Elev8 Baltimore:
Southwest Baltimore Charter School

MSDE Report: SY 2020-2021

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Contributors
Claire Fontaine, Ph.D.

Inciter
Data. Driven.

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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 Southwest Baltimore Charter School 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.

Southwest Baltimore Charter School

Southwest Baltimore Charter Schools serves 427 students in grades K through 8. The student population is 84 percent Black, 7 percent white, and 5 percent Hispanic. Less than 5 percent of the student body are classified as English language learners, and 17 percent are diagnosed with disabilities. The average teacher tenure is 7 years and the teacher to student ratio is 1:14.

Southwest Baltimore Charter School 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 Southwest Baltimore Charter School OST program operated during summer 2021 only.

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. 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 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.

No Exact Path data are available for Southwest Baltimore Charter School this 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.
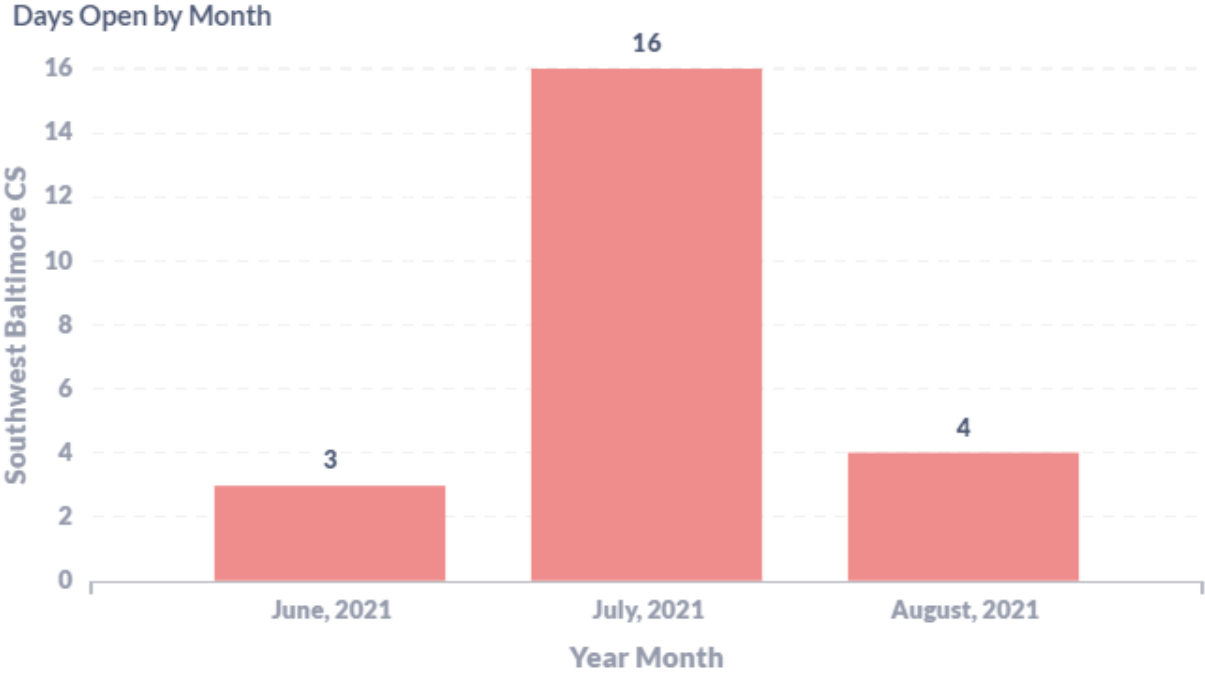
No events data are available for Southwest Baltimore Charter School this year.

Findings
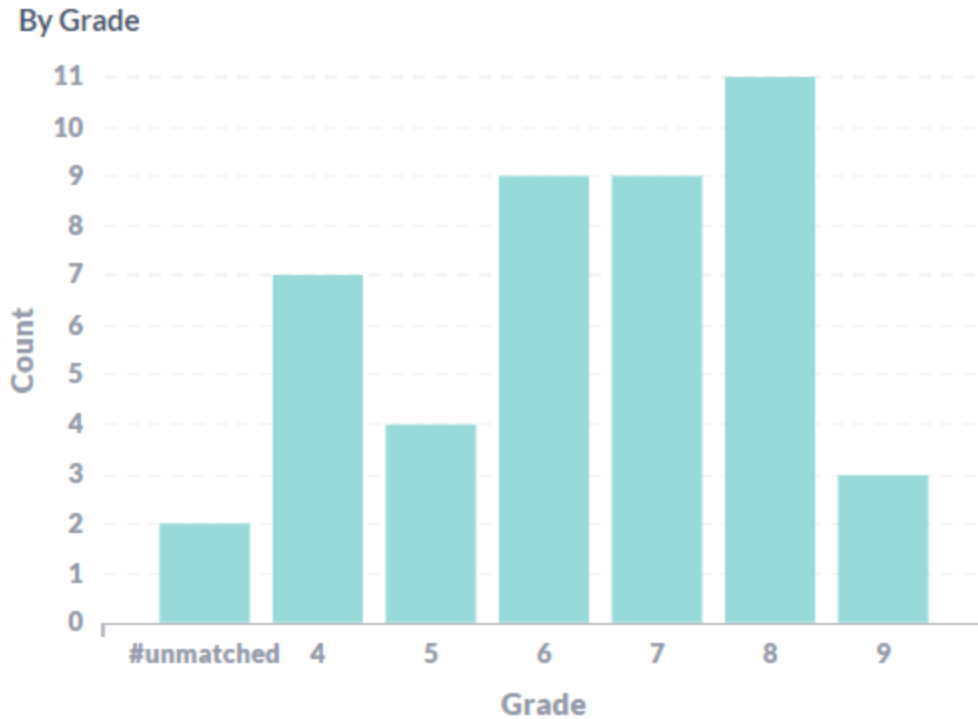
Out-of School Time Enrollment and Attendance

The 2020-2021 OST program at Southwest Baltimore Charter School began June 28, 2021 and ended on August 5, 2021, operating for a total of 23 days. Figure 1 shows the number of days the program was open by month.
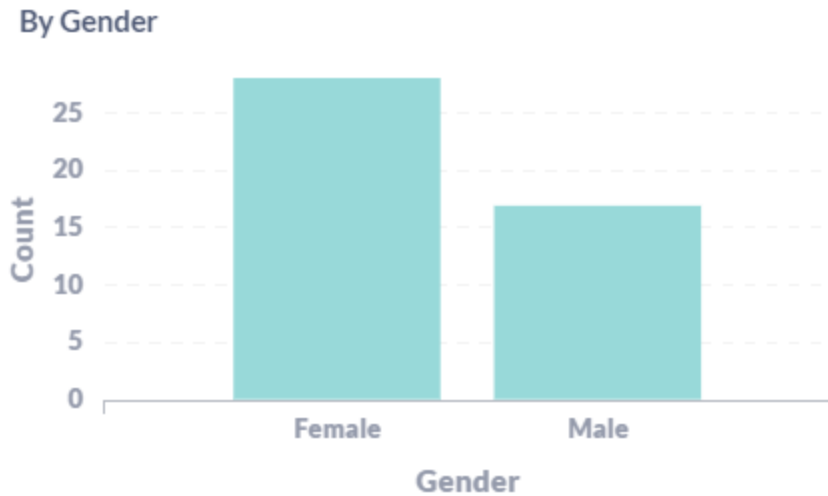
Figure 1: OST Days Open, by Month

The OST program served 45 students. As shown in Figure 2, this included seven (n=7) fourth graders, four (n=4) fifth graders, nine (n=9) sixth graders, nine (n=9) seventh graders, 11 eighth graders, and three (n=3) ninth graders. An additional two (n=2) students were "unmatched," meaning no grade levels were associated with the student IDs provided in OST attendance records.

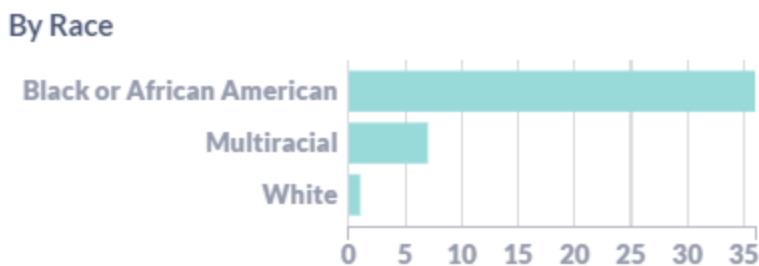Figure 2: OST Enrollment by Grade

As shown in Figure 3, girls comprised 62 percent of enrolled students (28 of 45), and boys 38 percent (17 of 45).
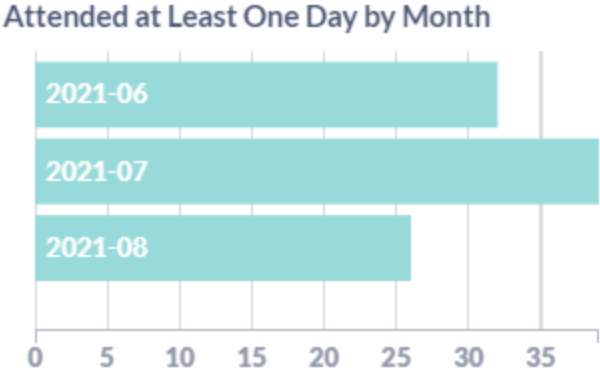
Figure 3: OST Enrollment by Gender

By Gender

Hispanic-identifying students represent 11 percent of the total enrollment (5 of 45 students). Additionally, 36 students, or 80 percent of students identify as Black or African American, seven (n=7) as multiracial, and one (n=1) as white.

Figure 4: OST Enrollment by Race

By Race

As shown in Figure 5, over the summer, 32 students attended at least one day in June, 39 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

Attended at Least One Day by Month

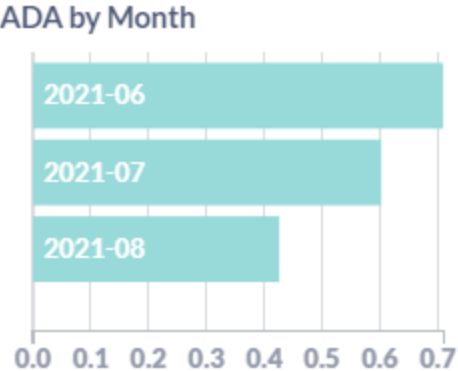| Month	Value
2021-06	32
2021-07	39
2021-08	26

Average daily attendance over the summer session was 58 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.

Average daily attendance was highest in June, at 71 percent, slightly lower in July at 60 percent, and lowest in August at 43 percent.

Figure 6: Average Daily Attendance by Month

ADA by Month

Month	Value
2021-06	0.71
2021-07	0.60
2021-08	0.43

Exact Path

No Exact Path data are available for Southwest Baltimore Charter School in 2020 - 2021.

Events

No events data are available for Southwest Baltimore Charter School in 2020 - 2021.

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. There was no OST program during the school year, but the program operated in-person over the summer, for a few days at the end of June, the entire month of July, and a few days at the beginning of August.

The majority of participants in the summer OST program (64 percent, or 29 of 45 participants) were rising middle schoolers. Female-identifying students were over-represented, as were Hispanic-identifed students.

Exact Path and events data was unavailable for this reporting period.

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