

2018-19 Evaluation of The City Year Program

Larry W. Featherston, Ph.D.

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At-a-Glance

City Year Dallas (City Year) proposed to provide Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) with an academic and behavioral intervention program designed to help students at risk of dropping out to stay in school, make positive behavioral changes and get back on track to graduate. City Year's student intervention and support model, WHOLE SCHOOL, WHOLE CHILD™ (WSWC), places teams of trained young adults in schools (a minimum of eight per school) who serve every day for one full academic year. City Year uses AmeriCorps members trained to provide support to students, teachers and the wider school community to help accelerate student learning and performance. AmeriCorps members focus on indicators that place students at increased risk for dropping out of school: low attendance, poor behavior, or course failure in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics.

Based on the 2018-2019 City Year service contract with Dallas ISD, AmeriCorps members were to work closely with the school principal and teachers to deliver a suite of interconnected services to improve student, classroom, and whole-school outcomes. Services included:

- additional capacity in the classroom, supporting classroom management and providing and enabling differentiated instruction;
- use of data to monitor student progress and better meet student needs;
- one-on-one and small group instruction in ELA and mathematics with embedded socio-emotional supports;
- extended-day activities including afterschool programming, homework assistance, enrichment curricula and civic projects that build and serve the community;
- small group socio-emotional skill building session; and
- whole school activities that improve conditions for learning, engage families and inspire civic engagement.

For the 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, City Year aimed to deploy at least 70 and no more than 145 AmeriCorps members per year to high need schools in the Dallas ISD. The total number of AmeriCorps members assigned to a school varied based on school enrollment and need, with a minimum team size of eight AmeriCorps members. During the 2018-19 school year, City Year partnered with the following nine schools:

- J. P. Starks Math, Science and Technology Vanguard: eight AmeriCorps members.
- Maple Lawn Elementary School (ES): eight AmeriCorps members
- R. Q. Mills Elementary School (ES): eight AmeriCorps members
- E. B. Comstock Middle School (MS): ten AmeriCorps members
- Oliver W. Holmes Humanities/Communications Academy: nine AmeriCorps members
- Francisco "Pancho" Medrano Middle School (MS): nine AmeriCorps members
- Franklin D. Roosevelt High School (HS): eight AmeriCorps members
- H. Grady Spruce High School (HS): nine AmeriCorps members
- W. T. White High School (HS): eight AmeriCorps members

Purpose and Methods of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of attendance, behavioral, and academic support services provided to Dallas ISD students by City Year in 2018-19. Student characteristics, attendance, disciplinary referrals, *State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness 3-8 (STAAR 3-8)* performance data, and *STAAR End-of-Course (STAAR EOC)* performance data were extracted from district data files and matched to a City Year program services file provided to evaluator on May 29, 2019.

Program Funding

In 2018-19, City Year received financial support from Dallas ISD Student Services department. Total financial support requested from Dallas ISD Student Services department was \$690,000 and varied by school:

- J. P. Starks ES - \$80,000
- Maple Lawn ES- \$80,000
- R. Q. Mills ES- \$30,000
- E. B. Comstock MS- \$90,000
- O. W. Holmes MS- \$80,000
- Francisco Medrano MS - \$90,000
- Franklin D. Roosevelt HS - \$80,000
- H. Grady Spruce HS - \$80,000 and
- W. T. White HS - \$80,000

Student Demographics

In school year 2018-19, City Year provided a total of 13,372.8 hours of support services to 1,032 grade 2 through grade 9 students in nine schools, representing

23.1 percent of the student grade level enrollment at those schools ($N=4,473$). A larger proportion of students were served at R. Q. Mills MS (68.8%) and J.P. Sparks ES (52.6%). Schools with the largest number of students served were Oliver W. Holmes ES ($n=146$), Comstock MS ($n=143$), Spruce HS ($n=141$), and Francisco Medrano MS ($n=133$) (Table 1).

Table 1: 2018-19 Percentage of Students Served by City Year by School

Campus (Grades Served)	Total N	n	%
Starks ES (2-5)	209	110	52.6
Maple Lawn ES (3-5)	346	103	29.8
Mills ES (3-5)	125	86	68.8
Comstock MS (6-8)	778	143	18.4
Medrano MS (6-8)	927	133	14.3
Holmes MS (6-8)	694	146	21.0
Roosevelt HS (9)	250	69	27.6
White HS (9)	597	101	16.9
Spruce HS (9)	547	141	25.8
Total	4,473	1,032	23.1

Source: City Year data file (5/29/2019). Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) district data file (10/26/2018).

Note: ES=Elementary School. MS=Middle School. HS=High School. Students who withdrew from the district ($n=33$) or moved to a Non-City Year campus ($n=21$) during the school year were excluded from analyses.

The largest number of students served were in grade 9 ($n=311$, 30.1%) while the smallest number of students served were in grade 2 ($n=30$, 2.9%) (Table 2). Most students who received services were Hispanic ($n=599$, 58.0%) or African American ($n=398$, 38.6%). Almost half of the students who received services were English Learners ($n=457$, 44.3%) while most students were classified as economically disadvantaged ($n=978$, 94.8%) (Table 3).

Table 2: 2018-19 Students Served by City Year by Grade

Grade	n	%
2	30	2.9
3	89	8.6
4	113	11.0
5	67	6.5
6	93	9.0
7	179	17.3
8	150	14.5
9	311	30.1
Total	1,032	99.9

Source: City Year data file (5/29/2019). Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) district data file (10/26/2018).

Note: Percentage does not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 3: 2018-19 Demographic Characteristics of Students Served by City Year

Subgroup	n	%
Gender		
Male	512	49.6
Female	520	50.4
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	599	58.0
African American	398	38.6
White	21	2.0
Other	14	1.4
English Proficiency		
Non-EL	575	55.7
Current or Monitored EL	457	44.3
Special Education Status		
Not Receiving Services	1,000	96.9
Receiving Services	32	3.1
Economically Disadvantaged		
No	54	5.2
Yes	978	94.8

Source: City Year data file (5/29/2019). Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) district data file (10/26/2018).

Note: EL= English Learner.

Program Outcomes

Attendance and Discipline Referrals

During the 2018-19 school year, City Year provided a total of 1,246.2 hours of attendance support to 357 students. Students in the same grade level who did not receive attendance support services from City Year in the nine schools were used as a comparison group. The percentage of days attended by City Year students was lower than the percentage of days attended by Non-City Year students across almost all campuses (Table 4).

Overall, from 2017-18 to 2018-19, percent days attended decreased for both City Year students (-1.4%) and Non-City Year students (-1.3%). While these overall changes were statistically significant, they were not practically significant for either group ($d=.15$). A statistically and practically significant decrease in percent days attended was found for both groups at Roosevelt HS, Spruce HS, and White HS. Cohen's d effect sizes ranged from a small effect size of .24 (City Year students at Roosevelt HS) to a large effect size of .88 (City Year students at White HS). There was a statistically and practically significant increase ($d=.30$) in percent days attended (1.4% increase) for City Year students at Stark ES as well as a practically significant increase ($d=.31$) in percent days attended (1.5% increase) for City Year students at Maple Lawn ES.

Table 4: Percentage of Days Attended by School for City Year and Non-City Year Students for 2017-18 and 2018-19

Campus	n	% Days Attended		Diff.	d
		2018	2019		
City Year					
Starks ES	46	92.8	94.2	1.4*	.30
Maple Lawn ES	39	93.4	94.9	1.5	.31
Mills ES	23	93.9	94.6	0.7	.11
Comstock MS	43	92.0	90.6	-1.4	.15
Medrano MS	40	90.8	89.2	-1.6	.17
Holmes MS	48	89.1	88.0	-1.1	.11
Roosevelt HS	25	87.6	84.7	-2.9*	.24
White HS	24	95.5	90.0	-5.5*	.88
Spruce HS	45	90.2	85.2	-5.0*	.45
Total	333	91.6	90.2	-1.4*	.15
Non-City Year					
Starks ES	149	95.9	95.8	-0.1	.02
Maple Lawn ES	276	97.1	97.5	0.4	.12
Mills ES	95	95.1	95.6	0.5	.11
Comstock MS	687	95.8	95.0	-0.8*	.13
Medrano MS	832	96.9	96.3	-0.6*	.11
Holmes MS	596	94.2	93.4	-0.8*	.09
Roosevelt HS	177	91.4	86.7	-4.7*	.33
White HS	478	95.7	93.0	-2.7*	.27
Spruce HS	449	93.1	89.9	-3.2*	.27
Total	3,739	95.3	94.0	-1.3*	.15

Source: City Year data file (5/29/2019). District attendance file dated June 4, 2019.

Note: Only students who had attendance data for both school years were included in the analysis. Diff.=Difference between the average percent days attended for each school year. *= statistical significance of $p < .05$. Cohen's d values of .20, .50, and .80 are considered small, medium, and large, respectively (Cohen, 1992).

During the 2018-19 school year, City Year provided a total of 2,106.26 hours of social emotional support services to 659 students. Students in the same grade level who did not receive social emotional support services from City Year in the nine schools were used as a comparison group. Overall, a lower percentage of City Year students received disciplinary referrals compared to Non-City Year students (Table 5).

Overall, from 2017-18 to 2018-19, the percentage of disciplinary referrals increased for both City Year students (3.1%) and Non-City Year students (2.4%). However, a decrease in the percentage of disciplinary referrals was found at Holmes MS for both City Year students (-0.2%) and Non-City Year students (-0.8%). A decrease in the percentage of disciplinary referrals was also found for City Year students at Maple Lawn ES (-0.5%) and Miles ES (-0.2%).

Table 5: Discipline Referrals by School for City Year and Non-City Year Students for 2017-18 and 2018-19

Campus	N	City Year		Non-City Year	
		n	%	n	%
2017-18					
Starks ES	6	1	0.2	5	0.1
Maple Lawn ES	16	5	0.8	5	0.1
Mills ES	3	1	0.2	2	0.1
Comstock MS	300	20	3.0	116	3.0
Medrano MS	64	1	0.2	29	0.8
Holmes MS	102	3	0.5	45	1.2
Roosevelt HS	66	2	0.3	23	0.6
White HS	93	5	0.8	44	1.2
Spruce HS	259	9	1.4	81	2.1
Total	909	47	7.4	350	9.2
2018-19					
Starks ES	26	2	0.3	11	0.3
Maple Lawn ES	21	2	0.3	8	0.2
Mills ES	6	0	0.0	6	0.2
Comstock MS	421	27	4.1	169	4.4
Medrano MS	88	3	0.5	41	1.1
Holmes MS	49	2	0.3	16	0.4
Roosevelt HS	66	6	0.9	25	0.7
White HS	94	6	0.9	49	1.3
Spruce HS	429	21	3.2	115	3.0
Total	1,200	69	10.5	440	11.6

Source: City Year data file (5/29/2019). District discipline file dated July 18, 2019.

Note: N=Total number of referrals. Referrals include all types of disciplinary referrals. n=Number of students with one or more referrals. %=Percent of students who received a disciplinary referral out of the 659 City Year students and 3,814 Non-City Year students respectively. Statistical significance testing was not performed due to small sample sizes at each campus.

Academic Achievement

During the 2018-19 school year, City Year provided a total of 2,951.09 hours of literacy support to 259 students and a total of 4,393.86 hours of mathematics support to 363 students. Students in the same grade level who did not receive literacy or mathematics support services from City Year in the nine schools were used as a comparison group. Overall, analysis of STAAR and STAAR EOC data revealed that results for City Year students were mixed.

In 2018-19, a lower percentage of City Year students were at Approaches Grade Level or Above (Approaches+) compared to Non-City Year students on grades 3 through 6 STAAR reading and grades 3, 4, and 8 STAAR mathematics (Table 6). However, a larger percentage of City Year students were at Approaches+ on grades 7 and 8 STAAR reading and grades 5 through 7 STAAR mathematics. The percentage of City Year students at Approaches+ was higher on the Algebra I EOC and English I EOC compared to the percentage of Non-City Year students.

Table 6: STAAR 3-8/STAAR EOC Approaches Grade Level or Above Rates for City Year and Non-City Year Students for 2017-18 and 2018-19

Subject	Grade	n	% Approaches+		Diff.	d
			2018	2019		
City Year						
Reading	3	39	-	59.0	-	-
	4	58	77.6	53.4	-24.2*	.52
	5	26	46.2	73.1	26.9*	.56
	6	41	82.9	31.7	-51.2*	1.20
	7	64	56.3	65.6	9.3	.19
	8	69	62.3	82.6	20.3*	.47
English I EOC		127	93.7	62.2	-31.5*	.86
Mathematics	3	38	-	63.2	-	-
	4	46	65.2	63.0	-2.2	.04
	5	30	86.7	90.0	3.3	.10
	6	19	84.2	68.4	-15.8	.37
	7	56	71.4	55.4	-16.0*	.34
	8	32	28.1	84.4	56.3*	1.36
Algebra I EOC		95	89.5	88.4	-1.1	.03
Non-City Year						
Reading	3	165	-	73.3	-	-
	4	131	63.4	59.5	-3.9	.08
	5	169	70.4	85.2	14.8*	.36
	6	662	82.9	48.2	-34.7*	.79
	7	630	42.4	54.9	12.5*	.25
	8	652	56.1	76.2	20.1*	.44
English I EOC		848	72.8	58.8	-14.0*	.30
Mathematics	3	166	-	77.7	-	-
	4	143	76.2	74.1	-2.1	.05
	5	164	78.0	87.8	9.8*	.26
	6	683	81.4	65.6	-15.8*	.37
	7	491	44.4	54.4	10.0*	.20
	8	709	63.8	89.1	25.3*	.64
Algebra I EOC		826	83.9	86.2	2.3	.06

Source: District State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) data file dated June 13, 2019.

Note: Only students who had STAAR data for both school years were included in the analyses. English II EOC results not reported due to minimum sample size not being met. --Not applicable since STAAR is first administered in grade 3. Diff.=Difference. EOC=End of Course. Approaches+= Approaches Grade Level or Above. *= statistical significance. Cohen's d values of .20, .50, and .80 are considered small, medium, and large, respectively (Cohen, 1992).

Overall, from 2017-18 to 2018-19, the percentage at Approaches+ decreased for City Year students on 7 out of 12 STAAR tests compared to Non-City Year students who only decreased on 5 out of 12 STAAR tests. A statistically and practically significant decrease was found for City Year students on grade 4 and 6 STAAR reading ($d=.52$ and 1.2 , respectively), grade 7 STAAR mathematics ($d=.34$), and English I EOC ($d=.86$) while Non-City Year students had a statistically and practically significant decrease on grade 6 STAAR reading and mathematics ($d=.79$ and $.37$, respectively) and English I EOC ($d=.30$). A practically significant decrease was also found for City Year students on grade 6 STAAR mathematics ($d=.37$). A larger statistically and practically significant increase was

found for City Year students on grade 5 and 8 STAAR reading ($d=.56$ and $.47$, respectively) and grade 8 STAAR mathematics ($d=1.36$) compared to Non-City Year students on the same tests ($d=.36$, $.44$, and $.64$, respectively).

Recommendations

- **Include implementation data in evaluation.** Survey and interview data from AmeriCorps members, teachers, and students should be incorporated into future evaluations to broaden the interpretability of outcome data.
- **Continue improvements in data integrity.** Data collected by City Year included intensity or dosage of support for each general category of support (i.e. literacy, mathematics, SEL) services provided to students. However, to further distinguish and determine the effects of specific support services, City Year should document the specific type of support (i.e. reading tutoring, writing tutoring, etc.) service provided to students.
- **Include measures of SEL in evaluation.** City Year provided social and emotional support services to nearly twice ($n=659$) as many students than any other support service. A direct measure of students' social and emotional learning would help distinguish the direct impact of these services compared to using the district's discipline data file, which only provides an indirect measure of behavioral outcomes.

Reference

Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 155–159.

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Dallas ISD
Department of Evaluation and Assessment
H. B. Bell School Support Service Center
2909 N. Buckner Blvd.
Box 10
Dallas, TX 75228