

Bridge Builders COLLABORATE

Evaluation of Program Activities in 2016-2017

BRIDGES, Internal Evaluation

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Program Overview

The Bridge Builders® program is experiential, relational and transformational. All activities are built around an experiential learning cycle which begins with a hands-on experience and cycles through a series of debriefing questions. These questions allow students to reflect on what they just did, what they learned and how they can apply these lessons to their lives. The Bridge Builders COLLABORATE program involves a five day summer conference (day conference for 7th-10th graders and residential conference for 11th-12th graders) and six trainings during the school year. BRIDGES trains youth around three core areas of leadership, diversity appreciation, and community action/civic engagement. During the conferences, students are intentionally put into small groups with other students from different schools and backgrounds. For the residential conferences, students are paired with a roommate or housed in a multi-person cabin with students from different backgrounds. Activities are designed so that students will learn about the unique strengths/contributions of their peers and how diversity of talents and backgrounds serves as an asset for solving problems and creating positive community change. Two of the year-round trainings are centered on leadership and/or diversity appreciation and cultural awareness allowing students to further develop these outcomes. Each semester students also participate in at least one community action event.

The COLLABORATE program serves middle school and high school students. BRIDGES staff recruit students from across the Mid-south through partnerships with area schools and other youth-serving organizations. Staff are intentional and strategic in their recruitment efforts to reach out to diverse groups which include: racial diversity; geographic diversity; income diversity; and a mix of students from traditional public, charter and private schools.

The goal of the COLLABORATE program is for participants to develop their leadership skills and to become more culturally aware and civically engaged youth. In turn, these young people use their new knowledge and skills to create positive action in their communities.

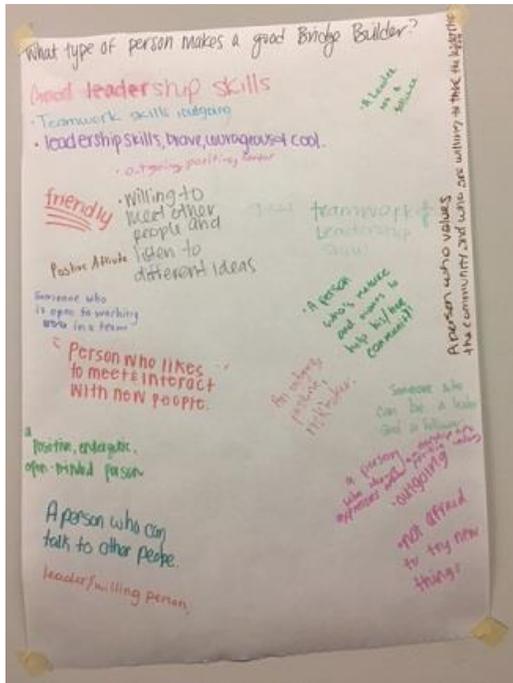
Methodology

This report combines several data sources to provide a holistic perspective on the implementation and outcomes of the COLLABORATE program. BRIDGES strives to provide high quality data for continuous improvement within the organization and community. When feasible, real-time, data-informed adjustments are made to programming in order to enhance the experiences of the students.

Youth participation is tracked through Salesforce, an interactive database using cloud technology. Staff keep detailed record of youth participation during the year-long program. Bridge Builders measures youth outcomes using a pretest survey at the beginning of the first day of interaction with the program and a posttest survey at the end of the program year. A midpoint survey, which is distributed at the end of the student's conference week, has been added in order to determine whether or not students learned something new about one of the outcome areas as a result of their summer conference experience. Feedback about facilitators is gathered on the midpoint survey and given to conference coordinators in real-time in order to provide facilitators with feedback prior to starting the next conference week. Participant data is analyzed in-house using SurveyMonkey for data entry and Excel and IBM- SPSS for quantitative analysis.

Qualitative data is gathered during the year through program observations and participant feedback surveys which are collected and analyzed after every program experience. Facilitator feedback surveys are distributed among a sample of trainings. Facilitator and student surveys administered throughout the

school year provide data about program quality and participant satisfaction, allowing for formative improvements to be made as soon as possible.



This year data was also gathered using activity based collection methods during spring trainings to understand who applies for Bridge Builders, who students think a Bridge Builder should be and what they do for the community.

Focus groups were conducted by an external evaluator, Ms. Jackie Nerron, among parents and students who are not participants of the Bridge Builders program. The purpose of these focus groups was to understand perceptions, positive or negative, about the program, overall awareness of Bridge Builders, and the diversity or lack of diversity in the program.

Parents also received BRIDGES annual Parent Survey which was distributed to all parents/guardians of current students. The goal of the parent survey was to allow parents to provide feedback about observed changes they have seen in their student as a result of the program as well as feedback about their customer service experience with BRIDGES staff.

In the spring of this year BRIDGES underwent a strategic planning process, facilitated by Ms. Shannon Dixon, to determine the trajectory and goals for the organization and its programs for the next three to five years. During the planning processes BRIDGES staff, board members and program participants came together to provide insight and suggestions for improvement in the coming years, which included revisions to the outcomes moving forward.

BRIDGES continues to participate in the Seeding Success (S2) Collaborative which focuses on "...collective impact– the idea that organizations can make a greater difference working collaboratively rather than alone. [Through the] work of multiple organizations joining together around one common outcome in order to improve it" (seeding-success.org). BRIDGES participates in the College and Career Readiness Collaborative Action Network (CAN). Through this collaborative, Bridge Builders receives and shares data with the Shelby County School System and the Achievement School District, as well as other youth serving organizations throughout the Mid-South. Additionally, the Bridge Builders evaluator can access individual student data from the school systems in order to better understand how our work supports educational outcomes. This year BRIDGES also had two youth department staff members go through the data training with S2 so that they may also see and discuss individual student data with the evaluator and develop appropriate actions to support students who may need assistance.

COLLABORATE Participant Demographics

At the beginning of each program year, marked by the summer conference, students take a survey to assess their knowledge, attitudes and behaviors prior to receiving any programming. Students then answer the same questions during their last training for that program year (late spring/early summer). For the 2016-2017 program year, 1,214 youth participated in the COLLABORATE summer conferences. The table below excludes demographic information about students who participated in the CHANGE level of programming, making the total 1,183. This year COLLABORATE level students came from 60 different zip codes, which is seven more than in the previous year.

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS	
Shelby County Schools	45% (57)
Parochial and Private Schools	24% (30)
Out of State and Other	17% (21)
Municipal Schools	12% (15)
Achievement School District Schools	2% (3)

N = 126 Total Schools Represented

Participant Demographics	7 th -8 th	9 th -10 th	11 th -12 th	TOTAL
Gender				
Female	14% (167)	18% (217)	28% (337)	61% (721)
Male	11% (128)	12% (144)	16% (188)	39% (460)
Prefer not to answer	0.1% (1)	0.1% (1)	-	0.2% (2)
Race/Ethnicity				
Black/African American	17% (207)	24% (284)	35% (409)	76% (900)
White/Caucasian	4% (48)	3% (33)	5% (58)	12% (139)
Two or more races	1% (12)	1% (13)	1% (14)	3% (39)
Hispanic/Latino	1% (12)	1% (10)	1% (17)	3% (39)
Asian	1% (10)	1% (14)	1% (14)	3% (38)
Indian	0.3% (3)	0.7% (8)	1% (8)	2% (19)
Other	0.3% (4)	-	0.3% (4)	1% (8)
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-	-	0.1% (1)	0.1% (1)

N = 1183

The results shared in this report are based on analyses of surveys completed by 65% of the participants in the 2016-2017 program year, as these were the students who completed both the pretest and the posttest surveys. Of those students who participated in the program 768 participants completed both the beginning and end of year surveys. Data are self-

reported by youth regarding their knowledge, attitudes and behaviors around the three areas of focus for the program: leadership, diversity appreciation and community action/civic engagement.

Leadership

One area of focus for the Bridge Builders COLLABORATE program is the development of an individual's leadership skills. The goal is for students to know their personal strengths and power and to develop knowledge and/or

LEADERSHIP INDICATORS			
<i>For the following statements, the answers range from Never to Always on a 7 point scale.</i>	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	% of Improvement
I let others take the lead when I see their talents.	5.31	5.69	43%***
I use my talents to help my peer(s) reach a goal.	5.28	5.75	43%***
I express my ideas in diverse groups.	5.40	5.85	43%***
I set aside my self-interests to work for the benefit of others.	5.47	5.78	42%***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

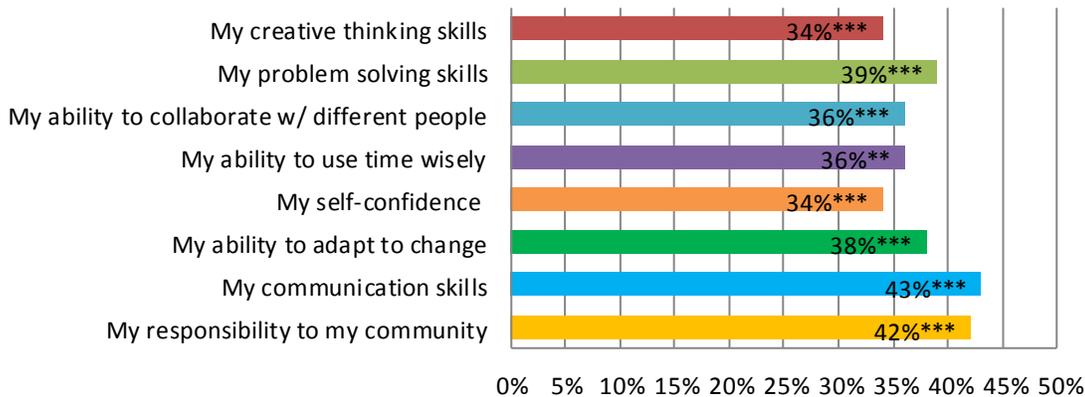
N = 768

skills in order to engage in positive community change. **Over the course of the 2016-2017 program year 95% (732: 768) of students improved across all leadership indicators.** After a year of programming, students are more aware of their own assets and skills as leaders, with 78% of students improving on three or more leadership indicators and 52% improving on five or more indicators. **Notably, this year 10% of students improved on ten or more indicators and three of those students improved on all thirteen leadership indicators.**

After participating in the COLLABORATE program, 43% of students increased their leadership abilities including: letting others take the lead because the student recognized that person's talents; students using their own talents to help groups reach goals; and students expressing their ideas in diverse groups. Additionally, 39%*** of students indicated that they took action by speaking up when a friend or family member made a discriminatory remark, indicating an 18% improvement on this question from the previous year. Among students who spoke up when a discriminatory remark was made, the mean score at the end of the year was 2.65 on a four point scale. One student stated after a year in the COLLABORATE program, *"Bridges has helped me grow into a positive leader who speaks out against injustice and tries their hardest to be a role model for change[.] [T]his program has changed my life and I will be forever thankful for that."*

21st Century Learning Skills

Answers range from Weak to Strong on a 7 point scale



The Bridge Builders curricula also focuses on key leadership skills that are directly aligned with the 21st Century Learning Skills, which are important indicators of an individual's ability to succeed in school and beyond. The goal of 21st century learning skills are for, "...learners [to] acquire knowledge and skills

they need to thrive in a world where change is constant and learning never stops” (www.p21.org). Average scores at the beginning of the year for each 21st Century indicator were high, but many students showed improvement with 42% increasing their scores related to responsibility that they feel to their community and 43% improving their communication skills. Although many students improved their scores over the year, there was a slight decrease in the percent of students who improved, across every category, when comparing percentages to the previous program year.

Regarding their leadership skills and how they have used them in the community, one student stated, *“For the past three years, Bridge Builders has made a very positive impact on my life. Since joining Bridges, I've been able to better my problem solving and communication skills. After going to the training's I've [learned] how to how to become a better leader in my school as well as my community. Community actions have inspired me to make a change in my community by cleaning up trash and checking on the elderly which [I]'ve done often since doing the mentor up community actions. The electives haven given me insight on what's really happening in the city, around me and how I can make [M]emphis a better place with my leadership. Overall, Bridges has taught me to have more confidence and step out of my comfort zone to be an active leader for those around me.”*

This year BRIDGES also began tracking some Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) indicators as a result of their participation and partnership in the Seeding Success Collaborative. SEL is defined as, “... the process through which [people] acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (www.casel.org). BRIDGES agreed to pilot some SEL indicators on their pre- and post-assessments using questions from the Youth Engagement, Motivation, and Beliefs Survey (YDEKC) in order to begin to understand if BRIDGES programming impacts students in any way regarding SEL. Posttest results from select SEL indicators are shared throughout

this paper. A full list of SEL questions and responses can be found in Appendix A. Since this is the first year BRIDGES has collected SEL data there are no internal benchmarks available at this time. However, BRIDGES would like to see an increase in the percent of students who report that it is completely true or mostly true regarding the actions listed in the chart above.

TODAY, how true are the following statements for you? Indicators taken from the YDECK	Not at all True	Completely True
I can solve difficult problems if I try hard enough	0.1%	60%
I think of my past choices when making new decisions	1%	59%
I try things even if I might fail	1%	53%
I don't give up easily	1%	51%
When my solution to a problem is not working, I try to find a new solution	1%	46%
I can control my temper	3%	45%
I finish whatever I begin	2%	36%
I can handle stress	5%	31%

N = 768

Diversity Appreciation

The overall goal of the unity and diversity outcome is for Bridge Builders to appreciate diversity, recognize the potential and talents of all people, and engage collectively in positive community change. **Across all diversity appreciation indicators 92% (710:768) of students improved.** However, examining the individual indicators and comparing those to the previous year, students

DIVERSITY APPRECIATION INDICATORS		
For the following statements, the answers range from Never to Always on a 7 point scale.	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean
I speak up in conversations about uncomfortable or difficult topics (such as racism) among diverse groups of my peers.	5.06	5.46
I listen to someone's point of view even if I disagree with them.	5.60	5.77
I work with my peers regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, religion or how much money they have.	5.91	5.92

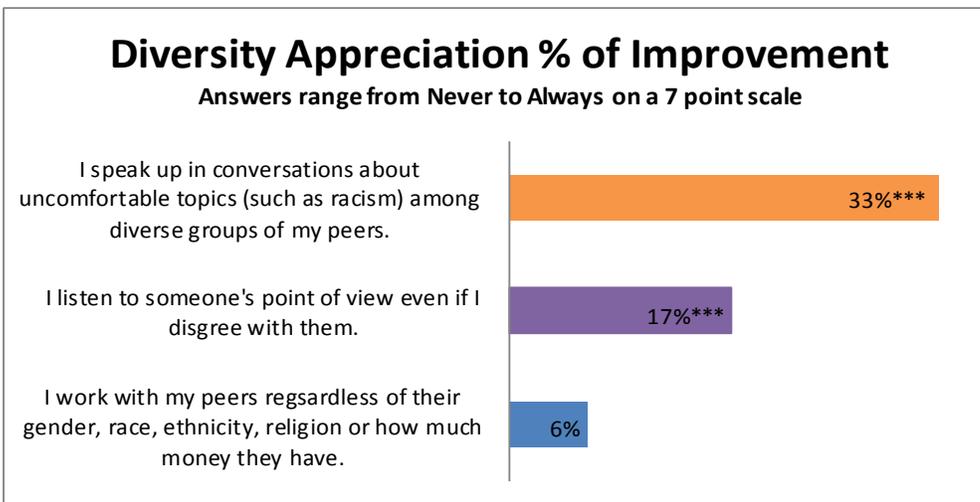
* p < .05, ** p < .01, ***p < .001

N = 768

reported little improvement in their knowledge, behavior or actions related to diversity. As discussed in the Leadership section of this report, there is little room for improvement among individuals, as scores at the beginning of the year are high leaving little room to show growth. The chart above shows the pretest and posttest means in order understand how students scored at the beginning of the year and again at its conclusion. The chart below shows the percentages of improvement related to the individual's frequency of actions for each indicator. Scale options for these indicators use a seven point scale with responses ranging from Never to Always.

Students are also asked to report how often they have taken certain actions within the past year. Within the past year 28%* of students reported increases in the number of times they have been to a celebration or festival of a culture different than their own, and 29%** reported an increase in the number of times

they were in the home of a friend of a different race/ethnicity or had them to their home. Additionally, 84% of parents "agree" or "strongly agree" that Bridge Builders has positively impacted their student's understanding of people who are different from himself/herself (such as their race, religion, gender, abilities, etc.). Regarding their growth in the area of diversity appreciation one student



stated, "It has made me work with and understand more about people different than I am. I am more ready to have difficult conversations with people [who are] different [,] than I was before. I have more confidence in a group and am willing to speak up for myself and others. Having activities such as d[i]m[e]nsions of diversity helped me get out of my comfort zone with hard topics." **After a year of programming, 44% of students improved their scores on three or more indicators and 10% improved on five or more.** From the data collected regarding Social and Emotional Learning, 51% of students indicated on the post-test that it is "completely true" for them that, "When I make a decision, I think about how it will affect other people."

Each year students are asked to report on their friendship types as well as their number of friends by type. **After a year of programming, 71% (547: 768) of students cumulatively reported an increase in their friendships among diverse groups of people, which is a dramatic 22% cumulative decrease from the previous year.** Youth reported having diverse groups of personal friends at the beginning of the year and little change occurred from that time until the end of the year. These are important indicators for the program, as BRIDGES strives to intentionally expose students to youth from backgrounds different than their own and encourages the development of friendships with diverse people.

DIVERSITY APPRECIATION INDICATORS – Friendship Groups	FY17 TOTAL Percent of Improvement
Students improved or grew their friendships with persons who have a mental or physical disability.	28%
Students improved or grew their friendships with persons who are of a different religion or faith tradition.	33%
Students improved or grew their friendships with persons who are of a different race or ethnicity that have been in their home.	34%
Students improved or grew their friendships with persons who have a different sexual orientation than themselves.	35%

N=768

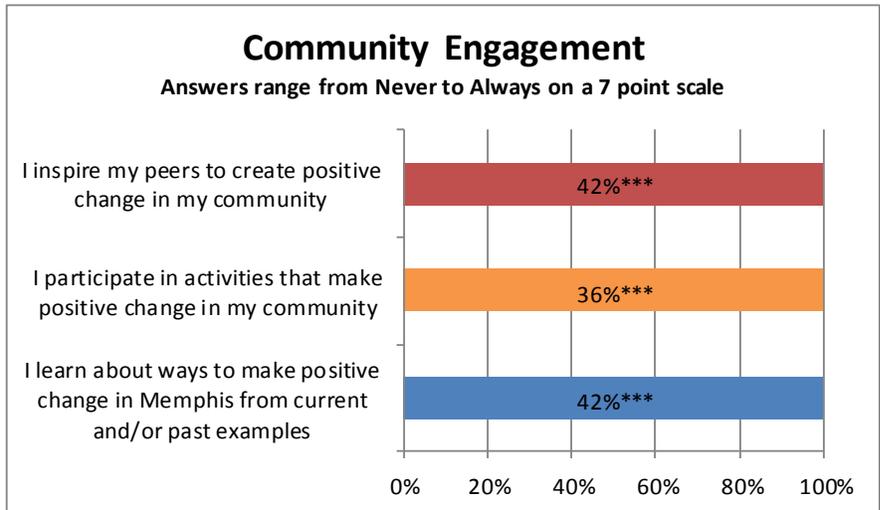
BRIDGES continues to work to include more diversity in the program, as Bridge Builders is often the only place for students to meet youth who do not attend their school or live in their community. While at BRIDGES students are able to meet youth from different socioeconomic backgrounds, with different abilities, and with gender identities. While BRIDGES achieved their internal goal for cumulative improvement on the diversity outcome, examination of the individual diversity indicators were again lower this year than expected. Since fiscal year 2015 improvement on individual diversity indicators continue to decrease, BRIDGES plans to address the reported low levels of improvement through various strategies which are discussed in the Lessons Learned and Recommendations section of this paper.

Community Action

Students who participate in Bridge Builders experience significant growth regarding engagement with their community. Students also increase often they participate in civic activities after participating in Bridge Builders. Youth were asked to respond to eleven statements regarding specific actions they have taken with regard to issues of social justice and civic engagement.

Cumulatively 94% (724:768) of students improved across all civic engagement and community action indicators. After a year of programming, 68% of students improved their scores on three or more indicators, 32% improved on five or more, and four students improved on all 11 indicators.

The chart to the right shows the percent of students who increased the frequency of their behaviors related to taking action in their community. One student stated, *“Having sit down conversations about important things happening in our world today has changed me as a person by keeping me educated and motivating me to speak up and make a positive change.”* 42%*** of students improved how often they inspire their peers to take action and 42%*** also improved their understanding of how to make a change in Memphis rooted in historical understanding and current perspectives.



COMMUNITY ACTION INDICATORS			
<i>For the following actions, answers range from 0 Times to 5+ Times within the past year, on a 4 point scale</i>	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	FY17 TOTAL % of Improvement
I have attended an event or meeting about an issue that is important to me.	2.19	2.55	43%***
I have volunteered in my community.	2.82	3.14	39%***
I have taken a leadership position (such as, student government, clubs, teams, church, etc.)	2.66	2.84	34%***
I have attended/or spoken at a public meeting, forum, protest or rally.	1.51	1.72	32%***
I have supported a cause using social media (Facebook, Twitter or other).	2.25	2.35	30%**
I have signed a petition (paper or online).	1.67	1.83	29%***
I have participated in a walk or run for a cause.	1.78	1.81	24%
I have contacted a public official to express my opinion.	1.30	1.41	19%***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

N = 768

[to] LITE. As a result, I was the first freshman selected for the program. I launched Pumps and Politics 901 to

The chart to the left shows the percent of students who increased the number of times they took a specific action related to community action and civic engagement, within the past year. Surprisingly the percent of students who took action using social media outlets is lower than expected while more intense commitments like taking on formal leadership positions is higher than expected. Regarding opportunities to become more civically engaged one student stated, *“Bridge Builders has connected me*

help young women of color to get involved in the political process. Bridges has changed my life. I plan on keeping Pumps and Politics 901 going as well.” Although many students increased their participation in civic activities BRIDGES would like to see more engagement from their students. Additionally, it may be that the indicators selected are not relevant activities for students in 2017 and questions may need to be added and/or revised to reflect how students engage with their communities today. Recommendations for new indicators and revisions are discussed in a subsequent section of this paper.

Community Investment

BRIDGES continues to gauge how supported and connected Bridge Builders feel to the Memphis community. Students have the opportunity to become more familiar with their city through urban treks and community action projects that occur during summer conference.

Community Investment	
<i>For the following statements, the answers range from Strongly Disagree to Disagree on a 7 point scale.</i>	Percent of Improvement
I feel a personal connection to the Greater Memphis community. <i>Note: N = 356 (11th - 12th grade students only).</i>	41%***
Young people are given useful roles in solving problems in my community. <i>Note: N = 412 (7th and 10th grade students).</i>	32%
I feel that the Greater Memphis community is a good place to live, work and play.	27%***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

N = 768

Although most Bridge Builders reside within Shelby County, which encompasses Memphis, many do not venture outside of their immediate neighborhoods. The treks and community actions expose students to different areas of the city with which they may not be familiar. **According to parent survey data, 65% of parents “agree” or “strongly agree” that Bridge Builders has positively impacted their student's desire to learn more about Memphis.** Students typically plan to leave the city for college or work and may choose not to return later in life, which concerns BRIDGES and other youth serving organizations. Throughout the summer conferences and in some of the year-round programming pieces, BRIDGES encourages youth to look at the assets that exist within the community. One student shared, *“Bridges has helped me better utilize my involvement in the community... It has helped me meet new people in the community and forge better relationships,”* and another student stated, *“Bridge Builder[s] had really help[ed] me love my community. I moved to Memphis at a young age. Leaving my family to come here really made me hate Memphis but since joining Bridges I feel there are people I can count on with and things I can help [with] in my community. It also help[ed] me have a voice.”* The curricula are designed so that youth see themselves as assets in our community and specifically addresses how young people can make positive changes in Memphis. While the goal is to ignite a desire in students to invest in their city and retain these talented youth, the data shows that this is still an area that needs work, with less than half of students improving how they feel about their connection to the Memphis community.

School Year Programming - Training, Electives and Community Actions

COMMUNITY ACTION INDICATORS - For the following, answers range somewhat agree to strongly agree on a 7 point scale	FY16	FY17
TODAY, I learned something new about leadership and/or unity & diversity.	78%	94%
This meeting helped me grow as a Bridge Builder.	81%	94%
TODAY, I was able to discuss issues that are important to me.	-	94%

N = 1616 N = 1700

Throughout the year students participate in trainings, electives, and community actions that build on their summer conference experience. Students must complete a leadership and diversity training during the year-

round programming as well as two electives and two community action events each year. After each training and community action students complete a survey with questions that ask about what they learned during the training and to assess their facilitators. The Curriculum and Training Coordinator has been diligent in reviewing data from previous years and using that information to design more meaningful and engaging experiences for students. There has been significant positive change in comparison to the previous year (see chart above) in the percent of students who report positive agreement for questions asked about the training they attended. While some questions are consistent and appear on each survey, instruments are designed to be flexible and allow staff to request that questions be added in order to better understand how to make changes to the curricula. For example, in the fall students were asked to give input about what topics they would like to cover and what activities they would like to do in the spring (a selection of responses are shown in the word cloud above). Students indicated that they have a strong desire to discuss issues that are relevant and important to them. A parent shared the following with us through the parent survey: *"Thanks for having the sexual harassment talk he said his eyes were opened to many topics he never knew existed."*



This year students had seventeen different community actions to choose from. The McKellar Lake Clean-Up continues to be the most highly attended community action, with more than 300 students in attendance.

COMMUNITY ACTION INDICATORS - For the following, answers range from somewhat agree to strongly agree on a 7 point scale	FY16	FY17
TODAY, I learned about new opportunities to create positive change in my community.	87%	94%
TODAY, I learned something new about how to take action in my community.	-	93%
This meeting helped me grow as a Bridge Builder.	84%	93%
I gained the tools needed that will help me make positive community change.	81%	91%
I would like to continue working on this project in the future.	75%	87%

N = 1544 N = 1253

Several new community actions designed by Bridge Builders CHANGE student interns were offered this year which included: Memphis Against Sexual Harassment and Assault, Educational Justice, and Youth and Police Relations. CHANGE students incorporated data collection methods into the community actions they designed, such as

focus groups, and used the data collected to help inform their work which included school policy changes and curriculum developed to help youth and police better understand one another. Similar to the training data, when comparing this program year to the previous one, the community action data shows substantial improvement in the percent of students who reported positive agreement for questions asked about the experience they attended. BRIDGES staff continue to increase the diversity of community action options available to students and try to offer experiences that address the needs of the community and wishes of the students.

As mentioned in the methodology section, data was collected during spring training using a conversational method, in addition to the standard training surveys. Used as an icebreaker for group discussion, students were asked to think about four questions, write their responses on flip chart paper and then as a group discuss their responses. The questions were: 1) Why did you apply for Bridge Builders, 2) How do people (teachers, family, peers) talk about Bridge Builders, 3) What type of

Who makes a good Bridge Builder	The Role of Bridge Builders in the community
Leaders	To speak out on difficult issues
Problem solvers	To make the community strong/better/cleaner
Good listeners	To help others
People who are fun	To inspire/motivate/advocate
Someone who steps out of their comfort zone	Bring people together/connect with people from different backgrounds
Respectful	To take action/take initiative
Cooperative/collaborative	

person makes a good Bridge Builder, and 4) What is the role of a Bridge Builder in the community? Data collected from these discussions will not only help staff better understand how Bridge Builders perceive the program but may also assist the recruitment team with identifying new recruitment strategies. There were a range of responses but some of the more common themes related to who makes a good Bridge Builder and their role in the community are listed in the table above.

TODAY, how true are the following statements for you? <i>Indicators taken from the YDEKC</i>	Not at all True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Completely True
I feel proud to be a part of Bridge Builders	0.3%	4%	13%	82%
Bridge Builders helps me build new skills	0.1%	5%	18%	76%
What we do in Bridge Builders is important to me	0.3%	5%	20%	74%
What we do in Bridge Builders will help me succeed in life	0.4%	5%	19%	74%
What we do in Bridge Builders is challenging, in a good way	0.4%	5%	21%	73%
I fit in at Bridge Builders	0.3%	6%	22%	70%
There are things happening in Bridge Builders that I feel excited about	1%	6%	24%	68%

N = 768

As mentioned in the methodology section of this report, BRIDGES also began asking questions taken from the Youth Engagement, Motivation, and Beliefs Survey (YDEKC) about the student's Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). On the posttest, BRIDGES chose to include some programmatic questions taken from the YDEKC to gain a better understanding of whether or not

their programming encourages SEL growth and the quality of the programming offered. Overall most

students report that the program is a positive space that gives them opportunities to grow (see chart above).

Parent Satisfaction

The parent survey was distributed in late spring, and parents were asked to report observed changes in their student(s) as a result of their participation in Bridge Builders. Parents were also asked to share their customer service experience(s). Surveys were distributed to all Bridge Builder parents and guardians who had a student in the program, regardless of how engaged their student(s) was.

PARENT OBSERVED INDICATORS		
<i>Percentages in the chart are based on responses of a "6 – Agree" and "7 – Strongly Agree."</i>	FY16 Total Percent	FY17 Total Percent
Bridge Builders (BB) has positively impacted my student's understanding of people with opinions different from their own.	78%	81%
BB has positively impacted my student's ability to effectively work with others.	78%	81%
BB has challenged my student to think critically and engage in courageous conversations.	73%	77%
BB has positively impacted my student's desire to make Memphis a better place.	71%	72%
BB has encouraged my student to participate in their community more (such as volunteering, student government, etc.)	74%	71%
	N= 242	N = 235

One parent stated, *"I've also noticed my daughter become more of a leader. She was the quiet type who would not necessarily want to be involved. Now she's engaged and loves to explore by learning new things and meeting others her age."* Parent feedback about the observed changes among their students was

majorly positive and the chart above shows improvement on several indicators in comparison to the previous year, while the chart to the left shows improvement on every indicator regarding the degree of change parents observe in their student.

Overall parents report that they are satisfied not only with the changes they have observed in their students but also with the customer service provided by staff. **When asked, "Would you recommend Bridge Builders to another parent/guardian?" 86% of**

PARENT OBSERVED INDICATORS CONTINUED		
<i>For the following statements, the answers range from "No Change" to "Significant Change" on a 7 point scale. Percentages in the chart are based on responses of a 6 and 7.</i>	FY16 Total Percent	FY17 Total Percent
He/she recognizes that individuals have the capacity to influence and change their community.	61%	67%
He/she identifies ways that young people can be leaders for justice in their homes, schools or communities.	56%	66%
He/she exhibits the desire to develop his/her personal strengths.	58%	64%
He/she is open to learning about diverse groups of people.	59%	63%
He/she has an awareness or curiosity about social justice issues in the Memphis area.	53%	60%
He/she expresses a personal commitment to taking action that promotes justice.	53%	55%
He/she encourages others.	45%	52%
	N= 242	N = 235

parents reported that they “Definitely” (equal to the highest score of a 10) would. Another parent shared, “My son is at a stage now where he is uncomfortable. Some thoughts and discussions about biases and stereotypes are truly just s[inking] in and he’s processing what all of it means to him. So, it’s not 100% fun...right now ... I know the reason is that it stretches him. He always - ALWAYS - returns home with a positive outlook and opened eyes. I told him that I know he’s really trying to get something out of the program because he’s willing to be a little uncomfortable and walk through it. I know it’s not easy to be a teenager and I appreciate that Bridge Builders broaches topics that are brushed over in many other settings.”

Each year parents are required to attend an in-person, mandatory parent orientation in order for their student to enroll in the program. This year a webinar was piloted and offered to parents who have a student(s) who is returning to the program; new parents were still required to attend an in-person orientation. The goal of the webinar was to provide an enhanced customer service experience to parents by: 1) removing the barrier of attending the meeting in-person, 2) cutting down on wait times for all parents by reducing the volume of persons who attend physical orientations, and 3) streamline information and reduce redundancy of information received by returning parents. Webinars occurred after the parent survey was distributed, but based on the number of webinar participants and informal feedback received (e.g., phone calls, emails, etc.) by staff, the webinars were appreciated and successful according to returning parents.

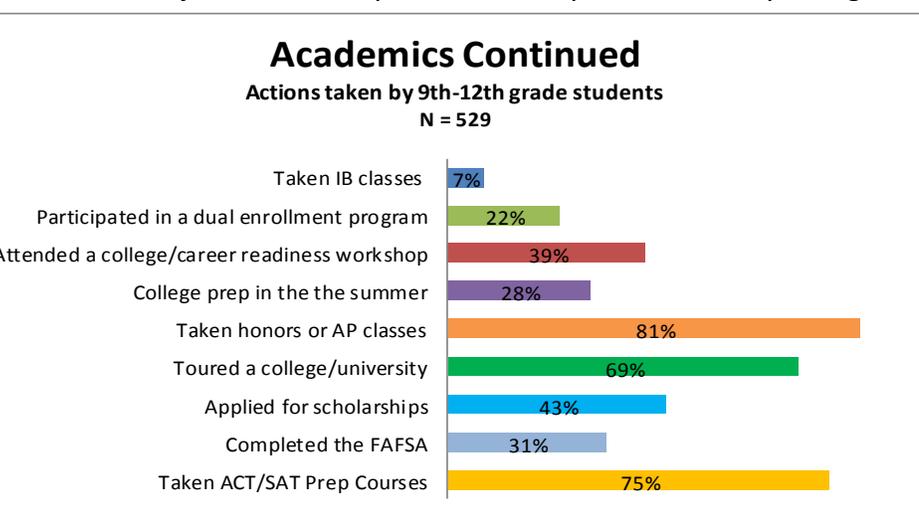
Academic Engagement

COLLABORATE participants were asked to self-report their academic engagement; students in the 7th and 8th grades were excluded from responding to academic actions as most actions are not available to middle school students. Students in 9th through 12th grades were asked about their plans after high school, both at the beginning and end of the program year. **At the end of the program year 95% of**

students reported that they plan to attend a four year college or university after high school and 20% will work part-time while in school. Additionally, 24% of students say that they will enter a job/career full time, 5% will join the military or attend a 2 year community college, 4% will take time off and then go to

ACADEMIC INDICATORS CONTINUED	
11th-12th Grades – Cumulative Posttest Data	
Applied for a college/university	54%
Received an acceptance letter(s) to a college/university	52%
Completed the TN Promise Application	37%
Awarded a financial aid package	37%

N = 355



college, 2% will go to technical/trade school and 2% do not know what they will do after high school. No students indicated that they do not plan to pursue college after high school. Most students selected more than one option from the list provided, indicating that some will pursue multiple post-secondary opportunities.

The chart above shows some of the individual academic

indicators that were tracked, which are aligned to the work of the Seeding Success Collaborative. These actions were selected as they are good indicators of how likely a student is to enroll in classes at a college or university. 9th and 10th grade students are not yet able to complete some tasks shown in the chart (previous page, top right), therefore they were not asked about those actions. Opportunities shown in the chart to the left can be completed by 9th through 12th grade students and are also good predictors for how likely a student is to enroll in classes at a college or university. The data shows that in general, the older the students are the more likely they are to take action. However, as the degree of difficulty increases students are less likely to complete the action. In order to understand how students feel about school, SEL questions related to academics were also included this year. Overall students are positive about their education, but BRIDGES would like to see an increase in the percent of students who say that it is completely true that they are a hard worker when it comes to their schoolwork.

TODAY, how true are the following statements for you? <i>Indicators taken from the YDECK</i>	Not at all True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Completely True
Getting a college education is important to me	0.1%	2%	9%	89%
Doing well in school is an important part of who I am	0.1%	2%	20%	77%
It is important to me to learn as much as I can	-	3%	19%	77%
I feel excited about my future	1%	3%	29%	77%
I take pride in doing my best in school	1%	5%	25%	69%
I am a hard worker when it comes to my schoolwork	1%	10%	31%	58%

N = 768

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Improving Outcomes

This year BRIDGES achieved its internal goals for cumulative improvement in each of the outcome areas of: Leadership, Diversity Appreciation, and Community Action/Civic Engagement. However, improvement among the individual indicators for outcome areas continues to decline each year. While the percent of students who improve on individual indicators declines, many students provide high scores at the beginning of the year, which can be seen in the charts throughout the report, allowing for little room to improve over the course of the year. **For example among questions with a seven point scale the average score at the beginning of the year was 5.46 and 5.77 at the end of the year. The average pretest score among questions on a four point scale was 2.07 while the posttest average was only 2.24.** For four years BRIDGES has used the same language for questions to assess student's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. In the coming year it is recommended that BRIDGES consider adding new questions and revising existing ones in order to determine if the questions used are still appropriate indicators for each outcome. This recommendation aligns to the strategic planning process, mentioned in the methodology section. As part of the strategic planning process group members suggested revising the indicators used to measure success across all three outcome areas. It was also suggested that additional secondary outcomes be added and/or revised. For example, BRIDGES continues to embrace youth voice and youth empowerment, so group members determined that this should be added as a secondary outcome. Piloting new questions and revising old new ones will help to determine whether the lack of improvement is due to poor selection of indicators, a ceiling effect, lack of clear objectives in the curricula, and/or other variables not yet identified.

Observations of workshops and events will be conducted more regularly with the assistance of youth evaluators. BRIDGES will strengthen their partnership with students by empowering Leadership Board Members (BRIDGES student governing board) and Bridge Builders CHANGE Interns to serve as youth-evaluators. Both groups receive facilitation training and this year will receive more intense and intentional evaluation training. Having youth evaluators will encourage students' candid feedback and will allow BRIDGES to collect data through more interactive, youth friendly, and unique methods.

Year-Round Programming Recommendations

BRIDGES will tailor leadership and diversity trainings to complement learning and skills developed through community actions and vice versa. Scores may be strengthened by focusing efforts to enhance the Bridge Builders school-year curricula, which are designed to reinforce lessons learned during summer conferences. As mentioned in the School Year Programming section of this report, the Curriculum and Training Coordinator, along with other staff, review data from previous years in order to strengthen learning for outcome areas where students show little improvement. Staff also actively seek out feedback and suggestions from students in order to design and implement experiences that are meaningful and engaging. Using data gathered during the year-round portion of programming, students have expressed the desire to discuss issues that many young people currently face. For example students explicitly asked that BRIDGES host more discussions and activities to help them understand immigrant's rights, politics, and the Black Lives Matter movement. BRIDGES is currently designing curricula that incorporate many of the topics students have identified as important to them into the year-round programming. Staff are also becoming more intentional about providing opportunities for youth to engage in the community through activities that have a long-term and sustainable community impact and enable them to learn about the importance of youth participation in civics. BRIDGES will continue to offer year-round programming experiences at

locations throughout Memphis, which also helps to address the need to offer experiences off-site in order to accommodate students with transportation needs.

Bridge Builders CHANGE student interns developed several community action experiences this past year and led actions during the summer conferences. The practice of having youth lead other youth through certain pieces of curriculum will continue. BRIDGES feels that having youth-led curricula is extremely advantageous to students and the organization. For example, youth who are participating in an experience are able to work with other youth leaders who are using their skills and knowledge now, versus waiting until they are older to use their skills. Second, youth leading their peers through curricula are able to present the information in an engaging way that resonates with their peers. Finally, CHANGE students actively seek out help from their peers and encourage them to start projects of their own. Through the summer conferences some students are able to actualize their ideas into working projects with the support of BRIDGES and their partner Let's Innovate Through Education (LITE).

In order to provide staff with data so that the adjustments to curricula, staffing, training, etc., can be made in a more timely fashion, the Evaluation Manager should develop mechanisms to capture data electronically. Historically, BRIDGES has distributed paper surveys for all of the year-round programming experiences. During the strategic planning process a student recommended that surveys be distributed electronically. In the upcoming year, surveys for year-round programming will be administered both on paper and electronically via smartphones. Electronic distribution will reduce the amount of entry required of BRIDGES staff, reduce the number of errors, reduce the amount of paper and ink used, and allow the evaluator to share data with other staff in a more timely manner. The evaluator chose to continue offering paper versions of the survey for three key reasons: 1) not all students have a smartphone, 2) some students may not wish to complete the survey on their phone, and 3) for experiences offered offsite, wifi may not be available.

Recruitment Recommendations

BRIDGES staff continues to address the lack of racial diversity in the program by intentionally developing more and stronger partnerships with school sponsors to encourage target demographic students, non-African Americans, to apply for the program. Females and Black students continue to be the students who apply and participate in the program at the highest rates. The recruitment team will use data about individual students who attend target schools. Data provided will then be used in discussion with school sponsors to determine the impact the program has had on their students, so that they may better understand the value of the program. In previous years BRIDGES has conducted focus groups and interviews among target demographic students to determine if the lack of racial diversity prevents them from participating in the program. In order to better understand perceptions about the program and further explore if target demographic families do not apply due to a perceived lack of diversity, an evaluation should be conducted among target demographic students and their parents. BRIDGES continues to offer year-round programming at satellite locations to allow target demographic students to engage with the program without having to come to the BRIDGES Center.

As mentioned in the Parent Satisfaction portion of this report, a parent orientation webinar was piloted among parents who have a student(s) returning to the program. Although formal feedback has not yet been collected about this process, informal feedback suggests that BRIDGES should continue to offer webinars as an option for parent orientations.

BRIDGES continues to use student Ambassadors to increase awareness and outreach about the program. For the 2017-18 program year BRIDGES will rely more on Leadership Board (LB) Members (BRIDGES student governing body) to fill the ambassador role. Leadership Board members have already committed to engage with their peers and BRIDGES programming at a higher level than most students; in turn, less training is

needed for LB members to serve as ambassadors at target schools because their training already incorporates recruitment strategies. The evaluator continues to recommend that BRIDGES develop a parent-to-parent recruitment strategy to assist with recruitment efforts.

Facilitation Recommendations

BRIDGES will continue to enhance the training for facilitators, in order to provide the best experience for students. AmeriCorps members, who typically serve as facilitators for BRIDGES events and workshops throughout the year, have asked for training that is more hands-on. Facilitators would like the opportunity to role play through the curricula in order to understand what the student experience is and to observe a more experienced facilitator. BRIDGES understands that facilitators significantly impact a student's experience and their ability to learn. In addition to strengthening training for facilitators, BRIDGES will also reduce group sizes during summer conferences. During the strategic planning process several concerns were raised about group sizes, especially during the middle school summer conferences. Staff, board members, and students expressed concerns about the facilitator's ability to adequately control groups and provide safe, meaningful, and engaging experiences. BRIDGES feels strongly that groups that are too large negatively impact a student's ability to learn. BRIDGES will create smaller groups, in order to provide spaces that are conducive to learning for students and to enable facilitators to effectively lead the group through discussions and activities. Facilitators should also intentionally highlight debrief questions that are linked to outcomes. This strategy encourages facilitators to link the conversation back to the outcomes so that students may more clearly recognize the link between the activity and the program goals.

Appendix A

TODAY, how true are the following statements for you? <i>All questions in this matrix are taken from the YDECK survey.</i>	Not at all True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Completely True
Doing well in school is an important part of who I am	0.1%	2%	20%	77%
It is important to me to learn as much as I can	-	3%	19%	77%
I am a hard worker when it comes to my schoolwork	1%	10%	31%	58%
I take pride in doing my best in school	1%	5%	25%	69%
Getting a college education is important to me	0.1%	2%	9%	89%
I feel excited about my future	1%	3%	29%	77%
If I set goals, I take action to reach them	1%	7%	30%	61%
I make step-by –step plans to reach my goals	4%	24%	30%	40%
When my solution to a problem is not working, I try to find a new solution	1%	10%	42%	46%
I think of my past choices when making new decisions	1%	8%	32%	59%
I can control my temper	3%	16%	34%	45%
I can handle stress	5%	24%	39%	31%
I finish whatever I begin	2%	21%	41%	36%
I stay positive when things don't go the way I want	3%	24%	40%	33%
I don't give up easily	1%	10%	36%	51%
I try things even if I might fail	1%	12%	33%	53%
I can solve difficult problems if I try hard enough	0.1%	6%	33%	60%
I can do a good job if I try hard enough	0.2%	3%	33%	74%
I feel bad when someone gets their feelings hurt	2%	11%	27%	58%
When I make a decision, I think about how it will affect other people	1%	11%	35%	51%

N = 768