



# Elev8 Baltimore: Sandtown-Winchester Achievement Academy

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 Sandtown-Winchester Achievement Academy 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.

## **Sandtown-Winchester Achievement Academy**

Sandtown-Winchester Achievement Academy serves 400 students in grades Pre-K through 8 in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood of West Baltimore. It is a relatively new elementary and middle school that was created with the merger of students from William Pinderhughes Elementary/Middle School and Gilmore Elementary School. The student population at Sandtown-Winchester is over 95 percent Black, with 16 percent of students diagnosed with disabilities, and less than 5 percent classified as English language learners. The average teacher tenure is 8 years, the teacher to student ratio is 1:27, and the average class size is 16 students. Sandtown-Winchester has been a community school since 2012-2014 (in its previous iteration as William Pinderhughes Elementary/Middle). Areas of focus include mentoring services (e.g. in classrooms, for girls, and with a literacy focus); and food security (e.g. food pantry, weekly groceries for homeless students and those in transitional housing).

### **Sandtown-Winchester 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) and into custom data collection tools. Data on student learning activities (Guiding Question 2) is downloaded from a separate source. Inciter developed a central web application that aggregates data from 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.

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. 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;

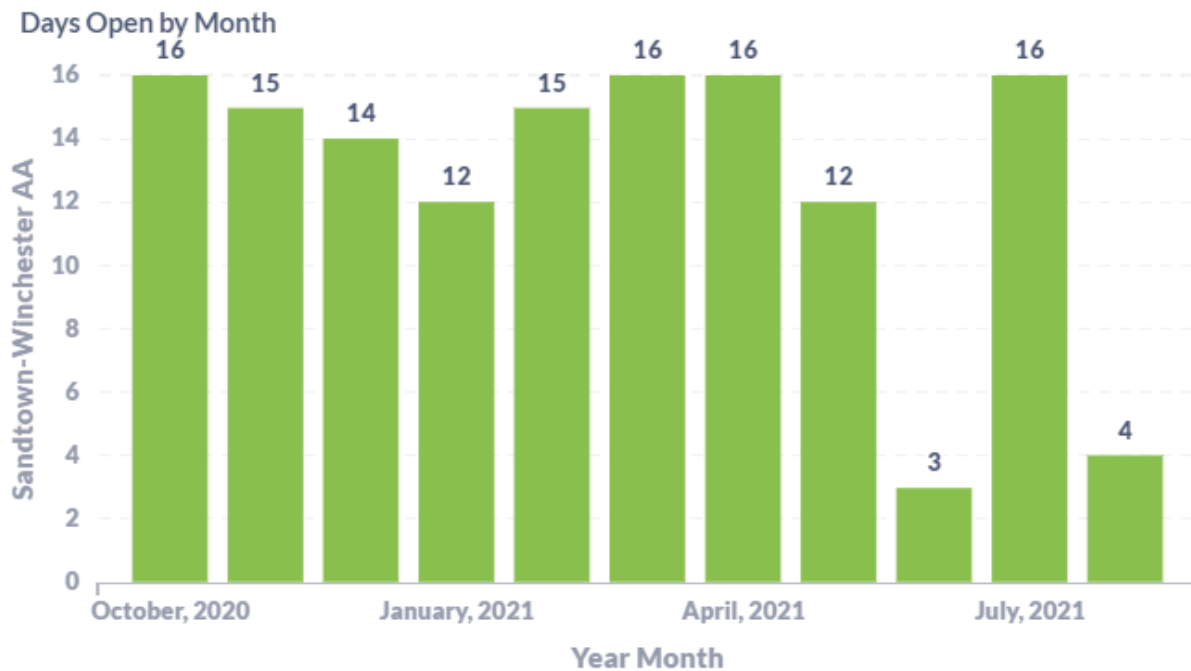
- Leadership development: Events that focus on student and/or parent/community leadership, such as quarterly awards for students who excelled during that time, a seminar for parents and staff on conflict mediation, and a training session for students to be grant proposal reviewers for summer funding;
- 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 2020-2021 school year OST program at Sandtown-Winchester Achievement Academy began October 5, 2020 and ended on May 20, 2021. The program operated 116 days during the regular school year, and 23 days during the summer. Figure 1 shows the number of days the program was open by month.

Figure 1: OST Days Open, by Month

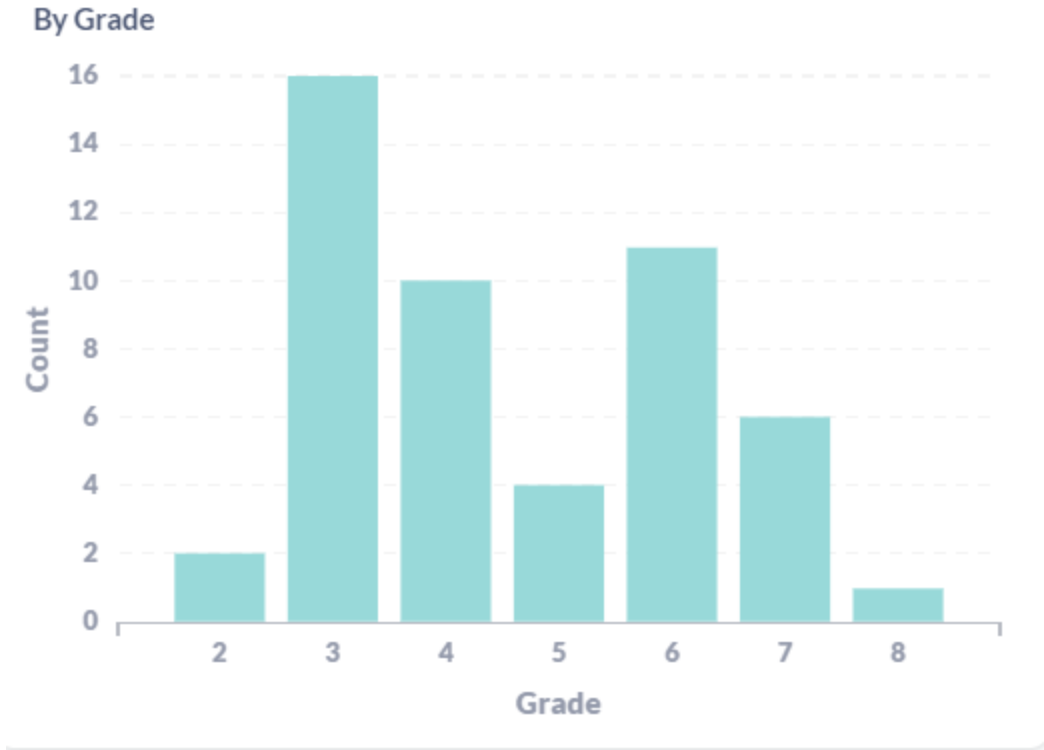




The OST program served 50 students at Sandtown-Winchester Achievement Academy during 2020-2021.

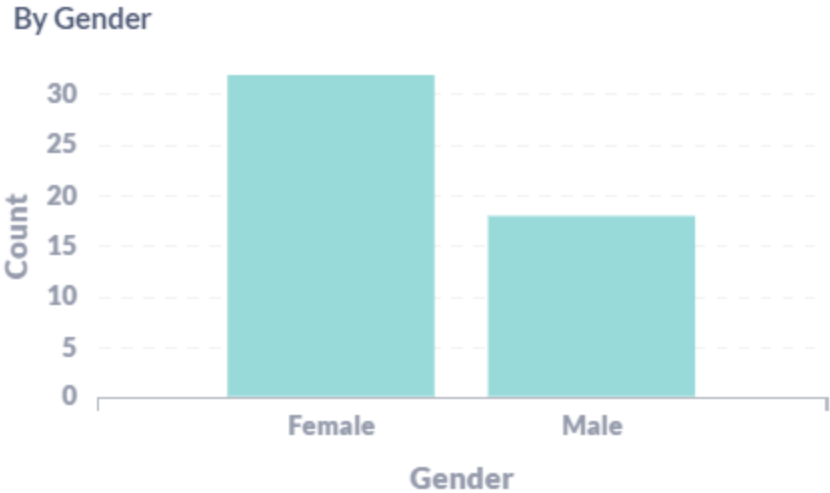
As shown in Figure 2, this included two (n=2) second graders, 16 third graders, ten (n=10) fourth graders, four (n=4) fifth graders, 11 sixth graders, six (n=6) seventh graders, and one (n=1) eighth grader.

Figure 2: OST Enrollment by Grade



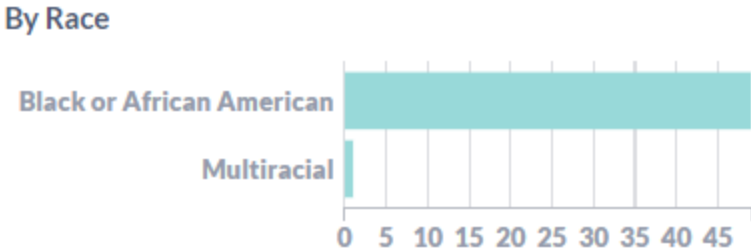
As shown in Figure 3, girls comprised 64 percent of enrolled students (32 of 50), and boys 36 percent (18 of 50).

Figure 3: OST Enrollment by Gender



None of the enrolled students identify as Hispanic. Almost all enrolled students identify as Black or African American (49 of 50).

Figure 4: OST Enrollment by Race

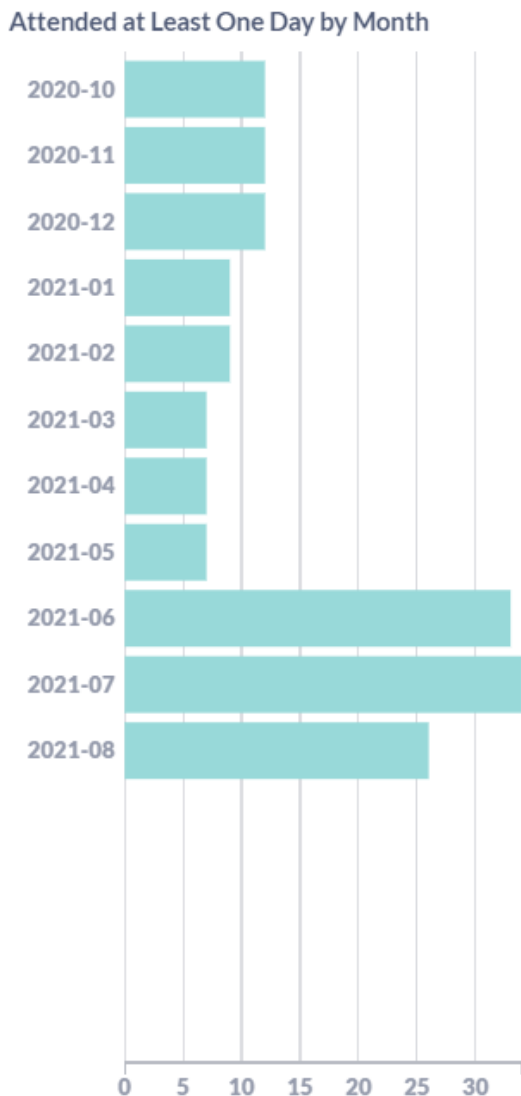


Attendance in the OST program was much lower during the school year than in the summer. This is likely related to the virtual mode of programming delivery.

In October, November, and December, 12 students attended at least one day of programming. This figure dropped to nine (n=9) in January and February, and dropped again to seven (n=7) in March, April, and May.

During the summer, by contrast, 33 students attended at least one day in June, 34 attended at least one day in July, and 26 attended at least one day in August.

Figure 5: Attended at Least One Day by Month

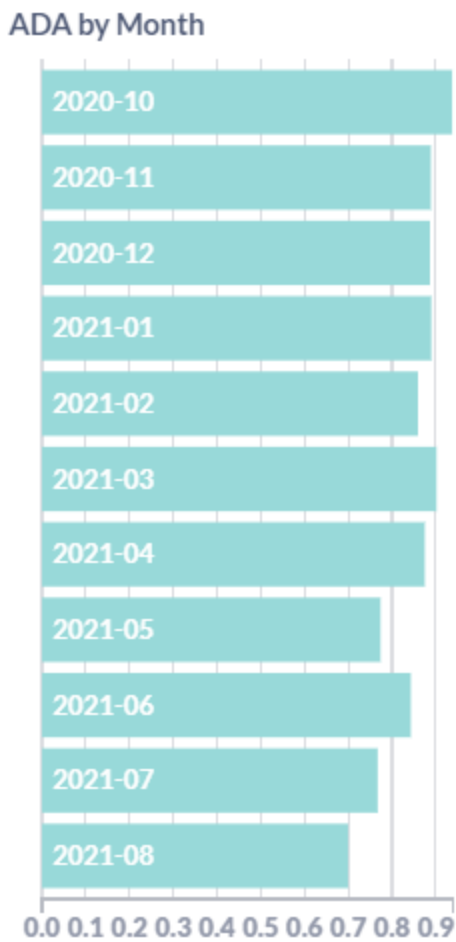


Despite the relatively low numbers of students attending OST programming during the school year, the average daily attendance rate was quite high during the school year.

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. Average daily attendance refers to the average daily attendance rate of retained students each day the program was open.

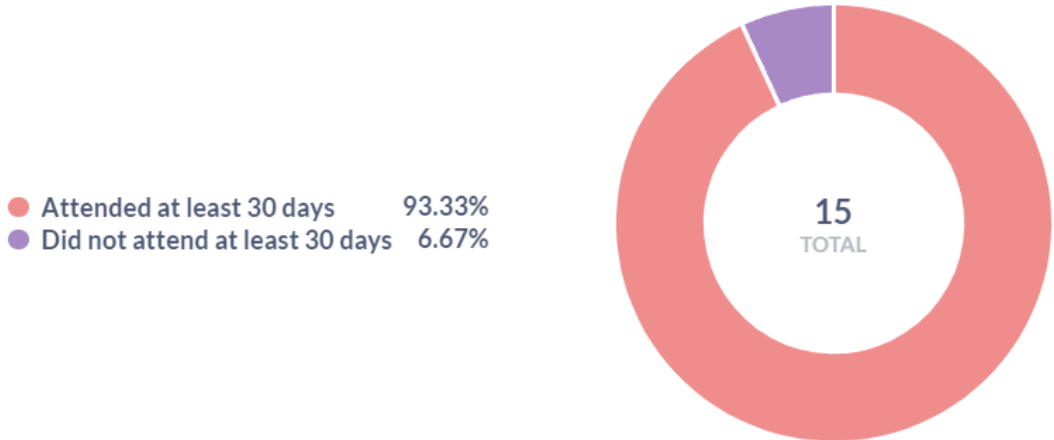
During the school year OST program, the average daily attendance rate was 88 percent. By comparison, the average daily attendance rate during the summer was 77 percent. This means that although fewer students attended the school year program, these students attended more regularly.

Figure 6: Average Daily Attendance by Month



Focusing on the subset of students attending school year OST programming, approximately 93 percent attended 30 or more days.

Figure 7: OST Enrollment by 30 Day Benchmark



The discrepancy between the total number of students in Figure 7 (n=15) and the greatest number of students attending at least one day a month in Figure 5 (n=13) suggests that new students came into the program midway through the year.

# Exact Path

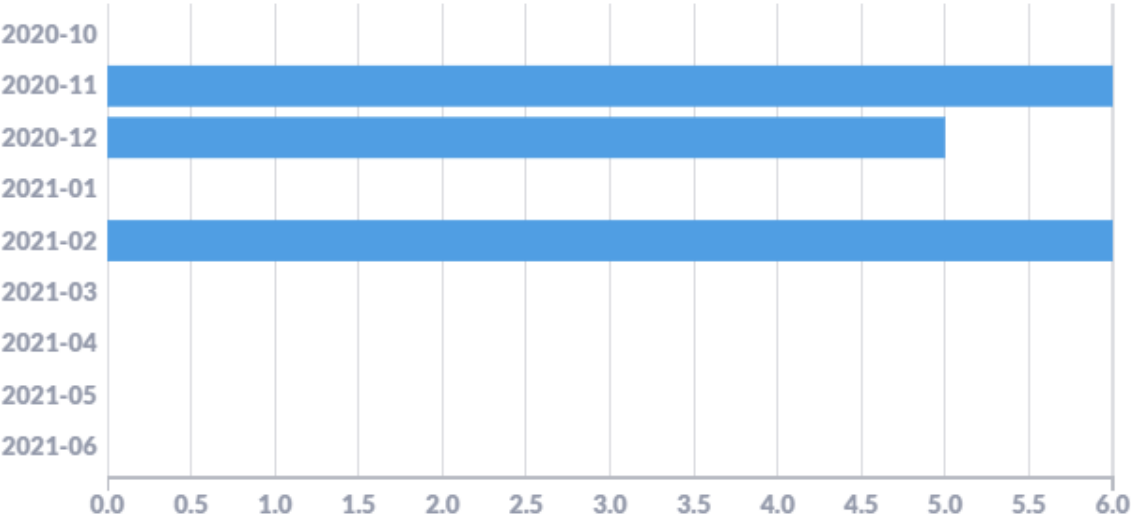
During the 2020-2021 academic year, 53 students at Sandtown-Winchester logged into Exact Path.

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 Sandtown-Winchester students who used the Exact Path platform could be higher.

Of the 53 students associated with Sandtown-Winchester, four (n=4) students mastered 17 skills: two (n=2) second graders mastered seven mathematics skills, one (n=1) third grader mastered one mathematics skill, and one (n=1) eighth grader mastered 9 mathematics skills.

By month, skill mastery was accomplished in November (6 skills), February (6 skills), and December (5 skills).

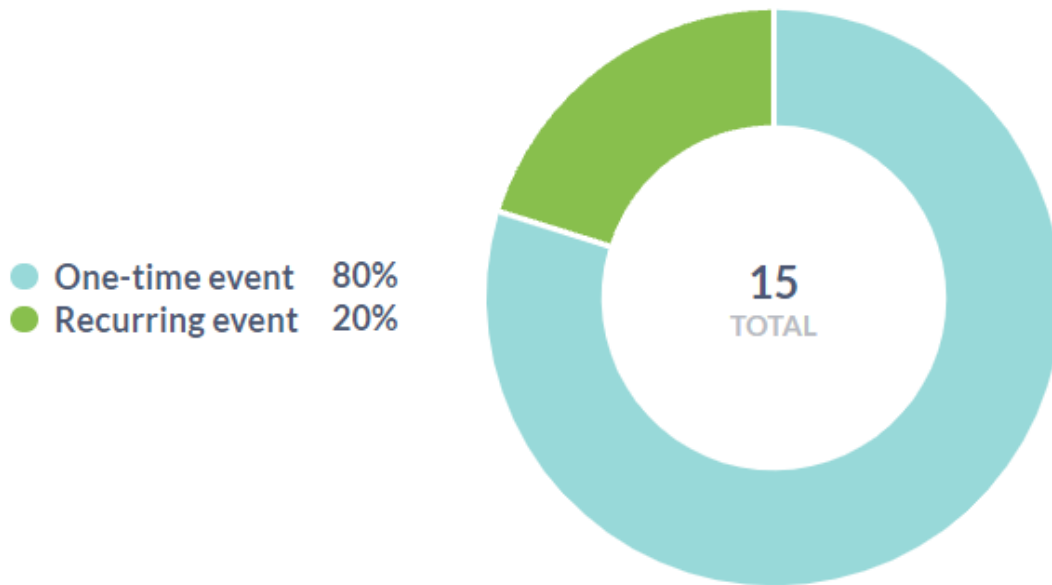
Figure 8: Skills Mastered by Month



## Events

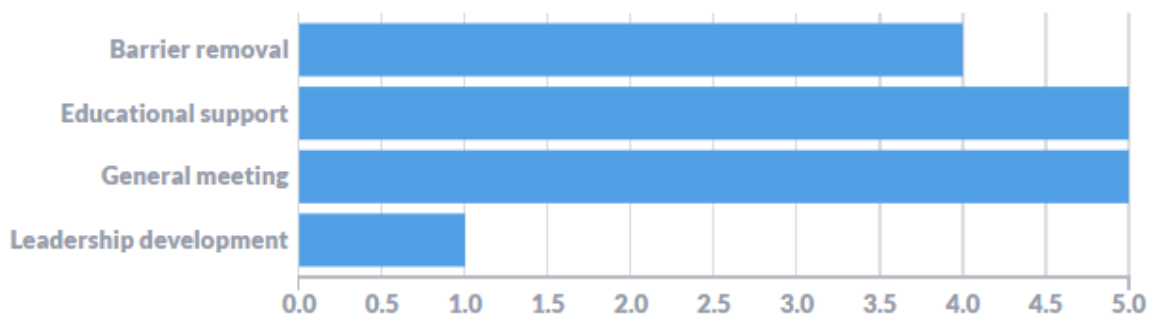
Elev8 at Sandtown-Winchester Achievement Academy organized and hosted 15 events between September 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021. The majority of these, or 12, were one-time events. The remaining three (n=3) were recurring events.

Figure 9: Event Recurrence



By event type, five each (n=5) were educational support events and general meeting events, four (n=4) were barrier removal events, and one (n=1) was a leadership development event.

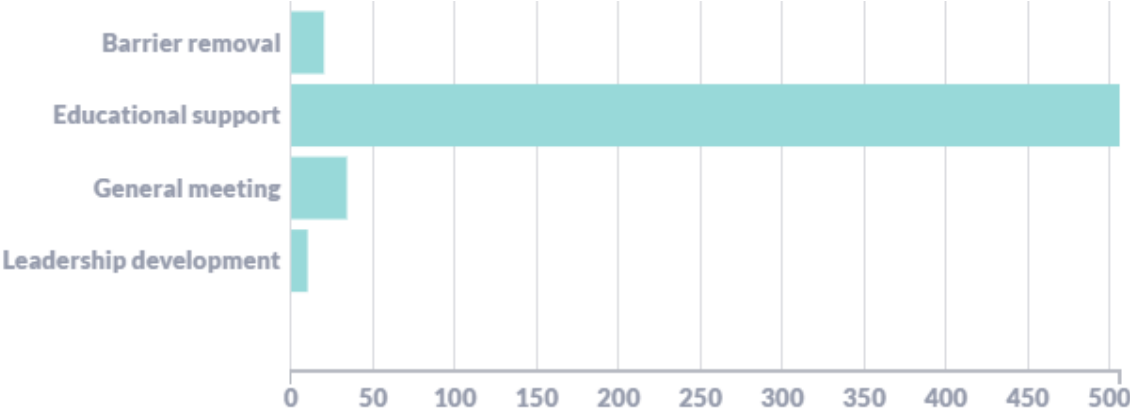
Figure 10: Event Type



Educational support events included a holiday music program during the school day, a back to school information session and school supply giveaway, and virtual achievement ceremony. Barrier removal events included monthly outdoor pantry events to support families with food access as well as a vaccine clinic outside the schools for adults and students age 12 and up. General meetings included a family planning Zoom meeting to discuss a beautification project on school grounds, and a parent-led discussion about the community-led Sandtown Master Plan.

In terms of the estimated number of stakeholders supported, there are 570 total across all events, with the majority supported through educational support events.

Figure 11: Estimated Quantity of Stakeholders Supported





## 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.

Not surprisingly, raw numbers around enrollment and attendance in the OST program were greater during the summer than during the school year. This is not surprising as virtual participation and engagement are especially challenging to maintain. However, those students who did attend the virtual OST program during the school year had very regular attendance.

Exact Path data for Sandtown-Winchester students was not available to report on in the same degree of detail as in past years. This is likely due to a variety of overlapping challenges posed by the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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

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