

Summer Programs: 2015-2016

Department of Evaluation and Assessment

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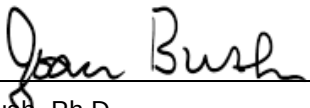
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Approved Report of the Department of Evaluation and Assessment

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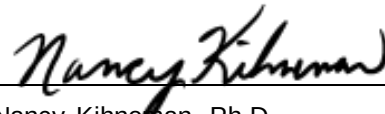
November 2016

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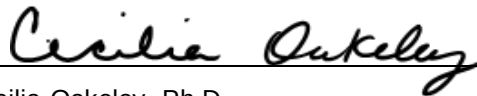
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SUMMER PROGRAMS: 2015-2016

**Project Evaluators: Nolan Rett Mickelson
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ABSTRACT

Summer Readiness Program

- The Summer Readiness Program (SRP) provided remedial instruction at home campuses to 4,744 elementary and 2,232 middle school students at risk for retention.
- Eighty-seven percent of the elementary and middle school students matriculated to the next grade level at the start of the 2016-17 school year. 3,074 students did not attend the required number of days to pass the necessary courses; however, 83 percent of these students were promoted.

High School Credit-Recovery Program

- The high school Credit-Recovery Program provided students opportunities to recover or gain up to one credit at ten campuses across the district.
- The number of students who met the 17-day attendance criterion (required to receive credit) ranged from 210 students at North Dallas High School to 696 students at Samuell High School.
- Course passing rates ranged from 87 percent to 100 percent; however, average *Assessment of Course Performance* scores for eight of 32 courses fell below the passing standard of 70.

Summer Achievers Academy

- The Summer Achievers Academy (SAA) was a voluntary, full-day academic and enrichment program that served 1,517 students at five elementary campuses and 255 students at three middle school campuses.
- Campus observers reported clean sites prepared to welcome students; however, busing problems persisted throughout the program.
- Students generally worked as a class (54%) or alone (44%) across timepoint observations. Students were rarely off task and student behavior disrupted learning during only eight percent of the timepoints.
- Two administrations of the *Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment-Mini*, a measure of social-emotional competence, indicated no overall growth among elementary students and little growth among the small number of middle school students. However, among students who received low pre-program ratings, both elementary and middle school students made significant gains ($M = 7.3$, elementary; $M = 15.1$, middle).
- Principal interviews, mentor teacher surveys, and intern surveys revealed several important programmatic themes: teachers lacked supplies and other resources; the curriculum was a review of the 2015-16 school year, was not interesting for the students, and did not prepare them for the upcoming school year; students and parents expected a “summer camp” atmosphere during academic classes rather than classes similar to what students take during the regular school year; and busing issues.
- Students had positive views of the academic classes (91% elementary, 80% middle school) and enrichment activities (97% elementary and middle school).
- Students’ caregivers chose the SAA for enrichment opportunities and academic improvement. Only 18 percent of the caregivers responded that finding an alternative summer activity would be easy for their child.

Alternative Certification Intern Training

- Alternative certification interns with the Dallas ISD’s Compass program and Teach For America (TFA) completed practicum teaching experiences at the eight SAA campuses and three high school campuses.
- SAA interns positively rated nearly all aspects of the programs. Perceptions did not vary by program.
- The student attendance rates at the TFA site were high throughout the program compared to the rates at Compass campuses.
- Principal interviews and teacher surveys revealed that interns wanted more autonomy to create lesson plans, small middle school class sizes did not prepare interns for the school year, and principals lacked instructional roles on their campuses.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Background Information

The Dallas Independent School District's (ISD) Department of Summer Learning and Extended-Day Services provided the Summer Readiness Program (SRP) for 7,006 kindergarten through eighth-grade students needing remedial instruction at each elementary and middle school campus. The SRP was an intensive eight-day program designed for students that did not meet the criteria for promotion set forth by the Dallas ISD's Board of Trustees.

The Summer Achievers' Academy (SAA) was a full-day program designed for PK through eighth-grade students who could benefit from additional instruction during the summer months to stem summer learning loss. Campus administrators and teachers recruited students to the program. Elementary programs included core instruction in reading/language arts and mathematics. Middle school programs provided instruction in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Big Thought, a non-profit organization focusing on arts enrichment, provided a variety of activities for students during the afternoons. The activities included subjects as diverse as culinary arts, music, and athletics. Each elementary and middle school campus served as a training center for alternative certification interns with either the Dallas ISD's Compass program or Teach For America (TFA).

The high school Credit Recovery Program (CRP) provided opportunities for students to recover up to one full credit for failed high school courses at 10 campuses across the district. Sites also offered from two to six accelerated courses. Three sites served as training centers for Compass and TFA's alternative certification interns.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the evaluation of the Summer Learning Program is to provide program managers with context and outcome information for state reporting, program improvement, and strategic planning. It also serves as documentation of the district's efforts in providing summer learning opportunities and services for students in elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as student efforts to be promoted to the next grade level or to recover course credits.

MAJOR EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

What was the amount of funding for this program?

The Department of Summer Learning and Extended-Day Services estimated expenditures of \$1,349,913 for the SRP. This program provided remedial instruction to elementary and middle school students who had failed two or more core courses during the regular school year. The SRP expenditures also included funding for the Student Success Initiative, which provided remedial instruction and test preparation for students who passed their core content courses but did not meet the minimum standard on either the reading,

mathematics, or both *State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)* subtests. Ultimately, after the commissioner of the Texas Education Agency determined that these students would not take the summer administration, they were no longer required to attend the program.

Program managers estimated Dallas ISD's SAA expenditures to be \$1,066,176. Big Thought provided additional funding for arts enrichment in the afternoons. The Wallace Foundation provided funding to support efforts to sustain the program in future years and broaden the scope of program evaluations. Sections of this report were produced with funding from the Wallace Foundation.

The Dallas ISD expended approximately \$1,370,300 for high school credit recovery and accelerated courses.

How was the Summer Readiness Program implemented?

Methodology

Evaluation staff reviewed the district's Summer Learning Handbook and the policy of the Board of Trustees to determine student eligibility guidelines for participation in the SRP. Campus staff tracked attendance using a district-developed application. Upon the SRP's conclusion, program administrators provided the evaluator with a spreadsheet of attendance data which were matched with demographic information from the district's student database (June 6, 2016). The attendance application clearly indicated students attending the program as part of the Student Success Initiative (fifth- and eighth-grade students who failed either the reading or mathematics *STAAR*) or as part of the SRP, but not as part of both programs. The SRP analyses only include students that met the SRP qualifications.¹

Results

Each district elementary campus was assigned a summer school location for its students to attend. Summer data controllers at each of the elementary summer locations used the students' summer enrollment forms to develop class rosters and place students by program, grade level, and English language ability (general education or bilingual).

Program Characteristics

The handbook included student eligibility guidelines and was distributed to all elementary and middle school campuses with guidelines for which students should participate in the SRP. Student eligibility guidelines included:

- Students in grade 1 who were considered for retention when grade-level objectives were not mastered, especially in language arts and mathematics (parental permission is required for student retention),
- Students in grade 2-5 who had an overall report card average of 70 or above, but received less than 70 in two or more of the following areas: reading/language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies,
- Students in grades 2-5 who had an overall report card average below 70,
- and sixth- through eighth-grade students who failed at least two core courses (reading/language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies).

¹ Students who were not at risk of retention were invited to attend the program if a campus had slots available. The attendance application did not differentiate between students required to attend and those invited to attend.

The Summer Learning Department estimated that 10 percent of the students at each campus would qualify to attend the program. If fewer than 10 percent of the students met the criteria for attendance, other students were invited to fill slots already budgeted for, including kindergarten students.

Each elementary and middle school campus hosted qualifying students from that school. To be promoted to the next grade, students were required to attend all eight days of the SRP, which began June 6 and ended June 16 (two weeks, Monday through Thursday). Campuses provided two courses each day with each course lasting approximately two hours. All students received breakfast in the classroom.

Demographics and Attendance

Exactly 4,774 kindergarten through fifth-grade students attended at least one day of the SRP. Most summer students were at risk for retention and were recommended to attend to be promoted to the next grade level at the beginning of the 2016-17 school year, but only based on academic achievement or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course. Some courses had few qualifying students enrolled; other students – who did not meet the eligibility criteria – were invited to fill class rosters.

Because the SRP took place at nearly all Dallas ISD elementary campuses, overall attendance is presented in aggregate. Students who attended at least one day of the program for academic reasons (not because of *STAAR* reading or mathematics results) were counted.

The demographic characteristics of the 4,774 elementary summer students attending because they were at risk of retention generally mirrored the characteristics of district students during the 2015-16 school year (see Table 1). Most SRP students were Hispanic ($n = 3,342$, 70%). African American students were slightly over-represented during the SRP when compared with the regular school year, comprising 26 percent of the SRP students and 23 percent of district elementary students overall. Male students were also slightly over-represented in the elementary program (56.8% SAA; 51.5% regular school year).

Table 1: Elementary Summer Readiness Program Student Demographics

Demographic Variable	Regular School Year		Summer Readiness Program	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Race				
Asian	1,104	1.3	56	1.2
African American	19,975	22.8	1,247	26.1
Hispanic	61,643	70.3	3,342	70.0
American Indian/Alaska Native	264	0.3	11	0.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	37	<0.1	2	<0.1
Two or More Races	505	0.6	12	0.3
White	4,219	4.8	104	2.2
Sex				
Female	42,571	48.5	2,061	43.2
Male	45,176	51.5	2,713	56.8
English Language Learner				
Yes	45,847	52.2	2,561	53.6
No	41,900	47.8	2,213	46.4
Receives Special Education Services				
Yes	6,692	7.6	470	9.8
No	81,055	92.4	4,304	90.2
Economically Disadvantaged				
Yes	80,154	91.3	4,568	95.7
No	7,593	8.7	206	4.3

Note. Some percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

A total of 2,232 middle school students attended the SRP strictly for not passing core courses during the regular school year. Most students were Hispanic ($n = 1,606$, 72%). As shown in Table 2, a larger proportion of students were male (70%) than female (30%), and 56 percent were ELL students. Twelve percent received special education services, somewhat higher than the 10 percent receiving services in the district overall. Additionally, over 95 percent of attending students were economically disadvantaged.

Table 2: Middle School Summer Readiness Program Student Demographics

Demographic Variable	Regular School Year		Summer Readiness Program	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Race				
Asian	382	1.2	21	0.9
African American	7,025	22.3	562	25.2
Hispanic	22,504	71.6	1,606	72.0
American Indian/Alaska Native	67	0.2	2	0.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	21	0.1	0	0.0
Two or More Races	174	0.6	3	0.1
White	1,273	4.0	38	1.7
Sex				
Female	15,164	48.2	681	30.4
Male	16,282	51.8	1,551	69.6
English Language Learner				
Yes	16,123	51.3	1,248	55.9
No	15,323	48.7	984	44.1
Receives Special Education Services				
Yes	3,006	9.6	266	11.9
No	28,440	90.4	1,966	88.1
Economically Disadvantaged				
Yes	28,698	91.3	2,123	95.1
No	2,748	8.7	109	4.9

What were the results of the Summer Readiness Program?

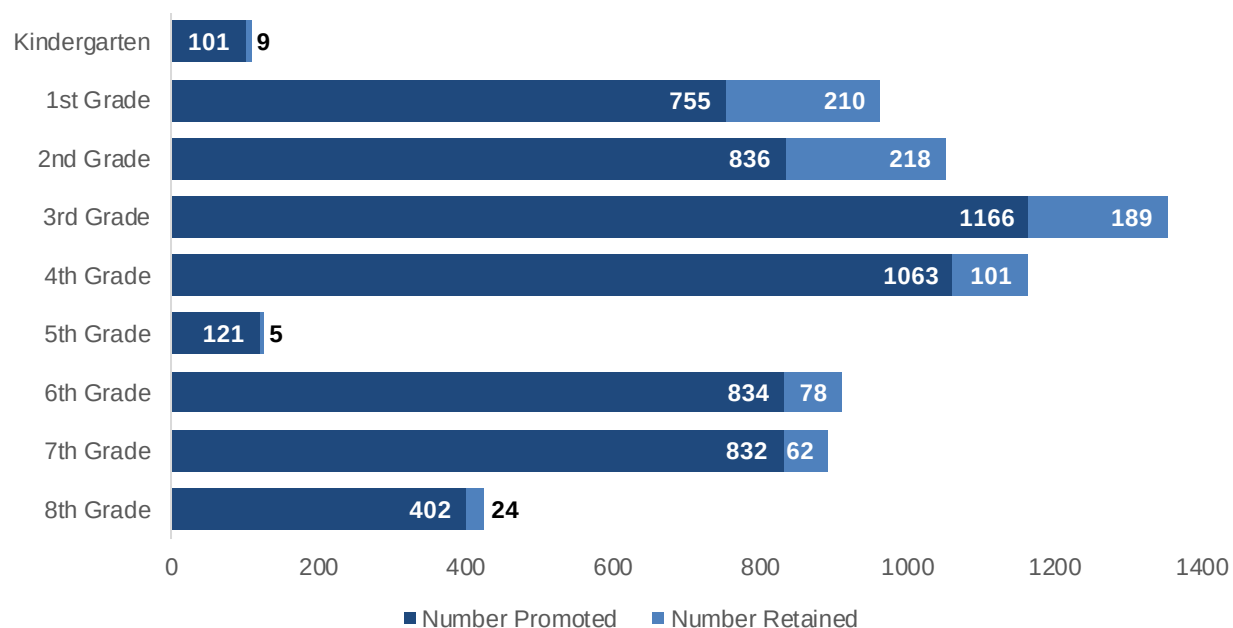
Methodology

The evaluator compared matriculation rates for students attending the Summer Readiness Academy across grades for elementary and middle school students. Matriculation data for students were obtained from the district's student database on September 7, 2016.

Results

Overall, 6,110 students (87%) had matriculated to the next grade at the beginning of the 2016-17 school year (see Figure 1). A total of 1,355 third-grade students attended the program, most among all grades. Note that the number of fifth and eighth grade students only includes those who attended for failing core courses during the regular school year. Students who attended for not passing the reading or mathematics STAAR are not included. Kindergarten students were invited to attend the program to fill classes with low numbers of students, but they were not required to attend.

Figure 1: Summer Readiness Academy Promotion and Retention by Grade



Note. Does not include fifth and eighth grade students attending the program for failing the reading or mathematics STAAR.

To receive a passing grade in a course, students must have attended all eight days of the program. Overall, promotion rates of attending elementary students ranged from 78 percent of first-grade students to 96 percent of fifth-grade students (see Table 3). Middle school promotion rates ranged from 91 percent of sixth graders to over 94 percent of eighth graders. Nearly 83 percent of attending students were promoted to the next grade at the beginning of the 2016-17 school year despite not attending all eight days of the program, a rate 8 percent lower than for students who met the attendance criterion (91%). The promotion rates by grade for elementary students attending fewer than eight days were all above 73 percent; the rates for middle school students were above 84 percent.

Table 3: Summer Readiness Students Who Met the Attendance Criterion and Promotion Rates

Grade	Attended < 8 Days		Attended 8 Days		Overall % Promoted
	<i>n</i>	% Promoted	<i>n</i>	% Promoted	
Kindergarten	46	82.6	64	98.4	91.8
1st	485	73.8	480	82.7	78.2
2nd	463	74.1	591	83.8	79.5
3rd	569	84.2	786	87.8	86.3
4th	457	88.2	707	93.5	91.4
5th	43	93.0	83	97.6	96.0
6th	434	84.1	478	98.1	91.4
7th	401	88.0	493	97.8	93.4
8th	176	89.8	250	97.6	94.4
Total	3,074	82.5	3,932	91.1	87.3

Note. Does not include fifth and eighth grade students who attended for not meeting the standard on the reading or mathematics STAAR subtests. Some students were invited to fill smaller classes and were not required to pass courses to be promoted, including all kindergarten students.

What were the results of the High School Credit-Recovery Program?

Methodology

The evaluator consulted the Summer Learning Handbook for program dates and operational details. Attendance, demographic characteristics, and course performance data were extracted from the district's summer database. Descriptive and frequency analyses were conducted.

Past evaluations revealed that students have received course credit without attending at least 90 percent of the instructional days, as per the policy of the Board of Trustees. To prevent this, Summer Learning Department administrators removed students from the summer database as the students' gained more than two absences. As such, the summer database only included students who attended 17 or more days when extracted for evaluator analysis, so attendance patterns for all students who attended are not provided.

Results

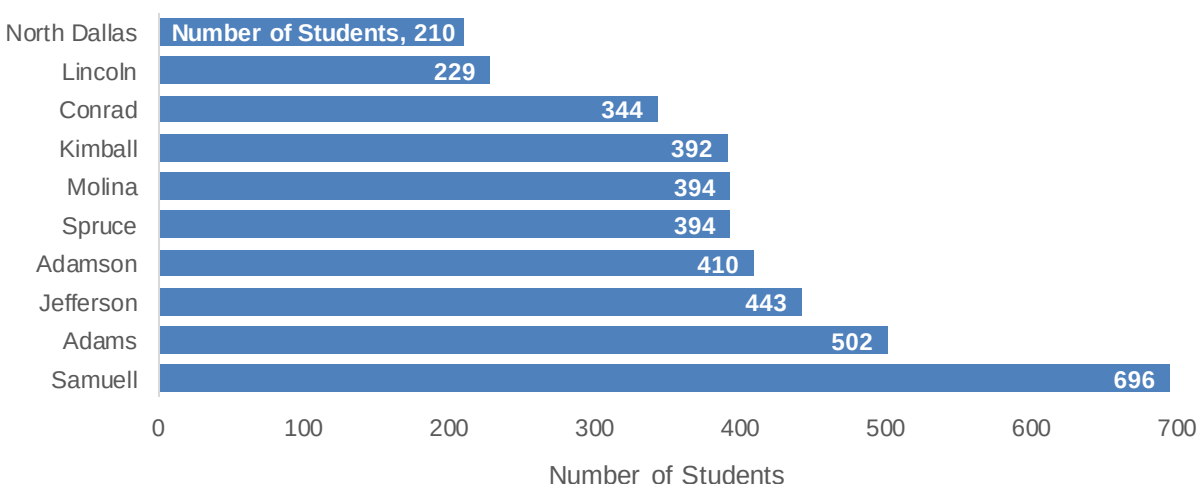
Program Description

Ten high school campuses offered the high school Credit-Recovery Program (CRP), providing students opportunities to recover or gain up to one full credit. Students were required to attend 17 of the 19 instructional days and take an *Assessment of Course Performance (ACP)* to pass a course. Final course grades were calculated as 85 percent coursework grades and 15 percent ACP score. The program operated four hours per day from June 27 to July 28, Monday through Thursday. Three sites (Jefferson, Spruce, and Lincoln) provided practicum experiences for alternative certification interns with TFA and the Dallas ISD's Compass programs.

Attendance and Demographics

Over 4,000 students ($n = 4,014$) attended at least 17 days of the CRP hosted at ten campuses across the Dallas ISD. As shown in Figure 2, the number of students meeting the attendance criterion ranged from 210 at North Dallas High School to 696 at Samuell High School.

Figure 2: High School Credit-Recovery Program Attendance by Campus



The demographic characteristics of students attending 17 of 19 instructional days generally mirrored those of Dallas ISD students during the regular school year (see Table 4). African American students were slightly over-represented in the CRP by 3.5 percentage points. White students were slightly under-represented. A greater proportion of male students attended the program than would have been expected, with males making up 50.1 percent of school year students and 61.7 percent of CRP students.

Table 4: High School Credit-Recovery Program Student Demographics

Demographic Variable	Regular School Year		Credit-Recovery Program	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Race				
Asian	499	1.7	43	1.1
African American	6,643	22.1	1,029	25.6
Hispanic	21,258	70.6	2,825	70.4
American Indian/Alaska Native	87	0.3	8	0.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	25	0.1	0	0.0
Two or More Races	131	0.4	6	0.1
White	1,472	4.9	103	2.6
Sex				
Female	15,038	49.9	1,538	38.3
Male	15,077	50.1	2,476	61.7
English Language Learner				
Yes	9,776	32.5	1,456	36.3
No	20,339	67.5	2,558	63.7
Receives Special Education Services				
Yes	2,536	8.4	400	10.0
No	27,579	91.6	3,614	90.0
Economically Disadvantaged				
Yes	25,804	85.7	3,512	87.5
No	4,311	14.3	502	12.5

Note. Some percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Course Performance

High school course passing rates were generally high, with 87 percent the lowest rate for semester 1 Algebra I students (see Table 5). All other course passing rates were higher than 92 percent. Every student meeting the attendance criterion of 17 days passed nine courses: Communication Applications, semester 1 English III, semesters 1 and 2 English IV, Health Education, semester 1 Physics, semesters 1 and 2 Pre-Calculus, and semester 1 World History.

Final exam scores as measured by the ACP, were lower than course grades with the exception of Communication Applications. For both semester 1 and semester 2 Algebra I courses, the students' average scale scores of 66 and 68 were below the passing score of 70. English I, semester 1 students averaged a scale score of 67. In two courses where 100 percent of the students passed the course (semester 1 Physics and semester 2 Pre-Calculus), average ACP scores were below 70.

Table 5: High School Summer ACP and Overall Course Results by Subject

Course Semester	Mean ACP Score	Mean Overall Grade	Course Passing Rate (%)
Algebra I			
Semester 1 (n=247)	66	79	87
Semester 2 (n=262)	68	80	94
Algebra II			
Semester 1 (n=115)	74	85	97
Semester 2 (n=130)	73	85	98
Biology			
Semester 1 (n=187)	71	80	95
Semester 2 (n=201)	70	81	92
Chemistry			
Semester 1 (n=126)	72	84	95
Semester 2 (n=177)	71	83	96
Communication Applications			
One Semester (n=72)	90	82	100
Economics			
One Semester (n=58)	74	90	98
English I			
Semester 1 (n=274)	67	80	92
Semester 2 (n=280)	71	79	89
English II			
Semester 1 (n=141)	72	81	92
Semester 2 (n=165)	71	80	93
English III			
Semester 1 (n=79)	73	85	100
Semester 2 (n=85)	70	83	98
English IV			
Semester 1 (n=23)	66	86	100
Semester 2 (n=61)	74	85	100
Geometry			
Semester 1 (n=175)	75	84	94
Semester 2 (n=205)	74	82	93
Health Education			
One Semester (n=36)	75	89	100
Physics			
Semester 1 (n=107)	67	85	100
Semester 2 (n=131)	72	82	97
Pre-Calculus			
Semester 1 (n=21)	77	88	100
Semester 2 (n=35)	63	85	100
U.S. Government			
One Semester (n=58)	72	88	98
U.S. History			
Semester 1 (n=83)	69	84	94
Semester 2 (n=79)	75	86	96
World Geography			
Semester 1 (n=102)	71	85	97
Semester 2 (n=116)	68	82	94
World History			
Semester 1 (n=71)	77	87	100
Semester 2 (n=87)	71	85	97

How was the Summer Achievers Academy implemented?

Methodology

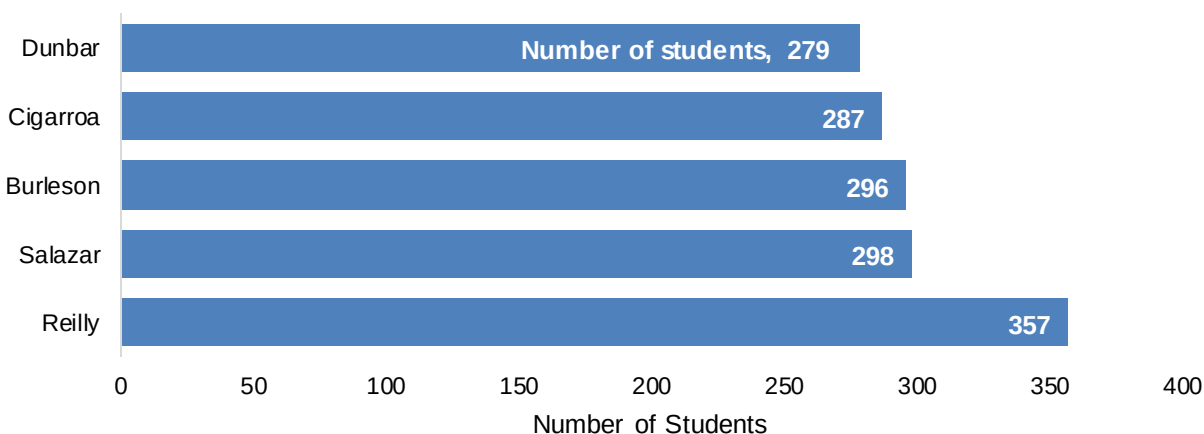
The evaluator extracted student attendance information from the district's summer database. These data were merged with student demographic information from June 6, 2016, the end of the regular school year. Frequency and crosstab analyses were conducted.

Results

Enrollment and Demographics

The five elementary school sites had 1,517 students that attended at least one day of the SAA. More students attended Reilly Elementary School ($n = 357$) than other campuses, which ranged from 279 to 298 attending students (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Elementary Summer Achievers Academy Attendance by Campus



Note. Students attended at least one day of the program.

The demographic characteristics of students attending the SAA generally mirrored the characteristics of elementary students who were attending the Dallas ISD at the conclusion of the regular 2015-16 school year (see Table 6). Hispanic students made up nearly 68 percent of the SAA population, and over 25 percent were African American.

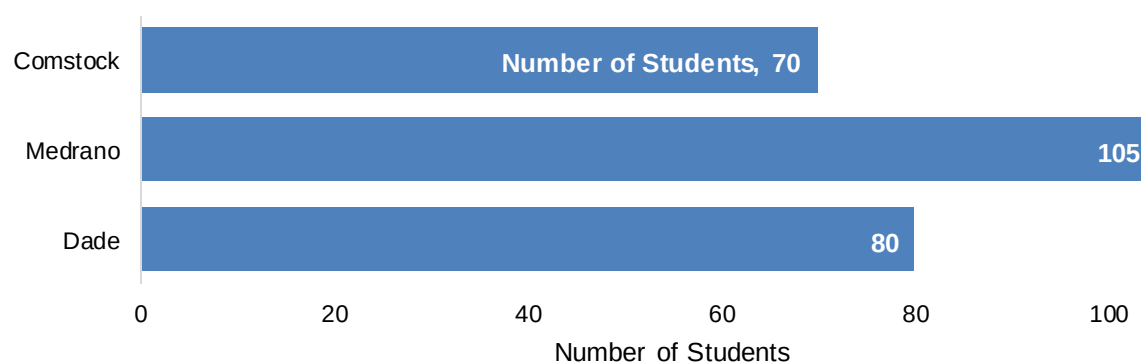
Table 6: Elementary Summer Achievers Academy Student Demographics

Demographic Variable	Regular School Year		Summer Achievers Academy	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Race				
Asian	1,104	1.3	12	0.8
African American	19,975	22.8	386	25.4
Hispanic	61,643	70.3	1,025	67.6
American Indian/Alaska Native	264	0.3	5	0.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	37	<0.1	3	0.2
Two or More Races	505	0.6	10	0.7
White	4,219	4.8	76	5.0
Sex				
Female	42,571	48.5	767	50.6
Male	45,176	51.5	750	49.4
English Language Learner				
Yes	45,847	52.2	686	45.2
No	41,900	47.8	831	54.8
Receives Special Education Services				
Yes	6,692	7.6	122	8.0
No	81,055	92.4	1,395	92.0
Economically Disadvantaged				
Yes	80,154	91.3	1,356	89.4
No	7,593	8.7	161	10.6

Note. Some percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The middle school program had 255 students that attended at least one day of the program (see Figure 4). A greater percentage of students attended Medrano Middle School (41.1%) than Comstock (27.5%) or Dade Middle Schools (31.4%).

Figure 4: Middle School Summer Achievers Academy Attendance by Campus



Note. Students attended at least one day of the program.

The demographic characteristics of middle school students attending the SAA differed from the characteristics of middle school students who were attending the Dallas ISD at the end of the regular 2015-16 school year (see Table 7). A higher percentage of SAA students were African American (34.9%) and a lower percentage were Hispanic (57.3%) than during the regular school year (22.3% and 71.6%, respectively).

Twenty-nine percent of the SAA attendees were classified as English Language Learners (ELL); during the regular school year 51 percent of the students were ELL students.

Table 7: Middle School Summer Achievers Academy Student Demographics

Demographic Variable	Regular School Year		Summer Achievers Academy	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Race				
Asian	382	1.2	4	1.6
African American	7,025	22.3	89	34.9
Hispanic	22,504	71.6	146	57.3
American Indian/Alaska Native	67	0.2	0	0.0
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	21	0.1	0	0.0
Two or More Races	174	0.6	0	0.0
White	1,273	4.0	16	6.3
Sex				
Female	15,164	48.2	119	46.7
Male	16,282	51.8	136	53.3
English Language Learner				
Yes	16,123	51.3	75	29.4
No	15,323	48.7	180	70.6
Receives Special Education Services				
Yes	3,006	9.6	32	12.5
No	28,440	90.4	223	87.5
Economically Disadvantaged				
Yes	28,698	91.3	224	87.8
No	2,748	8.7	31	12.2

What were the results of the Summer Achievers Academy?

Methodology

The evaluator developed checklists to assess campus environment and campus operations. On June 27 – the first day of the program – a team of observers completed first-day checklists at all eight SAA campuses. Elementary observations began at 7:30 a.m. and middle school observations at 8:30 a.m. Observers returned to the same campuses during the fourth week of the program (July 18 and 19) and completed mid-program checklists. Frequency and crosstab analyses were conducted.

Observers conducted academic classroom observations on July 18 and July 19. The observation instrument required observers to complete general items immediately upon entering (grade, number of students, classroom environment, and other items of the same type), then respond to a series of items about classroom activities at four 10-minute timepoints. Prior to leaving the classroom, the observers recorded general information about classroom activities overall. Each observation period lasted approximately 35 minutes. The evaluator conducted frequency and crosstab analyses of the classroom and timepoint data.

The evaluator extracted student daily attendance from the district's summer database and compared the percentage students attending each day by site. Students took pre-tests in each academic course on the first day of the program then a post-test when the program concluded in late July. Mentor teachers at five of the eight campuses entered student answers. No one entered student answers at the remaining three campuses.

Because the data entry was not standardized, teachers input many different responses to the same questions, making the files unusable for this evaluation report.

The evaluator conducted interviews with all eight SAA principals by telephone from July 14 to July 20. The evaluator-developed, semi-structured interview protocol included questions related to the principals' motivations to work the position, responsibilities, goals for the program, program expectations and implementation, and reflections on using the program to train alternative certification interns. The interviews were recorded, partially transcribed, and coded for predominant themes. Evaluator-developed surveys of mentor and training teachers included open-ended response items to determine teachers' perceptions of the SAA program. These items were coded using the predominant themes determined during analysis of principal interviews. Quotations from interviews and excerpts from open-ended responses were lightly edited for grammar and typographical errors.

In May 2016, regular school year teachers of students who applied to attend the SAA completed the *Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment-Mini (DESSA-Mini)*, a measure of students' social-emotional learning skills. The instrument converts student ratings to *T*-scores which place students into one of three categories: students scoring 40 or below need instruction, students scoring 41-59 are typical, and students scoring 60 and above are considered strong (Lebuffe, Shapiro, & Naglieri, 2009). SAA enrichment instructors completed the *DESSA-Mini* for their students at the end of the summer program. Big Thought supplied all copies of the *DESSA-Mini*, coordinated both administrations, and completed all data entry. Frequency and crosstab analyses were conducted by social-emotional category. Because the elementary program placed students in larger classes than the middle school program, analyses were conducted separately by campus level. Using pairs of repeated-measures Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) for each campus level, the evaluator compared pre- and post-program scores for all students, then repeated the analysis with only students rated as typical or needs instruction before the program.

Big Thought conducted surveys of students and caregivers during the last weeks of the program. The evaluator cooperated with Big Thought, whose primary interest was the afternoon enrichment, to include items addressing the academic portion of the program. Students completed the surveys during enrichment classes; caregiver surveys were sent home with students but were also available at each campus' main office. Big Thought completed all data entry and provided spreadsheets of the data. The evaluator conducted frequency and crosstab analyses.

Results

Evaluator Observations

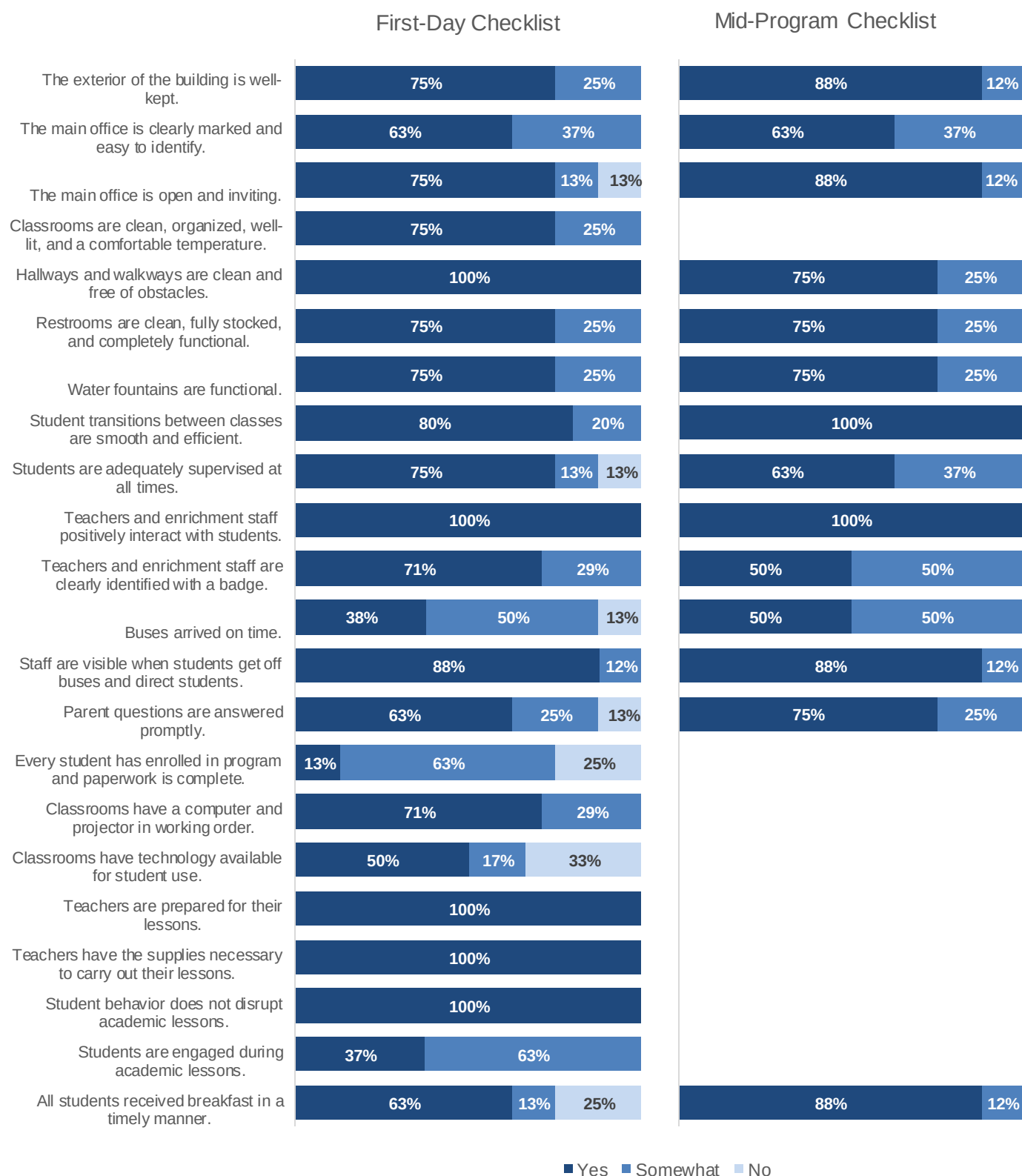
First-Day and Mid-Program Checklists. A team of observers visited each SAA campus on the first day of the program and completed a checklist to assess the campus environment and general preparedness to begin the SAA. Observers completed a modified checklist during the fourth week of the program to determine areas in which campuses made improvements and areas in which they had not. Figure 5 presents the percentage of campuses meeting, somewhat meeting, and not meeting each expectation.

On the first morning, observers reported that every campus had teachers prepared for lessons and with the necessary supplies. Also, student behavior did not disrupt lessons, and the campus staff interacted positively with students at all campuses. However, the first-day's academic lessons consisted of students taking a pre-test. This led to observers reporting that students were engaged in the lessons at three campuses, and somewhat engaged at five campuses. Observers also reported problems with students arriving unenrolled and without a system to address parent concerns in a timely manner.

Campuses showed improvement in areas such as campus environment: 75 percent of the campuses had a well-kept exterior on day one, and 88 percent did during the fourth week. Similarly, more campuses had an open and inviting main office on the second observation. Eighty percent of the observers reported smooth transitions between classes on the first day; 100 percent of the campuses had smooth transitions later in the program. Whereas 63 percent of the campuses served breakfasts to students in a timely manner at the beginning of the program, 88 percent did so during the second observation.

Previous evaluations have indicated that certain expectations are difficult for campuses to meet on the first day and then are resolved as the program progresses. One of those expectations is that the buses will arrive on time. Observers witnessed buses arriving late at five of the eight campuses on the first day. Principals reported calls from parents who had taken their children home from the bus stops after waiting for over 30 minutes. The evaluator observed a bus arrive at a middle school campus after 11:00 a.m. – over two hours after the SAA start time – and drop off one student. During the later observation period, busing was still an issue at four campuses. Hallways and walkways were clean at all campuses initially; however, 25 percent did not meet this expectation during the fourth week.

Figure 5: First-Day and Mid-Program Checklists

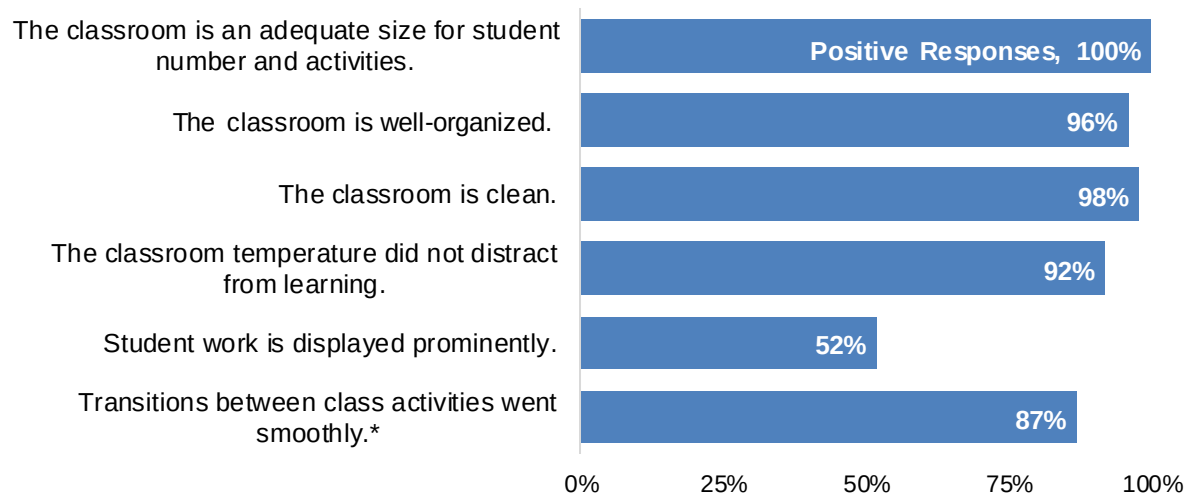


Note. Some items were not included on the Mid-Program Checklist because they were not applicable for the observation period or were addressed with classroom observations. Some percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Academic Classroom Observations. Evaluators observed 109 classes across the five elementary and three middle school SAA campuses. Elementary students only received English/language arts and mathematics instruction; Middle school students also took science and social studies courses. Evaluators observed reading/language arts instruction in 46 percent of the classrooms, mathematics in 40 percent, science in 7 percent, and social studies in 7 percent.

Evaluators generally rated the classroom environment positively across all SAA sites (see Figure 6). The campuses provided clean, well-organized classrooms that adequately accommodated the number of students in each class and any observed activities. However, students in eight classrooms experienced uncomfortable temperatures. Teachers in 52 percent of the classrooms displayed student work. In many cases where work was not displayed, observers noted that some teachers had created spaces in the classrooms to display work or track progress, but had not posted work yet.

Figure 6: Summer Achievers Academy Academic Classroom Observations



Note. Positive responses include “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” responses. *Item missing one response.

The 109 classroom observations yielded 434 timepoint observations spaced 10 minutes apart. One observation ended after 25 minutes, enough time for two observation points. The number of observation timepoints by grade was generally equal, ranging from 40 first- and fifth-grade observations to 60 seventh-grade observations. The number of observations by campus ranged from 44 at Cigarroa to 64 at Burses.

At nearly 87 percent of the timepoints, one teacher was involved with the students. This included such activities as presenting material, checking for understanding, facilitating discussions, and disciplining students among other possible activities. Alternative certification interns with Compass or TFA taught alone at nearly 58 percent of the observed timepoints, taught with another intern at 2 percent of the timepoints, taught with a mentor teacher at 5 percent of the timepoints, and mentor teachers taught alone at 13 percent of the observation timepoints. Because observers were instructed not to interrupt lessons, the type of teacher was unknown for 22 percent of the timepoints.

As Table 8 shows, all students were actively working during more than half of the observed timepoints ($n = 219$, 51.0%). Half or more of the students were off task at 12 timepoints (2.8%).

Table 8: Student Work Across Timepoints in Academic Classes

Item	None		Some		Half		Most		All	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
What proportion of the class is actively working?	47	11.0	30	7.0	17	4.0	116	27.0	219	51.0
What proportion of the students are off task (does not include passive learning)?	327	76.2	90	21.0	4	0.9	8	1.9	0	0.0

Note. Observers marked “Not Applicable” for both items at five timepoints. In all instances, students were eating breakfast and not expected to be engaged in the lesson.

Across observation timepoints, student behavior rarely disrupted lessons, with this occurring at just 34 timepoints (see Figure 7). Students were working as a class at 54 percent of the timepoints (see Figure 8). Observers recorded students working alone at 44 percent of the timepoints. Students worked in pairs or small groups less often, 12 percent and 18 percent of the time, respectively.

Figure 7: Academic Disruptions Across Timepoints

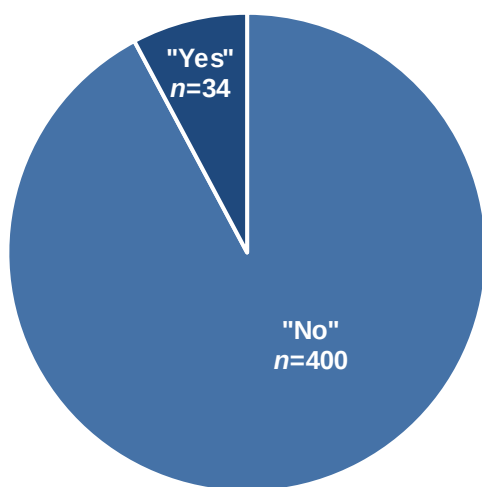
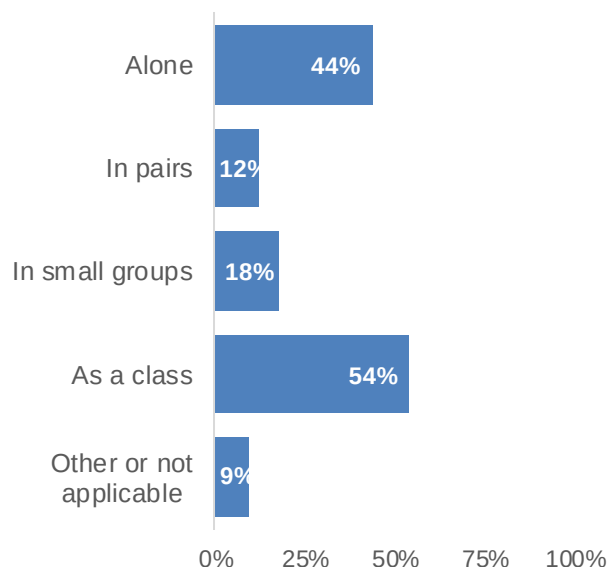


Figure 8: Academic Grouping Across Timepoints

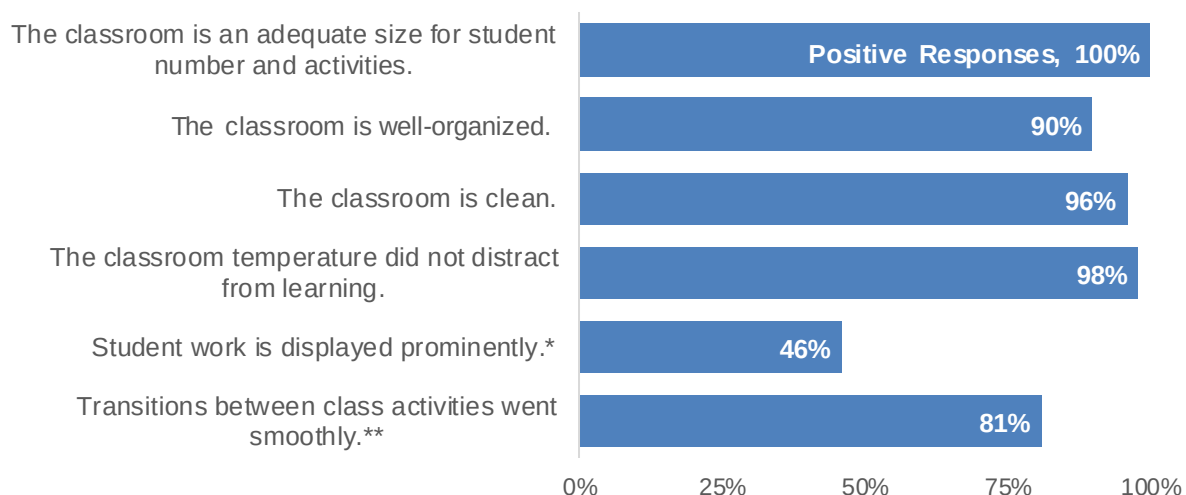


Note. Observers could select multiple categories.

Enrichment Activity Observations. Observers visited 37 elementary and 15 middle school afternoon enrichment activity sessions across the eight SAA campuses. The activities varied from music, dance, drama, literary arts, and visual arts to robotics, athletics, and culinary arts.

The observers rated the enrichment workspaces' environment positively across the SAA sites (see Figure 9). The workspaces and classrooms were clean, well-organized, and adequately accommodated the number of students participating in each activity. Observers recorded smooth transitions between enrichment activities in 81 percent of the classrooms.

Figure 9. Summer Achievers Academy Enrichment Activity Observations



Note. Positive responses included “Strongly Agree” or “Agree.” *31 percent of observers selected “Neither Agree nor Disagree” and 23 percent selected “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” for this item. ** Item missing one response.

The 52 enrichment observations yielded 205 recorded timepoints spaced 10 minutes apart. The number of timepoints by campus ranged from 16 at Comstock Middle School to 44 at Cigarroa and Salazar Elementary Schools. At nearly 86 percent of the timepoints, one instructor was involved with the students; multiple instructors were involved with students at 12 percent of the timepoints, often working with small groups or individual students. One instructor did not interact students and spent the observation period on a telephone.

As Table 9 shows, all students were actively working during nearly 72 percent of the observed timepoints ($n = 141$, 71.9%). Half or more of the students were off task at 12 timepoints (2.8%).

Table 9: Student Work Across Enrichment Timepoints

Item	None		Some		Half		Most		All	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
What proportion of the class is actively working?*	10	5.1	8	4.1	6	3.1	31	15.8	141	71.9
What proportion of the students are off task (does not include passive learning)?**	158	79.0	38	19.0	4	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

*Nine not applicable responses are excluded. **Five not applicable responses are excluded.

Across observation timepoints, student behavior rarely disrupted the enrichment sessions, occurring at 14 (7%) of the timepoints (see Figure 10). Students were working as a class at 48 percent of the timepoints (see Figure 11) and in small groups at 31 percent of the timepoints. Observers recorded students working alone at 28 percent of the timepoints. Students worked in pairs less often, 10 percent of the time. Observers did not view any students working at eight timepoints. In four of these cases, the students were on a restroom or snack break. In one instance, an academic teacher briefly held students from an enrichment activity as punishment for behavioral issues.

Figure 10: Enrichment Disruptions Across Timepoints

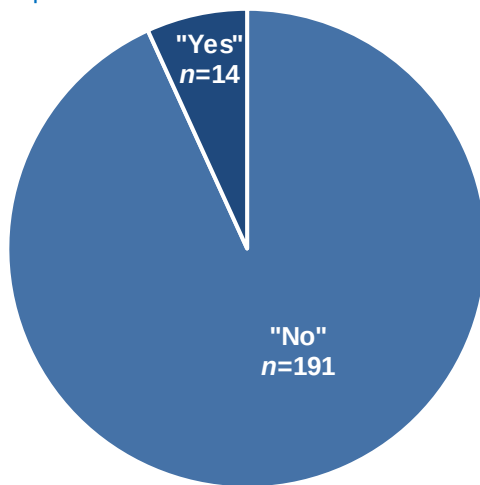
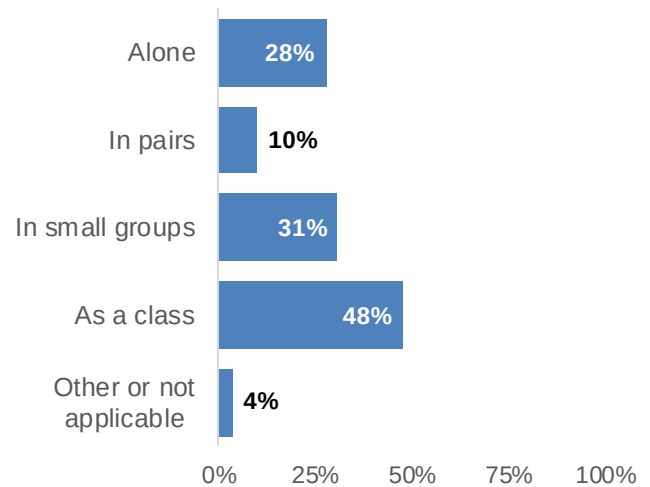


Figure 11: Enrichment Grouping Across Timepoints

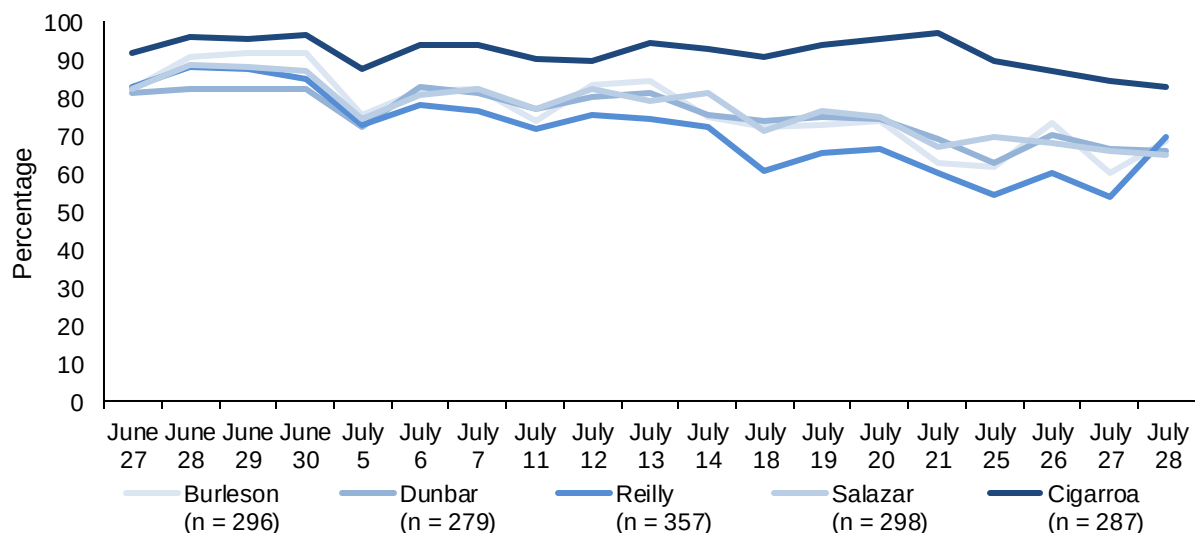


Note. Observers could select multiple categories.

Student Attendance

Elementary attendance was analyzed overall and by SAA site. Overall daily attendance rates gradually dropped as the program progressed, ranging from a high of 89 percent on the second day of the program to 65 percent on the next-to-last day of the program. By site, daily attendance ranged from 54 percent of Reilly students on July 27 to over 97 percent of Cigarroa students on July 21 (see Figure 12). Disregarding the decrease in attendance on July 5, student attendance at Cigarroa remained high throughout the first four weeks of the program before dropping during the last week. All other programs experienced a gradual drop in attendance throughout the program.

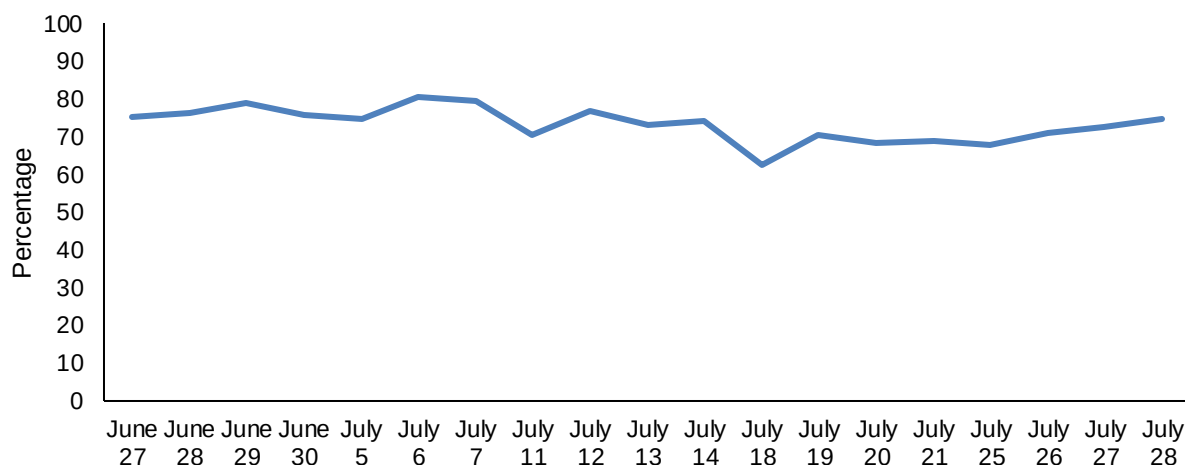
Figure 12: Percentage of Elementary Students Attending Daily by Campus



Note. See Figure 3 for a comparison of overall campus attendance.

Middle school attendance rates for all three sites were similar across the duration of the program and, due to the low number of students attending overall, are combined in Figure 13. Attendance rates ranged from 63 percent of students attending on July 18 to 80 percent of students attending on July 6. The percentage of students attending on July 21 does not include Dade or Medrano Middle Schools, and the attendance for July 22 does not include Comstock Middle School. Students took fieldtrips on those days, and no attendance was taken.

Figure 13: Percentage of Middle School Students Attending by Day



Note. No attendance was taken at Comstock Middle School on July 20, and no attendance was taken at Dade and Medrano Middle Schools on July 21. Students took field trips on those days. See Figure 4 for a comparison of overall attendance by campus.

Principal Interviews and Open-Ended Teacher Responses

Qualitative analyses of principal interviews and open-ended survey items yielded several important themes. Details by themes follow.

Inadequate Resources. Results of the surveys showed that, early in the SAA, many training teachers reported a lack of materials. Some lessons required copies of worksheets or handouts, and teachers reported that they were not given access to copy machines or printers. Other teachers, even when they had access, did not have paper available to print or copy. As one teacher related, “It made it difficult to plan lessons without having adequate access to these things.” Another teacher wrote regarding supplies, “I was provided with a very low amount. I had to purchase most of my supplies.” Several others noted that, “... more material resources are surely needed. Some lessons need additional materials for demonstration purposes.” Contrary to teacher reports, observers did not note a lack of materials for delivering lessons (see Figure 5). The observers did not have prior knowledge of the planned lessons, and so were unable to judge whether lessons in progress had the necessary supplies to continue. They were not able to determine if teachers had altered the lesson to accommodate for missing supplies.

Some mentor teachers surveyed noted that lessons suffered because of scarce materials. In particular, mentor teachers tended to mention that students should have had access to technology (desktop computers,

laptop computers, or tablets) to reinforce instruction with software or research topics on their own. For mathematics lessons, some mentor teachers reported that while lessons required manipulatives, no manipulatives were provided.

Curriculum Issues. Some mentor teachers and most principals reported that, for many SAA students, the curriculum was limited, bland, and functioned as a review from the previous school year. A mentor teacher clarified, “It would be more interesting for students if we could have done more projects so that the academic classes are not repeating what was done during the school year.” Another mentor teacher noted the review nature of the program and wrote that it should, “... shift the purpose of the academy from review to front loading. The fourth-grade achievers academy should be for [fall 2016] incoming fourth graders rather than incoming fifth graders.”

Some teachers and principals suggested that the program incorporate a project-based learning environment where students have opportunities to choose topics to study, then complete an in-depth project over an extended time. “This would create an engaging academic environment that would encourage kids to keep coming,” one principal said. Other teachers disagreed, and felt that the curriculum should have focused on more general, foundational knowledge. One mentor wrote, “It is an ideal environment of small classes to help them master the basics which are strongly needed if they are to be successful in more complex concepts.”

Assessment Issues. During interviews, many principals reported that they received calls from parents explaining that they had expected a “summer camp” experience for their children. This is likely because the students’ first experiences during the SAA were pre-tests in every course. Prior to the start of the program, Summer Learning administration made clear to the evaluator that they worried student attendance would drop after testing the first day. Indeed, every principal stated that he or she would not have administered tests on the first day because they believed it affected attendance. Furthermore, principals did not know how the test results were used to improve student learning.

Bus Delays. All principals were frustrated by busing delays, especially those during the first days of the SAA. One principal said in an interview, “We were telling students and parents how important it was to show up every single day, and we didn’t pick them up on time.” Nearly every principal reported losing students because parents were frustrated with or unable to accommodate the delays. Most principals reported that, even in the third or fourth weeks of the program, busing was still an issue. The problems were not only in picking students up on time, but dropping them off as well. “When lower grades were involved,” said one elementary principal, “students had to be monitored until they were picked up by parents, causing delays at each stop that compounded as the routes continued.” Another principal specifically recalled one route where students were not dropped off until after 8:00 p.m.

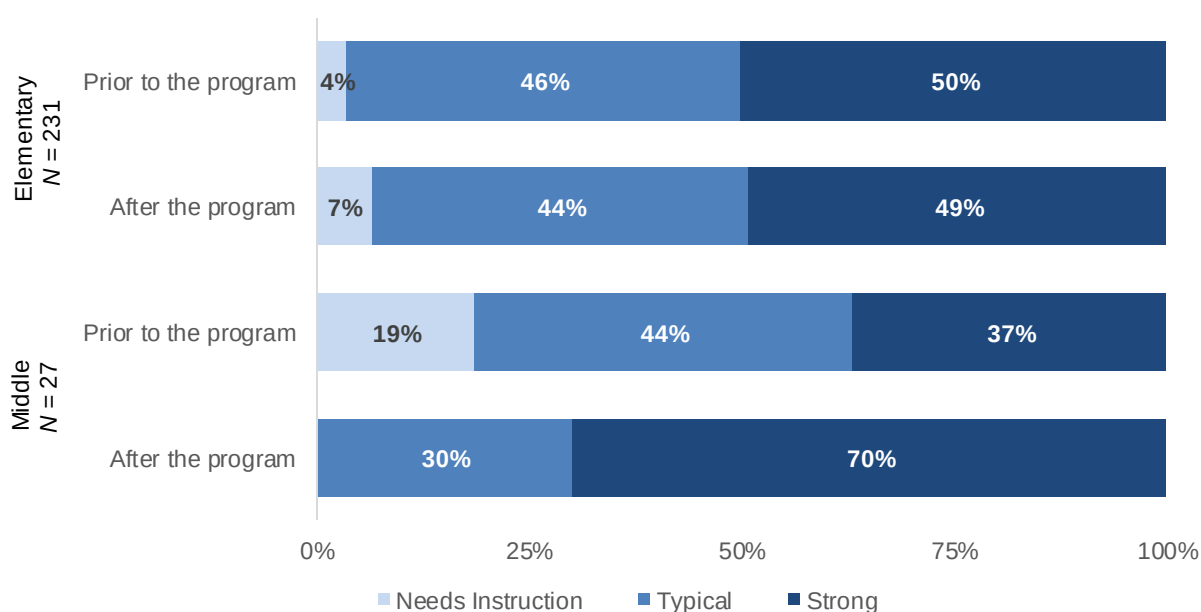
Unclear Expectations for the SAA. Most principals – and some mentor and training teachers – noted that students and parents did not have a clear idea about what the program would provide until after it had begun. Principals reported frustrated parents calling the campus because they and their children had expected more of a “summer camp” environment that did not include academic lessons delivered as they would have been during the regular school year. Both mentor and training teachers wrote that students did not expect the

SAA academic classes to resemble classes that students attended during the regular school year. Many wrote something similar to this teacher, who stated, “Expectations and descriptions of the program should be clear to both students and teachers. I didn’t know what to expect on the first day, and I don’t think students and their parents did either.”

Social-Emotional Learning

Exactly 231 elementary students whose regular school-year teachers completed the *DESSA-Mini* prior to the summer program received ratings at the completion of the SAA. Based on overall *T*-scores², students were categorized as needing instruction, typical, or strong. Figure 14 shows the percentage of elementary and middle school students in each category before and after the program.

Figure 14. Percentage of Students in *DESSA* Descriptive Categories



Two repeated-measures ANOVAs were conducted at both the elementary level and middle school levels to assess differences in *DESSA-Mini* ratings recorded prior to and at the end of the SAA program. At each level, one ANOVA was conducted for all students and a second was conducted for students categorized as needing instruction or typical. For elementary students, 231 were included in the overall analysis and 115 in the follow-up analysis. Out of 27 middle school students with two ratings, 10 received strong initial ratings and were excluded from the follow-up analysis.

As Table 10 indicates, overall analyses showed that middle school students received significantly higher *DESSA-Mini* ratings at the end of the SAA than before the program began, $F(1, 26) = 9.05, p < .025$; elementary students did not show similar growth overall. When looking at only needs instruction and typical students, both elementary and middle school students, on average, received significantly higher ratings at the

² *T*-scores are standardized with a mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10.

conclusion of the SAA program. Elementary needs and typical student ratings averaged 49.0 at the end of the 2015-16 school year and increased to 56.3 after the program, $F(1, 114) = 29.46$, $p < .025$. The effect size, as indicated by η^2 , represents a moderate effect ($\eta^2 = .21$). Average ratings for needs and typical middle school students were significantly higher after the program ($M = 62.3$) than before the program ($M = 47.2$), $F(1, 16) = 42.82$, $p < .025$. This indicated a large practical effect ($\eta^2 = .73$). The middle school results should be considered cautiously because of the low number of students included in the analyses.

Table 10: Elementary Student *DESSA-Mini* Results by Grade

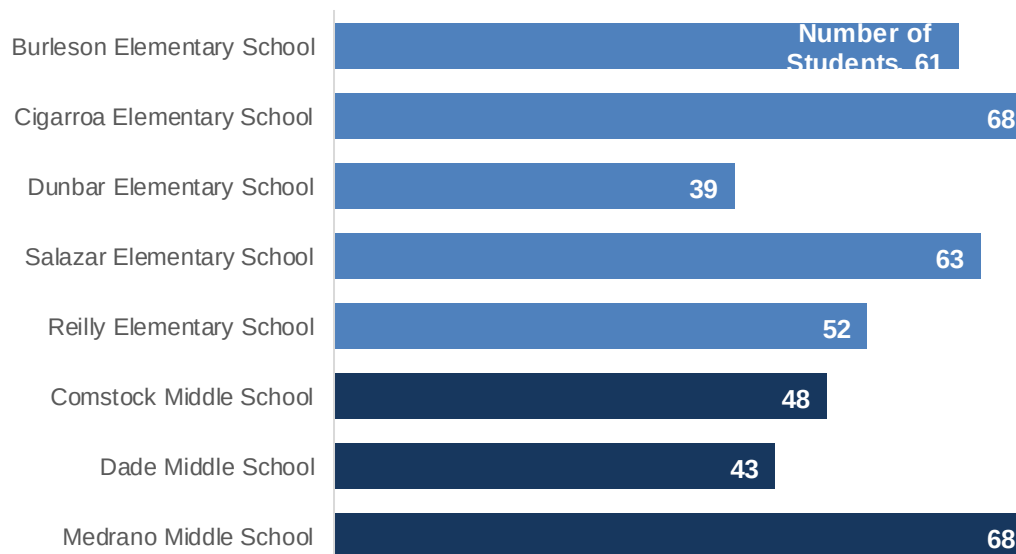
Campus Level		<i>n</i> Students	<i>M</i> Prior to SAA	<i>M</i> After SAA	<i>M</i> Gain
Elementary	Overall	231	58.0	59.1	1.1
	Needs or Typical	115	49.0	56.3	7.3*
Middle	Overall	27	54.6	62.3	7.7*
	Needs or Typical	17	47.2	62.3	15.1*

Note. *M* = Mean. * $p < .025$.

Summer Achievers' Academy Student Survey Results

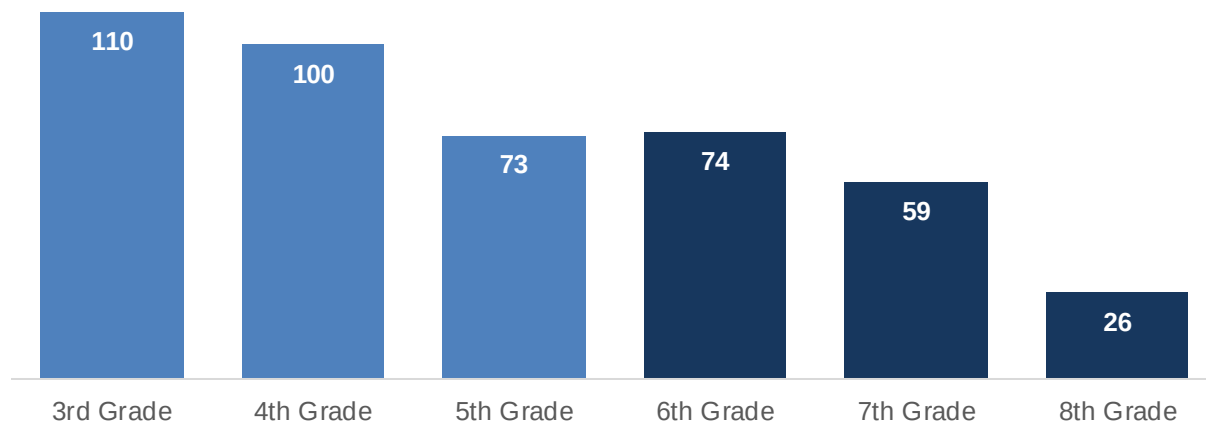
Survey Respondent Characteristics. Evaluators received 442³ valid student responses for the SAA survey. Figures 15 and 16 show the number of survey respondents by campus and grade. Survey respondents included 283 elementary students and 159 middle school students. Respondents from third and fourth grade made up 74 percent of the elementary school respondents ($n = 210$), whereas respondents from sixth and seventh grade made up 84 percent of the middle school respondents ($n = 133$).

Figure 15: Number of Student Survey Respondents by Campus



³ A total of 446 students responded to the survey, but four invalid surveys were removed from analyses.

Figure 16: Number of Student Respondents by Grade Level

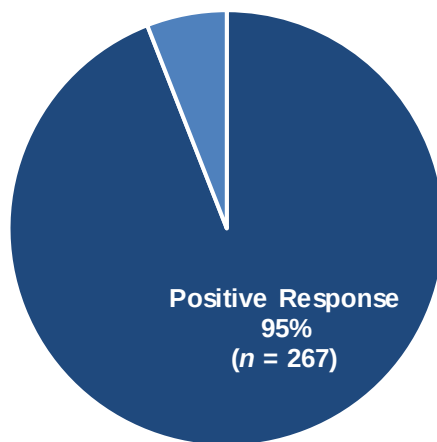


Note. Grade level is the grade that the student survey respondents completed prior to summer school.

Elementary School Student Survey Results. As shown in Figure 17, 95 percent of all elementary student respondents enjoyed the Summer Achiever's Academy and 80 percent were likely to recommend the camp to other kids.

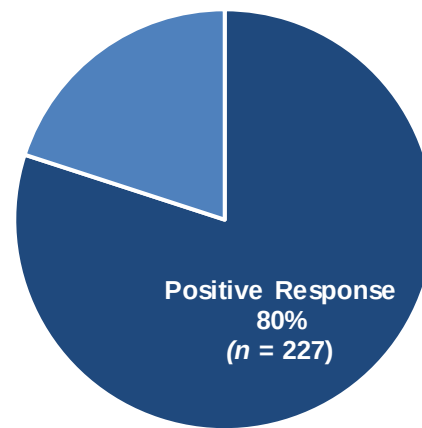
Figure 17: Elementary School Respondents' Overall Satisfaction

How do you like the camp overall?



Note. Positive responses included "I love it" and "I like it OK." One student did not answer the question.

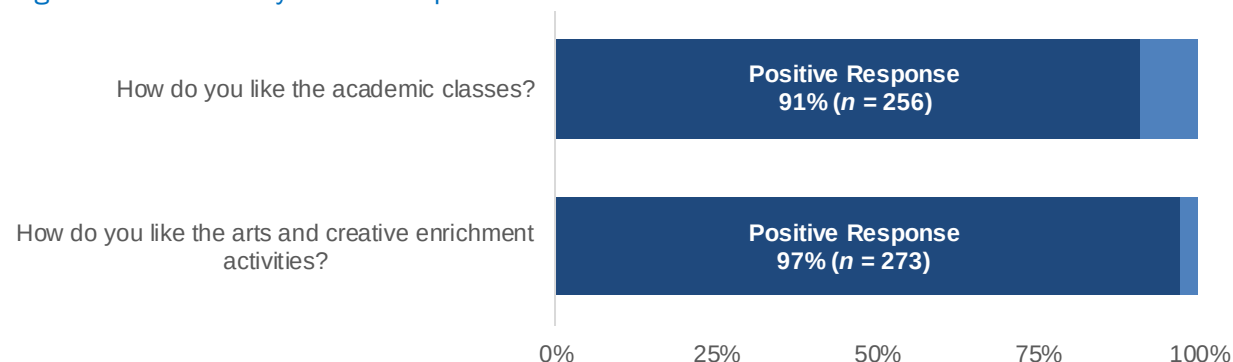
Would you recommend the camp to other kids?



Note. Positive responses included "Definitely" and "Sometimes."

Students were asked specifically if they enjoyed the program's classes on the survey. More elementary respondents enjoyed the enrichment activities than the academic classes, but overall perceptions were very positive for both classes. As shown in Figure 18, over 90 percent of elementary respondents indicated they liked or loved the academic classes (91%) and enrichment activities (97%).

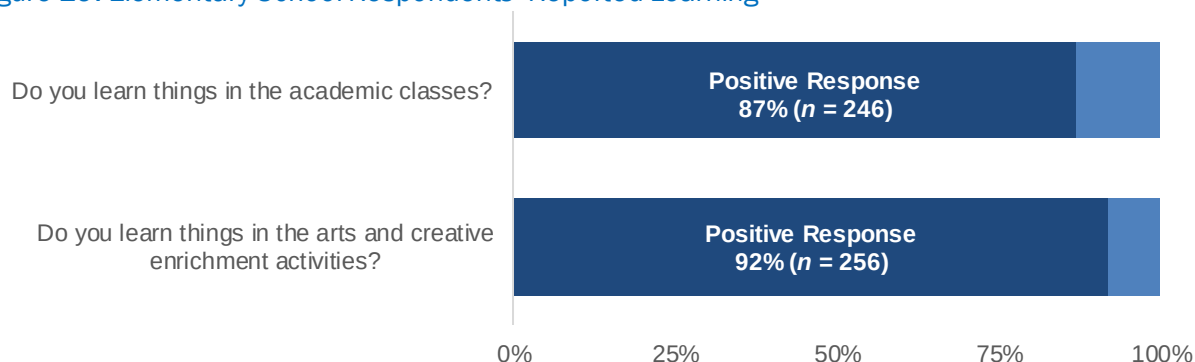
Figure 18: Elementary School Respondents' Satisfaction with Classes and Activities



Note. Positive responses included “I love it” and “I like it OK.” Three students did not answer the “How do you like the academic classes?” question and two students did not answer “How do you like the arts and creative enrichment activities?”

Students were asked if they learned material in their academic and enrichment classes. A majority of elementary respondents indicated that they learned material from both their academic classes (87%) and enrichment activities (92%), as shown in Figure 19. Although still a large majority, respondents reported learning more in their enrichment classes than their academic classes.

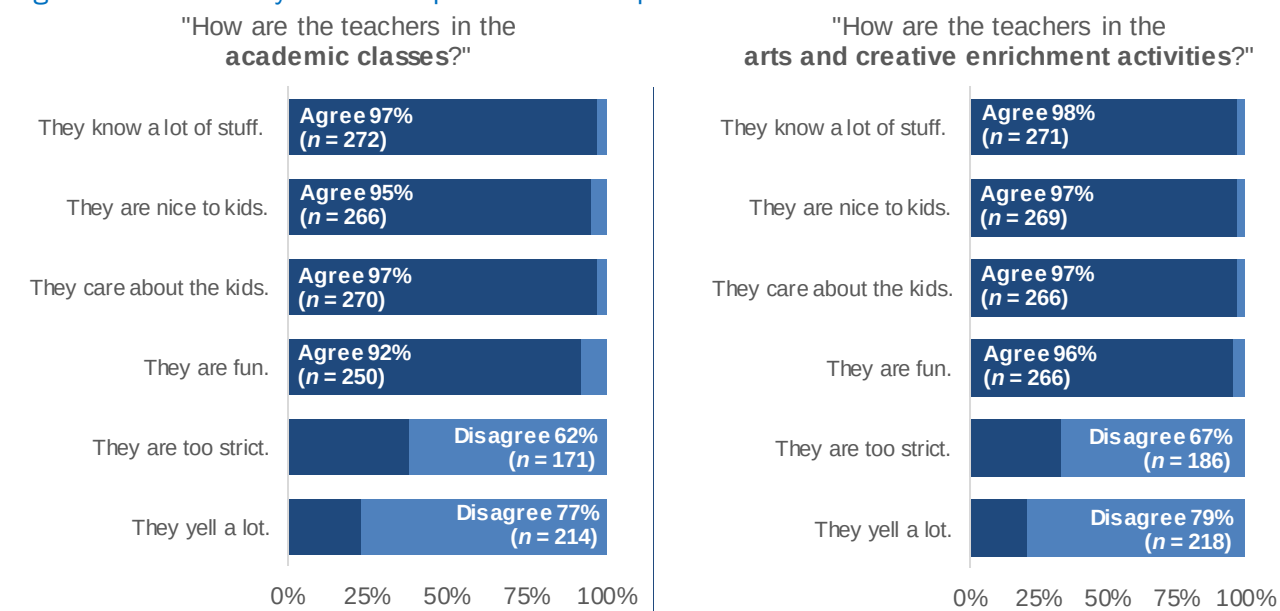
Figure 19: Elementary School Respondents' Reported Learning



Note. Positive responses included “A whole lot” and “A lot.” One student did not answer the “Do you learn things in the academic classes?” question and four students did not answer “Do you learn things in the arts and creative enrichment activities?”

On the survey, students rated their teachers' knowledge and disposition for both academic classes and enrichment activities. Figure 20 shows that, across all indicators, a majority of elementary respondents were very positive about their teachers. More than 90 percent agreed that their academic teachers were knowledgeable (97%), caring (97%), nice (95%), and fun (92%). Respondents were also positive about their enrichment teachers with almost all rating the teachers as knowledgeable (98%), caring (97%), nice (97%), and fun (96%). A minority of elementary respondents felt their teachers yelled a lot (23% for academic teachers and 21% for enrichment teachers) or were too strict (38% and 33%, respectively).

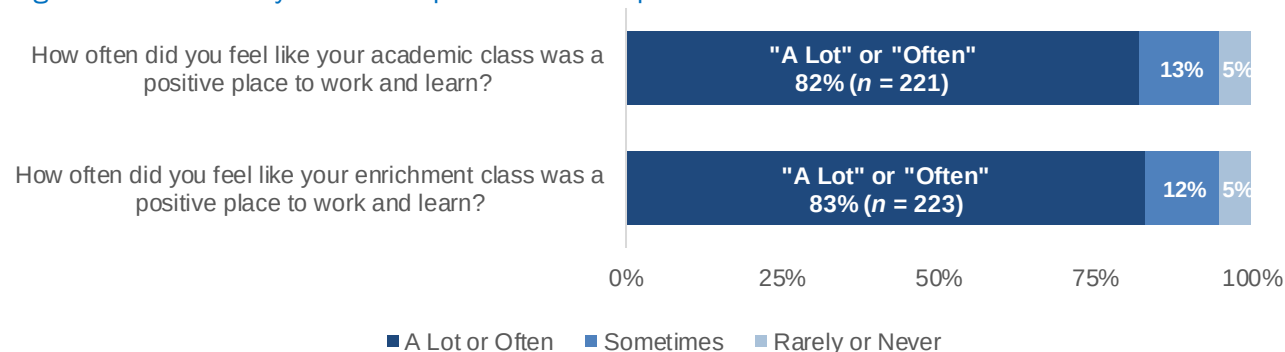
Figure 20: Elementary School Respondents' Perceptions of Teachers



Note. Agree responses included "Definitely" and "So-So" whereas disagree responses included "Not really" and "Not at all." Not all students responded to every question.

Elementary respondents were positive about their work environment in both academic and enrichment classes (see Figure 21). More than 80 percent indicated that the academic (82%) and enrichment (83%) portions of the SAA produced a positive place to work and learn. A small minority (5%) felt the classes rarely or never produced a good learning environment.

Figure 21: Elementary School Respondents' Perceptions of Class Environment

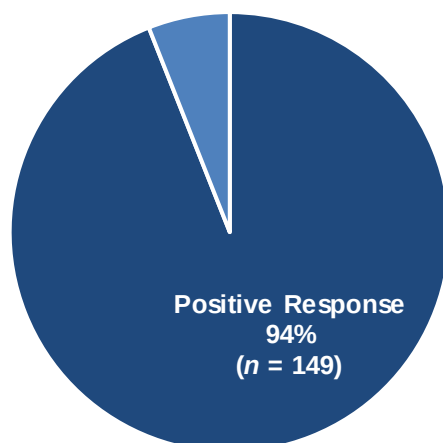


Note. 12 students did not answer "How often did you feel like your academic class was a positive place to work and learn?" and 15 students did not answer "How often did you feel like your enrichment class was a positive place to work and learn?"

Middle School Student Survey Results. Overall, a large majority of middle school students enjoyed the Summer Achiever's Academy. As shown in Figure 22, 94 percent of all middle student respondents agreed that they enjoyed the program and 78 percent were likely to recommend the camp to other kids.

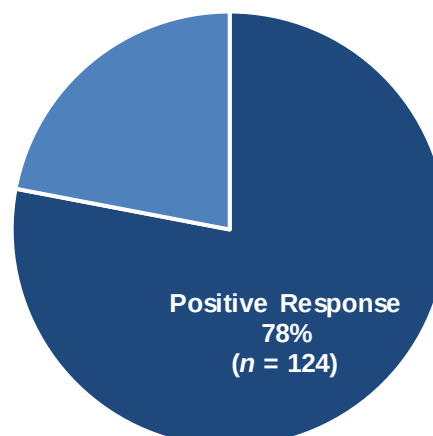
Figure 22: Middle School Student Respondents' Overall Satisfaction

How do you like the camp overall?



Note. Positive responses included "I love it" and "I like it OK."

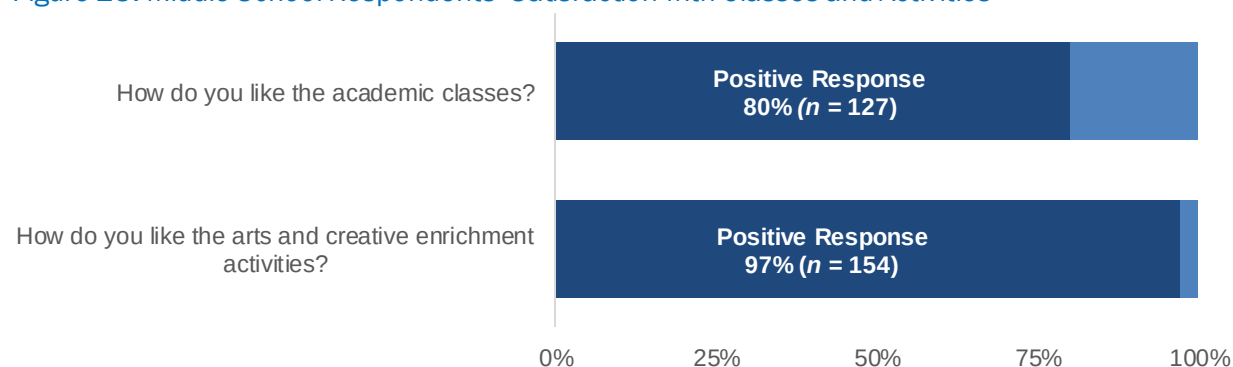
Would you recommend the camp to other kids?



Note. Positive responses included "Definitely" and "Sometimes." One student did not answer the question.

On the survey, students were asked specifically if they enjoyed the program's classes. Middle school respondents were positive about their enrichment classes with 97 percent saying they loved or liked the activities. Although a majority of middle school respondents reported loving or liking their academic and enrichment classes, respondents were more positive about their enrichment activities (97%) than their academic classes (80% - see Figure 23).

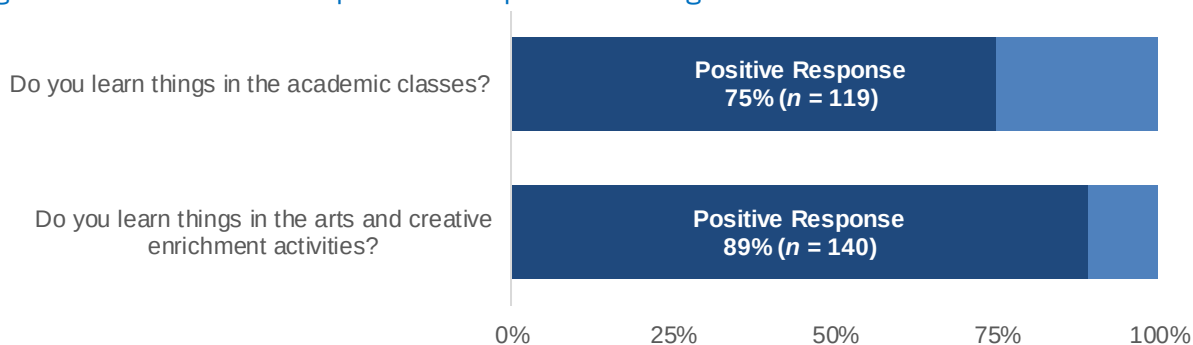
Figure 23: Middle School Respondents' Satisfaction with Classes and Activities



Note. Positive responses included "I love it" and "I like it OK." One student did not answer the "How do you like the academic classes?" question.

Students were asked if they learned material in their academic and enrichment classes. A majority of middle school respondents indicated that they learned material from both their academic classes (75%) and enrichment activities (89%), as shown in Figure 24.

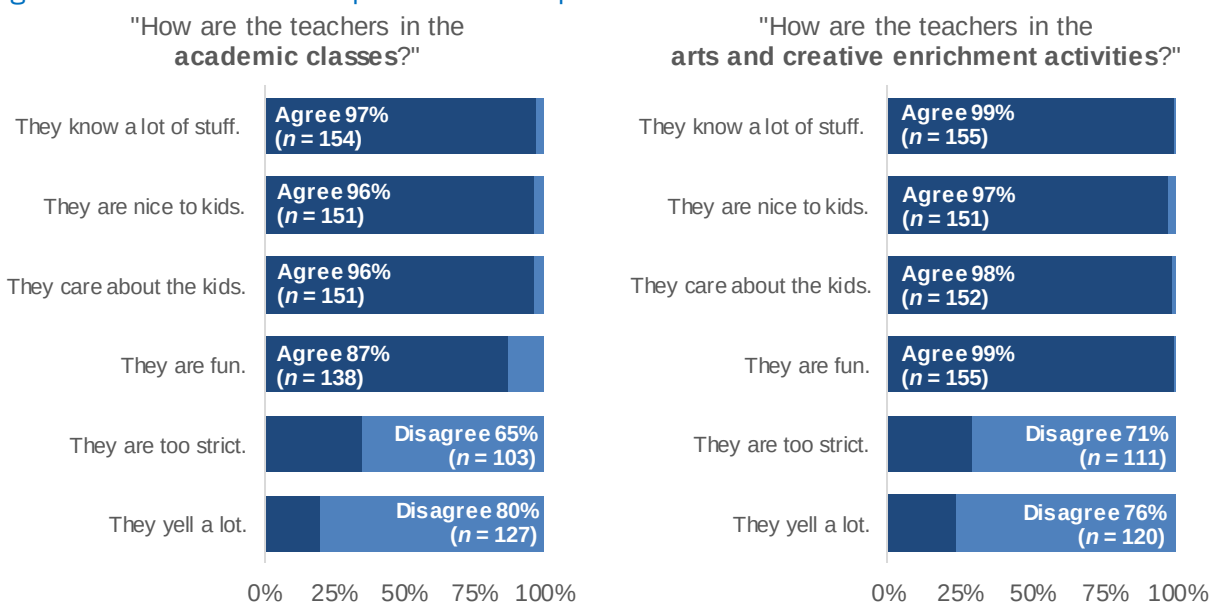
Figure 24: Middle School Respondents' Reported Learning



Note. Positive responses included “A w hole lot” and “A lot.” One student did not answer the question “Do you learn things in the arts and creative enrichment activities?”

The survey instructed students to rate their teachers' knowledge and disposition for both academic classes and enrichment activities. Figure 25 shows that a majority of middle school respondents agreed that academic teachers were knowledgeable (97%), caring (96%), nice (96%), and fun (87%). Respondents were also positive about their enrichment teachers with almost all rating the teachers as knowledgeable (99%), caring (98%), nice (97%), and fun (99%). A minority of respondents felt their teachers yelled a lot (20% for academic teachers and 24% for enrichment teachers) or were too strict (35% and 29%, respectively).

Figure 25: Middle School Respondents' Perceptions of Teachers

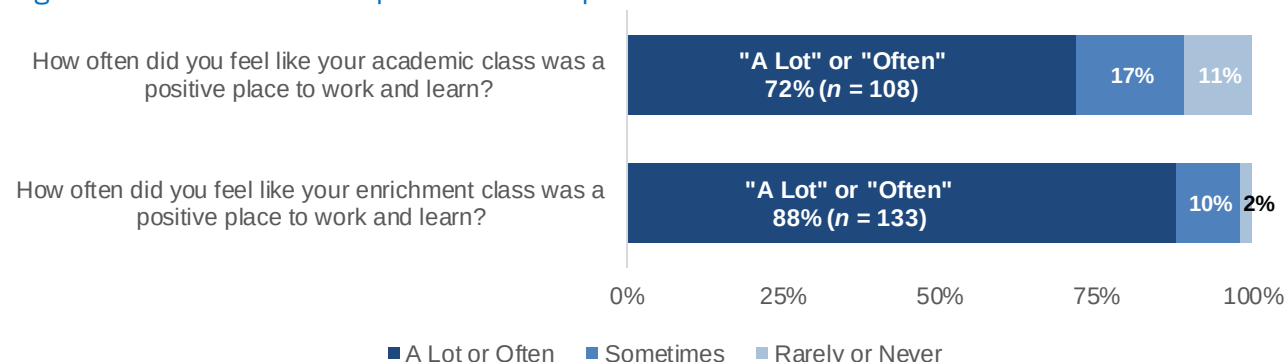


Note. Agree responses included “Definitely” and “So-So” whereas disagree responses included “Not really” and “Not at all.” Not all students responded to every question.

More than 70 percent of middle school respondents agreed the learning environment for both academic and enrichment portions of the SAA program were positive (see Figure 26). However, more respondents agreed that the enrichment environment (88%) was a positive place to work and learn than the academic

environment (72%). A small minority felt the academic (11%) and enrichment (2%) environments rarely or never produced a good learning environment.

Figure 26: Middle School Respondents' Perceptions of Class Environment

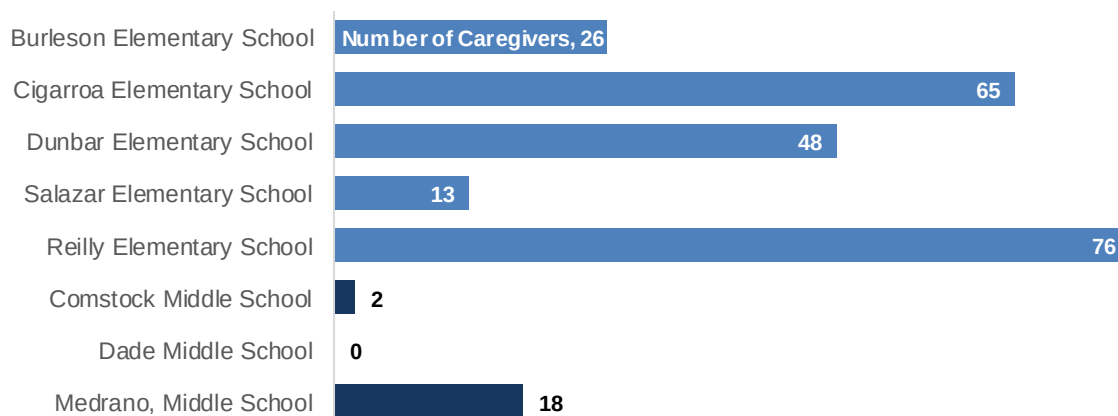


Note. Eight students did not respond to both questions.

Summer Achievers Academy Caregiver Survey Results

Far more caregivers of elementary students responded than caregivers of middle school students (see Figure 27). This is not surprising given the relatively small number of middle school students attending the program. Reilly Elementary had the highest number of attending students ($n = 359$) and received the most responses ($n = 76$). Comstock Middle School received two responses, and Dade Middle School did not receive any despite having 70 and 80 students attending, respectively. The caregiver survey results should be viewed with caution because the respondents may not be representative of all caregivers of students who participated in the SAA.

Figure 27: Number of Caregiver Survey Respondents by Student Campus



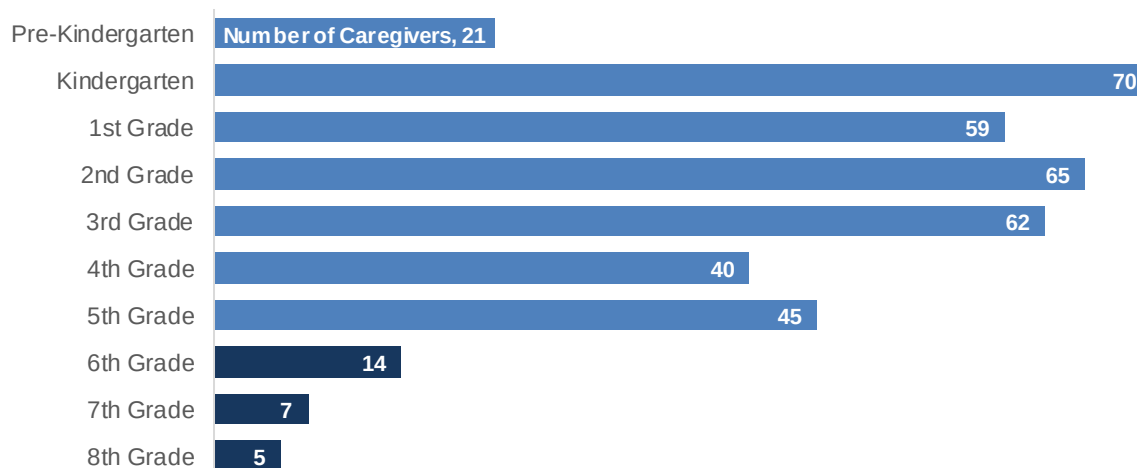
Over 52 percent of caregivers responded that they had multiple children attending the elementary or middle school program (see Table 11). Most caregivers had only one student attending (47.2%), and very few had four or more students attending.

Table 11: Caregivers' Number of Children Attending

Number of Children	Number of Caregivers	%
1	117	47.2
2	93	37.5
3	27	10.9
4	5	2.0
5	1	0.4
6	1	0.4
No Response	4	1.6

When reviewed by grade, more caregivers of kindergarten students returned the survey ($n = 70$) than caregivers of students in other grades (see Figure 28). Of the 25 pre-kindergarten students, 21 caregivers completed the survey. Few middle school caregivers responded, with only 5 caregivers of eighth-grade students completing the survey.

Figure 28: Number of Caregiver Students by Grade



Note. Caregivers responded for every child attending.

When completing most items on the survey, caregivers were instructed to respond while thinking only of the oldest child attending. As shown in Table 12, most responses came from mothers (77.8%). Grandmothers (7.3%) and fathers (6.5%) completed 34 surveys combined. Sixteen caregivers did not respond to the question.

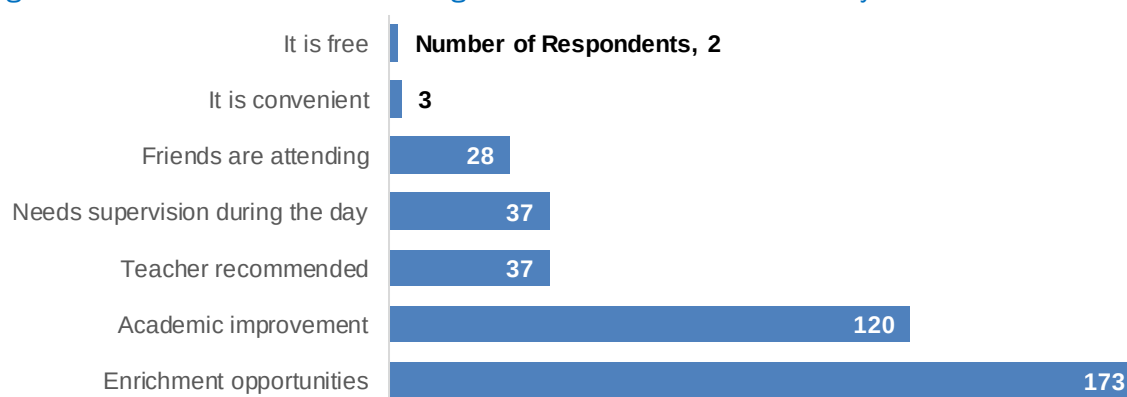
Table 12: Caregiver Relationship to Oldest Child Attending

Relationship	Number of Respondents	%
Mother	193	77.8
Father	16	6.5
Grandmother	18	7.3
Grandfather	4	1.6
Caretaker/Legal Guardian	1	0.4
No Response	16	6.4

Of the 248 valid responses, 92 percent ($n = 228$) reported that the child was not attending any other camps or programs during the summer. Eight caregivers responded that the child was attending other camps such as those offered by the YMCA or Boys and Girls Clubs. Two caregivers noted that their children had also attended STEM Camp, a program offered at other Dallas ISD campuses.

The reasons caregivers gave as reasons for their children attending the SAA were, by and large, for the enrichment opportunities and so children could improve academically (see Figure 29). Campus and after-school teachers during the regular school year recommended the program to 37 responding caregivers. Others cited that the full-day program provided necessary supervision for the child or that the child's friends were also attending the program.

Figure 29: Reasons for Child Attending the Summer Achievers Academy

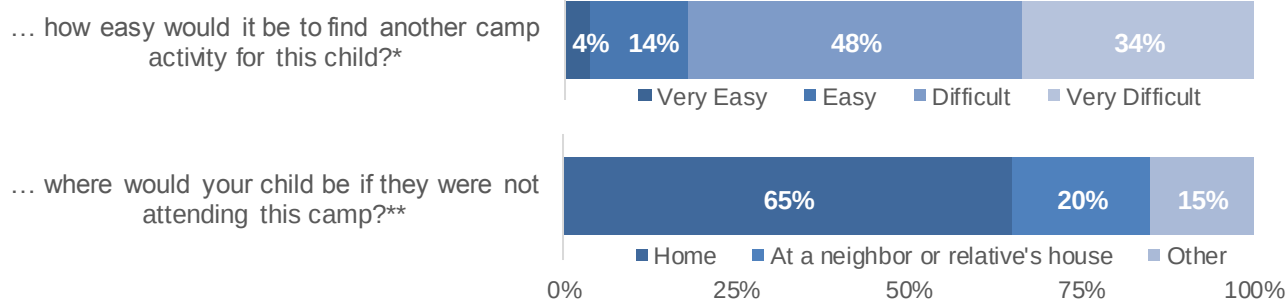


Note. Caregivers could select multiple responses.

Most respondents indicated that it would have been difficult or very difficult (82% combined) to find another camp or activity to replace the SAA. Eighteen percent of the respondents could have easily or very easily found a different activity for the students. Over 85 percent of the respondents indicated that the child would have been at home or under a relative/neighbor's care (see Figure 30). The remaining 15 percent of responses included activities such as attending another camp, staying with a sitter or at daycare, and being at a recreation center.

Figure 30: Finding Summer Activities and Programs without the Summer Achievers Academy

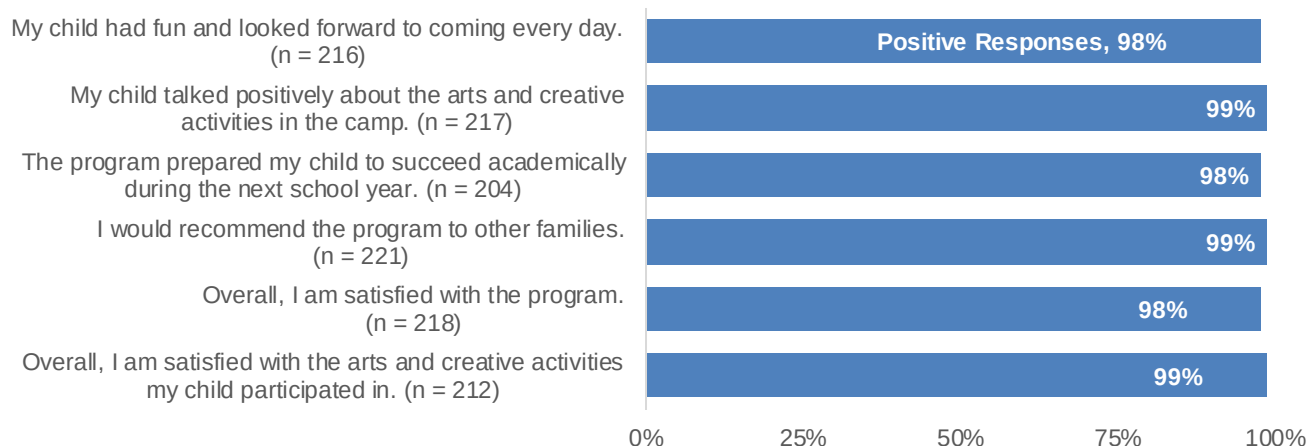
If this summer camp program were not available...



*Five caregivers did not respond to this question. **Fourteen caregivers did not respond to this question.

The caregivers of elementary students overwhelmingly responded positively to each item assessing the child's experience and their opinion of the program (see Figure 31), with over 97 percent positive responses on every item.

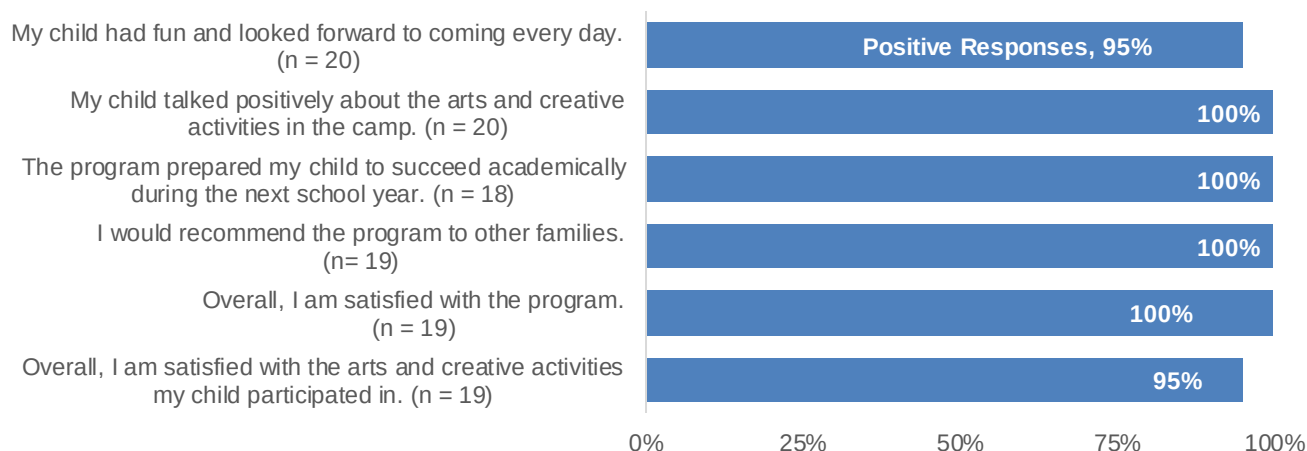
Figure 31: Caregiver Perceptions of the Elementary Program



Note. Positive responses include “Very True” or “Somewhat True.” Figure does not include non-responses and “I don’t know” responses.

Few middle school caregivers completed the survey, with 18 to 20 respondents completing each item about the caregivers’ perceptions of the program. As seen in Figure 32, the caregivers responded positively. All caregivers felt the academic program prepared the student to enter the 2016-17 school year, and all reported that their children talked positively about the afternoon enrichment activities. One caregiver responded that his or her child did not look forward to coming every day, and one caregiver indicated some dissatisfaction with the enrichment activities.

Figure 32: Caregiver Perceptions of the Middle School Program



Note. Positive responses include “Very True” or “Somewhat True” while negative responses included “Mostly Untrue” and “Not at All True.” Figure does not include non-responses and “I don’t know” responses.

What were the results of the alternative certification intern training?

Methodology

During the last two weeks of the program, alternative certification interns completed an evaluator-developed survey assessing their perceptions of the practicum experience. Response frequencies were analyzed by type of alternative certification program. The Compass and TFA programs provided data on intern participation and completion rates. The evaluator combined the data and conducted frequency and crosstab analyses.

The evaluator conducted interviews with all eight SAA principals by telephone from July 14 to July 20. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to find out about the principals' motivations for working the position, responsibilities, goals for the program, program expectations and implementation, and reflections on using the program to train alternative certification interns. The interviews were recorded, partially transcribed, and coded for predominant themes. Surveys of mentor teachers and interns included open-ended response items that requested teachers' opinions of the SAA program. These items were coded using the predominant themes determined during analysis of principal interviews. Quotations from interviews and excerpts from open-ended responses were lightly edited for grammar and typographical errors.

The evaluator extracted student daily attendance from the district's summer database and compared the percentage students attending each day by the alternative certification program operating at each site – Compass or TFA.

Results

Program Participation

The Dallas ISD's Compass alternative certification program had 113 interns start teaching during the SAA and high school CRP. Over 69 percent of the interns completed the program ($n = 78$) and received placement for the 2016-17 school year. Two interns withdrew from the program and two were dismissed for performance issues; 31 interns (27%) were dismissed because they did not pass the content certification exams.

TFA began the summer with 204 interns teaching for the SAA and CRP programs. Of those, 104 were slated to teach with the Dallas ISD. Over 96 percent of the TFA interns slated to teach in the Dallas ISD completed the program ($n = 100$).

Intern Survey, Mentor Survey, and Principal Interview Results

Respondents rated how well the SAA prepared them for teaching. Figure 33 shows the positive responses for items related to the teacher training programs' (Compass or TFA) quality. More than 73 percent of intern respondents were positive in all areas, except "establishing relationships with parents." Responses varied for Compass and TFA intern respondents, and one group of interns did not stand out as being more positive about the academy than the other group.

Figure 34 illustrates the responses of Compass and TFA mentor teachers on the mentor survey items. Except for "establishing relationships with parents," over 63 percent of mentor teachers with Compass or TFA

responded positively to the items. TFA mentor teachers gave higher ratings than Compass mentor teachers on nine of the eleven items, including “overcoming unexpected obstacles” (82% TFA; 63% Compass), “assessing/tracking student mastery” (95% TFA; 67% Compass), and “addressing the social-emotional needs of the students” (89% TFA; 71% Compass).

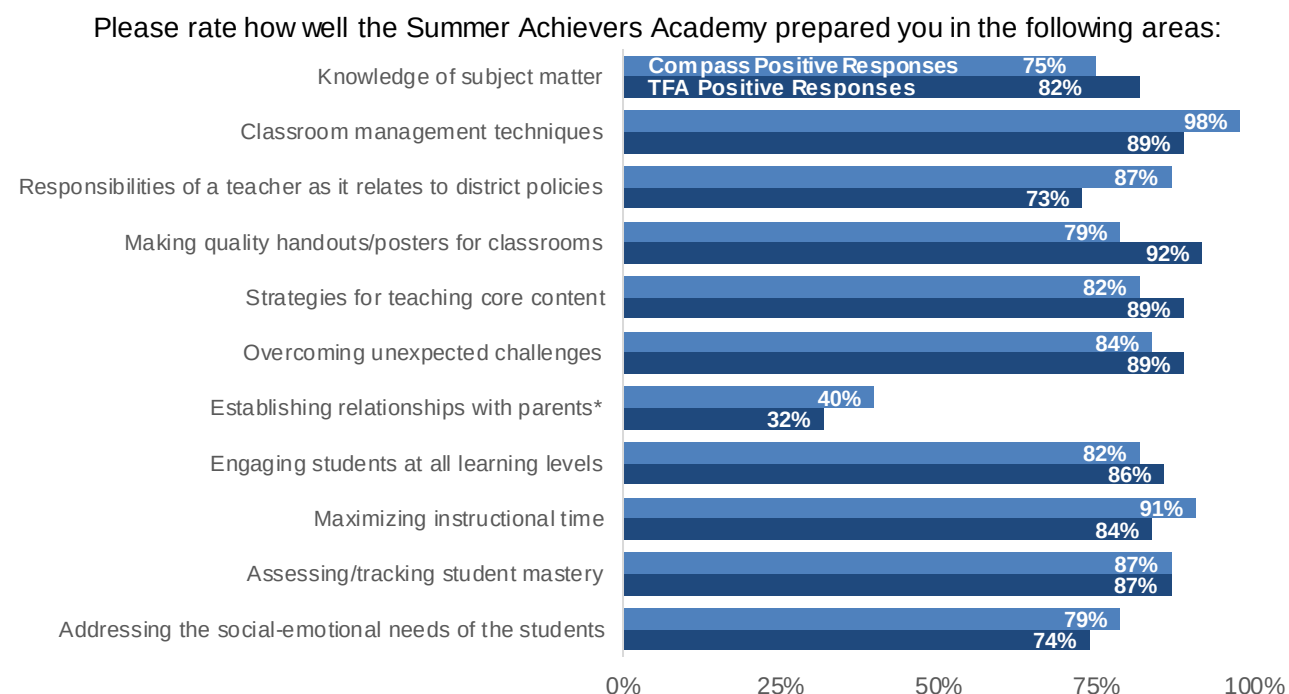
Qualitative analyses of the survey and interview data revealed several prominent themes. Details by theme follow.

SAA and Regular School Year Roles. The most commonly reported barrier to successfully training middle school alternative certification interns, as reported by principals, mentor teachers, and training teachers, was the low number of students in each class. One intern noted that, “[I] don’t think that teaching a class of four good students is going to prepare me for what I’ll see when I start the school year.” The majority of the principals followed up with similar statements, explaining that regardless the training the organizations provide during afternoons, the interns needed time in front of classes with similar sizes and student characteristics to what they would see when the school year began.

Elementary teachers taught only reading/language arts and mathematics during the SAA. Many teachers – particularly those who would be teaching middle school – felt that the elementary training program offered little benefit. One stated that, “... teaching outside of my direct area of certification was exhausting.” These teachers wrote that teaching campus levels and subjects different from what they would be teaching during the 2016-17 school year did not prepare them to be successful in their upcoming role.

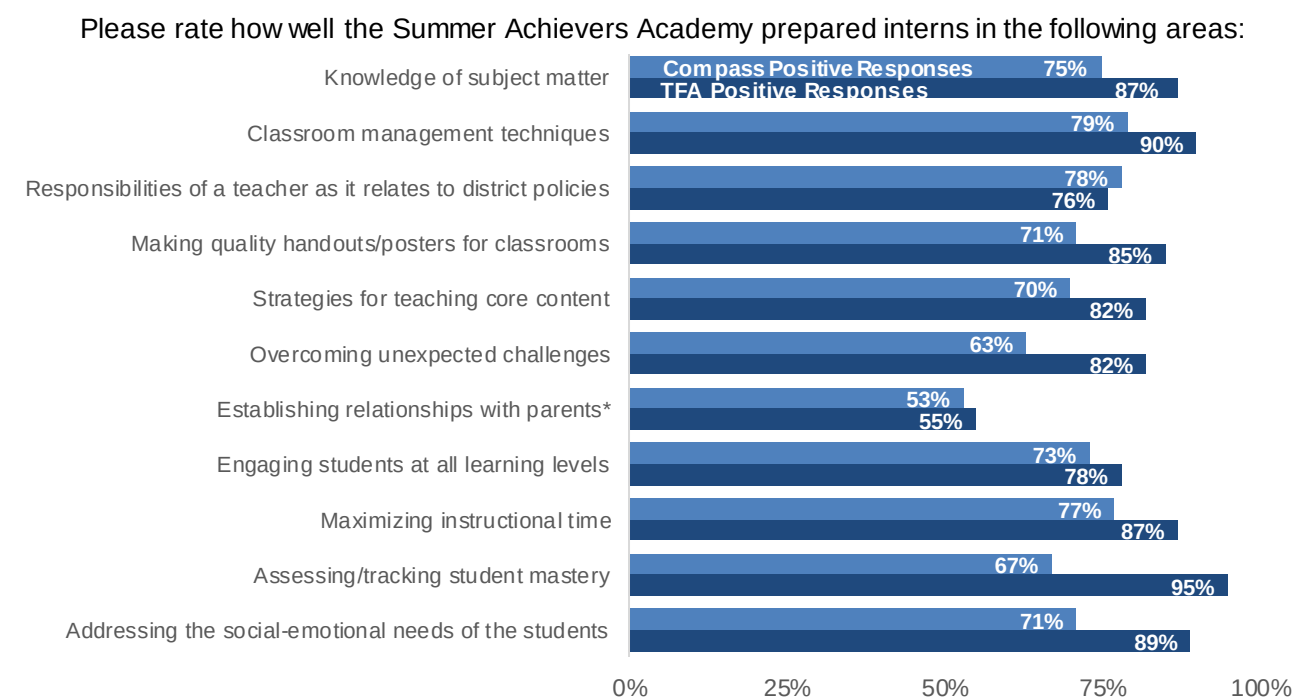
Little Time for Mentor Teacher and Intern Collaboration. Several training teachers and mentor teachers reported that they had little time to debrief after the training teachers gave a lesson. During the afternoons, training teachers met with program staff for other professional development sessions. One mentor teacher wrote that the program should, “... allow more time for mentors to guide and help interns improve with lessons and teaching practices. This could be done after school hours when we dismiss the students to Big Thought teachers.” Some training teachers wrote that the direct input received from mentors on their lessons was more practical for improving the delivery of their next lesson. They could, “... take what my mentor told me and keep that in mind when [they are] with the class the next day.” A few training teachers opined that they did not understand the role of the mentor teacher if they just observed the lessons and could not thoroughly debrief once they had concluded.

Figure 33: Intern Perceptions of Teacher Training Quality



Note. Figures do not include "I Don't Know or Not Applicable" responses. Positive responses included "Excellent" and "Good." *13 Compass and 12 TFA intern respondents marked "I Don't Know or N/A" for this item.

Figure 34: Mentor Perceptions of Teacher Training Quality



Note. Figures do not include "I Don't Know or Not Applicable" responses. Positive responses included "Excellent" and "Good." *5 Compass and 5 TFA mentor respondents marked "I Don't Know or N/A" for this item.

Lesson Development and Expectations. Many interns reported that they desired autonomy when developing lesson plans, a common refrain from most training and mentor teachers alike. The lesson plans were developed and scripted by TFA, and while they allowed teachers some opportunities to edit them, the core of the plan was already in place and they were expected to follow the script. Most training teachers stated that the program did not mimic the planning process that they would experience once the regular school year began; most mentor teachers agreed. One mentor addressed this succinctly with the following response:

I think it would be very helpful if the training teachers came into the program with very clear expectations of what exactly they would be expected to do in the classroom each day. The teachers came in with an understanding of classroom management, but with not very many other tools that could have helped them. I think exposing them to the general things they would be doing this summer such as lesson planning, finding engaging activities, and just overall planning for a classroom would have helped them. Maybe just giving them an overview of what a true day for a teacher looks like from planning, to teaching, to creating things, etc., so that they would know what they could expect [during the regular school year].

Instructional Role Limited for Principals. Most summer principals (all assistant principals during the regular school year) described their main reason working the summer program as a way to get a full principal experience, and that included acting as the instructional leader on the assigned campus. However, Compass and TFA guided instructional delivery toward each program's own goals. Principals reported that they had little to no input on instructional delivery at their particular campuses. One said, "They [TFA] were doing their own thing, and I didn't want to interfere. I visited four or five classrooms per day but it was mainly for positive reinforcement... to encourage them."

Classroom Observations

Classroom Environment. As shown in Table 13, observers rated the classroom environment highly across program types – TFA or Compass. All classes were of adequate size, and nearly all classrooms were well-organized and clean. Seven Compass classrooms, however, were either uncomfortably hot or uncomfortably cold. Observers found displays of student work were more common in Compass classrooms (56%) than in TFA classrooms (46%).

Table 13: Summer Achievers Academy Classroom Environment Observations

Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Program	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The classroom is an adequate size for student number and activities.	TFA	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	28.2	28	71.8
	Compass	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	24	34.3	46	65.7
	Overall	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	35	32.1	74	67.9
The classroom is well-organized.	TFA	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	30.8	27	69.2
	Compass	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	5.7	30	42.9	36	51.4
	Overall	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	3.7	42	38.5	63	57.8
The classroom is clean.	TFA	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	28.2	28	71.8
	Compass	0	0.0	1	1.4	1	1.4	30	42.9	38	54.3
	Overall	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.9	41	37.6	66	60.6
The classroom temperature did not distract from learning.	TFA	0	0.0	1	2.6	1	2.6	17	43.6	20	51.2
	Compass	2	2.9	5	7.1	0	0.0	35	50.0	28	40.0
	Overall	2	1.8	6	5.5	1	0.9	52	47.7	48	44.1
Student work is displayed prominently.	TFA	14	35.9	5	12.8	2	5.1	15	38.5	3	7.7
	Compass	5	7.1	16	22.9	10	14.3	15	21.4	24	34.3
	Overall	19	17.4	21	19.3	12	11.0	30	27.5	27	24.8
Transitions between class activities went smoothly.	TFA	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	5.1	33	84.6	4	10.3
	Compass*	1	1.5	5	7.2	6	8.7	30	43.5	27	39.1
	Overall*	1	1.0	5	4.6	8	7.4	63	58.3	31	28.7

* Item missing one response.

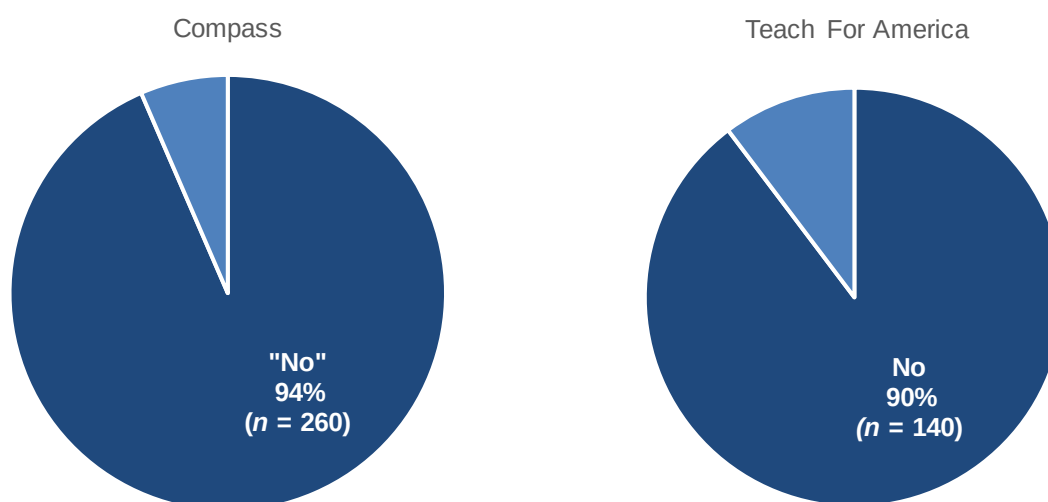
Classroom Activities. Most to all students were actively working during almost 89 percent of the observation timepoints in TFA classrooms (see Table 14) and most to all students were working at 72 percent of the timepoints in Compass classrooms. Conversely, no students were off task during 70 percent of the TFA observations and 76 percent of the Compass observations. Student behavior rarely disrupted the lesson: At 94 percent of Compass observations and 80 percent of TFA observations, evaluators reported no disruptions (see Figure 35).

Table 14: Summer Achievers Academy Classroom Activity Observations

Item	Program	None		Some		Half		Most		All	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
What proportion of the class is actively working?	TFA	0	0.0	8	5.2	9	5.8	45	29.2	92	59.7
	Compass	47	17.1	22	8.0	8	2.9	71	25.8	127	46.2
	Overall	47	11.0	30	7.0	17	4.0	116	27.0	219	51.0
What proportion of the students are off task (does not include passive learning)?	TFA	107	69.5	47	30.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Compass	220	80.0	43	15.6	4	1.5	8	2.9	0	0.0
	Overall	327	76.2	90	21.0	4	0.9	8	1.9	0	0.0

Note. "N/A" responses were excluded. Some percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Figure 35: Student Disruptions by Program

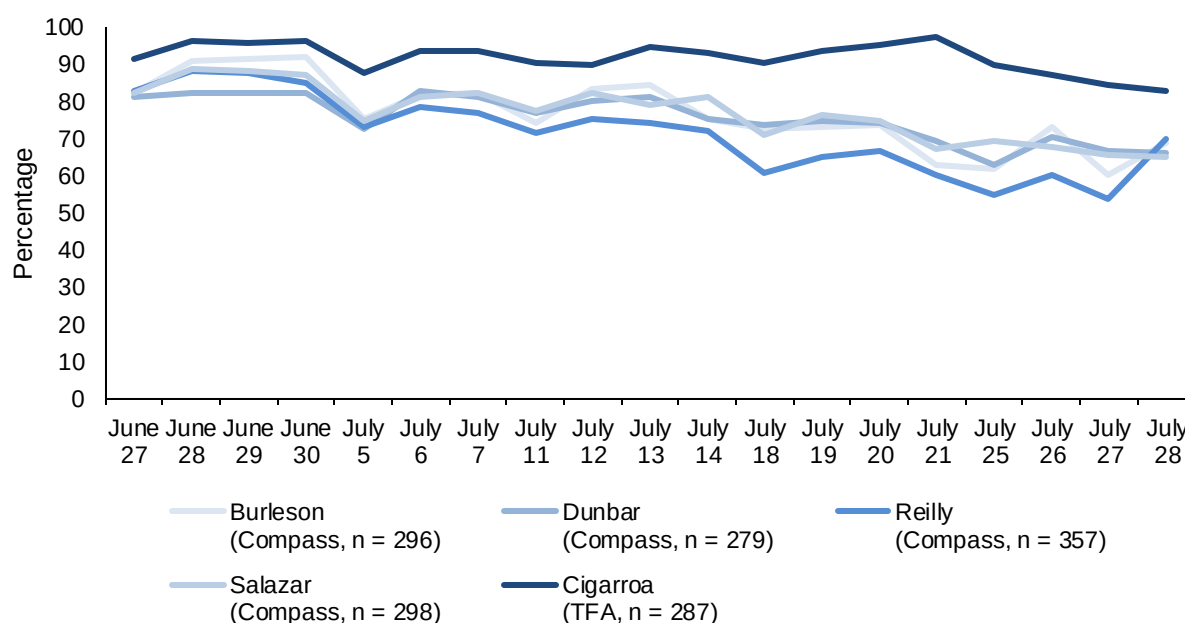


Student Outcomes

Attendance. The overall and daily attendance rates at Cigarroa were higher than all other campuses throughout the program. As mentioned previously, TFA hosted an alternative certification training program for prospective teachers at Cigarroa. The Dallas ISD's alternative certification program, Compass, hosted training programs at the four remaining sites: Burleson, Dunbar, Salazar, and Reilly Elementary Schools.

In interviews, principals at TFA's elementary and middle school campuses reported that the program required interns to place telephone calls to parents when students were absent, even into the final days of the program. This seems to have sustained high levels of attendance throughout. Students who attended at least one day of SAA at Cigarroa attended at a high rate as the program progressed (see Figure 36). Comparatively, student attendance at the Compass sites dropped as the program continued. At the end of the fourth week (July 21), nearly 98 percent of students who began the program at Cigarroa were still attending; 65 percent of the students at the four Compass sites attended that day. Additionally, no Cigarroa students attended fewer than seven days of the program. Nearly 39 percent of the Cigarroa students attended every day of the program, over 2.25 times the rate for students at Compass sites (17.0%).

Figure 36: Percentage of Students Attending Sites by Day: TFA and Compass



High School Academic Outcomes. Students attending the High School CRP took *ACPs*, and these scores served as final exam grades.⁴ Overall, Table 15 indicates that there was little variation of *ACP* scores among students attending one of the three types of sites: traditional, Compass, or TFA. Average scores ranged from 64 for TFA students taking algebra I second semester to 93 for TFA students taking English I first semester. Indeed, the average score of 93 was significantly higher than the average scores of traditional or Compass students ($M = 68$ and $M = 69$, respectively). Of the eighteen courses (nine subjects with two semesters each), six courses had students in at least two of the groups average below a passing score of 70.

Despite the lack of *ACP* success, overall grade averages remained high for all courses, ranging from 75 for TFA students in English I semester 2 to 93 for TFA's world geography semester 2 students. World geography students, while receiving significantly higher overall grades than traditional or Compass students, had the lowest average *ACP* score ($M = 66$) among the three groups. In 8 of the 18 courses, the student group with the lowest average *ACP* score received the highest average overall grades.

⁴ An *ACP* score of 70 or above is considered passing.

Table 15: High School Summer ACP and Overall Course Results by Subject and Campus Type

Semester	Campus	n	Mean ACP Score	Mean Overall Grade
Algebra I				
Semester 1	Traditional	170	66	78
	Compass	45	65	84
	TFA	32	65	80
Semester 2	Traditional	193	67	80
	Compass	44	70	81
	TFA	25	64	76
Algebra II				
Semester 1	Traditional	75	74	85
	Compass	23	68	86
	TFA	17	79	83
Semester 2	Traditional	97	72	84
	Compass	10	80	89
	TFA	23	75	90
Biology				
Semester 1	Traditional	139	70	79
	Compass	36	72	83
	TFA	12	72	79
Semester 2	Traditional	159	70	80
	Compass	30	67	83
	TFA	12	72	82
Chemistry				
Semester 1	Traditional	89	71	84
	Compass	20	69	81
	TFA	17	79	90
Semester 2	Traditional	120	70	84
	Compass	29	71	80
	TFA	28	74	80
English I				
Semester 1	Traditional	190	68	79
	Compass	49	69	82
	TFA	35	93	82
Semester 2	Traditional	179	72	80
	Compass	67	70	77
	TFA	34	68	75
English II				
Semester 1	Traditional	110	72	81
	Compass	20	72	82
	TFA	11	75	83
Semester 2	Traditional	118	72	81
	Compass	25	68	79
	TFA	22	73	77
Geometry				
Semester 1	Traditional	139	76	84
	Compass	24	70	85
	TFA	12	79	84
Semester 2	Traditional	150	76	83
	Compass	32	65	78
	TFA	23	70	84
World Geography				
Semester 1	Traditional	56	73	84
	Compass	26	69	83
	TFA	20	66	91
Semester 2	Traditional	79	69	81
	Compass	24	67	79
	TFA	13	66	93
World History				
Semester 1	Traditional	46	77	86
	Compass	12	78	90
	TFA	13	73	86
Semester 2	Traditional	54	72	86
	Compass	22	69	81
	TFA	11	68	88

Note. Courses with fewer than 10 students in a subgroup are excluded. See Table 5 for overall totals.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The SRP, hosted four days per week at each elementary and middle school campus from June 6 to June 16, provided remedial instruction for students who had failed two or more core courses during the regular school year. Exactly 4,744 elementary students and 2,232 middle school students attended at least one day of the program. To meet promotion requirements, students should have attended all eight days of the program. Overall, 87 percent of attending students matriculated to the next grade level at the start of the 2016-17 school year. For third- through eighth-grade students who did not meet the attendance criteria, promotion rates ranged from 84 percent of third- and sixth-grade students to 93 percent of fifth-grade students.

The High School CRP operated at 10 high school campuses across the Dallas ISD. Over 4,000 students ($n = 4,014$) attended at least 17 days of the 19-day program, the minimum necessary to receive course credit. Samuell High School ended the program with 696 students meeting the criterion, more than the next largest campus, Bryan Adams, which had 502 students attend at least 17 days. North Dallas and Lincoln High Schools were smallest, with 210 and 229 students attending 17 days, respectively. Course passing rates for eligible students ranged from 87 percent of Algebra I semester 1 students to 100 percent of students in nine of the courses. Student scores on the ACPs were below passing in eight of the 32 CRP courses.

Summer Achievers Academy

The SAA operated from June 27 to July 28, four days per week at five elementary schools and three middle schools. The program provided academic instruction from alternative certification interns (supervised by mentor teachers) during the mornings followed by enrichment activities supported by Big Thought during the afternoons. The number of students attending elementary campuses ranged from 279 to 357, serving a total of 1,517 students overall. Exactly 255 middle school students attended at least one day of the program.

Daily attendance declined for most elementary campuses for the duration of the program; attendance at Cigarroa, however, remained steady throughout. That site had at least 83 percent attendance each day of the camp and a high attendance percentage of 97 percent during the fourth week. The middle school attendance rates were similar across sites, and overall rates fell from the high of 80 percent during the first week to 63 percent to begin the fourth week.

Observers completed general campus environment checklists on the first day and during the fourth week of the program. Nearly all campuses provided a clean, welcoming environment for students with teachers prepared for the first day. Some first-day students had not enrolled prior to showing up, and some campuses did not have an efficient system in place to complete the enrollment process and address parent questions. SAA campuses improved in many areas during the first weeks, but half of the campuses experienced busing issues during the fourth week of the program.

Across all academic timepoint observations ($N = 434$), most to all students were working 78 percent of the time with half or more students off task at only three percent of the observation timepoints. Student behavior

disrupted lessons at eight percent of the timepoints, and students were most often actively working as a class (54%) or alone (44%).

Analysis of principal interviews and mentor/intern survey responses revealed several prominent themes.

- Teachers lacked necessary resources. Despite observers reporting that teachers had the supplies to deliver intended lessons to begin the program, many mentor teachers and interns wrote that they lacked supplies.
- The curriculum was a review 2015-16 school year. All principals said that they would have preferred a curriculum that prepared most students for the next grade while providing remediation for students that needed it, especially for students moving to grades 5 and 8, where they must pass the reading and mathematics *STAAR* subtests.
- Prior to the program, parents and students expected a “summer camp” experience, even during the academic classes. They did not clearly understand that academic classes would be similar to what students experienced during the regular school year.
- Bus issues were prevalent on the first day and continued throughout the duration of the program.

Overall, elementary students’ average composite score on the *DESSA Mini*, a measure of social emotional competence, did not differ from before to after the program. Although limited by low numbers having *DESSA-Mini* scores, middle school students’ average scores were nearly eight points higher at the end of the SAA, a statistically significant result. When comparing only students considered needing instruction or typical, both elementary and middle school students’ average scores were statistically significantly higher at the post-program assessment than at the pre-program assessment: Elementary students gained over 7 points and the middle school students gained over 15 points. The middle school results should be viewed extremely cautiously due to the small number of students in the analyses.

Alternative Certification Training

The Dallas ISD’s Compass alternative certification program had 113 interns teach during the SAA and high school CRP. Teach For America began the SAA and CRP with 204 interns, 104 of which were slated to teach with the Dallas ISD at the start of the 2016-17 school year. Over 69 percent of the Compass interns completed the program ($n = 78$), lower than the 96 percent of TFA interns who completed the program ($n = 100$). Thirty-one Compass interns were dismissed from the program because they did not pass their respective content certification exam; all four dismissed TFA interns did not pass the exams.

Qualitative analysis of principal interviews, mentor teacher surveys, and intern surveys revealed salient issues.

- The SAA environment did not prepare some interns for the 2016-17 school year. Many mentors, interns, and principals believed that the small middle school class sizes were not representative of the classes that interns would teach during the regular school year. Some interns with the Dallas ISD’s Compass program, in particular, were frustrated teaching elementary students during the summer when they would be at middle schools during the fall.
- The mentor teachers and interns had little time to thoroughly debrief or collaborate. Many interns and mentor teachers stated that they wanted more time to meet with each other. Some interns wrote that the mentor teachers’ input was more practical than other training that they received and could be implemented in the next day’s lesson.

- The interns had little autonomy to develop lesson plans. Many interns and mentor teachers believed that the interns should have developed lesson plans independently, an expectation during the regular school year.
- Principals expected to act as the instructional leader on their campuses during the SAA. However, TFA and Compass guided the instructional delivery at campuses through the programs' observations and feedback.

Recommendations

Modify enrollment procedures for the SRP to include all reasons a student may have attended the program. For fifth- and eighth-grade students, the SRP data only marked students as attending based on either STAAR failure or course failure – not both. A complete evaluation of the SRP should include all students who failed two or more core courses, not just those that failed courses but passed the STAAR.

Collaborate with the district's School Administrative Services Department to prevent campuses from granting course credit for students not meeting the criteria for credit while retaining data on the students in the summer database. High school students were removed from the district's summer database after administrators determined that they had accumulated more than two absences, the maximum allowed to receive course credit. Because data from these students was unavailable, overall high school CRP enrollment, attendance rates, and other areas could not be assessed.

Ensure students in the high school CRP pass both courses and final exams. Course passing rates ranged from 87 to 100 percent; however, average ACP scores for eight of 32 courses were below the passing score of 70.

Ensure that buses for the SAA arrive at campuses on time and minimize delays when dropping off students. Observers and principals reported bus issues. Many principals related that some parents removed their children from the program because of concerns with busing.

Confirm that campuses have all supplies on campus prior to the first day of the SAA. Principals and teachers reported that they had to alter lessons to accommodate for missing supplies or supplies that had not yet been delivered. Because the teachers are expected to deliver the lessons provided, all materials should be provided and delivered to campuses before the start of the program.

Consider eliminating pre-testing of students for the SAA and administer post-tests using scannable answer sheets. Principals, in particular, thought that pre-testing on the first day of the program was not engaging and created a poor perception of the program among some parents and students. Principals and teachers believed that many students stopped attending the program because of initial perceptions of the academic program. No testing data was entered for three SAA campuses and data entry was not standardized at the other five campuses, making the data unsuitable for analysis in this report.

Provide parents and students with clear descriptions of the SAA program, academic courses, in particular. Principals reported receiving telephone calls from parents who were confused about the academic courses that their children were taking in the mornings: They had expected a more relaxed, "summer camp" environment rather than academic classes similar to what the students experienced during the regular school year.

Consider incorporating methods used at TFA campuses to lessen student attrition. Principals at the TFA program sites commended staff and interns for their work encouraging students and parents to remain in the program. Middle school sites showed no differences in attendance rates among the TFA and Compass sites; Cigarroa Elementary (the TFA site), however, maintained high attendance rates throughout the program, and the percentage of students attending every day was over 2.25 times higher than at other sites.

Provide joint professional development sessions for mentor teachers and interns prior to the start of the SAA. Mentor teachers reported that they received very little professional development prior to the program, and they met the interns that they would be guiding on the first day of the program. All principals and many mentor teachers conveyed that a cooperative professional development session would have solidified the expectations and roles for all teachers in the classroom, mentors and interns alike.

Consider including summer principals in the planning process for the alternative certification intern training. The summer principals expected to be the instructional leaders on their respective campuses. Because TFA and Compass dictated the lesson delivery, observations, and feedback, the summer principals did not serve in this role. To allow SAA principals to gain a more complete principal experience and to strengthen campus instructional leadership during the summer, consider including future summer principals in summer curricular decisions.

REFERENCE

LeBuffe, P., Shapiro, V., & Naglieri, J. (2009). *Devereux student strengths assessment*. Lewisville, NC: Kaplan.