn't really put into place a plan of action before we got people on board." - ESD interviewee

"[I am] proud of the fact that we were able to get a reengagement specialist into the school buildings before the end of school year and start developing relationships with staff." - ESD interviewee

"It's a creative approach and plugging [youth] into community resources and reengaging them in that way... We are hopefully communicating with school counselors in their schools to let them know what's going on. It's just taking an interest in their life and seeing where they are at." - ESD interviewee

"We've been really lucky to find people that are coming with case management backgrounds, though not directly connected schools, they are very well connected to the communities that they work in. They're bringing in those community relationships that schools may or may not have had and will pull hopefully help with that concept of resources that connect and provide services to schools." - ESD interviewee

"We wanted to look at where the need was, and mainly it was the missing kids who had no contact and were not enrolled anywhere. Also those with high level of absences and course failures, and incomplete and low credits, and high absences due to suspension and expulsion. Those are kids we are trying to target." - ESD interviewee

students/families to inform direct service supports, they are less commonly using student/family input to inform their broader system-building work. Similarly, districts and ESDs are developing partnerships within and across agencies to connect students and families to needed supports, which may have implications for strengthening systemic collaboration across agencies.

Many districts and ESDs are working to provide tiered attendance and reengagement support to address needs of students and families as appropriate. (Tiered support is where different types and intensity of support are provided based on student/family situations, strengths, and needs.) They are often integrating this tiered approach into MTSS structures, some of which are being revamped since COVID-19.

Similarly, districts are using data to identify students for support and to provide services that are responsive to students' and families' needs. Examples include providing mentoring support for students who have fallen behind academically or connecting with students (and their families) who had attendance concerns in the prior school year. With a tiered approach, districts and ESDs are also providing universal, or Tier 1 supports, such as Attendance Awareness campaigns, strengthening staff-student relationships, supporting a sense of belong among students, and providing social emotional supports.

"...there's going to be that person with one foot in the building and one foot out in the community and identifying what are those challenges that students are facing. At this grade level, it's typically family-related unexclusively. So, we recognize that we might have to do some case management services for families at large as well as that individual student." – ESD interviewee

"It is not just about those with the most chronic absences, but I am always trying to bring the conversation back around to making sure we are looking at all the tiers, so I think the work is very closely connected to MTSS program." – ESD interviewee

"I am proud of that we're trying think about and work through on what does Tier 1 look like. It doesn't do any good to pull kids out of the river if we don't know why they jumped in in the first place." – ESD interviewee

Meaning making participants noted the challenges of connecting structures in small districts, where many staff have a wide range of responsibilities and wear many hats, coupled with the uncertainty of sustainable or longer-term funding. At the same time, they noted the value in understanding how small districts are making progress on this work, and the importance of connecting how systems are being built and strengthened and how that relates to improved outcomes for students (e.g., improved attendance, reenrollment).

¹¹ From a survey of participants who attended the Attendance Works training in September 2022, 81% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the training helped them learn to "Draw on universal, whole school strategies to create strong relationships with students and families that prevent absenteeism and promote positive conditions for learning."

¹² The project is focused on building or enhancing school and district systems including: 1) Enhancing tiered supports and interventions when students are absent, 2) Early Warning Systems and teaming on attendance, 3) Partnering with students, families and communities to address barriers to attendance and increase opportunities for engagement.

¹³ From a survey of participants who attended the Attendance Works training in September 2022, almost 77% of all training participants agreed or strongly agreed that the session helped them "learn how to work as a team to take a data-driven multi-tiered approach to improve attendance." Two themes survey respondents identified for their next steps included: [a] building up teams; and [b] focusing on students and families. And themes identified for the most valuable aspect of the training are: [1] learning and hearing from others about their approaches; and [2] the resources and materials shared.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Partnerships and collaboration are an integral part of how districts and ESDs are approaching this work.

ESDs and districts have made efforts to create partnerships within their own agencies, including connections with MTSS, Migrant Youth, Behavioral Health and other related program areas.

There are also partnerships developing across the state (with OSPI, and among ESDs from different regions) and within regions between ESDs and their local districts. There is an interest in working together and learning with and from one another as part of the larger community of this project. Specifically, ESDs and districts are open to learning the methods other districts and ESDs are using to reengage students.

Broader community partnerships are being developed with community-based organizations and service providers with a focus on addressing the needs of families who are receiving direct service support. Examples include mental health support, mentorship opportunities, and community partners connected through MTSS. Districts and ESDs recognize that these community partnerships are needed to effectively reach and support the priority populations they aim to serve, such as districts that serve a lot of Native students seeking to develop and strengthen relationships with local Tribes. Additionally, partnerships between ESDs/districts and local courts and community engagement boards are in varying stages of development.

Sustainability

Districts and ESDs are also thinking about and planning for what is required to sustain this work. They note the importance of additional funding sources to support staff capacity after the grant concludes.

Due to the short timeframe¹⁴ of this grant, ESDs and districts noted the challenge of building and implementing structures and processes over a short period of time that are expected to yield lasting results. ESDs and districts acknowledge that sustaining this work after this grant will be challenging and are attempting to prepare and build in steps to ease that transition.

Districts and ESDs note the importance of additional funding sources to support staff capacity to carry out this work after the grant concludes. They believe that continuing this work will be linked to

“We’re trying to work on how we coordinate the efforts of all of the work that’s already going on in the ESD to help develop this tiered system of supports.” - ESD interviewee

“We have worked with the juvenile court in the past, we have worked with multi-tiered framework, partnered up with our own building personnel when we work with districts. Not just superintendents, but with migrant programs, principals, and vice principals at each building, doing attendance huddles with them, and prioritizing which students are most in need when they are chronic or when they are Tier 1 or Tier 2 student.” – ESD interviewee

“My focus is... how we are changing Tier 1 and Tier 2? [It’s] great that we are adding in Tier 3, but if I can teach them how to make Tier 1 and 2 more effective, that would improve sustainability beyond my grant.” – ESD interviewee

available funding and are also exploring options of embedding attendance and reengagement efforts throughout the district or ESD. ESDs and districts also shared that building relationships, creating opportunities for learning, and demonstrating the impact of this work may support advocacy for continued funding. Another approach includes the integration of attendance and reengagement work to current and existing structures and systems used by the school district or ESD. By embedding attendance and reengagement work into current practices, the hope is to demonstrate the value of attendance supports and encourage continuation of this work.

Integration

There is an overarching focus on integrating attendance and reengagement work into current practices.

There is an overarching theme of integration as districts and ESDs develop and implement attendance and reengagement efforts. This relates to how the work is integrated into current practices and structures and how that supports sustainability, as well as how roles and responsibilities are defined across related areas of work. Districts and ESDs are considering the mechanisms currently in place that may support the work required to identify and reengage disengaged or chronically absent students and support engagement among students more broadly.

“I think something else that will be critical to support sustainability and that’s already being built, baked into the regional network model [is] having multiple people in a school and district involved.” – ESD interviewee

“There’s a question on shared accountability and it gives us time to think about the different levels of accountability within a district. Where does attendance show up and whose responsibility is that?” – ESD interviewee

¹⁴ As of January 2023, revised timing with a potential extension was being considered. Interview data were collected between July and September 2022 and in the context of an anticipated end date of June 2023.

Limitations and Responses

There are a number of limitations to consider as context for the baseline results, and each has an associated response as the evaluation continues.

Limitation	Response
<p>Preliminary and partial data: The baseline report reflects the first phase of implementation of the Attendance & Reengagement Project, and results are preliminary. In particular, the direct service data and district survey were reported for the first time in Fall 2022 so district and ESD staff were learning what data were being requested for the evaluation and how to report this information.</p>	<p>Additional data will be collected to build a more robust understanding of implementation, system building, and supports for students and families. Direct service data will be reported bimonthly about students being served via direct service, and the Evaluation Team will continue to support to staff for this reporting. Additionally, we will conduct the district survey again in Spring 2023 and meet individually with each district to discuss the requested data (e.g., counts of unverified unenrolled students, and verified unenrolled students) to better understand how that aligns to the data districts are using in their attendance and reengagement efforts.</p>
<p>Different interpretations of requested data: Participating districts vary widely by size and region. Similarly, districts have a wide variety of approaches to attendance and reengagement efforts, so it is challenging to identify and define evaluation measures that are consistently understood and applied. This was particularly apparent in the district survey. There was a wide range of criteria and processes to identify students, so the counts from one district may not be consistent or aligned to counts from another.</p>	<p>We will collect counts of students served again in Spring 2023, and plan to meet individually with each district and ESD in doing so. This will provide greater clarity of the requested data and how it relates to the data districts are already using in their work. This will hopefully alleviate the burden of collecting additional data by aligning to districts' existing systems and processes. It will also provide greater confidence in the accuracy of the data provided and the ability to aggregate counts across districts.</p>
<p>Self-reported data: Most data were self-reported by ESD and district staff (direct service data, interviews, monitoring data, and district survey), so there was limited ability to triangulate the information with other sources.</p>	<p>As the evaluation continues, we will have more information about how this work is developing in districts, ESDs, and STEC schools over time. We will seek to understand progress and challenges from the perspective of districts as well as the ESD in their region, as an additional perspective to consider in addition to districts' self-reported data. Similarly, data from districts provide a different perspective on the supports provided by ESDs to triangulate with ESDs' self-reported information.</p>
<p>Limited interview notes for quotes: The Evaluation Team conducted ESD and district interviews in coordination with OSPI in Summer 2022. These interviews were scheduled over a three-month period, with a concentration of district</p>	<p>The baseline phase of the evaluation focused on building a general understanding of the ESSER Attendance & Reengagement landscape. As the evaluation continues, the Evaluation Team will focus our methods on deepening our understanding of the work happening in</p>

Limitation	Response
<p>interviews in August 2022. ESD interviews were more spread out, so the Evaluation Team had capacity to clean and provide interview notes and takeaways back to participants within several weeks of each interview. For district interviews, there were more interviews in a short period of time, so we relied on Zoom meeting transcripts in lieu of notes, and prioritized sharing key takeaways with participants in a timely manner. Illustrative quotes provided in this report thus reflect ESD perspectives, based on the verbatim notes we had readily available.</p>	<p>individual districts, STEC schools, and ESD regions. As we do so, we will attend to capturing and lifting up districts', STEC schools' and ESDs' understanding of their work, including by using their own words to illustrate evaluation results.</p>
<p>Disaggregation by race/ethnicity: Data on students served is disaggregated by race/ethnicity such that students who are bi/multiracial are categorized in a general "Two or More Races" category. The aggregation of bi/multiracial students into this broad category limits the understanding of students' experiences. As a starting point, we used two methods to analyze the racial/ethnic composition of students served, as shown in the Appendix.</p>	<p>The Evaluation Team is exploring how to reflect the range of racial/ethnic identities of students who identify with more than one group and its implications. The exploration includes deliberating on approaches that will help ensure that clarity and integrity in response data reporting are maintained either when students are counted once (i.e., under Two or More Races) and when they are counted in multiple categories with which they identify.</p>

IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Implications for the Evaluation

The Evaluation Team shared preliminary results at the January 2023 meaning-making sessions with evaluation participants and the ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Advisory Group. In addition to the feedback reflected in the preceding results section, participants provided helpful suggestions that will inform the next phase of the evaluation, including:

- **Providing timely regional reports:** In reviewing statewide data – particularly related to students served, reasons for disengagement, positive experiences in school, and progress toward reenrollment – participants expressed interest in seeing similar data for their ESD region or district. The Evaluation Team will work with ESDs and districts to develop a regional report template and reporting schedule to serve this purpose.
- **Using data for reflection and learning:** Along with more regular regional reporting, meaning-making participants would like additional opportunities to review and discuss data with their peers from ESDs or districts. They are interested in reflecting on their own data and sharing approaches and ideas with one another to support continuous learning and improvement.
- **Understanding progress over time:** Baseline results provide a broad overview of initial implementation across the state and meaning-making participants are interested in seeing how the work progresses, particularly related to building and strengthening structures and systems for attendance and reengagement. With additional data since the start of the 2022-23 school year, the Evaluation Team will look at how the work is unfolding within each district, STEC school, and ESD to learn more about the progress being made and barriers and challenges that are arising. This will support a deeper understanding of commonalities and differences among and across districts, STEC schools, and ESD regions in our statewide analysis.
- **Connecting student outcomes and system building:** Meaning-making participants are interested in understanding how changes for students – such as reenrollment in school and improved attendance – relate to the system-building efforts that districts are undertaking. As the evaluation continues, our deeper understanding of how work is progressing within districts will help us explore relationships between system changes and changes for students.

Next Steps

These implications help inform the next steps of the evaluation, through which we will **build on and deepen our baseline understanding** of reasons for disengagement; how students and families, particularly those furthers from educational justice, have informed implementation of the project; current cross-system and cross-agency collaborations; characteristics of district, STEC school, and ESD implementation; students served; and sustainability needs. We will also address **additional questions relevant to continued implementation**:

- What systems were created or further developed at STEC schools, priority districts, each ESD and across the AESD network to support attendance and reengagement?
- How did the project contribute to reengagement or engagement of students and families?
- What did we learn about potential future cross-system and cross-agency roles and collaboration?
- What did we learn from students and families that will inform the further development of the model?

Data collection next steps include:

- **Monitoring data:** Priority/grantee districts submit monthly monitoring reports and attend quarterly monitoring meetings with OSPI. This information provides a valuable opportunity to see how the work is developing over time and consider what additional evaluation data is needed to build from, complement, and triangulate with monitoring data.
 - o As an initial step, the Evaluation Team conducted a high-level review of Fall 2022 monitoring data from priority/grantee districts, where themes were consistent with baseline results and focused on:
 - **Development of partnerships**, particularly with and among ESDs/districts as well as with community-based partners. Several districts also described their growing relationships with local Tribes
 - **Use of data and tiered supports** as part of building and strengthening district systems, structures, and processes to provide supports related to attendance
 - In several districts, further development of a **team-based approach to attendance and efforts to provide Tier 1 supports**
 - o The Evaluation Team will review monthly monitoring data in more depth to understand progress within districts over time. We plan to work with districts and ESDs to support a shared understanding of the work that is happening, including areas of success and barriers/challenges, within each district.
 - o We will also conduct periodic interviews with districts to build from what they have reported via monitoring data. With a more detailed understanding of work in each district, our statewide analysis can include an understanding of themes across the state as well as by different types of districts (e.g., by size, region, rural/suburban/urban).
- **Direct Service Data:** The Evaluation Team will continue to collect data on students served through direct service from ESD and district staff on a bimonthly basis, and STEC schools will begin reporting data in Spring 2023. As we gather additional data, we intend to provide regional reports to inform ESDs, districts, and STEC schools about the work in their region. We expect that we will have more data to inform a more robust understanding of direct service work over time, as staff deepen their work with students and families and become more familiar with the evaluation reporting process.

- **Student Outcomes:** The Evaluation Team will receive attendance and credits-earned data from the Comprehensive Educational Data and Research System (CEDARS) managed by OSPI. With this data, we will explore changes in attendance and credits earned for students served via direct service as well as changes at the grade, school, and district level. We will align this analysis to the focus of districts' attendance and reengagement efforts (for example, if a given district's efforts are focused on middle schools, we will analyze changes in attendance for middle schools in that district).

As we have access to data on student outcomes (attendance and credits earned), we will consider how to share this data back with partners, as well as how we can share these data alongside system-building efforts to support the connections that meaning-making participants were interested in reflecting on and discussing with their peers.

- **Data Collection with STEC Schools:** As we continue co-designing the evaluation with STEC schools, we will begin collecting data with those schools. They will participate in direct service reporting similar to districts and ESDs, as well as methods they have recommended for their specific context including site visits, multimedia student projects, and schoolwide data collection to understand student/family experiences and perspectives.

The Evaluation Team deeply appreciates the continued commitment of partners who are part of this project. Their engagement, questions, comments, and suggestions help to deepen and focus learning opportunities to ensure the evaluation is relevant and meaningful to their work.

APPENDIX

Glossary

Direct Service: Direct service for students and families includes individualized supports, such as case management or light-touch support to reenroll in school, or group supports to increase engagement among students with attendance concerns.

Unverified unenrolled students: These are students who are identified by districts before any process to confirm if those students are truly unenrolled or may be enrolled elsewhere.

Verified unenrolled students: These are students who are confirmed to be unenrolled (i.e., not enrolled elsewhere).

About PSESD Strategy, Evaluation and Learning: Team Values

The PSESD StEL Team recognizes that evaluation and data practices have historically been extractive or can be deficit-based and disconnected from what is most meaningful to those doing the work and the communities they serve. To counter this, **our team's evaluation and data practices are rooted in the following values:**

- **Those doing the work have the best solutions** to the challenges at hand, especially those working in organizations that are closely connected to the communities they serve.
- **Community cultural wealth is strong in our state**, and members of the community, including families, support the growth and flourishing of these resources.
- **Many organizations are engaged in transformational practices, rooted in resilience, creativity and liberation, to create different ways of being** in service to communities and change.
- **There are ways of rooting evaluation and data practices in community ways of knowing in a respectful way**, which serve the organization and support mutual accountability with funders and the public.
- **Evaluation and data capacity building is a multi-directional relationship.** District, school, ESD, and community-based service providers/staff, community members especially families, and evaluation practitioners bring different gifts to the table and learn from each other in an ongoing way. As evaluators we bring tools and resources to the table when invited and do this in the spirit of learning and power-sharing.

Data Collection & Analysis Methods

Method & Purpose	Data Collection	Analysis
<p>Direct Service Reporting</p> <p><i>Purpose: understand students/families served, reasons for disengagement and engagement among students/families, and how project is contributing to reengagement</i></p>	<p>Direct service staff at ESDs and priority/grantee districts submitted data about the students/families served in September and October 2022:¹⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting was required for unenrolled students served by ESD and district staff - Reporting was optional for enrolled students served by district staff - Data collected included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Reasons for Disengagement and Positive Experiences at School (required for ESDs, optional for districts) o Student demographics o Progress toward reenrollment - The data were reported by direct service staff, as informed by their conversations with students/families. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The reporting tool is intended to support relationship-building and understanding between staff and students, where staff report what they gather from their conversations with students and families. The reporting tool is not intended as a survey that students/families fill out. - We piloted the data collection process with several ESDs in June 2022 resulting in improvements made to the reporting tool and process for the 2022-23 school year. 	<p>To conduct the analysis, the Evaluation Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compiled data from 47 direct service staff on students/families served in 50 districts - Reviewed and cleaned the data - Analyzed data for students/families served across the state and by region to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Student demographics o Reasons for disengagement o Positive experiences in school o Progress toward reenrollment <p>We analyzed direct service data in Excel using formulas and PivotTables.</p>
<p>District Survey</p> <p><i>Purpose: understand students served, priority</i></p>	<p>Summary information was reported by priority/grantee districts and ESDs on behalf of targeted districts via a survey in</p>	<p>To conduct the analysis, the Evaluation Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compiled data from 33 districts with submitted surveys

¹⁵ Some districts/ESDs reported data on students served in the summer 2022 or late fall in the 2022-23 school year.

Method & Purpose	Data Collection	Analysis
<p><i>outcomes and Tier 1/universal supports</i></p>	<p>Qualtrics. Baseline results focus on student counts¹⁶, particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For unenrolled students: The total count of unverified unenrolled students, verified unenrolled students, unenrolled students the district attempted to reach to provide individualized supports, and total count of students the district served with individualized supports.¹⁷ - For enrolled students: The total count of enrolled students identified as needing support (based on district criteria for identifying students for support, such as a threshold of number of days absent), and enrolled students served who received individualized supports (e.g., case management, group supports) as of November 2022. <p>Respondents provided their district and their name in the survey, and the Evaluation Team followed up with any clarifying questions. No survey questions had required responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewed data on student counts, and followed up for clarification as needed - Analyzed data across districts for total counts for unenrolled and enrolled students across all district respondents
<p>Document Review</p> <p><i>Purpose: understand characteristics of early implementation in districts and ESDs and system-building efforts</i></p>	<p>The Evaluation Team reviewed documents that districts submitted to OSPI, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant planning documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Priority/grantee districts: Grant narrative including plans for staffing, use of funds, student/family/community input to inform attendance and reengagement efforts o ESDs: Grant objectives - Priority/grantee district monitoring reports from Spring 2022, and September and November 2022 (monitoring 	<p>The Evaluation Team reviewed grant planning and Spring 2022 monitoring documents in advance of Summer 2022 interviews with ESDs and districts.</p> <p>We analyzed documents aligned to topics for these interviews to understand district/ESD work so far and identify areas to follow-up on in each interview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff hiring and training - Plans for reengagement/engagement work: Reasons for disengagement, priority groups,

¹⁶ Districts also reported on the focus of Tier 1 efforts (e.g., if Tier 1 efforts are focused on specific schools, grades, student groups, etc.) and priority outcomes (attendance, credits earned, and/or other outcomes districts are working to affect). In the next phase of the evaluation, the Evaluation Team will use this information to align analysis of CEDARS data with districts' Tier 1 and outcome priorities.

¹⁷ *Unverified unenrolled students* are unenrolled students that districts identify, before any process to confirm if they are truly unenrolled or may be enrolled elsewhere. *Verified unenrolled students* are those students who are confirmed to be unenrolled (i.e., not enrolled elsewhere). *Students attempted to reach* are those that a district has attempted to serve and may or may not have made contact with them. *Students reached/served* are those that a district made contact with and to whom they are providing support as of November 2022.

Method & Purpose	Data Collection	Analysis
	<p>reports include use of data/priority outcomes, progress made, barriers, partnerships, future milestones/objectives)</p>	<p>reengagement/engagement supports, measures of success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - System-building, collaboration/partnerships, student/family input for design of system improvements - Sustainability <p>Following our analysis of baseline data (interviews, direct service data and surveys), we analyzed summaries from OSPI of Fall 2022 priority/grantee districts' monitoring data (September/November) to understand continued implementation in districts and to inform future use of monitoring data for the evaluation (reflected in Next Steps).</p>
<p>Interviews</p> <p><i>Purpose: understand characteristics of early implementation in districts and ESDs and system-building efforts (and build from and triangulate with document review)</i></p>	<p>Between July and September 2022 and in partnership with OSPI, the Evaluation Team conducted brief, 30-minute interviews with each grantee/priority school district. The interviews took place during the respective school district's quarterly monitoring meeting with OSPI.</p> <p>One-hour interviews with ESDs and OSPI were conducted in June-July 2022.</p> <p>Interview Protocol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each of the interviews had <i>at least</i> two members of the Evaluation Team present: one facilitator and one note-taker - The interviews were guided by protocols (adapted for districts, ESDs, and OSPI) developed by the Evaluation Team that examined the following topic areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Work completed so far o Student supports o System building 	<p>Between September and November 2022, the Evaluation Team analyzed the final key takeaways from the qualitative interviews utilizing the Dedoose software.¹⁸</p> <p>Coding Interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview takeaways were analyzed using Dedoose based on a coding structure devised by the Evaluation Team. The coding structure is based on the following domains: reengagement/direct service, system building, staffing, status, and other. - Each of the finalized interview takeaways was uploaded to Dedoose and coded appropriately. During this process, the Evaluation Team adjusted code options where necessary, and completed a series of team calibration processes, to support consistent application of codes by team members.

¹⁸ A cross-platform app for analyzing qualitative and mixed methods research with text, photos, audio, videos, spreadsheet data and more. For more information see: <https://www.dedoose.com/>.

Method & Purpose	Data Collection	Analysis
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sustainability <p>Interview Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the conclusion of each interview, the Evaluation Team summarized all interview notes as key takeaways. These takeaways were shared with each ESD/school district for their review and feedback. The Evaluation Team also cleaned and provided full interview notes back to ESD/OSPI interviewees (described in Limitations and Responses). 	<p>Identifying Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Evaluation Team explored themes in school district/ESD/OSPI interviews. This was done by pulling all coded excerpts from Dedoose and conducting a thematic analysis. - Initial themes were identified, then grouped to developed larger, overarching themes (reflected in Implementation, System Building, and Sustainability Results).
<p>Statewide Training Survey</p> <p><i>Purpose: understand how statewide training relates to system-building efforts (and build from and triangulate with document review and interviews)</i></p>	<p>In September 2022 and in partnership with OSPI, Attendance Works provided a training session on Attendance Systems and Strategies with staff from ESDs, school districts, and schools, followed by a feedback survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sixty-nine participants completed a survey after the session¹⁹ - The survey had six close-ended items²⁰ - Four open-ended items inquired about specific next steps; the most valuable aspect of the training; suggestions for improvement; and questions or needs for support. 	<p>The Evaluation Team’s analysis of the survey included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploration of trends in responses in both the close- and open-ended items. We calculated percentage counts representing the respondents who agreed/strongly agreed to statements related to the session meeting learning needs and objectives (74% to 85%) and those who felt they were “walking away with clear next steps for [their] attendance teams” (57%). - With open-ended questions, we examined and identified themes based on responses from those who replied to the questions.
<p>Meaning-making sessions</p> <p><i>Purpose: Share and interpret preliminary results and discuss implications for practice and further learning</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Between December 2022 and January 2023, the Evaluation Team consolidated baseline data to prepare for a meaning-making session with evaluation participants on January 12, 2023.</p>

¹⁹ Participants included 19 Engagement/Reengagement/Attendance Specialists; 3 Attendance clerks; 12 principals; 7 district administrators; and 28 held ‘Other’ positions in their organizations. 37 respondents indicated that their organization is a recipient of the ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Grant (23 of the participants said that they don’t know).

²⁰ Five of the six items used a 5-point agreement rating scale (i.e., Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) related to meeting learning needs and objectives. One item required a Yes, No, or Maybe response to a question on readiness for next steps.

Method & Purpose	Data Collection	Analysis
		<p>All participating ESDs, school districts, and STEC schools were invited to learn about and discuss preliminary baseline results.</p> <p>The Evaluation Team created a presentation including data visualizations from counts of students served, and direct service data on reasons for disengagement, positive experiences in school, and progress toward reenrollment as well as qualitative themes developed from district/ESD/OSPI interviews.</p> <p>The Evaluation Team also shared preliminary results at a meeting of the Attendance & Reengagement Project Advisory for discussion and feedback.</p>

Direct Service Reporting

Background

In Spring 2022, the Evaluation Team worked with ESD Attendance Coordinators and direct service staff to develop a reporting tool and process for the students/families for whom they were providing direct service (e.g., individualized supports such as case management or light-touch support to reenroll in school, or group supports to increase engagement among students with attendance concerns).

The intent of direct service reporting was for ESD and district staff providing supports to students and families to collect and report data from and about the students/families they serve for the evaluation. This informs understanding of why students/families have disengaged from schools and barriers to reengagement, how many students/families have been served with ESD direct service supports through this project, and progress toward reengaging these students/families. Our intent was for direct service staff and others will use this information in providing supports to students and families, as well.

The direct service reporting tool includes three sections:

- 1) **Conversation Guide:** The Conversation Guide is intended for direct service staff to support their conversations with the students and families. Direct service staff report the data based on their understanding of the student's/family's situation and experience. It is not a survey or checklist meant to be done with the student/family. It is used after staff have established a relationship with a student/family, as part of the process to understand their prior experiences in school and what would be helpful for them to reengage/attend more consistently.²¹
- 2) **Demographics:** For each student, direct service staff list key demographic characteristics as data are available (e.g., from student information systems or from their conversations with students/families), including grade, race/ethnicity, gender and a range of other demographics (e.g., experiencing homelessness, in foster care, special education).
- 3) **Progress toward Reengagement:** Direct service staff report information about progress toward reenrolling (over time) for the students and families they are supporting who are not currently enrolled in school.

Through a pilot process in June 2022, ESD direct service staff were oriented to the direct service reporting tool and process and the Evaluation Team gathered feedback to make improvements. The revised tool and process were rolled out to all ESD and district direct service staff for the 2022-23 school year in September 2022. Most STEC school grantees will begin participating with a tool adapted for the STEC school context in Spring 2023. Direct service data are reported to the Evaluation Team on a bimonthly basis. The direct service reporting tool, as provided to districts and ESDs, is included on the following pages.

²¹ Conversation guide items adapted from:

Crumé, H. J., Martinez, D., Yohalem, N., Yoshizumi, A. (2020). *Creating Paths for Change: Understanding Student Disengagement and Reengagement*. Seattle, WA: Community Center for Education Results.
Reengagement. & Brundage, A., Moulton, S., & Castillo, J. (2020). *Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism (RCA-BV)*.

Direct Service Reporting Tool

Purpose: ESD and district staff providing direct service supports to students and families will collect and report data from and about the students/families they serve for the Attendance & Reengagement evaluation. This will inform understanding of why students/families have disengaged and barriers to reengagement, how many students/families have been served with ESD direct service supports through this project, and progress toward reengaging these students/families. We hope direct service staff and others will use this information in providing supports to students and families, as well.

Student/Family Conversation Guide

Please note that the below conversation guide is intended for direct service staff to use in conversation with the students and families they support. **Direct service staff will report the data based on your understanding of the student's/family's situation and experience.** It is not a survey or checklist meant to be done with the family. **It should be used after staff have established a relationship with the student/family,** as part of your process to understand their prior experiences in school and what would be helpful for them to reengage/attend more consistently.

Evaluation purpose (to share with students/families as context for the conversation): The information from students and families will be used in the statewide evaluation of the Attendance & Reengagement Project. It will inform understanding why students and families have disengaged from school and the supports that will help to reengage students/families across Washington State.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

ESD	<input type="checkbox"/> 101	<input type="checkbox"/> 113	<input type="checkbox"/> 123
	<input type="checkbox"/> 105	<input type="checkbox"/> 114	<input type="checkbox"/> 171
	<input type="checkbox"/> 112	<input type="checkbox"/> 121	<input type="checkbox"/> 189
District (if relevant)	District Name		
ESD direct service staff name	Staff Name		
Date of referral to direct service staff	MM/DD/YY		
Enrollment status at start of service	<input type="checkbox"/> Student not currently enrolled in school <input type="checkbox"/> Student currently enrolled		

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES AT SCHOOL

1. What were some of the things you liked about school when you last regularly attended? Select all that apply.	
a. Being with my friends	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. One or more of my classes	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Participating in sports or other afterschool activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Having something to do with my day	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Who was a trusted adult you had at school when you last regularly attended? Select all that apply.	
A teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
A school counselor	<input type="checkbox"/>
A sports coach	<input type="checkbox"/>
A principal or assistant principal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Another school staff person	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Did anyone reach out to you from school when you stopped regularly attending? Select all that apply.	
A teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
A school counselor	<input type="checkbox"/>
A sports coach	<input type="checkbox"/>
A principal or assistant principal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Another school staff person	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>

REASONS FOR DISENGAGEMENT

4. What are some of the reasons why you (or your student) stopped attending school? Select all that apply.	
A. I/they didn't feel comfortable or welcome at school. If relevant, select all that apply:	<input type="checkbox"/>
A1. Adults at my school didn't care about me.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A2. No one missed me when I didn't attend school.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A3. I didn't relate to staff at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A4. I didn't want to be teased or bullied.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A5. I didn't want to interact with another student(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>
A6. Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. I was (they were) suspended.	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. I/they didn't have the support they needed to succeed with their schoolwork. If relevant, select all that apply:	<input type="checkbox"/>
C1. I didn't know if I was on track or behind with my schoolwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>
C2. My classes were too hard.	<input type="checkbox"/>
C3. I often skipped classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>
C4. I didn't have the support I needed at school to do my schoolwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>
C5. I didn't have the support I needed at home to do my schoolwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>
C6. I changed schools and did not have the support I needed at my new school.	<input type="checkbox"/>
C7. Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. I was (they were) sick or dealing with health (physical or mental) issues. If relevant, select all that apply:	<input type="checkbox"/>
D1. I was sick or was dealing with a medical issue.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D2. I had to quarantine because of COVID-19.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D3. I was too sad/depressed or anxious/upset to attend school.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D4. I did not feel safe attending school because of COVID-19.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D5. I did not feel safe attending school because of reasons other than COVID-19.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D6. Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. I/they had other responsibilities. If relevant, select all that apply:	<input type="checkbox"/>
E1. I had to work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E2. I am a parent and had to care for my child.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E3. I had to take care of or help another family member (brother/sister, parent, grandparent, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>
E4. I had to go to court or was in jail or juvenile detention center.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E5. Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What are some of the reasons why you (or your student) stopped attending school? Select all that apply.	
A. I/they didn't have the equipment or materials I needed for school. If relevant, select all that apply:	<input type="checkbox"/>
F1. My computer/device didn't work.	<input type="checkbox"/>
F2. I didn't have a computer/device to use.	<input type="checkbox"/>
F3. I could not get an internet hotspot to connect.	<input type="checkbox"/>
F4. I was not able to or had trouble logging in for live sessions (Zoom, Google Classroom, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
F5. I was not able to log in to watch recorded lessons or get my assignments from the learning portal or management system (Blackboard, Canvas, Schoology, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>
F6. I did not have my assignment packet(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>
F7. Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. I was (they were) not able to communicate with the school because there was not support for my/our family's primary language.	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. I/they did not have a way to get to and from school.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. My/their home situation made it difficult to attend school. If relevant, select all that apply:	<input type="checkbox"/>
I1. I was homeless or had no place to stay.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I2. My parents didn't care if I miss school.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I3. The water, heat, or power were turned off at home.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I4. I had a family emergency (death, illness, injury, deportation, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I5. There were problems with the car (would not run, ran out of gas, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
I6. Other, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Other reasons, please describe.	<input type="checkbox"/>

BARRIERS AND SUPPORTS FOR REENGAGING:

1. What are the barriers for you (or your child) to reengage in school or another educational pathway? Select all that apply
a. I/they don't feel like there is anyone at school who cares about me/them and my/their success.
b. School doesn't feel relevant or helpful to me/them.
c. I/they don't want to return to their same school, and I/they don't know what other options there are.
d. I/they are don't have what I/they need to get caught up in their academics.
e. I/they don't have access to the services I/they need to support my/their physical or mental health.
f. I/they don't have the support they need to manage my/their other responsibilities, like childcare, caring for another family member, needing to work.
g. I/they don't have access to the equipment I/they need to be successful in school, like a computer, internet connection, or other school supplies.
h. I/they don't have the services or support they need in my/their home situation like enough food, stable housing, or managing other family emergencies.
i. I/they don't have transportation to get to school.
j. I/they don't have a way to communicate with the school in our primary language.
k. Other barriers. Please describe.

1. Of these barriers (identified in #2 above), which are the most important that schools and organizations can address to help you in coming back to school or another educational pat Select up to 3.
a. I/they don't feel like there is anyone at school who cares about me/them and my/their success.
b. School doesn't feel relevant or helpful to me/them.
c. I/they don't want to return to their same school, and I/they don't know what other options there are.
d. I/they are don't have what I/they need to get caught up in their academics.
e. I/they don't have access to the services I/they need to support my/their physical or mental health.
f. I/they don't have the support they need to manage my/their other responsibilities, like childcare, caring for another family member, needing to work.
g. I/they don't have access to the equipment I/they need to be successful in school, like a computer, internet connection, or other school supplies.
h. I/they don't have the services or support they need in my/their home situation like enough food, stable housing, or managing other family emergencies.
i. I/they don't have transportation to get to school.
j. I/they don't have a way to communicate with the school in our primary language.
k. Other barriers. Please describe.

PART 2: Student demographics

For each student, direct service staff will list key demographic characteristics, including:

Grade	<input type="checkbox"/> K <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 3
Race/ethnicity: <i>Select all that apply.</i>	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black/African American	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/>
Two or More Races (<i>Select if you do not have more specific information about multiracial student's racial/ethnic identity</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender: <i>Select one that most applies.</i>	
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonbinary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experiencing homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Foster care	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Special education	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
LGBTQ+	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Low-income (e.g., qualify for free and reduced lunch, SNAP benefits, Title I)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Migrant status	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

PART 3: Progress toward reengagement

The below information is for direct service staff to report about the students and families they are supporting who are not currently enrolled in school.

1. Last month/year student attended school	MM/YY
2. Date of first contact (Contact = when direct service staff were able to reach a student/family via any method. Trying to reach a student/family and not reaching them (e.g., leaving a voicemail or visiting the home and no one answers does not qualify as contact)	MM/DD/YY
3. Referral to support	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3a. If yes, date referral was made:	MM/DD/YY
3b. Did student access supports to which they were referred?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3c. If yes, date supports were accessed:	MM/DD/YY
4. Did the student re-enroll?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4a. If yes, when did the student reenroll? (date)	MM/DD/YY
4b. If yes, where did the student reenroll?	
Comprehensive elementary/middle/high school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative elementary/middle/ high school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open Doors 1418 Youth Reengagement	<input type="checkbox"/>
GED	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charter or private school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vocational training (e.g., Job Corps)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other – please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Was the student still enrolled 3 months after enrollment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Did the student graduate?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6a. If yes, when did the student graduate?	MM/DD/YY
7. Was the student exited from caseload?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
7a. If yes, date of exit from caseload	MM/DD/YY

NOTES: *(For direct service staff to add any notes that may be helpful to Evaluation Team - e.g., if certain sections are left blank.)*

Coding Structure

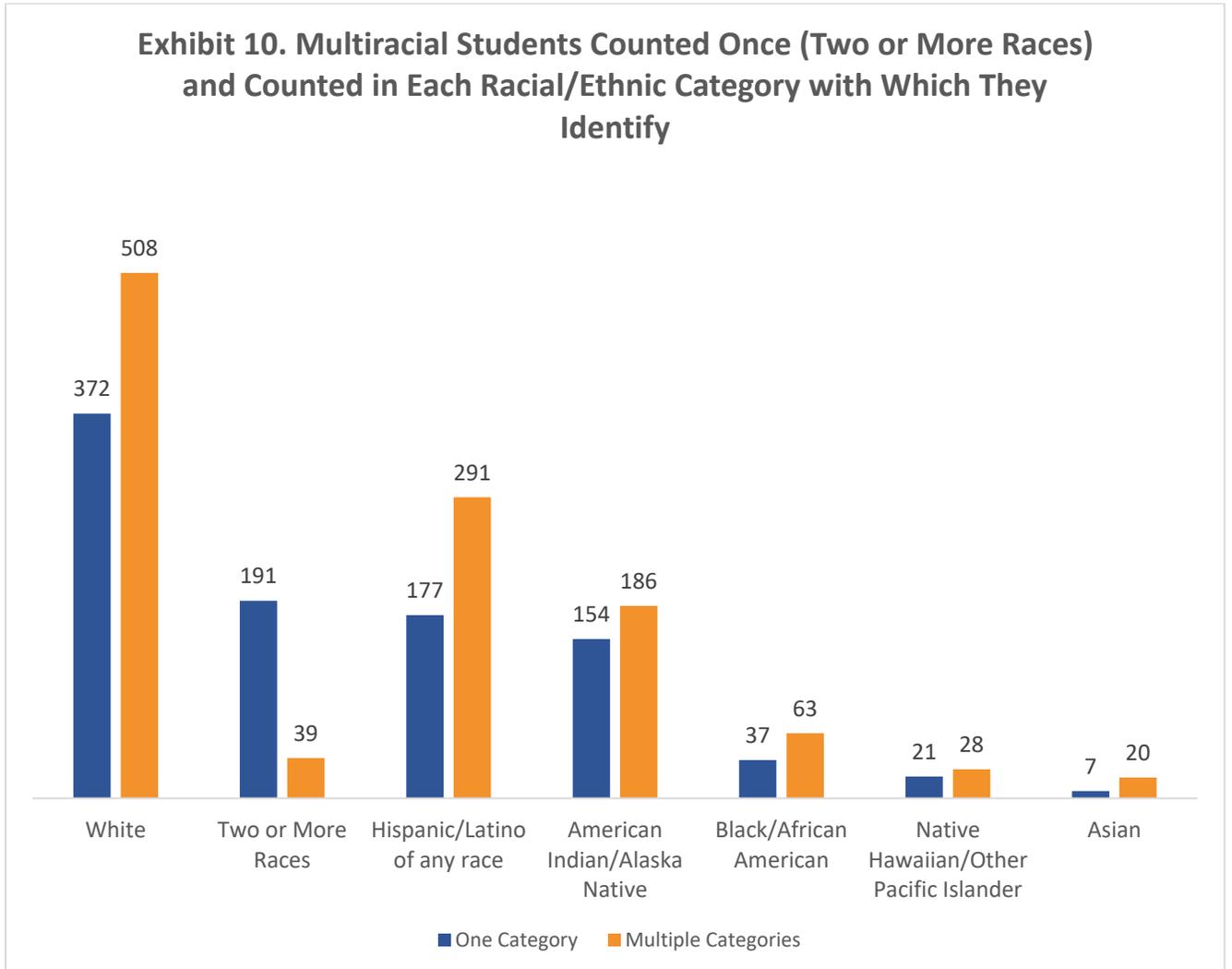
The analyses conducted for the qualitative interviews (with priority/grantee districts, ESDs, and OSPI) utilized the following coding structure. Utilizing the designated evaluation questions, individual parent, child, and grandchild codes were developed to help organize the qualitative data into relevant categories.

Code	Parent/Child/Grandchild Code	Related Eval Question(s)
Reengagement/direct service	Parent	1, 4, 5
Priority groups	Child	4, 5
Reasons for disengagement	Child	1
Reengagement approaches	Child	4, 5
Success measures	Child	4, 5
# of students/families served/to be served	Child	6
System Building	Parent	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Collaboration/partnerships	Child	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Internal- within one org	Grandchild	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Internal – within ESD region	Grandchild	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Cross-region (across ESD regions)	Grandchild	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
External (CBOs, Tribes, community)	Grandchild	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Student/family input for design	Child	2, 4, 5, 7
Attendance structures	Child	4, 5, 7
Courts/Community Engagement Boards	Child	3, 4, 5, 7
Integration with MTSS	Child	4, 5, 7
Data/Early Warning Systems	Child	4, 5, 7
Staffing	Parent	4, 5
Hiring	Child	4, 5
Direct service staff	Child	4, 5
Project leadership/coordinator	Child	4, 5
Training	Child	4, 5
Ways to hear from students/ families (for eval)	Parent	N/A
Survey	Child	N/A
Discussion/focus groups	Child	N/A
Other	Child	N/A

Code	Parent/Child/Grandchild Code	Related Eval Question(s)
Status	Parent	N/A
Where they are	Child	N/A
Proud of	Child	N/A
What they are exploring	Child	N/A
What they are not sure about	Child	N/A
Barriers/challenges	Child	N/A
Supports that are helpful	Child	N/A
Hopes/goals for the project	Child	N/A
Other	Parent	
Timing of grant	Child	Context
Sustainability	Child	11

Race/Ethnicity Data

The Evaluation Team is exploring how to reflect the range of racial/ethnic identities of students who identify with more than one group and its implications. The exploration includes deliberating on approaches that will help ensure that clarity and integrity in response data reporting are maintained either when students are counted once (i.e., under Two or More Races) and when they are counted in multiple categories with which they identify, as represented in Exhibit 10.



Acknowledgements

The Evaluation Team is grateful to the Attendance & Reengagement Team from OSPI, and the many districts, STEC school, and ESD staff who have been part of the evaluation. We also appreciate the students and families whose perspectives are helping to inform the efforts to strengthen attendance and reengagement supports and our understanding of them. Thank you to those from the many organizations who have engaged in the evaluation to date.

Districts/STEC Schools

- Burlington-Edison School District
- Chief Kitsap Academy
- Chief Leschi Schools
- Clarkston School District
- Concrete School District
- Evergreen School District
- Federal Way School District
- Franklin Pierce School District
- Grand Coulee Dam School District
- Granger School District
- Hoquiam School District
- Kiona-Benton City School District
- Lummi Nation School
- Lyle School District
- Mabton School District
- Marysville School District
- Moses Lake School District
- Mount Adams School District
- Mount Vernon School District
- Muckleshoot Tribal School

- North Beach School District
- North Mason School District
- Quillayute Valley School District
- Tacoma School District
- Taholah School District
- Vancouver School District
- Wa He Lut Indian School
- Wellpinit School District
- Yakama Nation Tribal School

Regional/State Agencies

- ESD 101
- ESD 105
- ESD 112
- ESD 113
- ESD 114
- ESD 121
- ESD 123
- ESD 171
- ESD 189
- OSPI