



# Hood Canal School District

ESSER ATTENDANCE & REENGAGEMENT EVALUATION CASE STUDY

*IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (OSPI)*

## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgement</b> .....	3
ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project Background.....	4
Hood Canal School District Case Study.....	4
<b>District Context</b> .....	5
Location and Size.....	5
Student Demographics (2023-24) .....	5
Regular Attendance Rates .....	6
Participation in ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project .....	6
<b>Methods</b> .....	6
<b>Leadership Commitment to Attendance</b> .....	7
<b>Partnerships and Collaboration</b> .....	8
School and Skokomish Tribe Collaboration.....	8
School and ESD Collaboration .....	11
<b>Tiered Interventions</b> .....	13
Creating Systems and Structures .....	13
Attendance Team Roles and Responsibilities .....	14
Tier 1 Supports.....	15
Tier 2 and 3 Supports .....	15
<b>Serving Students</b> .....	16
Positive Experiences in School.....	18
Reasons for Disengagement.....	20
Student Outcomes.....	21
<b>Looking Ahead</b> .....	22



## Acknowledgement

The Evaluation Team is grateful to the Attendance & Reengagement Team and the Office of Native Education at OSPI and the many districts, STEC school and ESD staff who were part of the Attendance & Reengagement Project Evaluation. We also appreciate the students and families who shared their experiences and perspectives in their schools, and who are helping to inform future attendance and reengagement efforts.

Special thanks to the project partners who collaborated with the Evaluation Team on this case study of Hood Canal School District and helped to make the site visit possible. We are honored and grateful to have had the chance to help tell the story of their work.



## ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project Background

**From late 2021 to June 2024, the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD) 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.**

The Attendance & Reengagement Project sought to address the crisis of engagement and disengagement students experienced during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly students and families furthest from educational justice. The project aimed to expand attendance and reengagement supports across the education system by increasing staff capacity for direct service reengagement supports (e.g., case management and group supports for students) and building or enhancing school and district systems (e.g., attendance teams, tiered interventions, actionable data). The project included 23 school district grantees (“priority districts”), 57 school districts that received ESD support, including ESD direct service staff and/or system-building support (“focus districts”), six STEC schools and nine ESDs.

## Hood Canal School District Case Study

This case study, focused on Hood Canal School District, illustrates the work of building and strengthening systems in several areas:

**Support from Leadership  
Partnerships and Collaboration  
Tiered Interventions**

It also includes data on students served through direct service support and student perspectives on positive experiences in school, reasons for disengagement and barriers to reengagement.



**This is one of six case studies that are part of the ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project Evaluation, conducted by the Evaluation Team at Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) in partnership with OSPI.** Attendance & Reengagement Project partners selected these case studies to illustrate a range of ways the project was implemented in districts and in STEC schools across the state. These case studies are intended to complement the statewide evaluation and results (final report available December 2024) by providing examples of how systems were built and strengthened and how students were served through support from this project.

This case study, focused on Hood Canal School District, illustrates the work of building and strengthening systems in the areas of support from leadership, partnerships and collaboration, tiered interventions and support for students. The intent is to help tell the story of attendance and reengagement efforts in this district and provide some ideas and approaches that may support similar work in other contexts.

## District Context

### LOCATION AND SIZE

Hood Canal School District includes one K-8 school with 330 students. The district and school are located on the Skokomish Reservation near the Hood Canal in the ESD 113 region.

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS (2023-24) <sup>1</sup>

#### RACE & ETHNICITY

- 45% White
- 21% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 18% Hispanic/Latino of any race
- 16% Two or more races
- <1% Asian, Black/African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

#### OTHER DEMOGRAPHICS

- 82% low-income students

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<sup>1</sup> Washington State Report Card.  
<https://washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/ReportCard/ViewSchoolOrDistrict/103300>



- 18% students with disabilities
- 9% students experiencing homelessness
- 5% multi-lingual learners

### REGULAR ATTENDANCE RATES<sup>2</sup>

- ◆ 2018–19 (pre-COVID) ..... 75%
- ◆ 2021–22:..... 52%
- ◆ 2022–23: ..... 51%
- ◆ 2023–24: ..... Available January 2025

### PARTICIPATION IN ESSER ATTENDANCE & REENGAGEMENT PROJECT

**Through the ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project, ESD 113 provided support to Hood Canal School District, which is comprised of one school, throughout the two years of the project.** In 2022-23, an ESD 113 Reengagement Specialist worked in the school several days per week and provided direct service to students and families and system-building support to the Assistant Principal. In 2023-24, the Assistant Principal became the building Principal, the ESD Reengagement Specialist transitioned to the ESD Attendance Coordinator role and a new ESD Reengagement Specialist was hired. The ESD Coordinator and Reengagement Specialist continued to support the school by providing system-building coaching and resources and direct services to students and families.

### Methods

The ESSER Attendance & Reengagement Project Evaluation Team developed this case study using the following methods:

- **Site visit to the district in Spring 2024 for in-person individual and group interviews with:**

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<sup>2</sup> Washington State Report Card.

<https://washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/ReportCard/ViewSchoolOrDistrict/103300> Regular attendance is defined as the percent of students with fewer than two absences per month, on average.



- ◆ The Hood Canal Attendance Team, including the Principal, Counselor and the Attendance Secretary
- ◆ Hood Canal Principal
- ◆ A teacher (who was also a principal/administrative intern)
- ◆ The Skokomish Early Childhood Education Director
- **Virtual interviews** with:
  - ◆ ESD 113 Reengagement Specialist and Attendance Coordinator
  - ◆ Hood Canal SD Superintendent

Two members of the Evaluation Team visited the site in Spring 2024 and participated in the individual and group interviews. The attending Evaluation Team members debriefed following the completion of all interviews to identify preliminary key themes. The team then synthesized the themes into high-level takeaways to share with the points of contact for each site to ensure accurate understanding and representation of what was shared. Using interview transcripts, the team then identified details to help expand on the high-level takeaways and incorporated relevant quotes into a detailed draft to share with sites for any feedback. (Note: To preserve anonymity, that quotes are attributed to general role groups, such as ‘staff interviewee’ to refer to district and school staff and ‘partner interviewee’ to refer to representatives of the Skokomish Tribe, a sovereign nation, or ESD 113 staff who partnered with the district on their efforts.)

The Evaluation Team incorporated feedback received into the final case study, which includes additional data beyond site visit interviews, including data gathered from students and families served via direct service as part of statewide data collection for the Attendance & Reengagement Project Evaluation.

## Leadership Commitment to Attendance

**Hood Canal has had a districtwide commitment to attendance over the past several years.** The Hood Canal School Board identified attendance as one of [four district goals](#) for 2022 to 2024. Other goals include literacy, communication and district culture. As a one-school district, the building Principal prioritizes attendance in his leadership, with a longstanding commitment to attendance that dates from the start of his career in education in California, where funding is in part determined by average daily attendance (ADA). He has since grown to



focus more on the important relationship of attendance to positive outcomes for students. The Superintendent's and Principal's actions together supported school attendance. The Principal and building staff, with support from ESD 113, implemented attendance initiatives in the school and the superintendent supported and empowered them in doing their work, while bringing visibility to their efforts.

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*"When I first started here, one of the things that jumped out at me was that our school board had made attendance one of its four major goal areas for the district... specifically calling that out certainly let me know at the onset that this was going to be one of the areas we're going to be focusing on... and I think it was pretty clear also to the school community that this was an area that we needed to focus on... people knew what the challenges were, they knew what the data said and... [staff] understood the throughline between attendance and student outcomes and how important this was if we were going to help our students be successful." – Staff Interviewee*

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*"[Building principal] has been the most engaged principal that we've had here for attendance. And I could say that 100% since I've worked with all of them [over many years]." – Staff Interviewee*

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## Partnerships and Collaboration

### SCHOOL AND SKOKOMISH TRIBE COLLABORATION

#### RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

**When both the Superintendent and Principal joined the district for the 2022-23 school year, they recognized the need to build and strengthen the relationship between the school and their community, particularly with the Skokomish Tribe.** The school is located on the Skokomish Reservation and serves many enrolled Tribal members and their descendants. The Skokomish Tribe has several different programs and departments that support Tribal children and their families, including Education and Early Childhood Education. Historically, there have been challenges in the collaboration between the district and the Tribe, as students and their families have experienced generational trauma related to negative experiences at the school.





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*"[School and Tribal leadership] meet every two weeks, and so we're trying to really stay in communication about things that we're doing, try to really work on that partnership. There's so much that we don't know about the Tribe that we want to be very careful and that we do it right. And, historically, administration [has] come in and they try to create a partnership and then they have fallouts... they've seen a lot of change in the school and a lot of change in administration, and so they're ready to do their part but they have to have that trust. And that's one thing that [Superintendent] is really working on. We show up and he has an agenda, and he shares what we're doing, we share what we're working on." – Staff Interviewee*

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**With new and committed leadership in the district and school, there has been an opportunity to build trust and strengthen collaboration with the Tribe.** The district and Tribe are connecting more regularly, including for school events, assemblies and implementation of the 'Since Time Immemorial' curriculum to support connections to the local Tribe and culture. The school also has an active social media presence through which they share photos and events with the community, helping to show how the school is celebrating and supporting students.

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*"[Hood Canal's] change in leadership has really helped. I'm not saying it's perfect, but it has made a difference in listening... They are trying very hard, [they] listen to everything, every bit of feedback that [the Tribe] give[s] them. It isn't just about attendance and things like that, but it's a lot of cultural things. [The Tribe is] involved in their assemblies every other month where they're talking about all things Skokomish." – Partner Interviewee*

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It has also helped facilitate trust that the Skokomish Attendance and Truancy Specialist (employed by the Tribe) is a Tribal member with longstanding relationships with families in the community and is also a member of the Hood Canal School Board.

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*"That's where the trust is good, because [Tribal member who collaborates with the school] feels safe to say those things, right, to work in partnership with us." –Staff Interviewee*

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## COLLABORATION AND TRIBAL SUPPORT

**Along with their improving relationship, the school and Tribe established regular structures for collaboration.** The Principal, Superintendent and the Tribe's CEO, Education Director and Attendance and Truancy Specialist met every month to connect and identify ways to partner. The Tribe's Education Director also met monthly with school leadership to discuss programming and any concerns. Within these collaborative structures, they clarified supports, processes and roles related to assistance for Tribal students which can get complicated given the multiple Tribal departments that may be involved (e.g., education programs and Indian Child Welfare, or ICW). The school and the Tribe also coordinated to do home visits for Tribal students with attendance concerns.

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*"We're going to set it up with ICW and [the district] to understand what role ICW does play and what role it doesn't play and what does it mean when it says the kid is in guardianship... it really depends on who you contact. And what you do for attendance and other issues that are happening, you can't just pick somebody and talk to them. So...[the Tribe is] just beginning that kind of work for the school... It is a different world, like when it goes either through ICW or stays with the State." – Partner Interviewee*


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**The school and Tribe also clarified their roles and supports for students and families.** Over time, the school increasingly served as the first point of contact and support for families when serving Native students, rather than families going directly to the Tribe for support as they had in the past. There were also supports and services that the Tribe provided (e.g., workforce development, financial assistance) where the school could connect with the Tribe, who then served as a liaison to the broader range of services available to families.

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*"[With workforce development or financial assistance] the school might say something to [the Tribe], 'hey, we know this family is struggling' because they can do quite a bit there too... [The Tribe is] their liaison, and that's how it's supposed to be. [The school is] supposed to connect with us, and then [the Tribe] connect[s] everybody with all the other services and people [at the Tribe]." – Partner Interviewee*

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**The Tribe offers additional education supports, including Head Start and childcare programs at the Skokomish Early Childhood Education Center.** When ready, their pre-K students go into the Hood Canal School District as kindergartners. The school (with support from ESD 113) provides speech and occupational therapy and other support services at the early childhood center. The Tribe also provides tutors for students, where tutors are employees of the Tribe but working at the school. This arrangement can be challenging to navigate given the school's role in directing tutors' work with students, as the tutors are not employees of the district.

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*"Attendance-wise, the community, the Tribe has a way of reaching family that we [as the school] don't." – Staff Interviewee*

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**The Tribe also holds regular case management meetings for enrolled Tribal members and their descendants, which includes 12-15 students at each grade level.** Tribal staff (the Education Director and Tribal tutors) discuss individual students and needed supports. With FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) consent from parents/caregivers, they have access to review portions of students' records in the district's Skyward system, including excused and unexcused absences. In the 2022-23 school year, the ESD Reengagement Specialist participated in some of these case management meetings.

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*"We [also] collaborate more internally [within the Tribe]. Once a month we do what's called case management and so [the Tribal] tutors bring all of the files for each of the kids [at Hood Canal]. We sit down and we go through each kid, child by child, for that month and we talk about attendance, you know, tardies, do they need anything else? Do we need any other services around here more than ICW and the clinic?" – Partner Interviewee*

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## SCHOOL AND ESD COLLABORATION

### RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

**ESD 113 provided Hood Canal with direct service and system-building support which helped strengthen their relationship.** In the project's first year, the Assistant Principal and the ESD 113 Reengagement Specialist built an initial relationship and collaboration before they both transitioned into new roles in 2023-24 as the building Principal and ESD Attendance Coordinator, respectively. This first year of collaboration built a foundation from which the



work continued to grow and deepen in 2023-24. The ESD Reengagement Specialist also helped to facilitate the collaboration between the school and the Tribe by helping the two entities connect and share information in 2022-23. This connection continued as direct collaboration deepened in 2023-24, without involvement of the new ESD Reengagement Specialist hired in 2023-24.

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*On the relationship between the Tribe and the school: “You gotta get united so the students feel more secure, more safe.”– Partner Interviewee*

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*“[The ESD attendance specialist] came in and was crazy instrumental in identifying our deficiencies and helping us see there was things we’re missing... so her and I actually had a really good work rapport because I was able to tell her our challenges and she would tell us ‘well here’s what other districts are doing’ or ‘have you tried this?’ or ‘here’s some research on the problem your having’ and so her and I worked really well.” – Staff Interviewee*

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## **ESD AND SCHOOL STAFF ROLES**

**As roles at the ESD shifted from 2022-23 to 2023-24, so did its supports for the school.** In the first year, the Reengagement Specialist worked with students and families and provided guidance to the Assistant Principal regarding systems development. The perspective of ESD staff, coming from outside of the district and with their exclusive focus on attendance, helped identify opportunities for improvement and necessary dedicated support. Initially some school staff received ESD guidance as criticism. As the year progressed, however, there was broader understanding and appreciation that ESD staff were helping the school create and strengthen their systems.

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*“[ESD staff was saying] so tell us about the systems you have for this. [We were saying] Well, we don’t have one so let’s build one. And now we’re assigning roles. We’re assigning jobs. We’re assigning who’s doing what. Well, that changes people’s perspective. [From thinking that] this person [was] coming in and telling us we’re not good enough [to realizing] that’s not what she was doing... she was helping us build.” – Staff Interviewee*

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**In the second year of the project, the new ESD 113 Reengagement Specialist contributed to many of the systems that had been developed in the first year**, including serving as a member of the school's Attendance Team, supporting the development of their weekly team meeting agendas and bringing attendance data to those meetings. The ESD helped the school to focus on regular attendance rates in addition to their existing focus on average daily attendance; and to support the district/school leadership's strong interest in their data.

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*"They're really interested in their data... [school/district leaders] likes to share it, talk about the growth, but they're also interested in analyzing it and looking at the trends and seeing what's going on and trying to use it, make it useful to them to make change." – Partner Interviewee*

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**In 2023-24, the ESD Reengagement Specialist continued to provide direct service support to students and families.** She was at the school two days per week, and several staff described her role as a "pseudo-counselor" who would connect with the school counselor to check-in on individual kids and coordinate supports for them. Her presence at the school only two days a week was seen as "not enough" given the need in the school.

## Tiered Interventions

**Over the course of the project, Hood Canal developed and implemented all tiers of attendance supports**, including building the school culture with regular family events, monthly attendance challenges, group supports for students and improving their Community Engagement Board (CEB) process.

### CREATING SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

**Hood Canal developed a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) approach to attendance creating structures and procedures to support students at all levels, including the development of a clear CEB process.** They used reports (i.e., Skyward Chronic Absenteeism and Regular Attendance reports) to develop their data literacy, identify data-informed supports for students and track progress toward their goals. They worked to become more proactive in their approaches by sending "nudge letters" (letters to families encouraging them to prioritize their students' attendance) and engaging teachers more deeply. They were motivated to



expand their efforts, as they reported an improvement of 15 percentage points in their regular attendance from 2022-23 to 2023-24.

## ATTENDANCE TEAM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**In developing the Attendance Team, the school defined the roles and responsibilities of different members to support students and families.** The Counselor completed needs assessments for students, used “[Check and Connect](#)” to support students and connected with community resources for student and family referrals. The Counselor also provided group supports, including classroom lessons and a Friendship Group for students in elementary grades. The Attendance Secretary worked on the daily tasks of attendance—including tracking and following up with families, collaborating with the Native Education Coordinator and preparing for weekly attendance team meetings and CEB meetings. A teacher and the administrative intern covered the Principal’s administrative duties when needed so that the Principal could conduct home visits, connect with Tribal partners and tend to other responsibilities away from the school building.

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*“It’s definitely a team effort and we can see the rewards of the team as our numbers are going up with attendance and things like that. You know there’s only so much one person can do, but everybody together we are a lot... stronger.” – Staff Interviewee*

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*“Kids are not going to come to school for their academics. They’re going to come to school because it’s where they want to be with their friends, and they feel safe and they feel happy.... And [the counselor’s] providing a big component of that behind the scenes.” – Staff Interviewee*

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*“Once we do get them here and get them here on time repeatedly, they start to understand the material and they start to get caught up. Then they start to realize what the beginning of the day looks like, so they’re more willing to not fight.” – Staff Interviewee*

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## TIER 1 SUPPORTS

**The school implemented a range of universal Tier 1 supports, including attendance competitions, Sunday phone calls from the principal where he shares upcoming events and the importance of attendance, monthly family nights, a regular “Caregiver Café” where parents and other family members have coffee with the principal and social emotional learning lessons.** School staff, including a Tribal member with longstanding relationships with many Native families, greeted students and families as they arrived at school each day. School staff also expanded class and extracurricular options, like art classes, to encourage students to attend. And in 2023-24 they had more after school programs than in previous years even though they struggled to cover staffing. School staff wanted to make sure that students wanted to be at school and that they felt connected and heard.

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*“I think that's really what we keep wanting to make sure that we're growing -- expanding the reasons why students want to come to school every day and so you know that's certainly a goal. You know, in a smaller school having the capacity to offer and do all the things that we'd like to do that would provide that kind of level of engagement is a challenge... those [classes and extracurricular options] can be reasons why kids come to schools like ‘today's robotics, so I'm coming to school’ or ‘today's Lego club and so I want to be there’; those little hooks that kind of help students feel connected and also building a sense of community and people that actually notice if you're there or not” – Staff Interviewee*

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## TIER 2 AND 3 SUPPORTS

**Hood Canal developed Tier 2 and 3 supports as well, including Friendship Group. For Tier 3 supports, which were prompted when a student reached an absence rate of 20% or more, they set up individual communications between parents/guardians and teachers, attendance staff, counselor and school administrators.** There was case management support through ESD 113 and school staff, and there was a CEB process. Some challenges to providing Tier 3 supports included reaching families and changing their mindsets about school and attendance; a lack of community resources – beyond those offered by the Tribe – to which they can refer students and families; and the concern that students who have had Tier 3 supports in Hood Canal may “get lost” in another district (i.e., when they move on to high



school, or if they move to another district). The school continued their efforts to reach families and shift mindsets among those who were not engaged in school.

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*“Some families don't want to be worked with, so then we're like trying to poke and prod even harder. So working with everybody, rallying the troops around them, so to speak and coming at them from different angles... The classroom teacher is going to call today and then the office is going to call and then [another staff] is going to call... let them know that 'hey, we noticed your kids absent', 'hey, we noticed your kid's absent', 'hey, where's your kid?' So, if multiple people actually care about their kid, they can see the impact that their kid missing is having on themselves in the school.” – Staff Interviewee*

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## Serving Students

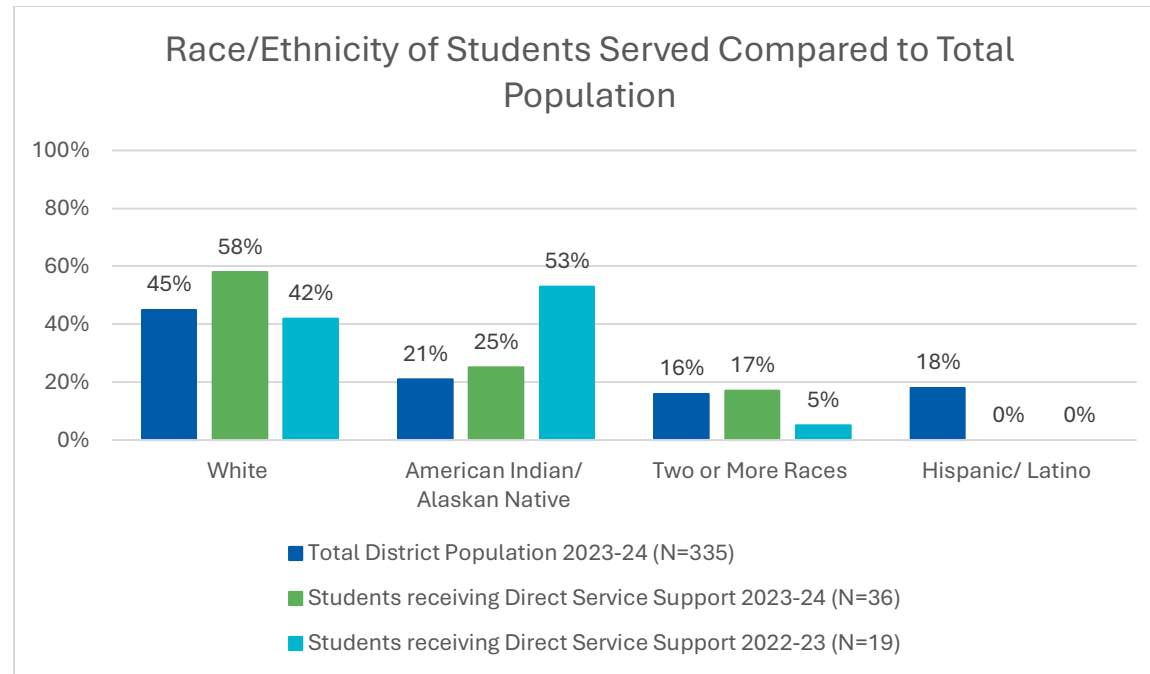
**In both years of the project, the ESD 113 Reengagement Specialist worked directly with students and families to support engagement and/or reengagement in school.** In 2022-23, the Reengagement Specialist supported 22 students enrolled in school. In 2023-24, they supported 38 students, 33 of whom were enrolled, and 5 of whom were unenrolled.<sup>3</sup>

**In both years of the project, the Reengagement Specialist supported a higher proportion of American Indian/Alaska Native students (53% of N=19 in 2022-23, 25% of N=19 in 2023-24) than were represented in the total population of the school (20% in 2023-24).** In 2023-24, a higher proportion of White students (58%) and students who identify with two or more races (17%) were served through direct service than are represented in the total population of the school (44% and 16% respectively). Notably, no Hispanic/Latino students of any race(s) were reported as receiving services from the Reengagement Specialist in either year, though they made up 18% of the total student population in 2023-24<sup>4</sup>.

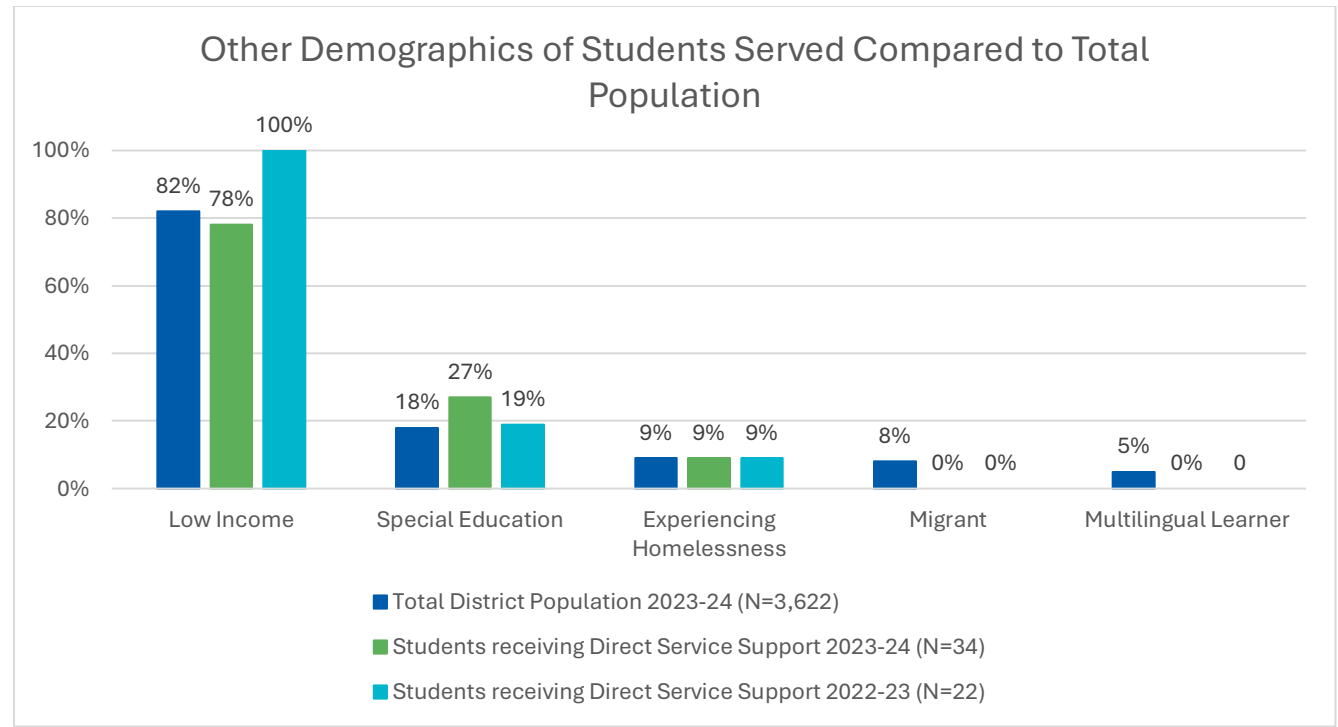
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<sup>3 3</sup> For the 2022-23 direct service report, data was reported for 22 students. In the 2023-24 direct service report, there was data for 38 students. Not every student had data reported for each section of the direct service reporting tool (i.e., student demographics, positive experiences in school, etc.) The percentages throughout this case study include the number of students for whom data was provided in the relevant section.



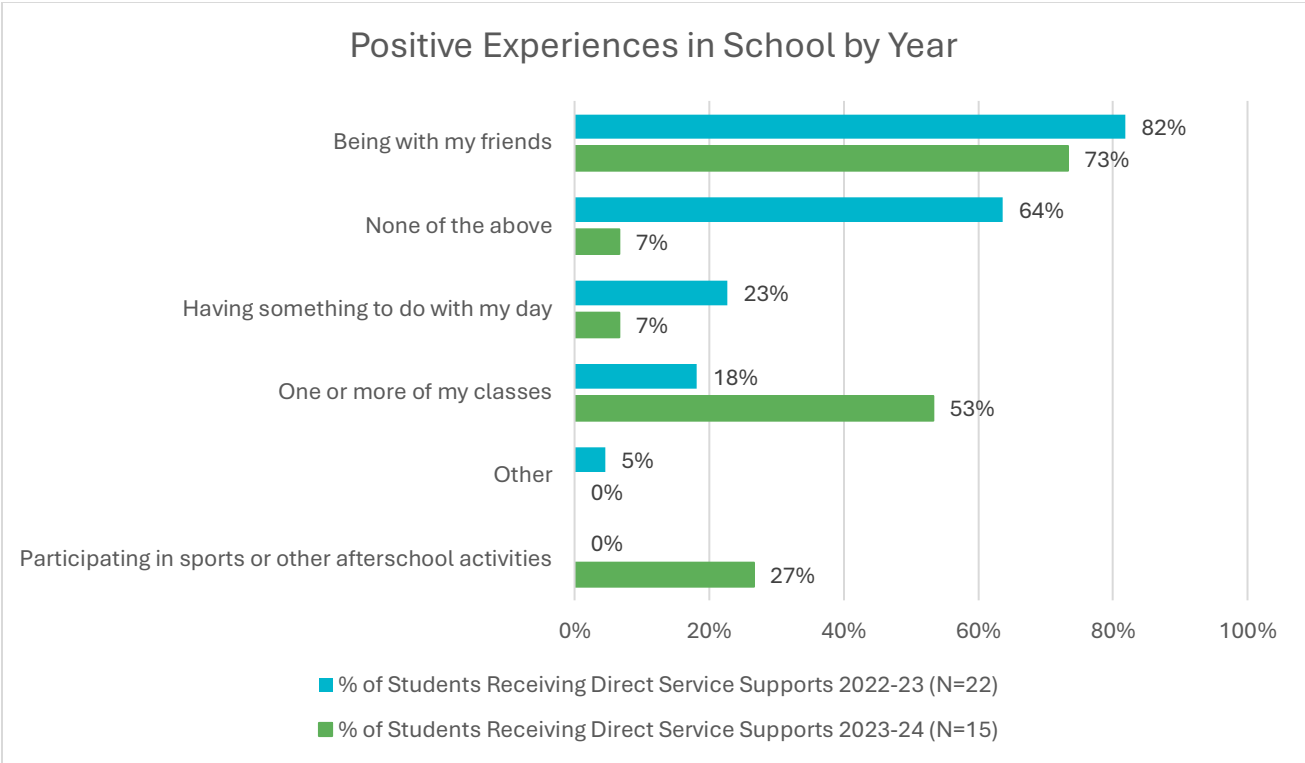


**Compared to the district population, direct service staff served more students in special education in both years of the project, and more students who were low-income 2023-24.** The project served a similar proportion of students experiencing homelessness, and fewer migrant and MLL students. (Note: data are limited and not reported for students who identify as LGBTQ+ or are in foster care. Limited data direct service data was reported for students served, and districtwide data is unavailable or suppressed from the OSPI Report Card.)



## POSITIVE EXPERIENCES IN SCHOOL

**Of students receiving direct service support, being with friends was the most common a positive experience in school in both years** (82% of N=22 in 2022-23, 73% of N=15 in 2023-24). In 2022-23, over half of students reported “none of the above” (64%), which decreased to 7% in 2023-24. Similarly, 23% of students in 2022-23 reported that they enjoyed having something to do with their day, which decreased to 7% in 2023-24. Conversely, only 18% of students in 2022-23 reported that their classes were a positive experience, and no students reported sports or other activities as a positive experience, while 53% of students in 2023-24 reported their classes were positive and 27% reported participating in sports or other activities as positive.



**Ten students completed a student survey which addressed their relationship with their attendance specialist, their feelings about the services they received, their relationships in school and their sense of belonging.**

- All students (N=10) agreed that they feel cared for by their attendance specialist, they trust their specialist, their specialist notices when they're absent, their specialist is easy to talk to and they know how to reach their specialist when they need them.
- Fewer students agreed that their specialist asked them how to bring back (N= 5) or keep students attending school (N=7); and only five of the students agreed that they look forward to going to school.
- Other areas, including students' relationships with peers and teachers, as well as their sense of belonging had more mixed responses – i.e., a few responded positively, a few others responded negatively and an equal number were not sure.



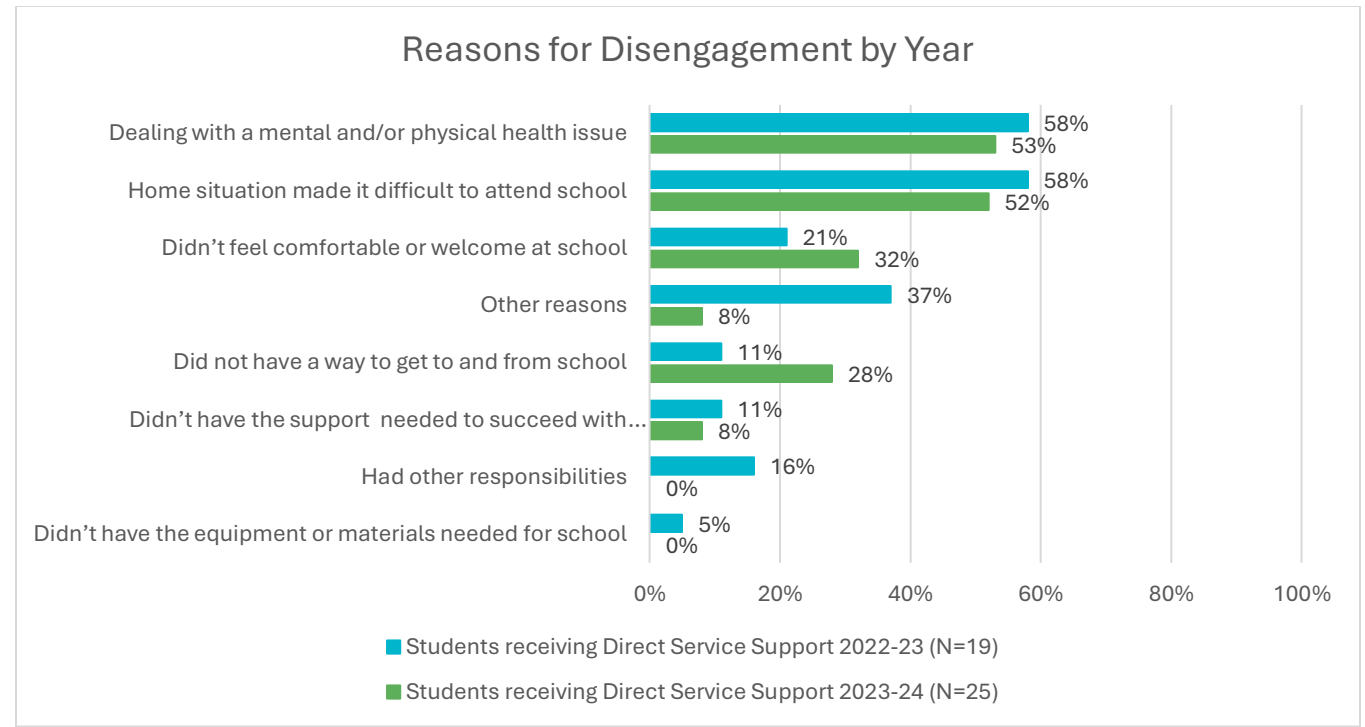
## REASONS FOR DISENGAGEMENT

In both years of the project, students identified a range of barriers to attendance, including:

- **Mental or physical health issues** (58% of students in 2022-23 and 53% of students in 2023-24)
- **Students' home life or home situation** (58% of 19 students in 2022-23; 52% of 25 students in 2023-24)
- **Students didn't feel comfortable/welcome at school** (21% in 2022-23, 32% in 2023-24).

These reasons are also reflected in the student survey, where only 37% (N=8, 68% of students responded "not sure") of respondents shared that they felt they belonged at school and 22% said they did not think students felt welcome at school.

Other reasons for disengagement varied from 2022-23 to 2023-24, including other responsibilities (16% in 2022-23), not having the support to be successful with their schoolwork (11% in 2022-23, 8% in 2023-24), not having the materials/equipment to be successful in school (5% in 2022-23) and not having transportation (11% in 2022-23, 28% in 2023-24).



## STUDENT OUTCOMES

Student outcomes for students served via direct service include reenrollment in school (for those who were unenrolled) and an increased sense of hope, as measured using the Hope Scale.<sup>5</sup>

**Among the five unenrolled students supported with direct service, one student reenrolled in an elementary school. The majority of 19 students who received direct service support experienced an increase sense of hope (32%) or no change in their sense of hope (47%).<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> Administering the Hope Scale – Community Toolkit. <https://oercommons.org/courseware/lesson/108078>

<sup>6</sup> For students who had “No change” in changes of hope, one student had “High Hope”, three students had “Moderate Hope” and four students had “Low Hope”.



**The school also saw a significant reduction in students in need of Tier 3 attendance supports.** From the conclusion of the 2021-22 school year to the mid-point of the 2023-24 school year, the number of Hood Canal students in need of Tier 3 interventions reduced by more than half, from 27% of students to 10% of students.<sup>7</sup>

## Looking Ahead

**As the Attendance & Reengagement Project came to an end and Hood Canal planned for their future work on attendance, they anticipated both challenges and opportunities.**

Given the supports received from ESD 113, including the Reengagement Specialist's work with students and families, school staff expressed concern about the impact on relationships with students and their families as her position ended with the grant. The district had come to depend on ESD supports, making it challenging to plan to sustain the work given staffing and resources available to them.

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*"Are we going to be able to sustain it? I feel like two years is not long enough to create sustainable like longevity, right? Like, how do we create something that if we walked away would continue?"—Staff Interviewee*

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**At the same time, Hood Canal identified opportunities to build from its work on attendance to bring more focus on tardiness.** Tardiness or tardies have been a challenge in the community. Native students had over twice as many number of tardies compared to non-Native students. This is a challenge across grade levels and has also been an issue at the high school of a neighboring district. The school and partners noted the opportunity to address this challenge when children are young and build the habit among students and their families to arrive at school on time. The school instituted a process to have parents/caregivers sign their students in when they are late to school but the practice had not reduced tardies as they had hoped. The Tribe also considered where else they might adopt policies to address tardies, including at the Skokomish Early Childhood Education Center.

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<sup>7</sup> Hood Canal identifies students for Tier 3 attendance supports based on missing 20% of school days or more. Tier 1 supports are for students missing 0-9.99% of school days and Tier 1 supports are for students missing 10-19.99% of school days.



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*"The kids are getting there, they're just not getting there for their first part of the day. [I] don't know that parents understand [tardies/absences] creates achievement gaps for the kids, and those gaps are super hard to close. For the K-2 kids, when you already established that gap, it's hard." – Partner Interviewee*

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*"We actually, as part of the collaboration [with Hood Canal], we try really hard to make attendance a big deal [at the Skokomish Childhood Education Center] too. And being on time a big deal here as well. So that the families understand it's important and the kids understand it's important. So you know we serve breakfast at a strategic time. We serve lunch at a strategic time. We just try to make sure that they get the kids here and attendance is key." – Partner Interviewee*

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