



# Elev8 Baltimore: Arundel Elementary

MSDE Report: SY 2020-2021

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Contributors

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## Introduction

Elev8 Baltimore is a year-round program that provides Out-of-School Time (OST) programming, school-based healthcare, and other family supports to community schools in Baltimore City. Elev8 Baltimore functions as a Lead Agency and OST provider as part of a full-service Community Schools strategy. The Community Schools strategy is an approach that positions public schools as hubs of integrated service delivery for students, families, and the broader community. OST programming in Baltimore City is intentionally aligned with the Community Schools strategy.

A Community School is both a place and set of strategic partnerships that promote student achievement, positive conditions for learning, and the well-being of families and communities. Through the work of Lead Agencies, each community school leverages unique community resources to meet needs and maintain a core focus on children, while recognizing that children grow up in families, and that families are building blocks of communities. This integrated approach is designed to lead to student success, strong families, and healthy communities.

Meanwhile, OST programs offer young people educational, recreational, and enrichment opportunities during the hours when school is not in session, extending the support services of community schools beyond the school day. They provide academic support and homework help, nutritious meals, high-quality care, and opportunities to explore new interests and experiences. OST programs are designed to promote academic benefits for youth as well as broader, non-academic benefits for youth and their families.

This report focuses on Elev8 Baltimore's programming at Arundel Elementary during the 2020-2021 school year, with particular focus on its OST program. The report is prepared by Inciter, a research and evaluation consulting firm that has served as the external evaluator for Elev8 Baltimore since 2010.

## Arundel Elementary

Arundel Elementary is a Pre-Kindergarten through 2nd grade school that was newly built and opened during the 2018-2019 school year. It is located in a recently constructed 21st Century Schools facility in the Cherry Hill neighborhood of South Baltimore. During the 2020-2021 school year, Arundel served 483 students, down from 523 students in 2019-2020. More than 95 percent of students are Black, and all students are eligible for the free lunch program. Eight percent of students have documented disabilities and less than five percent are English Language learners. As of the 2019-2020 school year, the most recent year for which data was available from Baltimore City Public Schools, the school's mobility rate was 33 percent. The average teacher tenure was 9 years, and the teacher to student ratio was 1:17, with an average class size of 16. The school also has a Judy Center providing school readiness and other services for children, birth through age four, and their families.

Arundel Elementary has been a community school since 2012-2013. Elev8 Baltimore functions as its Lead Agency and provides its community school coordinator and OST coordinator. There is a Community School Steering Committee (CSSC) in place representing a diverse group of stakeholders. At Arundel, Elev8 Baltimore cultivates strategic partnerships focused on improving attendance rates and providing integrated social and emotional supports to students and their families.

Attendance is addressed through structural supports (e.g., the creation of an attendance team) as well as incentive programs offering field trips and special lunches to those with perfect attendance. Social and emotional support interventions included gender-specific mental health workshops for parents, a student wholeness committee, and dynamic mentoring services addressing interpersonal and behavioral needs as they arise. In the context of Covid-19, food access also became a major emergent priority, with emergency food delivery supplementing existing food programs like a Thanksgiving turkey giveaway and weekend food backpacks. Arundel Elementary has a robust internet presence and actively cultivates family and community engagement through social media channels including Facebook and Twitter.

## **Arundel Elev8 OST Program**

All Elev8 OST programs follow a similar schedule. Programs are open Monday through Thursday from the time school ends until about three hours later. Programs begin with all students and staff gathering for Community Circle, a snack, and homework help, followed by Academic Hour, during which half the students focus on skill mastery using the Exact Path software system and the other half do a character development exercise. This ensures that all participants have the opportunity for academic development two days a week. This time is followed by Enrichment, which can be different for each school and includes cultural and athletic programming, culinary opportunities, and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) programming. At the end of the time, students have dinner before wrapping up and going home.

Once a month the OST programs hold “Fun Fridays” for a shorter period of time to celebrate those meeting attendance and behavioral goals. Special events are also planned and coordinated with school personnel.

In 2020-2021, the school year OST program was delivered virtually, while the summer OST program took place in person.

## Methodology

As in past years, Inciter worked closely with Elev8 program leadership and staff to develop this report.

Three guiding questions orient this work:

- I. What is the student enrollment and attendance at each school's OST program by grade?
- II. How are students using the Exact Path system to improve their skills in reading and math?
- III. What is Elev8, as a Lead Agency and OST program provider, offering in terms of daily programming and special events? How is it engaging students, their families, and the greater community?

## Data System

During the 2019-2020 school year, Elev8 transitioned from a traditional data system to a completely web-based one. Staff input data on day-to-day OST attendance (Guiding Question 1) and programming and events (Guiding Question 3) into custom data collection tools. Data on student learning activities (Guiding Question 2) is downloaded from a separate source. With technical support from Inciter, Elev8 staff are responsible for making sure the student and family data collected by Elev8's OST staff are accurate and complete.

Inciter developed a central web application that aggregates data from these disparate sources into one location and built a portal that allows Elev8 staff to access both raw data and data reports. The portal can be customized to clean and transform data, create descriptive statistics based on the raw data, and can produce tables, charts and graphs according to staff needs.

The Elev8 system keeps personally identifiable information (PII) secure by encrypting data at rest and in transit and by housing PII in production environments. Additionally, access to sensitive information is provided by Elev8 to Inciter and any Inciter access is logged in the system. Risk is managed through bi-weekly internal assessments and 48 hour notification in the event of a data breach.

This system supports Elev8 Baltimore's efforts at continuous improvement by enabling the organization to have real-time information on various critical metrics that can then be used to track and potentially improve service delivery.

## **Data Types**

### **OST Enrollment and Attendance**

Elev8 staff collect student enrollment and attendance data and enter it into Excel spreadsheets.

### **Skill Mastery Using Exact Path**

Skill mastery is assessed using Exact Path data. Exact Path is a personalized learning platform that includes assessment-driven math, reading, and language arts instruction. Students begin by taking an adaptive diagnostic assessment and are given an individualized learning plan based on their performance. The Exact Path system tracks logins, activity, usage, and results, which are exported to the portal on a monthly basis throughout the school year.

### **Events**

Elev8 staff enter data on the number and types of family support services and advocacy activities that families receive at all Elev8 Baltimore schools.

To collate events data, Elev8 staff enter event type, attendance, and other data into a Google form, which is uploaded into the portal. These events vary widely, from field trips for students with good attendance, Spooky Math nights, or a High School choice fair for 8th graders, to events geared toward parents and the community, such as self-care and health-oriented events, parenting seminars, and men's support groups. Data are categorized by whether they occurred once or several times; which stakeholder and age groups they supported; and by event type.

Event types include:

- **Barrier removal:** Events that remove barriers to optimal learning, such as vision screening and free glasses, a weekly produce market, and free flu shots and health screenings;

- Educational support: Events that further education in some way, such as Black History Month programming, math and literacy nights, and a trip to a local state college for high school students;
- General meeting: Events that range from one-time student assemblies or sessions to help interested students to find a job or sign up for driver's education classes, to recurring working meetings for all stakeholders to coordinate school initiatives or monthly parent breakfasts with a focus on engagement;
- Leadership development: Events that focus on student and/or parent/community leadership, such as quarterly awards for students who excelled during that time, a seminar for parents and staff on conflict mediation, and a training session for students to be grant proposal reviewers for summer funding;
- Out-of-school time: Special events that take place after school, such as a gardening club, a fashion enrichment club, and assisting the Student Government in organizing and preparing for a Winter Formal.



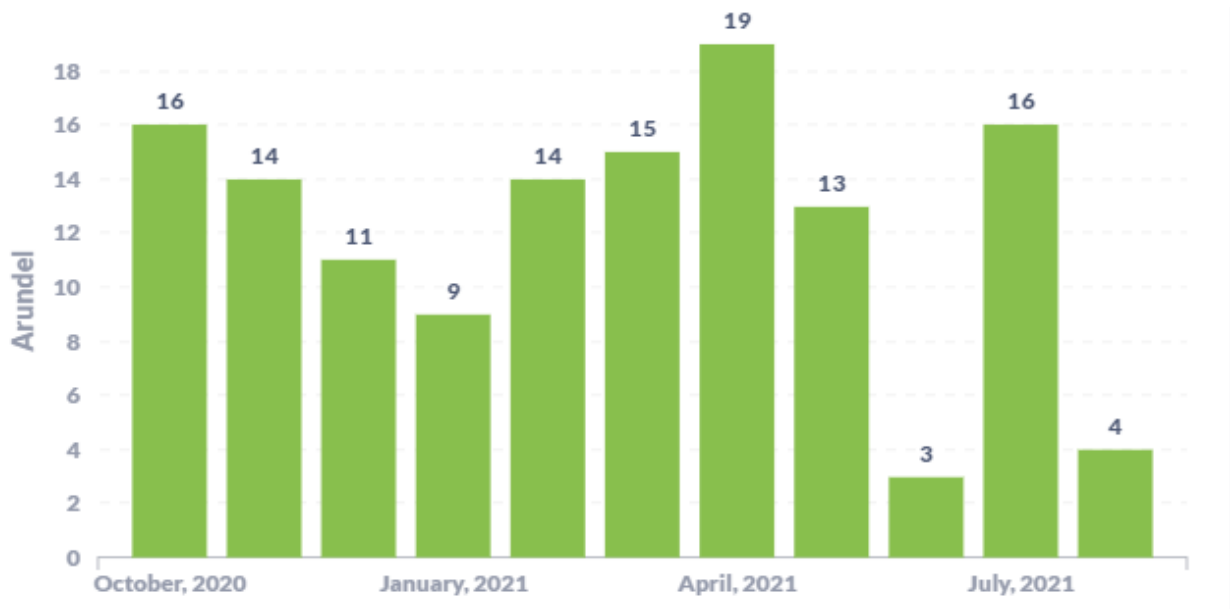
## Findings

### Out-of School Time Enrollment and Attendance

The Elev8 OST program at Arundel Elementary operated 134 days between October 2020 and August 2021. The first day of school year programming was October 5, 2020, and the final day of school year programming was May 20, 2021. The program also operated over the summer.

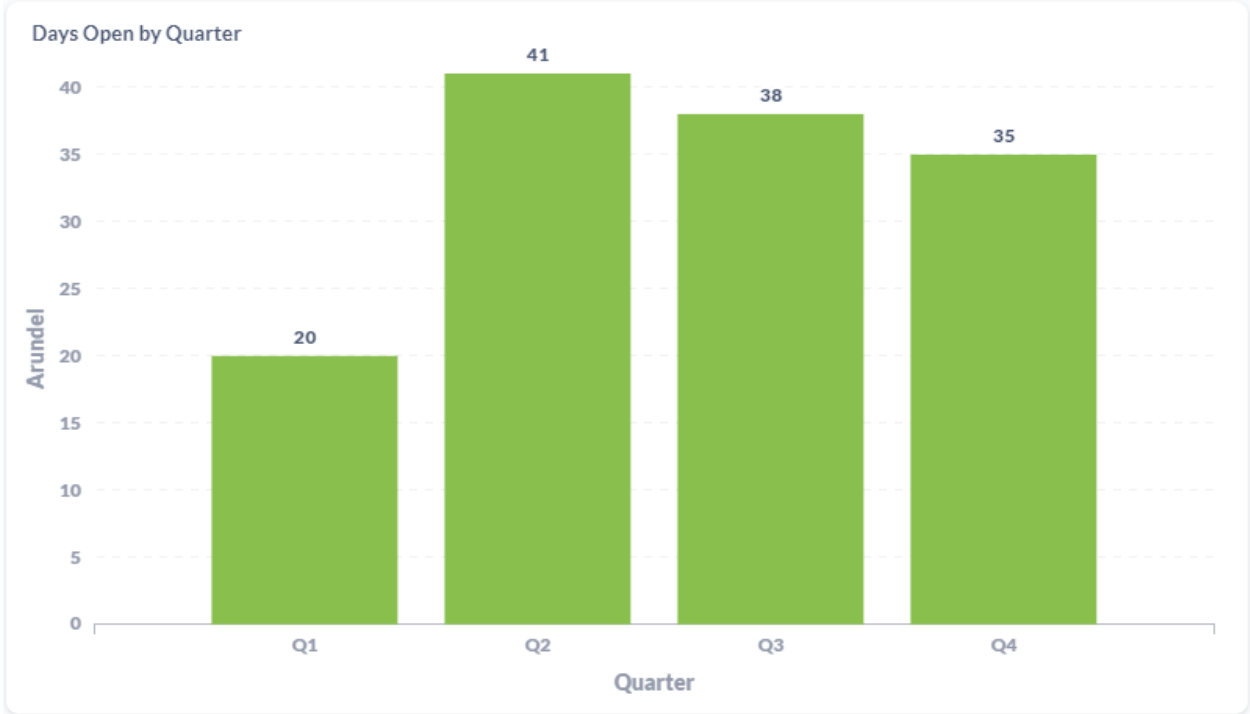
Figure 1 shows the number of days the program was open each month between October 2020 and August 2021. The program was open the greatest number of days in April (n=19), and the fewest in June (n=3).

Figure 1: OST Days Open, by Month



By quarter, as shown in Figure 2, the program was open the most days in Q2 (defined as October, November, and December), and the fewest days in Q1 (defined as June, July, and September).

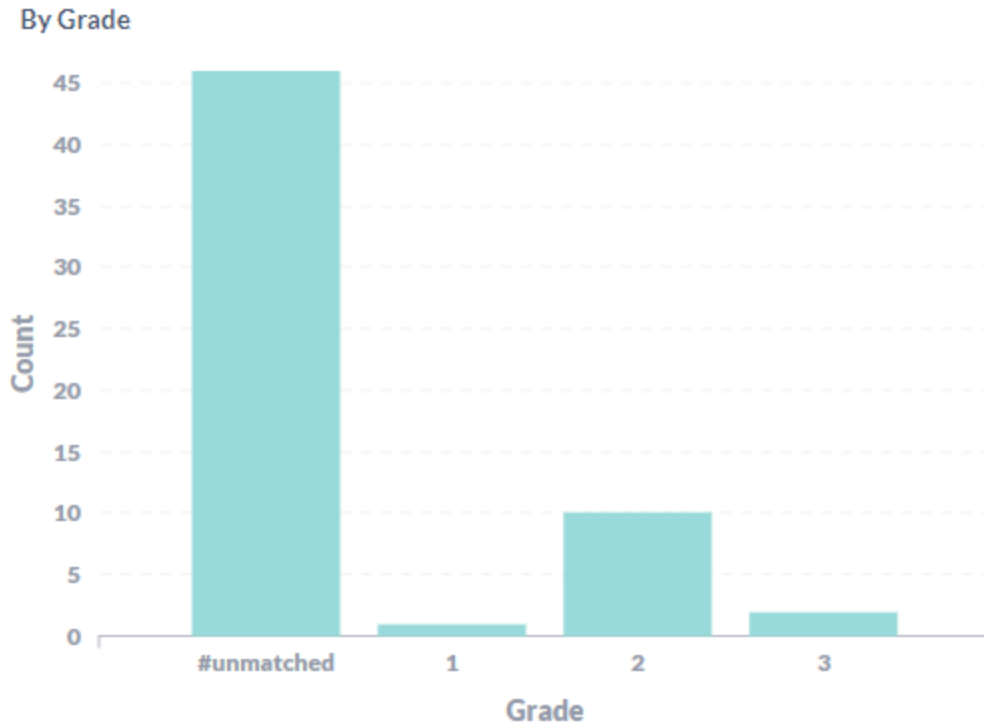
Figure 2: OST Days Open, by Quarter



The OST program served 59 students at Arundel Elementary over the 2020-2021 school year.

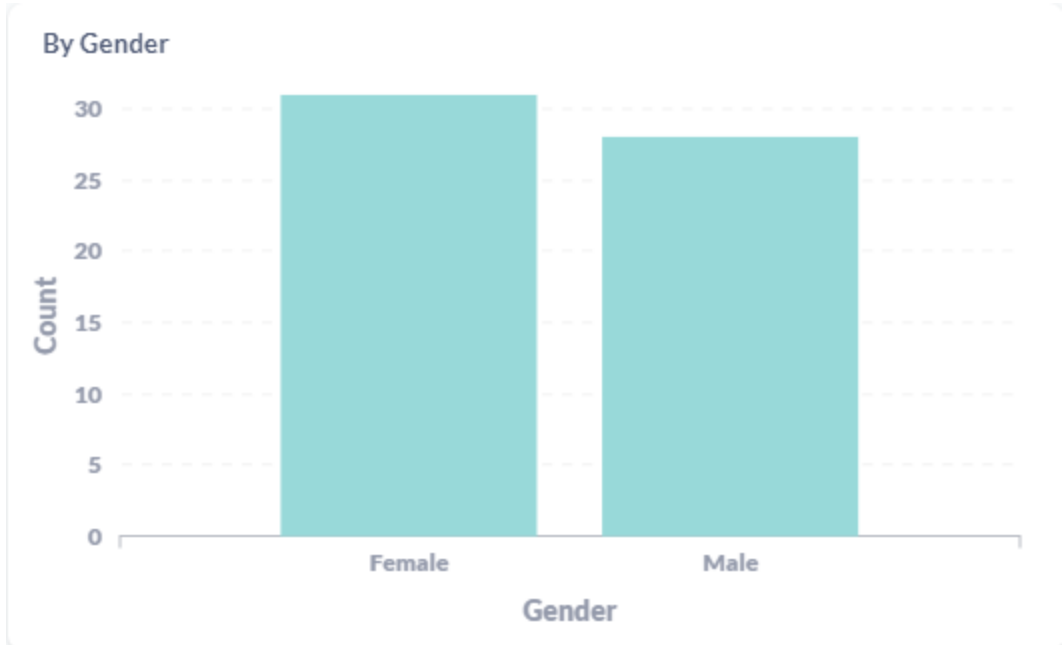
As shown in Figure 3, many of these students (n=46) had no grade levels associated with their student IDs in OST attendance records, so it is not possible to state with certainty how many hail from each grade.

Figure 3: OST Enrollment by Grade



As shown in Figure 4, girls comprised 53 percent of enrolled students (31 of 59), and boys 47 percent (28 of 59).

Figure 4: OST Enrollment by Gender

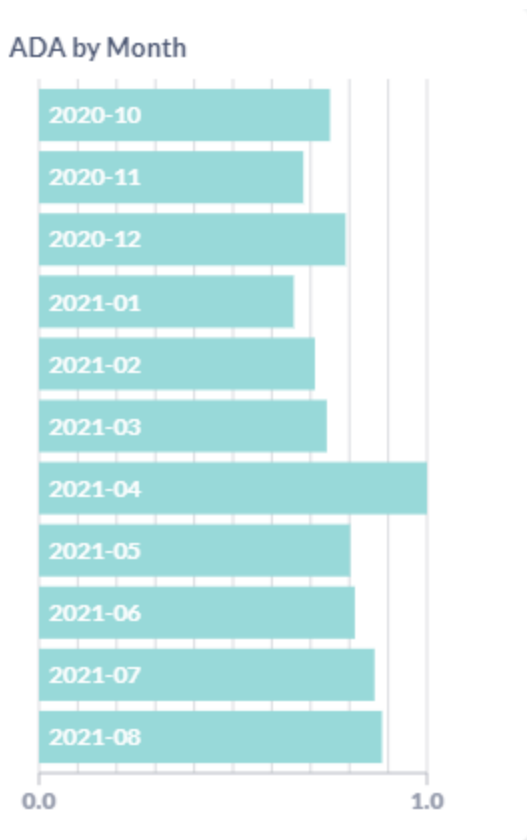


Average daily attendance in the Arundel OST program, averaged across all months, was 81 percent.

Average daily attendance refers to the average daily attendance rate of retained students each day the program was open. Average daily attendance is calculated as the sum of the number of days attended divided by the sum of the number of days a program was open.

The average daily attendance rates seem to vary seasonally. Average daily attendance rates were lowest in November and January (66 and 68 percent respectively) and highest in April and over the summer months (100 percent in April, 86 percent in July, and 88 percent in August).

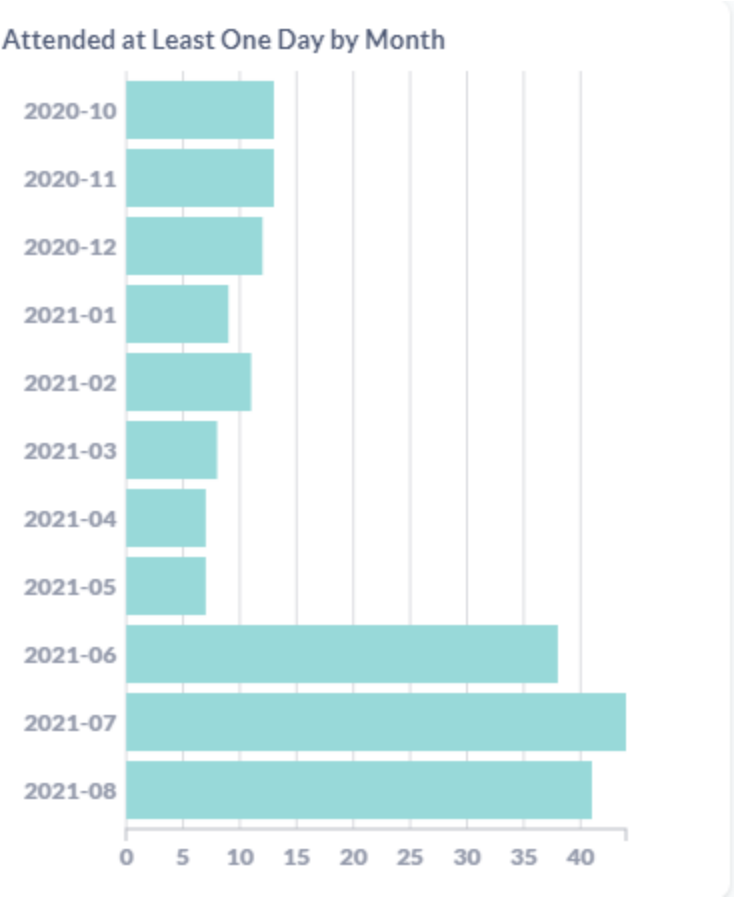
Figure 5: Average Daily Attendance by Month



The raw number of students attending OST programming was higher over the summer than during the school year. As shown in Figure 6, during the school year, the maximum number of students attending at least one day of OST programming was 13 (in September and October), with attendance generally declining over the course of the school year to a low of seven (n=7) in May.

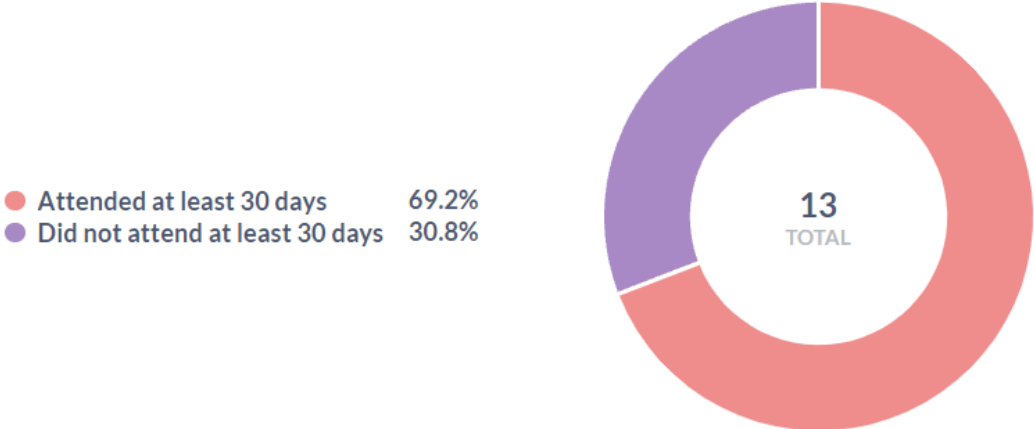
Over the summer months, 38 students attended at least one day in June, 44 attended at least one day in July, and 41 attended at least one day in August. This is likely a function, at least in part, of the delivery method, and the challenges of maintaining participation and engagement with virtual OST programming.

Figure 6: Number of Students Attending at Least One Day by Month



Focusing on the subset of students attending school year OST programming, approximately 69 percent of students attended 30 or more days of programming between October 2020 and May 2021. By comparison, in 2019-2020, nearly 88 percent of students attended 30 or more days of programming. Some of the difference is likely due to virtual mode of program delivery.

Figure 7: OST Enrollment by 30 Day Benchmark, 2020-2021.

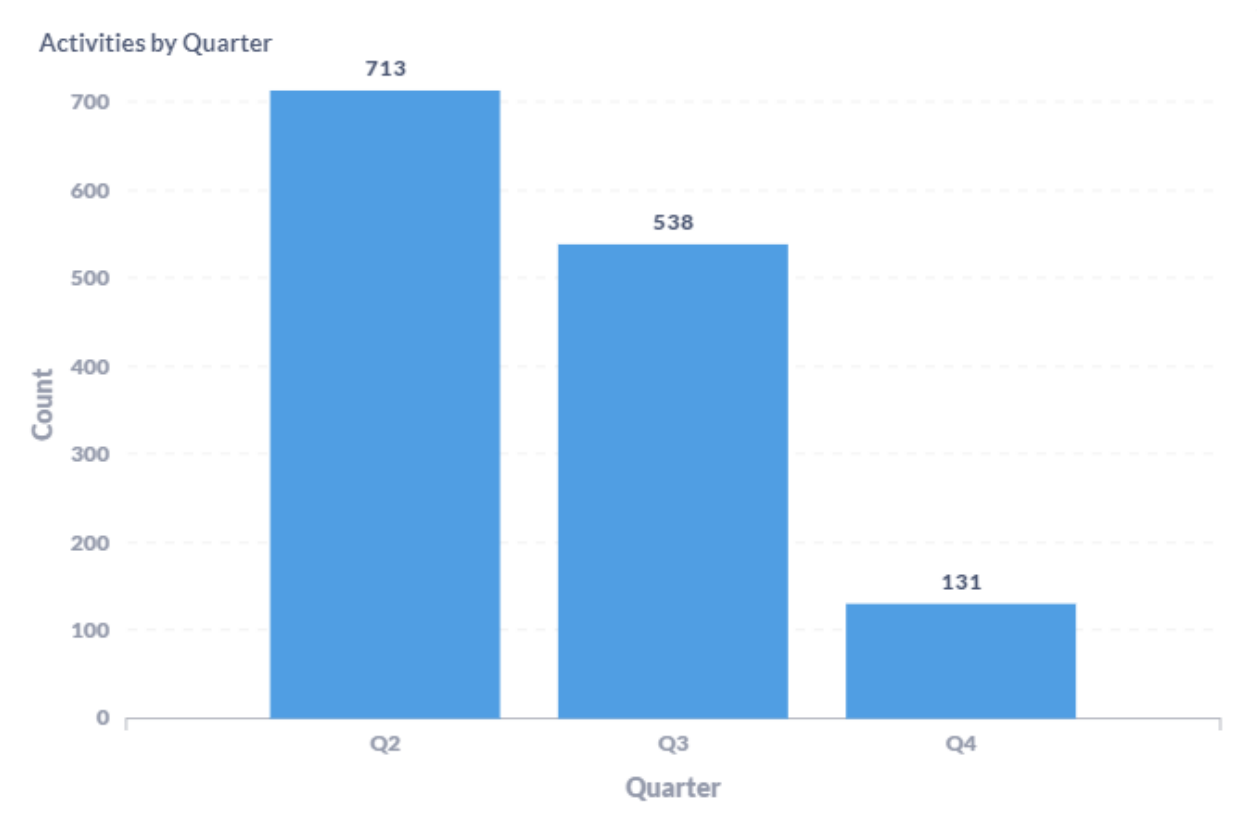


## Exact Path

Students at Arundel Elementary used the Exact Path system from October 12, 2020 to May 10, 2021, attempting lessons 1,382 times during this period.

As shown in Figure 8, most lessons (n=713) were attempted in Q2 (October, November, and December of 2020). In Q3 (January, February, and March of 2021), 538 lessons were attempted, and in Q4 (April, May, and June of 2021), 131 lessons were attempted.

Figure 8: Activities by Quarter



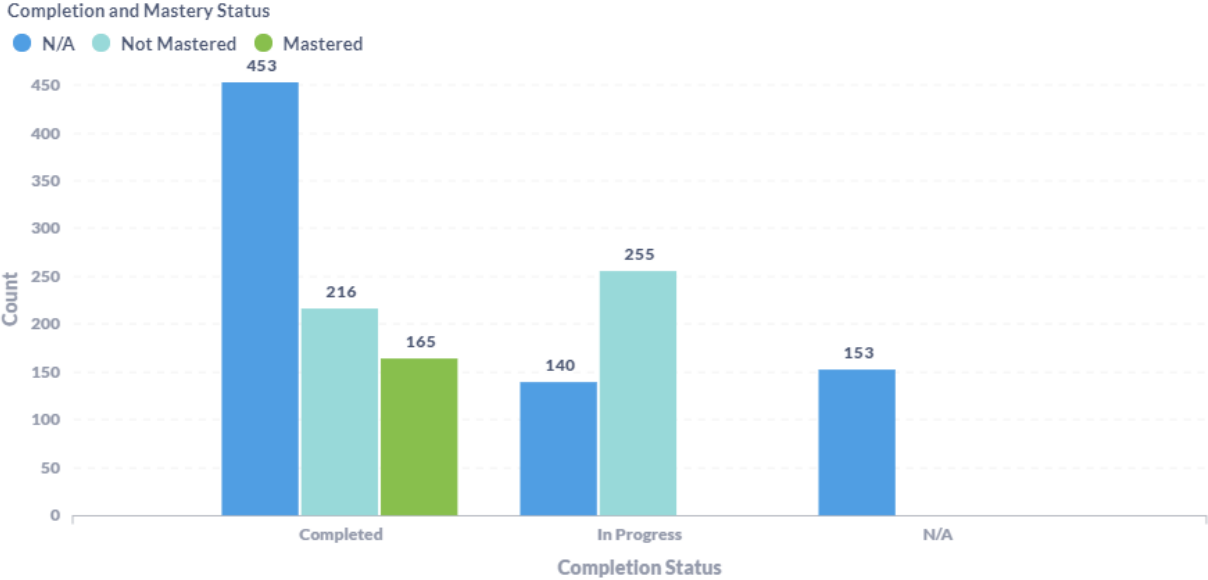
A total of 101 Arundel Elementary students used the platform.

It is worth noting, however, that approximately 37 percent of all Elev8 Exact Path data from school year 2020-2021 was not associated with a particular school name and had to be excluded from reporting. As a result, the actual number of Arundel students who used the Exact Path platform could be higher.



Figure 9 indicates that of the 1,382 attempted lessons, a total of 834 lessons (60.3 percent) were completed. Of 834 lessons completed, 165 skills were mastered.

Figure 9: Completion and Mastery Status

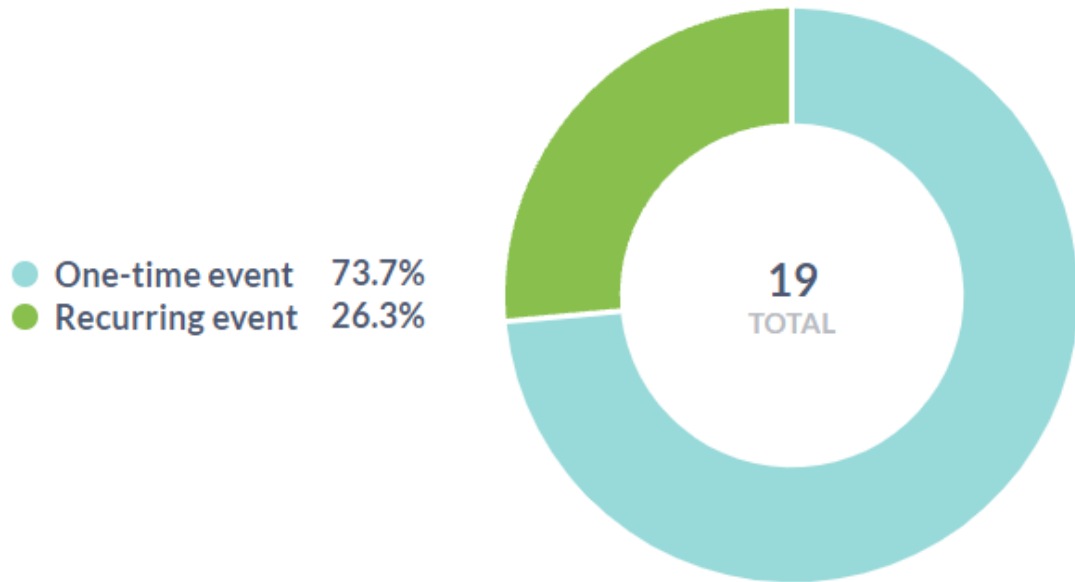


Due to previously mentioned challenges with Exact Path data for school year 2020-2021 on page 15, no information is available for Arundel Elementary on the number of skills developed in reading versus math.

## Events

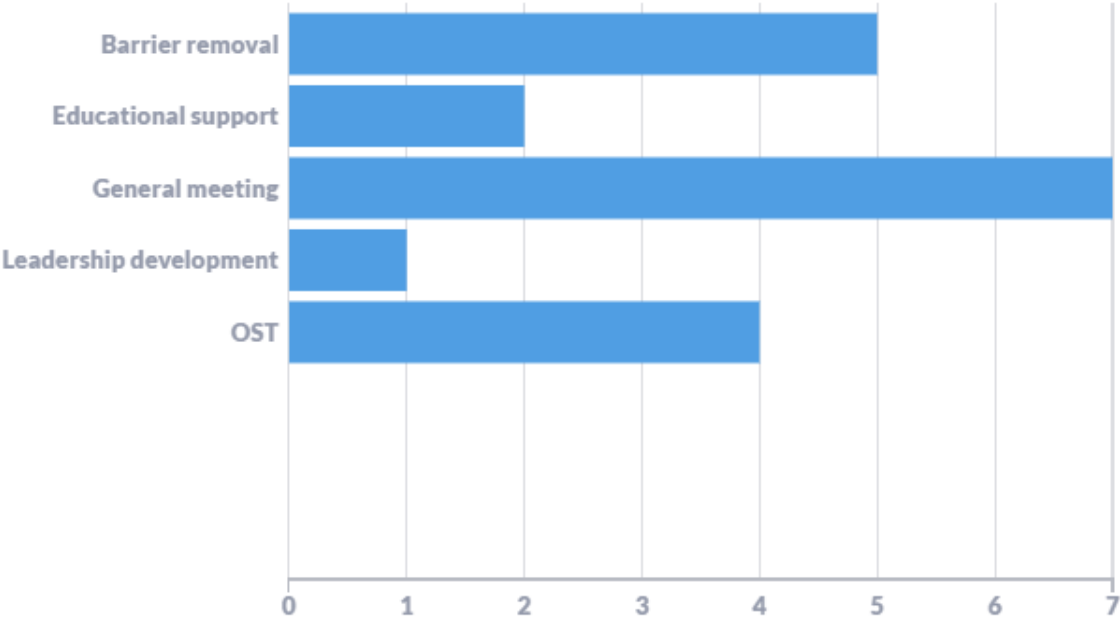
Elev8 at Arundel Elementary organized and hosted 19 events between September 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021. Nearly three quarters of these, or 14, were one-time events. The remaining five (n=5) were recurring events. (For this calculation, a set of recurring events is counted as at least one recurring event.)

Figure 10: Event Recurrence



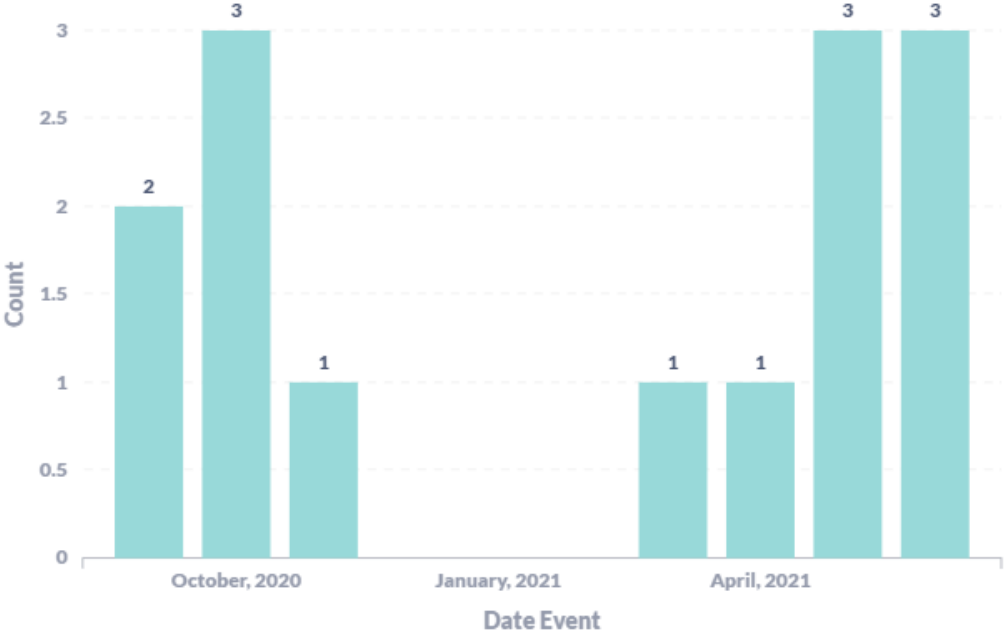
As shown in Figure 11 below, seven (n=7) were general meetings, five (n=5) were barrier removal events, four (n=4) were OST-related events, two (n=2) were educational support events, and one (n=1) was a leadership development event.

Figure 11: Events by Event Type



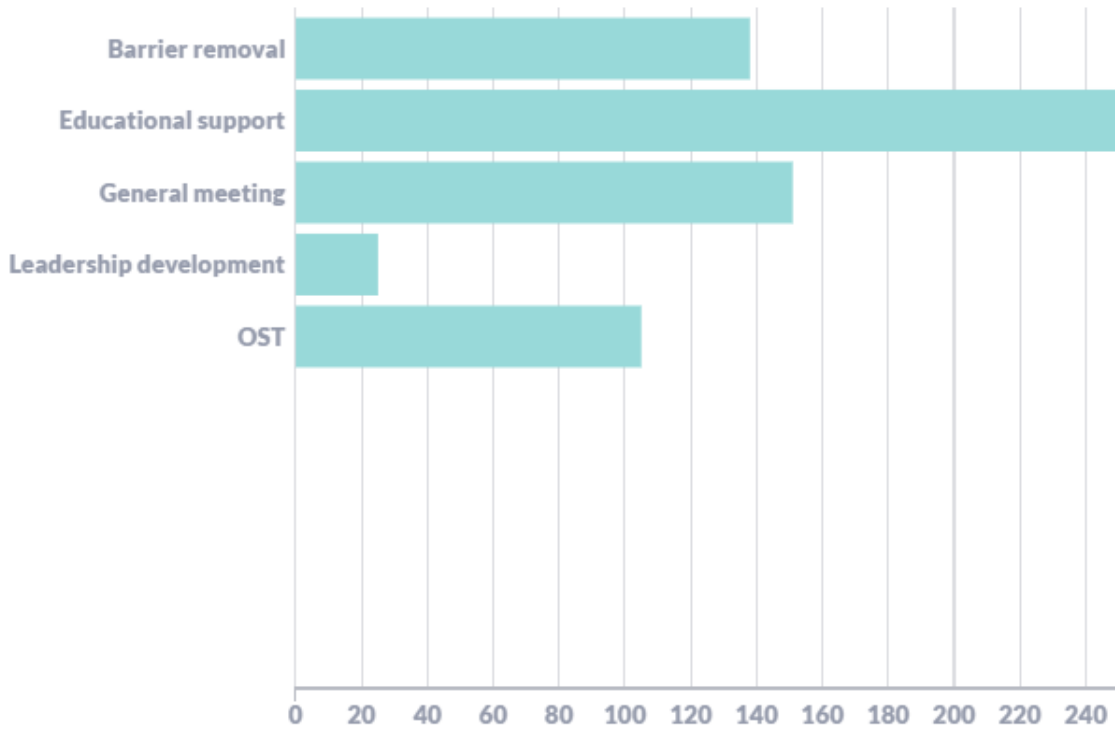
Looking more closely at one-time events, the majority occurred toward the beginning or the end of the school year, with two (n=2) events in September, three (n=3) in October, three (n=3) in May, and three (n=3) in June.

Figure 12: One-Time Event Timing



Continuing the focus on one-time events, an estimated 250 stakeholders were impacted by educational support events, 151 by general meeting events, 138 by barrier removal events, 105 by OST events, and 25 by leadership development events.

Figure 13: Estimated Number of Stakeholders Supported



Shifting the focus to recurring events, three (n=3) recurring events recurred weekly (e.g., a Virtual Parent Power Hour on Zoom, which had 17 occurrences), while one (n=1) recurred near-daily (the OST program), and one (n=1) recurred monthly (Arundel Food Pantry Grab and Go).

## Conclusions

Broadly speaking, the 2020-2021 school year was an unusual, unprecedented one, characterized by substantial disruptions to service delivery, and to a lesser extent, data collection.

The school year began with virtual instruction, and shifted to optional, in-person learning in March. The OST program operated virtually during the school year, and in-person over the summer.

Enrollment and attendance in the OST program was greater during the summer than during the school year. This is not surprising as virtual participation and engagement are especially challenging to maintain with the youngest learners, like those served by Arundel Elementary.

Exact Path data for Arundel Elementary students were not available to report on in the same degree of detail as in past years, particularly as they relate to specific skills in reading and math. This is likely due to a variety of overlapping challenges posed by the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite these challenges, Elev8 continued to offer a robust suite of daily programming and special events to students, families, and the greater community.

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