

ACES Program Evaluation Report



Prepared for the Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, and the Universities at Shady Grove by the Educational Policy Institute/SwailLandis

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Solutions for Student Success



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The Principal Investigator for this study was Dr. Watson Scott Swail with analytical support from Ms. Kimberly Ann Landis and Dr. William Smith.



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Acronyms

ACES	Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success
ACT	The ACT test/exam (ACT is not an acronym).
AP	Advanced Placement program
EPI	Educational Policy Institute
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages (Now or Prior)
FARMS	Free and Reduced-Price Meals System (Now or Prior)
GPA	Grade Point Average
MC	Montgomery College
MCPS	Montgomery County Public Schools
SAT	The SAT test/exam (SAT is not an acronym).
USG	Universities at Shady Grove

PART I — INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The ACES (Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success) program was created in 2013 as a joint venture between Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Montgomery College (MC), and the Universities at Shady Grove (USG). The program focuses on students who are historically underrepresented in higher education and need additional support to work towards and through the academic pathway from high school to college.

The ACES Data and Evaluation Committee proposed that an external evaluation be funded to gather data essential to the ongoing operation of ACES. This request was linked to the *ACES Strategic Plan* developed in 2018, and to the expressed needs for an evaluation that included a comparison group.

The ACES Strategic Plan included the following:

ACES Program is an innovative partnership across three entities of educational systems in Montgomery County: MC, MCPS, and USG. While coordinating the rules, systems, and leadership across all three entities can be challenging due to the complexity of this partnership, significant organizational progress has been made in implementing the day-to-day operations of the program. Initial evaluations prioritized implementation, enrollment, and participation before progressing to comparative research reports. As students move through the pathway to college graduation, ACES will work to develop and refine a set of consistent “transition” metrics for each institution to provide a clear and comprehensive picture of the program. Developing metrics that accurately measure student success through the program pathway may prove challenging; each educational institution uses different data collection, tracking, and reporting methods based on their student populations.

As noted above, the ACES Strategic Plan calls for a comprehensive program evaluation by an external evaluator. The most recent ACES program evaluation was released in 2016, prior to student articulation through the full ACES Pathway. Currently, four data reports on the ACES program are produced annually by the ACES Data and Evaluation committee, including three snapshots produced in Fall, Winter, and Spring, and an annual report developed each Summer. While the data reported in the ACES data

snapshots and the annual reports can help staff to monitor outputs and selected aspects of the program, these reports do not answer more broad evaluation research questions that are vitally important to the program. An in-depth program evaluation and analysis completed by an external evaluator can ultimately be of great use to ACES program staff and institutional leaders by incorporating linkages to best practices with positive outcomes. There is a myriad of other uses, including a public-facing report to support advocacy and funding efforts. Because staffing at the three institutions is insufficient to complete the in-depth analysis required to make both credible decisions and program claims, an external evaluator is required.

The ACES Data and Evaluation Committee collaborated to draft a Request for Proposal, which was approved by the ACES Leadership Team and the ACES Institutional Leaders. MC agreed to manage the RFP, and the Educational Policy Institute (EPI) was selected following MC contracting procedures. The RFP included a request to identify the data collection, storage, and reporting areas where we continue to experience challenges across the three institutions. This is an essential first step to building a data dashboard to serve program reporting and evaluation needs well into the future. The ACES Strategic Plan references issues with multiple data sources, coordination, and accountability. The program evaluators will have the ability to make recommendations regarding systemic data needs as they complete their work.

The Educational Policy Institute (EPI) was contracted in summer 2020 to conduct a process and impact study of the ACES program throughout its first seven years of operation. This report provides a summation of our findings, based on hundreds of hours of effort by a team of EPI research staff, as well as the assistance of personnel from MCPS, MC, and USG. This report summarizes our findings in the following manner:

PART I — INTRODUCTION provides summary information of the report, details about aspects of the program per our review and interviews with key stakeholders, as well as EPI recommendations.

PART II — DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS provides a summary of our review of all ACES students from the inception of the program through the 2019-20 year, including use of National Student Clearinghouse data for outcome data.

PART III — COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS provides our comparison of ACES versus non-ACES students for entering 11th grade students in 2015 and 2018. This analysis follows students to spring 2020.

PART IV — STUDENT SURVEYS provides a summary of the student surveys conducted in July and August 2020 of 406 MCPS students, 166 MC students, and 36 USG students.

PART VI — TECHNICAL APPENDICES provides documentation on the comparative analysis and copies of the three student surveys.

Each section of the report provides information in a contained manner, such that each part can be utilized separately from the entire report. EPI relied heavily on the expertise of key stakeholders from MCPS, MC, and USG in the design and execution of this study. MCPS, in particular, helped collect and provide data to the EPI research team for analysis. In addition, EPI created the student surveys with extensive insight from all three organizations.

There are limitations worth noting. First, less a limitation and more a reality, data in the descriptive and comparative studies may not match exactly to prior analysis conducted by MCPS due to (a) differences in variable definitions; (b) decisions on which students should be included in the analysis; and (c) the availability of certain data at the time of analysis. For instance, the National Clearinghouse data did not include graduations as of Spring 2020, which would have been helpful. However, the findings most certainly parallel and are quite close in all aspects to the MCPS analysis. Important to note is that Clearinghouse data do not include all students, given that students can opt out of NCS data participation.

Regarding definitions, how certain elements are defined matters greatly to the numerical outcomes. This is less a problem as opposed to a perspective. EPI made certain decisions based on how we view data compared to perhaps how others view it. We kept these to a minimum, but there were occasions where we made definitional decisions based on our focus. Again, these are minor issues overall. The availability and quality of program data is discussed later in Part I.

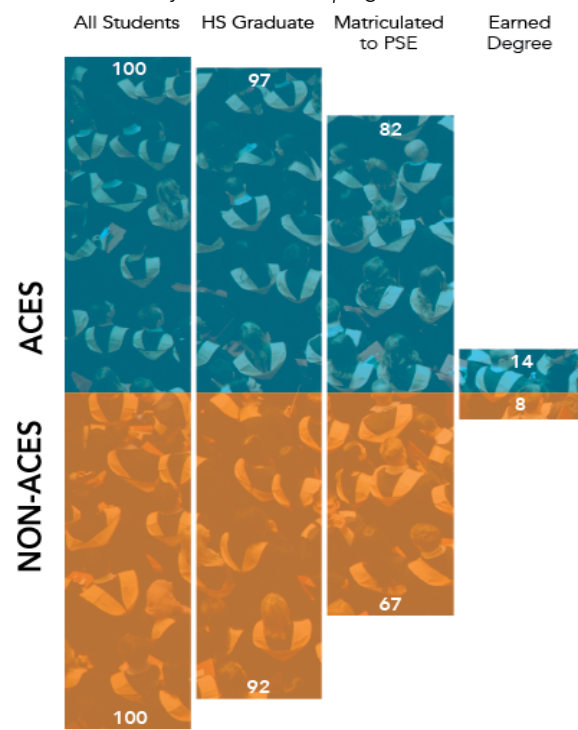
Finally, our viewpoints are framed in large part through our discussions with various ACES stakeholders between July and December 2020. How they responded and how we interpreted their responses has its own limitations, but it is our hope that we accurately portrayed their sense and meaning at the time. The quotes throughout this report are taken from conversations we had with ACES program administrators, coaches, associated personnel, and key stakeholders. In total, we transcribed over 25 hours of interviews. There is no attribution by name, title, or organization to protect the integrity of the discussions.

Brief Summary of Findings

The student surveys and formative analysis provide perspective to the findings of this report. However, perhaps of greatest interest are the data that describe the size, scope, and impact of ACES over the seven years of the program between 2013-14 and 2019-20. This brief summary provides some of these findings.

Between fall of 2013 and spring 2020, the ACES program served 5,562 students, starting with 962 students in Year 1 at 10 MCPS high schools and growing to 1,697 students in Year 7 (2019-20) at 14 high schools. ACES students are almost equally distributed among the 11th and 12th grade and is majority female (two thirds), minority (>90 percent), Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS; 88 percent), first generation (84 percent), and English Speakers of Other Language (ESOL; 64 percent). After seven years, ACES continues to serve the students it was intended to serve.

Exhibit 1. Summary information based on 100 11th grade ACES and 100 non-ACES students in fall 2014 by their academic progression and outcomes in 2020.



As this report illustrates, when compared to a similar group of MCPS students who did not participate in the ACES program, ACES students were more likely to be promoted from 11th to 12th grade; had less unexcused absences; and achieved higher Advanced Placement and SAT/ACT participation rates. Perhaps most importantly, ACES students had higher high school graduation rates (97 versus 92 percent); higher college matriculation rates (82 versus 67 percent); and earned degrees at higher rates than non-ACES students.

Overall, this is good news. Further study shows that ACES students are more likely than their comparative peers to do the right things at the right times to increase their postsecondary opportunities. Importantly, we see this in our subgroup summaries, by gender, by race/ethnic group, by special populations (FARMS and ESOL students), and entering GPA. In summary:

- Each ACES subgroup of students, by gender, race/ethnicity, FARMS, and ESOL, outperformed their non-ACES peers in high school graduation, matriculation to college, and earned degrees. Only ACES FARMS students had a similar high school graduation rate compared to their non-ACES peers;
- Female ACES students outperform male ACES students in high school graduation, matriculation to PSE, and degrees earned;
- Black and Hispanic/Latino students across both ACES and non-ACES students had high levels of high school graduation and college matriculation rates; and
- Students with higher entering GPAs did markedly better in all educational aspects than students with lower GPAs.

Other summary findings include the following:

Promotion to the 12th grade. In 2018, 90 percent of ACES students and 84 percent for non-ACES students were promoted from 11th to 12th grade.

Unexcused absences. ACES students were far less likely to have unexcused absences than non-ACES students. ACES students, on average, had 8 unexcused absences in 2018 compared to 13 for non-ACES students (11th grade).

High School GPA. ACES and non-ACES students both had similar GPAs in the 11th grade, with 3.1 for ACES and 3.2 for non-ACES students. The GPAs by gender, race/ethnicity, FARMS, and ESOL were similar. It is important to note that GPA was a factor in selecting and matching students in the comparison group. As a result, similar GPAs are to be expected.

Advanced Placement. We looked at three separate AP indicators:

- **AP course participation.** ACES students participated in AP courses at higher rates than non-ACES students. Overall, 73 percent of 2018 ACES students took at least one AP course compared to 63 percent of non-ACES students.
- **AP exams taken.** While ACES students are more likely to take one or more AP courses than non-ACES students, the latter group had a higher average number of total exams taken than ACES students, albeit the difference is marginal. On average, ACES students took 3.4 exams, compared to 3.6 for non-ACES students.
- **AP exam scores.** Non-ACES students averaged 2.6 out of 5 on their AP tests compared to 2.3 for ACES students.

SAT and ACT Participation and Performance. For college-bound students, taking an SAT or ACT exam is an important milestone to enrollment, especially at the four-year level.

- **Participation.** Amongst the 2018 cohort, ACES students took the SAT and/or ACT exams at much higher rates than non-ACES students in almost all categories. Eighty-eight percent of ACES students took at least one of the two exams compared to 69 percent of non-ACES students.
- **SAT Outcomes.** ACES and non-ACES students scored at almost identical rates on the SAT and ACT, with a 996 combined SAT score for ACES students compared to 995 for non-ACES students (out of 1600), and a 20 ACT for ACES students compared to 21 for non-ACES students (out of 36).

High school graduation. ACES students received their high school diplomas at significantly higher rates than comparable non-ACES students. For the 2018 Grade 11 cohort, ACES students recorded a 97 percent graduation rate compared to 87 percent for non-ACES students.

Matriculation to college. Our analysis focused on immediate matriculation to postsecondary education after high school graduation.

- **Matriculation to postsecondary institution.** Seventy-five percent of 2018 ACES students and 57 percent of non-ACES students matriculated to college immediately following high school graduation.
- **Matriculation to Montgomery College.** Thirty-nine percent of 2018 ACES students matriculated to Montgomery College immediately after graduating from high school compared to 21 percent of non-ACES students.
- **Matriculation to a two-year institution.** Forty-four percent of 2018 ACES students matriculated to a two-year college compared to 26 percent of non-ACES students.
- **Matriculation to a four-year institution.** Thirty-two percent of 2018 ACES students matriculated to a four-year institution out of high school compared to 31 percent of non-ACES students.

Persistence in College. Once students get to college, it is important for them to persist from semester-to-semester, year-to-year, until they earn their degree. Of students from the 2015 cohort who enrolled in college, almost 9 of 10 (88 percent) of ACES and non-ACES students persisted to their second year, a reasonably high persistence rate.

College Completion. The ultimate goal of going to college is measured by completion of a certificate, diploma, or degree. Of 2015 cohort students who went to college, 17 percent of ACES students earned one or more degrees during this time, compared to 12 percent of non-ACES students. Thirteen percent of ACES students earned an associate degree compared to 8 percent of non-ACES students. The National Clearinghouse data used to compile the report does not include Spring 2020 graduations.

In total, 111 students matriculated to USG, of which 85 percent earned a college degree and 32 percent earned a BA. Twenty-eight percent earned an AA and a BA.

Exhibit 2. Summary information based on 100 11th grade ACES and non-ACES students in fall 2014 by their academic progression and outcomes in 2020.

			All Students	Received High School Diploma	Matriculation (2-year)	Matriculation (4-year)	Matriculation to PSE	Earned a degree	AA	BA
Total		ACES	100	97	42	41	82	14	11	2
		Non-ACES	100	92	32	34	67	8	6	2
Gender	Male	ACES	100	95	43	36	80	8	7	0
		Non-ACES	100	90	36	27	63	8	6	1
	Female	ACES	100	97	40	43	84	18	13	3
		Non-ACES	100	94	30	39	69	9	6	2
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	100	92	41	36	77	23	14	9
		Non-ACES	100	100	23	70	93	13	10	3
	Black	ACES	100	97	32	54	87	10	7	2
		Non-ACES	100	93	28	47	75	6	3	2
	Hispanic/Latino	ACES	100	95	52	24	76	17	15	1
		Non-ACES	100	88	36	13	49	9	8	0
	Asian	ACES	100	100	54	33	88	23	17	0
		Non-ACES	100	98	49	23	72	15	10	5
Special Populations	FARMS	ACES	100	96	46	35	81	16	13	1
		Non-ACES	100	97	36	27	62	8	6	1
	ESOL	ACES	100	96	52	26	78	18	15	1
		Non-ACES	100	91	42	17	59	9	7	1

PART II — DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Introduction

The Educational Policy Institute was provided a data file¹ of all ACES students from the initial year of the program, 2013-14, through academic year 2019-20. The file included a variety of demographic and academic data. Due in part to the pandemic, some variables for the 2019-20 academic year were unavailable at the time of analysis. The file provides a cross-sectional, and to a degree, longitudinal look at ACES students throughout the lifetime of the program. The ACES Data and Evaluation Committee prepares three ACES “snapshot” reports and an annual report each year. The data in these reports are similar to the data in the comprehensive evaluation but may not match exactly due to certain assumptions that were made in completing the EPI analysis. This is important to keep in mind. Regardless, the essential outcomes measured herein will track with prior analysis.

Between 2013-14 and 2019-20, the ACES program has served 5,562 students. Starting with 962 students in the first year of the program at 10 MCPS high schools, the program served 1,697 students in 2019-20 at 14 high schools (See Exhibit 3). To jumpstart the program, the first year of the program featured two cohorts of students: an 11th grade and a 12th grade cohort. The number of first-time ACES students and returning ACES students increased each year of the program. In 2019-20, there were 885 first-year ACES students and 888 returning ACES students. During the lifetime of the program, 5,555 students applied to become ACES students, with approximately 900 applications annually in the most recent years of the program.

Each year, approximately 900 students apply to ACES annually and approximately 875 are accepted. Many of the schools fill up the 60 slots typically available in each grade for ACES.

Approximately two thirds of ACES students have been female (Exhibit 4). Although the distribution by gender has held relatively stable throughout the program, there has been a slight increase in the number and percentage of

women in the program each year. In total, there have been 3,530 women in the program and 2,032 men. In 2019-20, the program had a 2:1 ratio of women to men, consisting of 1,143 women and 553 men.

Exhibit 3. Total ACES students, first-time ACES students, and ACES applications, 2013-14 to 2019-20

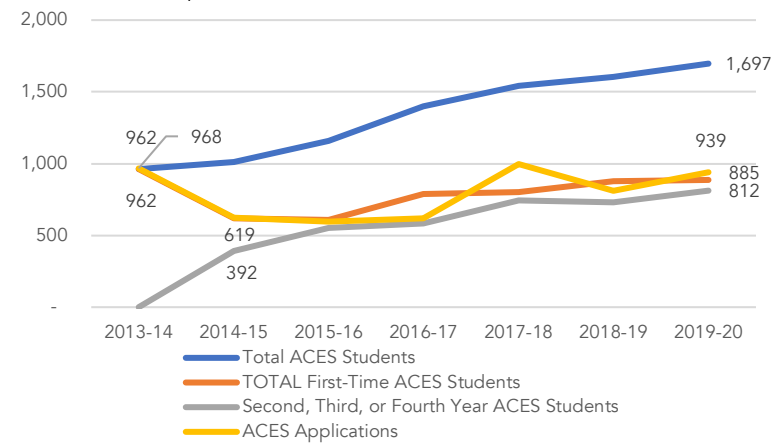
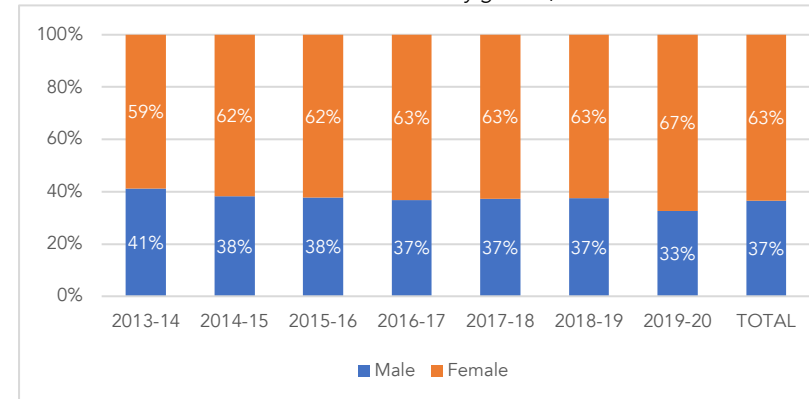


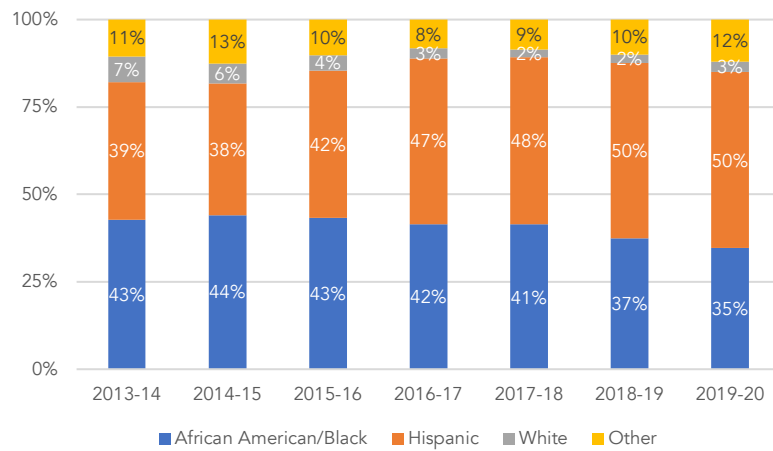
Exhibit 4. Distribution of ACES students by gender, 2013-14 to 2019-20



¹ All data from MCPS and USG were stripped of Personal Identifiable Information (PII) before sending to EPI.

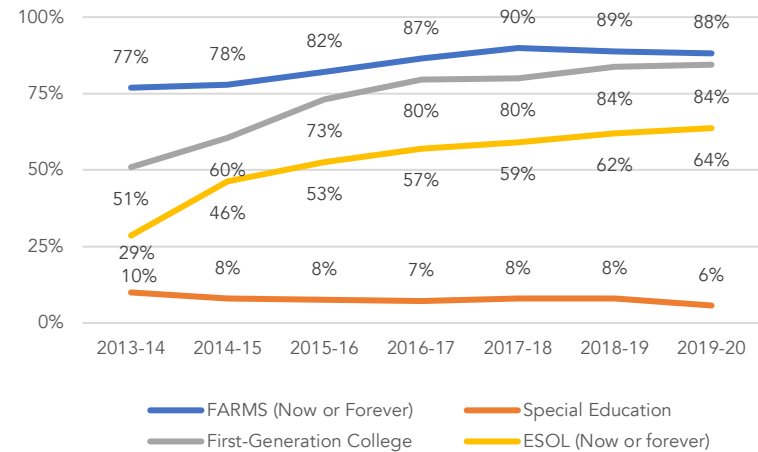
Because ACES is a dedicated program aimed at increasing college enrollment and success for students who are historically underrepresented in higher education, students of color make up the majority of ACES participants (Exhibit 5). Historically, approximately 40 percent of ACES students are Black and 38 percent Hispanic/Latino over the lifetime of the program. However, as the program matured, there was a shift from Black to Hispanic/Latino students, with Hispanic/Latinos making up half (50 percent) of the 2018-19 and 2019-20 cohorts.

Exhibit 5. Distribution of ACES students by race/ethnicity, 2013-14 to 2019-20



ACES serves other underserved audiences (Exhibit 6). In 2019-20, 9-of-10 ACES students (88 percent) were currently or previously eligible for the Free and Reduced-Price Meals System (FARMS), a proxy for low-income. This translates to 1,496 low-income students during the 2019-20 year. Additionally, 84 percent of students during 2019-20 will be the first in their family to go to college and two thirds (64 percent) of ACES students were participants in the MCPS English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) program. Only a small percentage of ACES students received special education services (6 percent).

Exhibit 6. ACES students by special characteristics, 2013-14 to 2019-20



The distribution of ACES students by grade level is relatively even between 11th and 12th grade students. Grade is a slightly cumbersome issue in MCPS as it is based on the number of credits earned, not that students necessarily "sit" in a particular grade. As well, there are unique instances when students technically enrolled in Grade 9 or Grade 10 may be included in the program. Thus, throughout the seven years since the inception of ACES, there are actually ACES students who started in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades, albeit only a handful before the 11th grade due primarily to credit attainment. ACES staff shared that most of these students catch up on the appropriate number and type of credits, and graduate on time. Still, as illustrated in Exhibit 7, there are typically a few more 11th grade, mostly first-time, ACES students than 12th-grade students. In the four years from 2015-16 to 2018-19, approximately 90-93 percent of ACES students returned to the program for their second year.

Exhibit 7. Distribution of ACES students by grade, 2013-14 to 2019-20

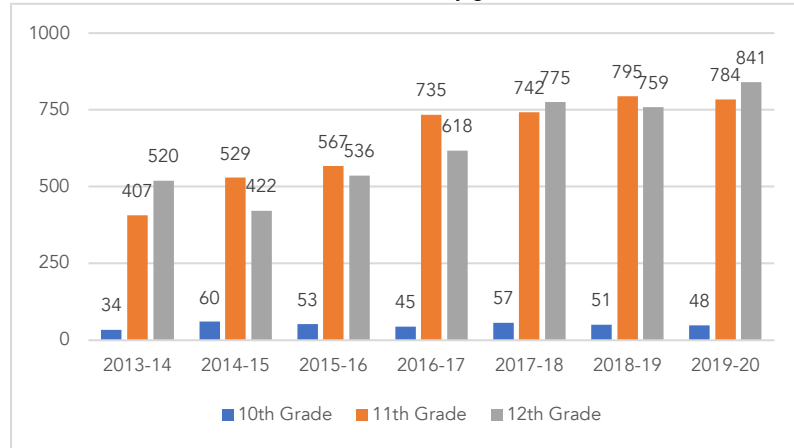
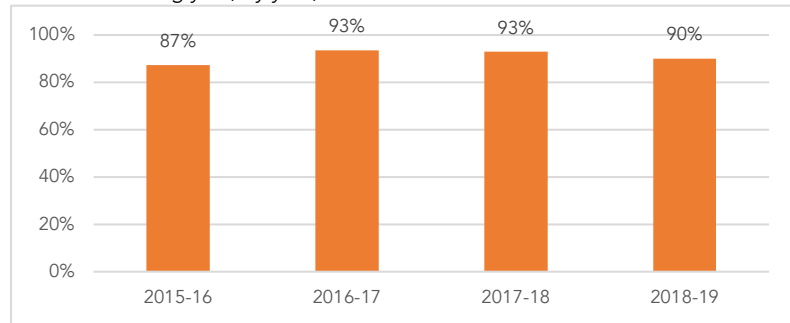
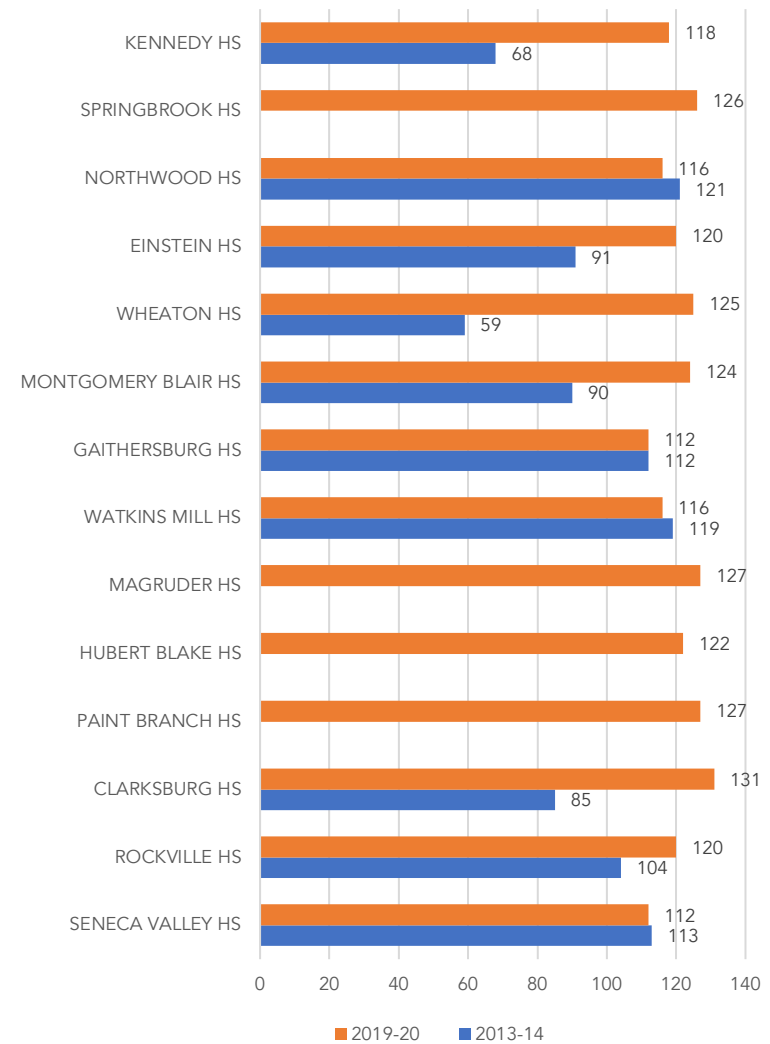


Exhibit 8. Percent of ACES students who returned to the program the following year, by year, 2015-16 to 2018-19



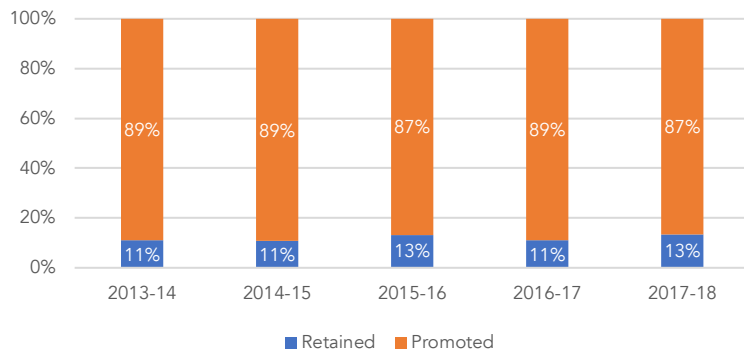
The ACES program originally began in 10 high schools during the 2013-14 year. The original schools included Seneca Valley, Rockville, Clarksburg, Watkins Mill, Gaithersburg, Montgomery Blair, Wheaton, Einstein, Northwood, and Kennedy High Schools. The ACES program grew by adding Paint Branch, Hubert Blake, and Springbrook High Schools in fall 2016, and Magruder High School in fall 2018. Exhibit 9 provides a snapshot of the enrollment at these schools in the first and latest years of the program.

Exhibit 9. ACES population by school, 2013-14 and 2019-20



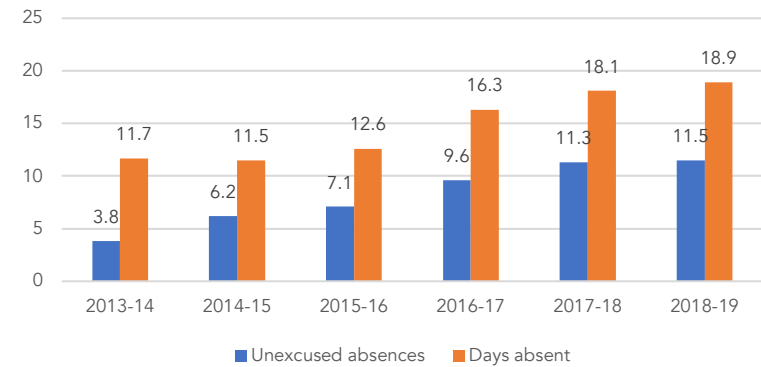
First-time ACES students were promoted to the next grade at high rates. Approximately 87 to 89 percent of 11th-grade students were promoted to the 12th grade at the end of their junior year. (Exhibit 10). Eleven to 13 percent of ACES students were retained in the 11th grade.

Exhibit 10. Retainment and promotion of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2018-19



In 2018-19, ACES students had an average of 11.5 days of unexcused absences and 19 total days of absences (Exhibit 11). Between 2013-14 and 2018-19, the number of both unexcused and total absences increased significantly. During this period, unexcused absences increased by 200 percent from 3.8 to 11.5 days, while total absences increased 62 percent from 11.7 days to 18.9 days. During this time period, MCPS deployed a more precise attendance system, increasing attendance accuracy by class.

Exhibit 11. Unexcused absences and days absent of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2018-19



ACES Program Participation

ACES provides many types of engagement activities for students during high school. These include workshops, meetings, and excursions, as well as activities to help them prepare for admissions. Based on ACES data, an analysis of program participation is described below.

Workshop Participation

Based on data provided by MC, the following chart provides participation rates for ACES students for the three academic years between 2017-18 and 2019-20. These data are separated out by year in the appendices. During this period, there were 3,142 unduplicated ACES students in the program.

Overall, 100 percent of ACES students participated in some type of program, as would be expected. On average through the three years, the 3,142 ACES students participated in 33,780 activities, or an average of 11 activities each. This averages approximately 3.5 activities per year per student.

Exhibit 12. ACES high school workshop participation, 2017-18 to 2019-20

	Attended		Total	
	No	Yes	Total Participation	% Participation
ACE Your Career Overview	1,146	751	1,897	40%
Art & Culture Career Workshops	912	128	1,040	12%
Campus Coach Visit	1,743	1,622	3,365	48%
Career Assessment Tools	34	23	57	40%
Career Exploration Workshop	1,073	844	1,917	44%
Career Immersion Trip	947	97	1,044	9%
Career Panel/Guest Speaker	176	106	282	38%
Career Workshop	776	596	1,372	43%
College Application Workshop	1,658	1,940	3,598	54%
College Field Trip	5,952	2,318	8,270	28%
College Greenlight	777	1,192	1,969	61%
College Selection Workshop	992	1,601	2,593	62%
Communication Skills	23	29	52	56%
Cultural Events	318	82	400	21%
ESOL Support (new)	2	14	16	88%
Essay Writing	1,224	1,221	2,445	50%
Financial Aid Workshop	1,590	1,530	3,120	49%
Financial Literacy Workshop	1,394	1,136	2,530	45%
Goal Setting Workshop	355	98	453	22%
Grade Level Orientation (pre Orientation)	2,231	4,427	6,658	66%
Interpersonal Skill	196	154	350	44%
Interview Skills Workshop	486	278	764	36%
Job Shadowing	42	14	56	25%
Kick-Off Event (pre Kick-Off)	1,607	954	2,561	37%
Oral Communication Workshop	298	168	466	36%
Other	2,890	2,403	5,293	45%
Professional Pathways Expo	528	284	812	35%
Professionalism Workshop	281	106	387	27%
reachHire Summer Bridge	885	682	1,567	44%
Referral to Community Organization	2	4	6	67%
Resume Workshop	1,133	1,050	2,183	48%
SAT/ACT Prep	4,682	1,291	5,973	22%
Saturday School	250	101	351	29%
Scholarship Workshop	1,391	1,706	3,097	55%
Service Learning	723	65	788	8%
SHMOOP (new)	96	7	103	7%
Small Group Career Coaching	-	103	103	100%
STEM Event	1,080	37	1,117	3%
Study Skills (pre Study Sessions)	946	1,393	2,339	60%

Summer Bridge (Rising 11th) (re-name)	1,799	1,797	3,596	50%
Summer Bridge (Rising 12th/USG)	1,079	990	2,069	48%
Time Management (pre in Personal/Social)	399	438	837	52%
TOTAL	44,116	33,780	77,896	43%

Individual Meetings

During the academic year and the summer bridge programming, there are approximately 24 types of individual meetings that students have with ACES coaches (see list below). On average, each ACES student had 17 individual meetings with ACES coaches during their ACES experience (two years), averaging approximately 8 meetings each year. These meetings are in addition to ACES workshops and activities that the students participate in.

- Academic
- Advancer+
- Career Development
- College Bound (from College Applications)
- Financial Aid/ Scholarships
- Personal/ Social
- SAT/ACT Prep
- Service Learning
- Educate Online
- Career Coaching/ USG Staff Only
- Check-in
- College Test Info
- Communication Skills
- Essay/Resume Help
- Parent Meetings
- School Staff Meeting
- Tutoring
- Interview Skills
- Virtual Meeting
- In-person Career Coaching/USG staff

- Field Trips
- Resume Help
- Virtual Career Coaching/ USG staff

As illustrated in the following exhibits, there were a total of 76,975 meetings recorded by ACES professionals between August 12, 2014, and August 22, 2020, averaging 20 minutes per session. Forty percent of meetings were of five minutes duration, 28 percent 15 minutes, and 20 percent 30 minutes. The remaining 13 percent were over 45 minutes in duration.

Exhibit 13. ACES high school individual meetings, duration and number, 2014 to 2020

Meeting Duration	Number of Meetings	Percent of Meetings
5	30673	40%
15	21345	28%
30	15057	20%
45	4667	6%
60	2932	4%
>90	2301	3
Total	76975	100%

Exhibit 14. ACES high school individual meetings, by year, 2014 to 2020

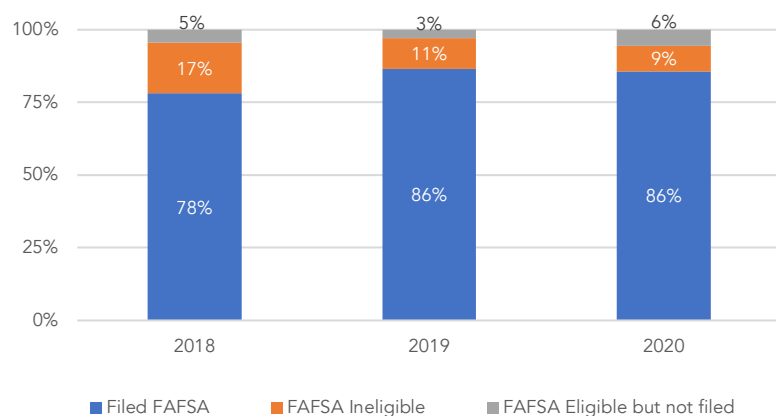
Year	#	%
2014-15	7,708	10%
2015-16	9,953	13%
2016-17	12,233	16%
2017-18	14,358	19%
2018-19	15,101	20%
2019-20	17,363	23%
Total	76,716	100%

Exhibit 15. ACES high school individual meetings, by year and semester, 2014 to 2020

Row Labels	Count of Year
2014-15	7,708
Spring	4,952
Summer/Fall	2,756
2015-16	9,953
Spring	5,602
Summer/Fall	4,351
2016-17	12,233
Spring	7,504
Summer/Fall	4,729
2017-18	14,358
Spring	7,896
Summer/Fall	6,462
2018-19	15,101
Spring	8,112
Summer/Fall	6,989
2019-20	17,363
Spring	9,222
Summer/Fall	8,141

FAFSA Completion

Students who are planning to go to college are encouraged to complete the Free Application for Student Financial Aid form, or FAFSA. Students who are citizens, legal permanent residence, or are refugees are eligible for federal financial aid and thus are encouraged to complete the FAFSA. Undocumented students are ineligible for federal student aid and thus do not complete the FAFSA. The chart below illustrates the FAFSA completion rates of active ACES students within their FAFSA year. During the 2018 FAFSA year, 78 percent (624) ACES students completed the FAFSA, 86 percent in 2019 (557), and 86 percent in 2020 (653). Of students who did not complete the FAFSA, only a very small percentage were eligible (e.g., only 5 percent, or 36 students in 2018; 3 percent or 19 students in 2019; and 6 percent or 42 students in 2020).



Academic Participation & Achievement

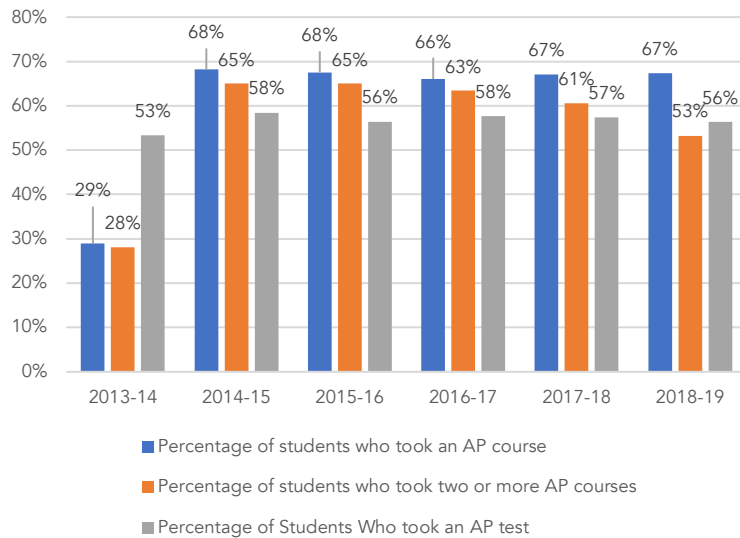
Our focus turns to the college preparation track for ACES students. Using data for Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and SAT and ACT college exams, we can measure both participation and academic outcomes for students.

Advanced Placement (AP). AP courses allow students to take college-level coursework while in high school. Produced and licensed by The College Board, MCPS offers most of the 38 AP courses available.

There are two important parts to AP; the first is completing the semester-long course; second is taking the norm-referenced exam produced by The College Board. If a student scores three or higher on their exam(s), many colleges will give students college credit for the course. Thus, students can shorten their college experience (and cost) by successfully completing and testing through the AP program.

Overall, half (49 percent) of ACES students participated in the AP program (2,740 students) between 2013-14 and 2018-19 (Exhibit 16). However, if the first year of the ACES program (2013-14) is excluded from our analysis, AP participation rises to 67 percent for 2014-15 cohorts onwards. Approximately two-thirds of ACES students took at least one AP course and over half completed two or more AP courses. Approximately half of students took at least one AP exam, an important issue we will discuss in a moment. The AP participation rates of ACES students was largely stable between 2014-15 and 2018-19.

Exhibit 16. AP participation rates of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2018-19



The total number of AP exams has increased over the years, with the highest number of exams taken during the 2017-18 academic year, due primarily to the expansion of the ACES program in terms of population (Exhibit 17). However, the average number of exams taken by ACES students has remained relatively constant at 2.5 exams per student. One third of students (34 percent) took one AP exam, while 22 percent took two exams, 14 percent three exams, and 10 percent took four exams. An additional 20 percent of ACES students took more than four AP tests (Exhibit 18).

Exhibit 17. Total number and average number of AP exams taken by ACES students, 2013-14 to 2018-19

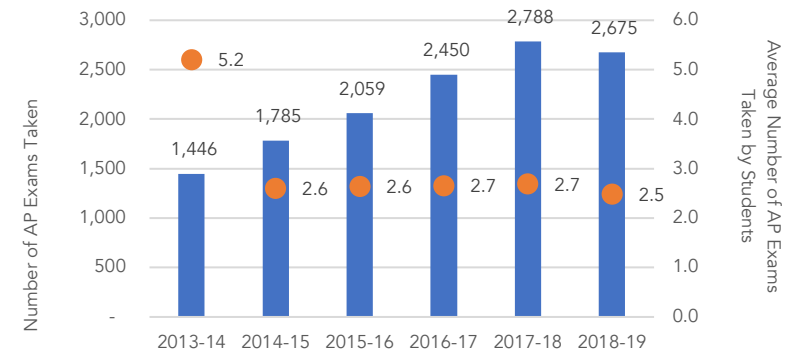
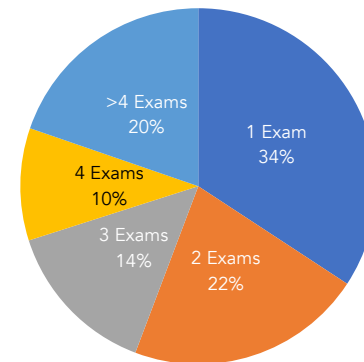
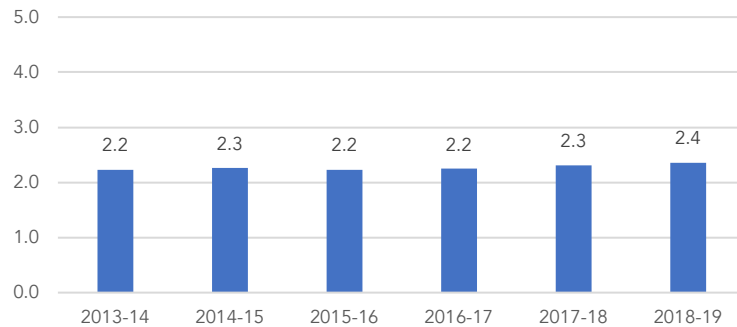


Exhibit 18. Average number of AP exams taken by ACES students, 2013-14 to 2018-19



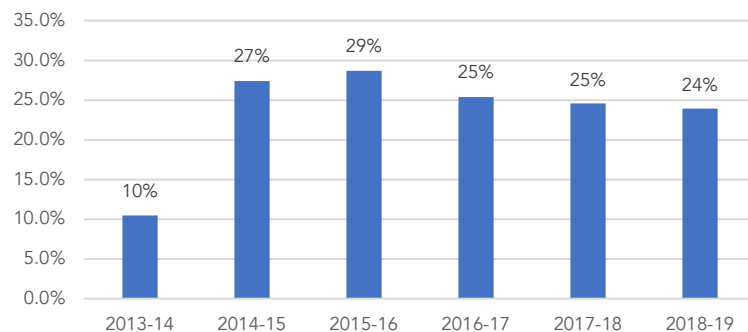
As mentioned, completing an AP course is only half the battle; taking the exam and scoring well (e.g., above 3) is a critical outcome and measure. Exhibit 19 illustrates that, on average, ACES students scored 2.4 on the five-point AP scale in testing. Thus, a majority of students would not have received AP credit in college for courses even though they successfully completed the course.

Exhibit 19. Average AP exam score by ACES students, 2013-14 to 2018-19



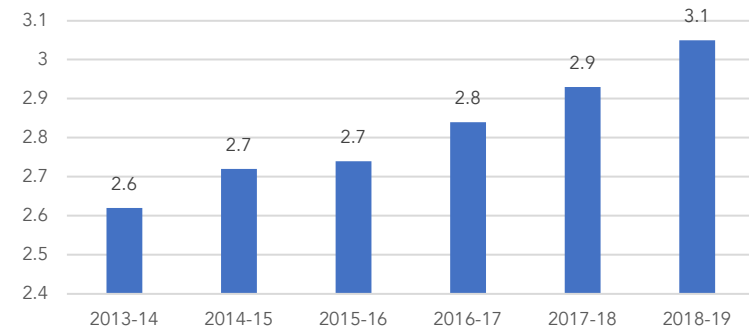
International Baccalaureate. International Baccalaureate (IB) programming is an alternative to the AP program that also provides high-level teaching and learning that is considered “college track.” Einstein, Kennedy, Rockville, Seneca Valley, Springbrook and Watkins Mill high schools offer the IB program. As illustrated in Exhibit 20, approximately one quarter (24 percent) of ACES students in 2018-19 participated in an IB course.

Exhibit 20. International Baccalaureate (IB) participation rates of ACES students (took one or more IB courses), 2013-14 to 2018-19



Grade Point Average. The grade point average (GPA) of students is a useful measure for academic production by students, although it is not a norm-referenced indicator, such as an AP exam. From the beginning of the ACES program in 2013-14 to 2018-19, the average GPA of ACES students increased each year from 2.6 to 3.1 (Exhibit 21). In addition, because there were more ACES students in the program each year, there were, on average, also a greater number of students earning higher GPAs.

Exhibit 21. Average high school GPA of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2018-19



SAT/ACT Exams. A further measure of college preparation and planning is whether students complete the SAT or ACT college entrance examination. The SAT and ACT have been traditionally used by institutions to provide an equal measure for evaluating prospective students. Of note, the State of Maryland has deemed college admissions exams optional for applications to a state college in Maryland starting in 2021-22. Still, they provide an important

norm-reference measure for student academic achievement.²

In 2017-18, 73 percent of ACES students took the SAT exam, the largest percentage of any prior year (Exhibit 22), representing over 1,100 students. The average math, verbal, and writing scores stayed mostly level at the 470 mark throughout the program, with the exception of a high of 580 in math and a low of 375 in writing among 2017-18 cohort ACES students (Exhibit 23).

Exhibit 22. SAT participation rates of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2017-18

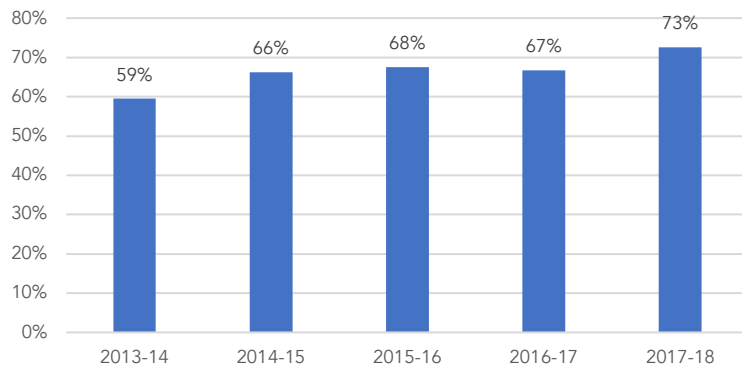
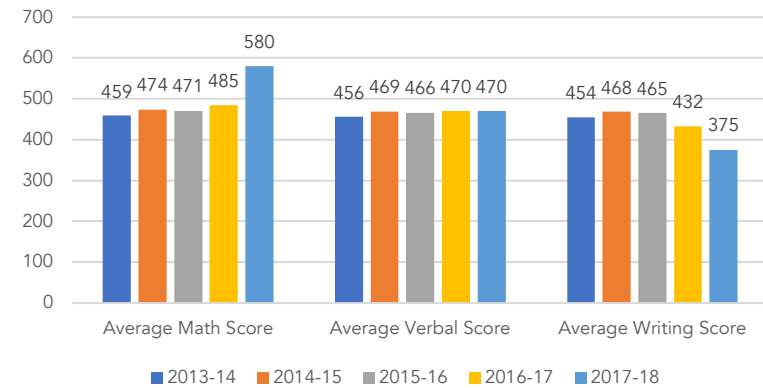


Exhibit 23. Average SAT scores of ACES students, by test, 2013-14 to 2017-18



The ACT test is secondary to the SAT in Montgomery County and Maryland and is usually taken by students who may want to apply to schools outside the state that require the ACT. This essentially keeps their college application options more flexible. Between 300 and 400 ACES students took the ACT each year, but this resulted in a declining percentage as the ACES population grew, suggesting that more focus was on the SAT rather than the ACT. As illustrated in Exhibit 24, only 21 percent of students who were in the ACES program in 2017-18 took the ACT, compared to a high of 38 percent of 2014-15 students. With regard to score, the scores ranged from an average of 18.3 to 19.5 out of a possible score of 36, with a total average of 19.1 between 2013-14 and 2017-18. A score of 20.8 is the average ACT score nationally.³

² In 2016, The College Board revamped the SAT exams underwent a large change in 2016 to make the test more equitable and also more relatable to curriculum. The prior combined score of 2,400 (three tests) was dropped to a two-test total of 1,600.

³ <https://blog.prepscholar.com/what-is-a-good-act-score-a-bad-act-score-an-excellent-act-score>.

Exhibit 24. ACT participation rates of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2017-18

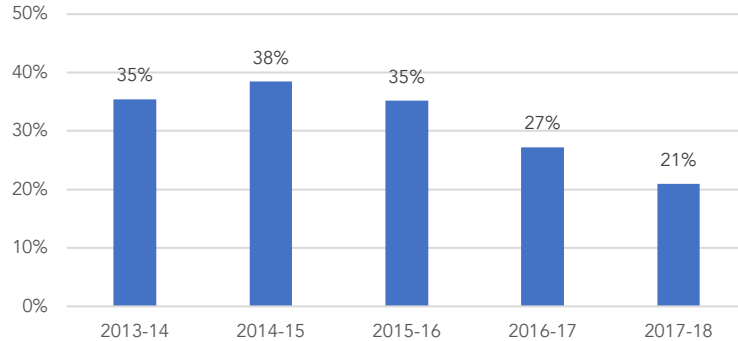
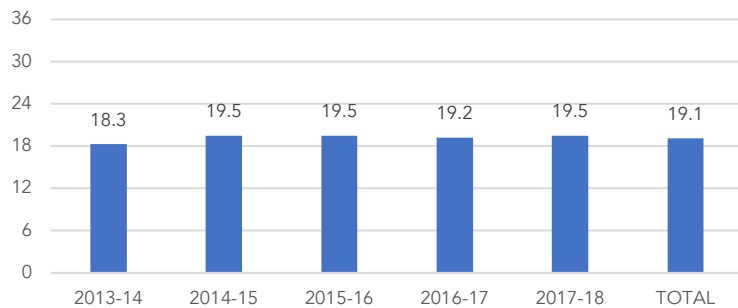


Exhibit 25. Average ACT composite scores (out of 36) of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2017-18



High School Graduation. Ultimately, high school graduation is a major measure of the academic ability of students, as well as a major milestone on the pathway to college and the workforce. Exhibit 26 illustrates the number of students who graduated from high school in a particular year by the type of graduation. Exhibit 27 illustrates the annual graduation rate of eligible seniors, which consistently averages 88 percent, which is on par with MCPS overall.

Exhibit 26. High school graduation status of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2018-19

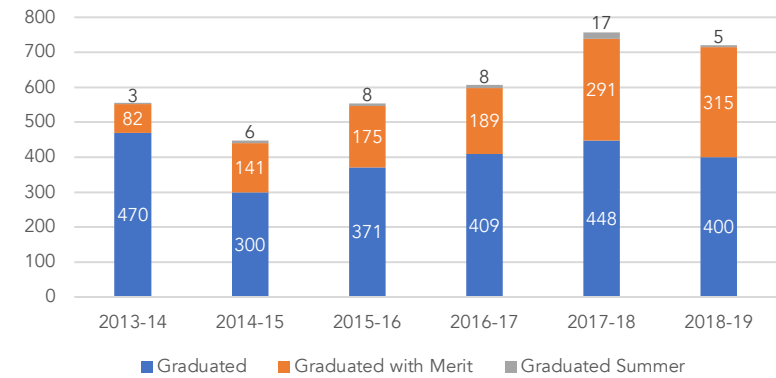
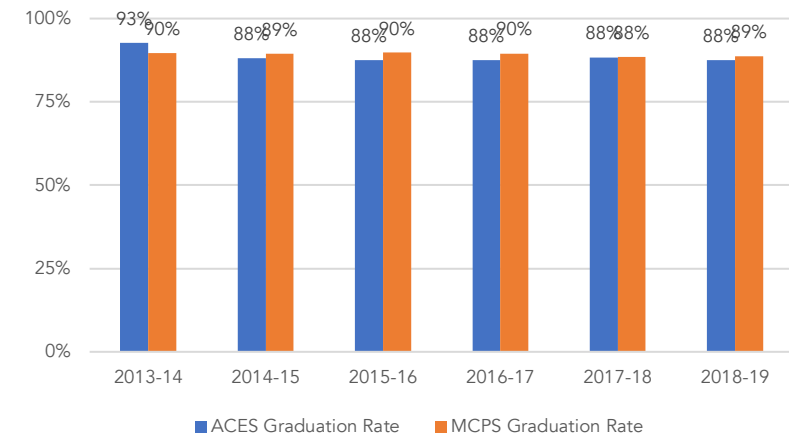


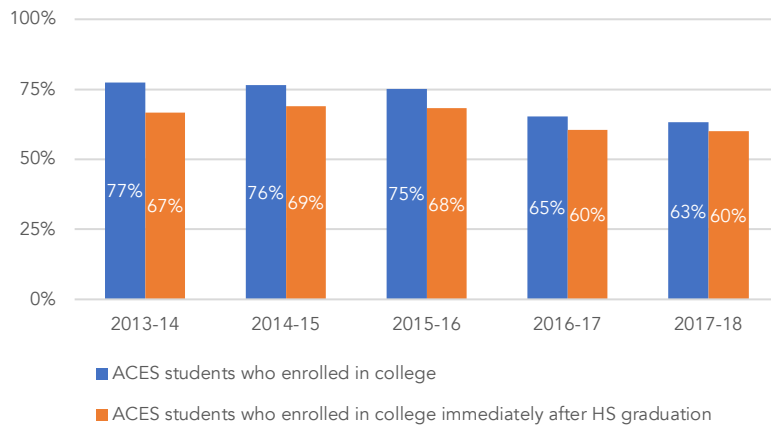
Exhibit 27. Overall high school graduation rate of ACES students versus MCPS total, 2013-14 to 2018-19



Postsecondary Matriculation

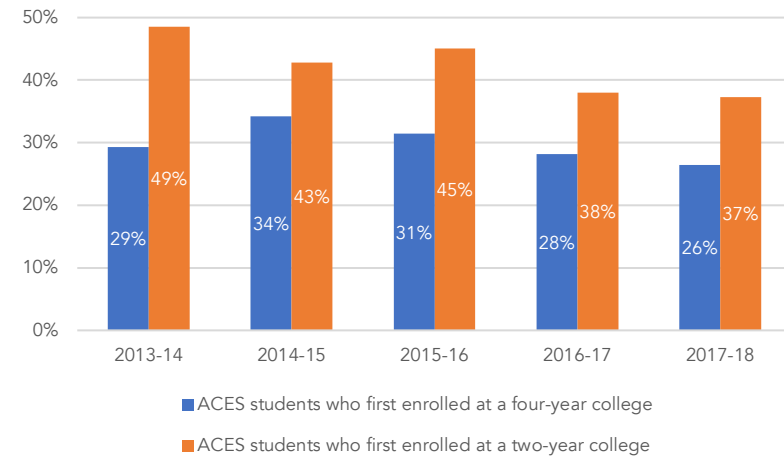
Between 2013-14 and 2017-18, 60- 67 percent of graduating ACES students matriculated immediately to college (Exhibit 28). This rate has declined slightly over the years from a high of 67 percent for 2013-14 to 63 percent in 2017-18. The percent of ACES students who ever enrolled in college decreased from 77 percent for the 2013-14 cohort to 63 percent for the 2017-18 cohort.

Exhibit 28. College enrollment rates and immediate matriculation rates of ACES students, 2013-14 to 2017-18



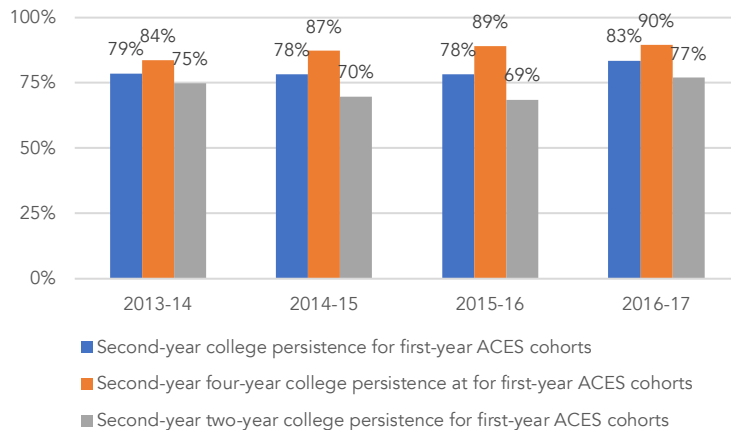
With regard to the type of college that students enter, 49 percent of ACES college students started at a two-year college of the 2013-14 cohort compared to 37 percent for the 2017-18 cohort (Exhibit 29). Twenty-nine percent of 2013-14 cohort students started at a four-year college. This decreased slightly to 26 percent for the 2017-18 ACES cohort.

Exhibit 29. College enrollment rates by institution type for ACES students, 2013-14 to 2017-18



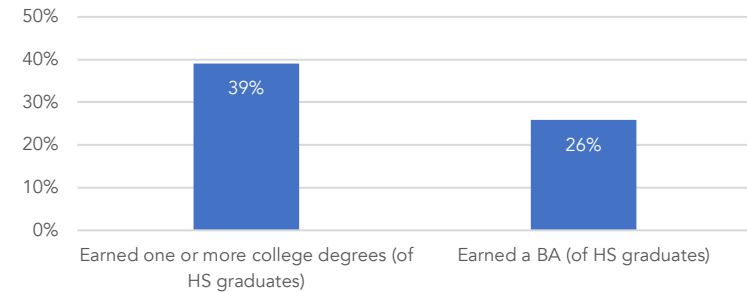
A high percentage of ACES college students return for their second year of college, as illustrated in Exhibit 30. Of all ACES students that matriculate to college, between 79 and 83 percent of students return for the second year. The rate for ACES students at four-year institutions is higher, ranging from 84 to 90 percent. For students at two-year institutions, the returning rate runs between 69 and 77 percent.

Exhibit 30. Second-year persistence of college-going ACES students, 2013-14 to 2017-18



Going to college is a good indicator of progress, but ultimately, completing college is the goal. Exhibit 31 illustrates the college degree completion rates for the 2013-14 entering cohort of students. As illustrated, 39 percent of students earned one or more degrees, and 26 percent earned a BA degree. More recent years do not have enough data to compute at this date.

Exhibit 31. College degree completion rates for ACES students for the initial 2013-14 cohort



Universities at Shady Grove (USG)

The matriculation and graduation numbers for USG are smaller than at MC for logical reasons: not as many of these students end up at the four-year level. Here are some of the findings of ACES students that did end up at USG partner institutions.

- We tracked 111 ACES students that matriculated to USG between 2014 and 2019.
- Of those students who enrolled at USG, 14 percent started at a four-year institution and 86 percent started at Montgomery College.
- Of those that matriculated from Montgomery College, 49 percent came from the Rockville Campus, 25 percent from the Germantown Campus, and 13 percent from the Takoma Park Campus.
- Of the 111 students who enrolled at USG, 105 of them (95 percent) matriculated to college immediately following high school graduation.
- Eighty-one percent of ACES students at USG received financial aid and 19 percent did not.
- Over half (56 percent) of ACES students at USG received Pell grants.
- Of those students, 85 percent earned a college degree, and 32 percent a bachelor's degree. Fourteen percent of BA graduates earned their degree at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) followed by University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) (10 percent). The

remainder were scattered across Salisbury University (SU), Towson University (TU), University of Baltimore (UB), University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), and the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) (formerly University of Maryland University College (UMUC)).

- Twenty-eight percent of students earned both their AA and their BA.

Exhibit 32. Number and percent of total ACES students who matriculated to USG, 2014 to 2019.

Year of HS Graduation	Number	Percent
2014	44	39.6
2015	24	21.6
2016	27	24.3
2017	16	14.4
Total	111	100

Exhibit 33. Origin of USG students, 2014 to 2019.

Institution	Number	Percent
Other	15	13.5
MC - Rockville	54	48.6
MC - Germantown	28	25.2
MC - Takoma Park	14	12.6
Total	111	100

Exhibit 34. Master table of various data indicators for ACES, 2013-14 to 2019-20

	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		TOTAL (unduplicated)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total ACES Students	962	100%	1011	100%	1160	100%	1399	100%	1544	100%	1605	100%	1697	100%	5562	100
TOTAL First-Time ACES Students	962	100%	619	61%	608	52%	789	56%	802	52%	875	55%	885	52%	5540	59%
Second Year ACES	—	—	392	39%	542	47%	589	42%	733	47%	727	45%	801	47%	3784	40%
Third/Fourth Year ACES	—	—	—	—	10	1%	21	2%	9	1%	3	0%	11	1%	54	1%
ACES Applications	968	—	625	—	596	—	618	—	997	—	812	—	939	—	5555	—
GENDER	962	100%	1011	100%	1160	100%	1399	100%	1544	100%	1606	100%	1696	100%	5562	100%
Male	395	41%	386	38%	438	38%	515	37%	575	37%	602	37%	553	33%	2032	37%
Female	567	59%	625	62%	722	62%	884	63%	969	63%	1004	63%	1143	67%	3530	63%
RACE/ETHNICITY	962	100%	1011	100%	1160	100%	1399	100%	1544	100%	1606	100%	1697	100%	5562	100%
Asian	79	8%	93	9%	89	8%	86	6%	97	6%	130	8%	174	10%	450	8%
African American/Black	412	43%	445	44%	502	43%	581	42%	639	41%	601	37%	589	35%	2216	40%
White	70	7%	58	6%	51	4%	41	3%	34	2%	39	2%	57	3%	616	11%
Hispanic/Latino	378	39%	381	38%	489	42%	663	47%	739	48%	806	50%	853	50%	2140	38%
Other	23	2%	34	3%	29	3%	28	2%	35	2%	30	2%	24	1%	140	3%
GRADE (Beginning of Year)	962	100%	1011	100%	1157	100%	1399	100%	1544	100%	1605	100%	1675	100%	—	—
9th/10th Grade	35	4%	60	6%	54	5%	46	3%	61	4%	73	5%	50	3%	—	—
11th Grade	407	42%	529	52%	567	49%	735	53%	735	48%	809	50%	784	47%	—	—
12th Grade	520	54%	422	42%	536	46%	618	44%	748	48%	723	45%	841	50%	—	—
SPECIAL STATUS	72	7%	62	6%	55	5%	106	8%	202	13%	216	13%	185	11%	—	—
ESOL (Current)	72	7%	62	6%	55	5%	106	8%	202	13%	216	13%	185	11%	—	—
ESOL Prior	203	21%	406	40%	556	48%	691	49%	709	46%	780	49%	896	53%	3058	55%
FARMS (Now or Prior)	740	77%	788	78%	952	82%	1211	87%	1388	90%	1424	89%	1496	88%	4746	85%
Special Education	96	10%	80	8%	87	8%	101	7%	124	8%	129	8%	97	6%	437	8%
First-Generation College	490	51%	611	60%	848	73%	1114	80%	1235	80%	1346	84%	1433	84%	4164	75%

NOTES: The number of ACES students represented in these exhibits include all students who originally entered the ACES program for each year. Thus, it also includes those students who left the program, transferred to another school or district, or dropped out. Additionally, grade level is determined by the number of credits earned.

Exhibit 34. Master table of various data indicators for ACES, 2013-14 to 2019-20

	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
BY SCHOOL	962	100%	1012	100%	1160	100%	1397	100%	1543	100%	1605	100%	1696	100%
SENECA VALLEY HS	113	12%	110	11%	121	10%	125	9%	118	8%	111	7%	112	7%
ROCKVILLE HS	104	11%	105	10%	109	9%	118	8%	124	8%	119	7%	120	7%
CLARKSBURG HS	85	9%	107	11%	124	11%	122	9%	111	7%	128	8%	131	8%
PAINT BRANCH HS	—	—	—	—	—	—	68	5%	126	8%	121	8%	127	7%
HUBERT BLAKE HS	—	—	—	—	—	—	65	5%	127	8%	130	8%	122	7%
MAGRUDER HS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	67	4%	127	7%
WATKINS MILL HS	119	12%	116	11%	111	10%	115	8%	113	7%	113	7%	116	7%
GAITHERSBURG HS	112	12%	122	12%	127	11%	119	9%	121	8%	117	7%	112	7%
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HS	90	9%	97	10%	114	10%	122	9%	123	8%	119	7%	124	7%
WHEATON HS	59	6%	77	8%	112	10%	122	9%	117	8%	119	7%	125	7%
EINSTEIN HS	91	9%	86	8%	110	9%	120	9%	116	8%	117	7%	120	7%
NORTHWOOD HS	121	13%	115	11%	119	10%	114	8%	116	8%	115	7%	116	7%
SPRINGBROOK HS	—	—	—	—	—	—	66	5%	114	7%	105	7%	126	7%
KENNEDY HS	68	7%	77	8%	113	10%	121	9%	117	8%	124	8%	118	7%

Exhibit 34. Master table of various data indicators for ACES, 2013-14 to 2019-20

	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		TOTAL (unduplicated)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)																
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB)																
Number of students who ever took an AP course	278	29%	689	68%	783	68%	924	66%	1036	67%	1081	67%			2740	49%
Number of students who ever took two or more AP courses	270	28%	657	65%	754	65%	887	63%	936	61%	855	53%			2440	44%
Number of students who took an AP test	513	53%	591	58%	654	56%	807	58%	887	57%	905	56%			2525	45%
Number of total AP tests taken	1446		1785		2059		2450		2788		2675					
Average number of AP tests taken	5.2		2.6		2.6		2.7		2.7		2.5					
Average AP Score	2.2		2.3		2.2		2.2		2.3		2.4				2.3	
Number of students who ever took one or more IB courses	101	10%	277	27%	333	29%	355	25%	379	25%	384	24%			1032	19%
Average GPA	2.6		2.7		2.7		2.8		2.9		3.1				2.84	
SAT/ACT Participation																
Students who took pre-2016 SAT	571	59%	660	65%	419	36%	39	3%	2	0%					1691	28%
Students who took revised SAT	1	0%	14	1%	400	34%	926	66%	1120	73%					2461	41%
Students who took either SAT	572	59%	669	66%	784	68%	933	67%	1120	73%					4078	67%
Average Math Score	459		474		471		485		580						464	
Average Verbal Score	456		469		466		470		470						459	
Average Writing Score	454		468		465		432		375						457	
Average SAT Composite	1370		1410		1402		1387		1425						1381	
Students who took ACT	341	35%	388	38%	408	35%	380	27%	323	21%					1840	
Average ACT Composite	18.3		19.5		19.5		19.2		19.5						19.1	

NOTE: 2013-14 AP data does not include possible courses taken in 2012-13.

Exhibit 34. Master table of various data indicators for ACES, 2013-14 to 2019-20

	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		TOTAL (unduplicated)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
ACES Program Retention	—	—	—	—	—	88%	—	97%	—	93%	—	91%	—	—	—	—
END OF YEAR STATUS	962	100%	1011	100%	1160	100%	1399	100%	1544	100%	1605	100%	—	—	5562	100%
Graduated	470	49%	300	30%	371	32%	409	29%	448	29%	400	25%	—	—	2398	43%
Graduated with Merit	82	9%	141	14%	175	15%	189	14%	291	19%	315	20%	—	—	1193	21%
Graduated Summer	3	0%	6	1%	8	1%	8	1%	17	1%	5	0%	—	—	47	1%
Retained	44	5%	60	6%	79	7%	86	6%	99	6%	102	6%	—	—	—	—
Promoted	357	37%	499	49%	517	45%	689	49%	640	41%	724	45%	—	—	—	—
Other	6	1%	5	0%	10	1%	18	1%	49	3%	59	4%	—	—	—	—
TOTAL Graduated in Current Year (percent of eligible graduates)	555	91%	447	86%	554	85%	606	83%	756	79%	720	77%	—	—	3638	65%
Total Graduated EVER (percent of all ACES students)	910	95%	946	94%	1091	94%	1277	91%	1396	90%	711	44%	—	—	—	—
ATTENDANCE																
Unexcused absences	3.8	—	6.2	—	7.1	—	9.6	—	11.3	—	11.5	—	—	—	8.8	—
Days absent	11.7	—	11.5	—	12.6	—	16.3	—	18.1	—	18.9	—	—	—	15.4	—

Exhibit 34. Master table of various data indicators for ACES, 2013-14 to 2019-20

	2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
COLLEGE ENROLLMENT										
Total	962	100%	619	100%	608	100%	789	100%	802	100%
First-time ACES students who enrolled in college	745	77%	473	76%	457	75%	515	65%	507	63%
First-time ACES students who never enrolled in college	217	23%	146	24%	151	25%	274	35%	295	37%
Total	962	100%	619	100%	608	100%	789	100%	802	100%
First-time ACES students who enrolled in college immediately after HS graduation	641	67%	427	69%	415	68%	477	60%	481	60%
First-time ACES students who did not enroll in college immediately after HS graduation	321	33%	192	31%	193	32%	312	40%	321	40%
Total	749	78%	477	77%	465	76%	522	66%	511	64%
First-time ACES students who enrolled first enrolled at a four-year college	282	29%	212	34%	191	31%	222	28%	212	26%
First-time ACES students who enrolled first enrolled at a two-year college	467	49%	265	43%	274	45%	300	38%	299	37%
COLLEGE PERSISTENCE										
College students who persisted to second year	586	79%	370	78%	358	78%	430	83%	—	—
Four-year college students who persisted to second year	236	84%	185	87%	170	89%	199	90%	—	—
Two-year college students who persisted to second year	350	75%	185	70%	188	69%	231	77%	—	—
COLLEGE OUTCOMES										
Earned one or more college degrees (of HS graduates)	356	39%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Earned a BA (of HS graduates)	236	26%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

PART III — COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Introduction

This section of the report focuses on a comparative analysis between ACES 11th-grade cohorts in 2015 and 2018 and a representative sample of non-ACES students at the same high schools. Working closely with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), the Educational Policy Institute (EPI) utilized a propensity score matching process for the selection of comparison students that most closely match the ACES cohort. This process provides the most equitable and accurate matching possible between groups to ensure that the outcomes are accurate and applicable. Technical details on this process and the analysis are provided on page 105.

We intentionally chose the 2015 and 2018 cohorts: the 2015 cohort allows for a five-year longitudinal perspective on these students, through high school graduation and into college. In some cases, we have graduation information from a two-year institution and transfer/matriculation to a four-year institution. The 2018 cohort provides a more recent look at the earlier piece of the longitudinal continuum, through high school and into the postsecondary system. The Exhibit below illustrates the timeline and pathway for students in our analysis.

Exhibit 35. Timeline and pathway for 2015 and 2018 analytical cohorts

Project Year	AY	HS GRADE		PSE Year					
		11	12	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
Year 1	2013-14	C1	C1b						
Year 2	2014-15	C2	C1	C1b					
Year 3	2015-16	C3	C2	C1	C1b				
Year 4	2016-17	C4	C3	C2	C1	C1b			
Year 5	2017-18	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1	C1b		
Year 6	2018-19	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1	C1b	
Year 7	2019-20	C7	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1	C1b
Year 8	2020-21	C8	C7	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1
Year 9	2021-22	C9	C8	C7	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2
Year 10	2022-23	C10	C9	C8	C7	C6	C5	C4	C3

For the 2015 cohort, we utilized 488 students for each group, ACES and non-ACES, totaling 976 students. In 2018, we were able to use a larger group of 660 students for each group, totaling 1,320 students. Thus, the 2018 cohort provides us with a higher

level of statistical power due to the larger numbers. However, the 2015 cohort provides more years of data to provide deeper postsecondary education outcomes analysis.

The data in this comparative analysis will not perfectly match those described in the descriptive analysis. That descriptive analysis serves as a full census of the ACES project. This study, by contrast, is a sample of ACES and non-ACES students for statistical purposes. Thus, percentages and other values may differ by slight amounts.

The analysis herein is interesting and at times complex. Full details from our analysis, including complete tables, are provided at the end of the report (see pages 105 and 109). This section provides key and summarized data and narrative on issues that we deem are (a) important to the understanding of the ACES project; and (b) have a statistical validation on to the differences between the ACES and non-ACES cohorts. Only certain findings are statistically significant, meaning that the differences or similarities are proven consistently by statistical methods. Other values may look like major differences but do not enjoy the statistical significance to deem them different.

Our overall analysis focuses on the comparison between ACES and non-ACES students. However, we also conduct comparisons via variable subsets such as gender, race/ethnicity, FARMS, ESOL, and entering GPA scores⁴. Some variables provided in the tables are hampered by low numbers, including White students, Asian students, "other" students, and special education students. Thus, we do not focus our narrative on those groups. By definition, ACES is a program that mostly focuses on underrepresented students in higher education, primarily on Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students, FARMS students, and ESOL students. Thus, those are our focus points in this analysis. Again, our summary charts and tables provide more detail and the master tables at the end provide additional variables not described within the body of this report.

The comparison analysis is conducted within year cohorts. That is, we conducted a statistical comparison between the ACES and non-ACES students for the 2015 cohort and the 2018 cohort. However, we did not conduct statistical analysis between the 2015 and 2018 cohorts. In the tables, bold numbers represent data that are statistically significant (different) at the $p < 0.05$ level or less. Red numbers signify low cell size (low N) with less than 40 students. Statistical significance is not observed in the associated charts provided throughout the report for readability. While the tables provide data

⁴ Entering GPA is the GPA the cumulative GPA that students have when they enter the ACES program. For the comparative group, or non-ACES students, we use the same GPA at the time of potential entry into ACES. Readers should

not confuse this GPA with their entire high school cumulative GPA. It is, at best, the GPA from ninth and 10th grades. That stated, we found that the entering GPA and cumulative throughout high school has few variations.

for both cohorts, the charts focus primarily on the 2018 cohort for reading simplicity. Tables regarding postsecondary participation and outcomes primarily utilize the 2015 cohort due to its number of out-years from high school graduation compared to the 2018 cohort. Full tables with additional data are provided at the end of this section.

Summary

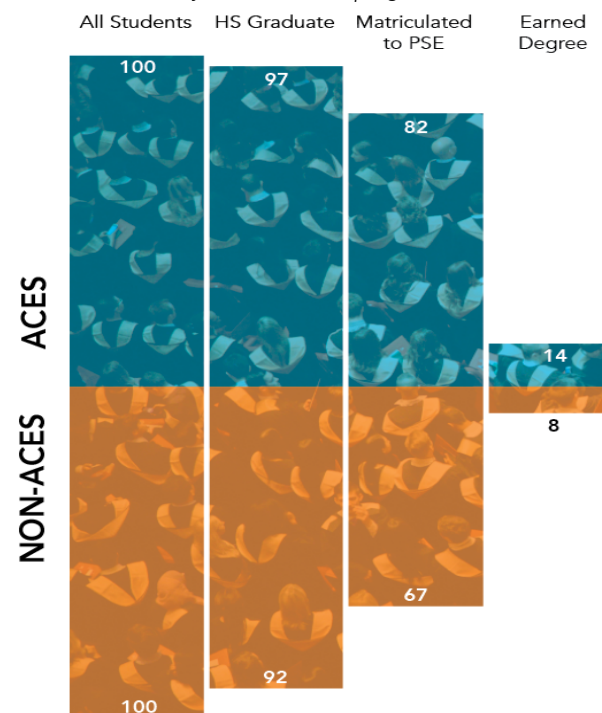
This report provides evidence of the impact of the ACES program as compared to a matched comparison group (non-ACES). The cohorts include entering 11th graders in 2014-15 (2015 cohort) as well as 2017-18 (2018 cohort).

Exhibit 36 provides a pictogram of what happens to 100 students in each group—ACES and non-ACES—from 11th grade to and through postsecondary education. It is critical to understand that more students from this cohort will earn postsecondary degrees in the next few years, so this is not a complete picture. Future studies will hopefully pick up on this for a more complete analysis of academic outcomes. What the graphic illustrates is that ACES students, when compared to their non-ACES peers, were more likely to:

- graduate from high school (97 versus 92 percent);
- matriculate to postsecondary education immediately following high school graduation (82 versus 67 percent); and
- earn one or more degrees (14 versus 8 percent of original cohort).

On a summary level, students who participate in the ACES program have better education progress and outcomes than other, comparative students who do not participate in the program. As we will see, ACES students also set themselves up for postsecondary studies more than non-ACES students by participating at higher levels in SAT/ACT college entrance exams and Advancement Placement (AP) courses.

Exhibit 36. Summary information based on 100 11th grade ACES and 100 non-ACES students in fall 2014 by their academic progression and outcomes in 2020.



Other summary findings include the following:

Promotion to the 12th grade. In 2018, 90 percent of ACES students and 84 percent for non-ACES students were promoted from 11th to 12th grade.

Unexcused absences. ACES students were far less likely to have unexcused absences than non-ACES students. ACES students, on average, had 8 unexcused absences in 2018 compared to 13 for non-ACES students (11th grade).

High School GPA. ACES and non-ACES students both had similar GPAs in the 11th grade, with 3.1 for ACES and 3.2 for non-ACES students. The GPAs by gender, race/ethnicity, FARMS, and ESOL were similar.

Advanced Placement. We looked at three separate AP indicators:

- **AP course participation.** ACES students participated in AP courses at higher rates than non-ACES students. Overall, 73 percent of ACES students in the 2018 cohort took at least one AP course compared to 63 percent of non-ACES students.
- **AP exams taken.** While ACES students are more likely to take one or more AP courses than non-ACES students, the latter group had a higher average number of total exams taken than ACES students, albeit the difference is marginal. On average, ACES students took 3.4 exams, compared to 3.6 for non-ACES students.
- **AP exam scores.** Non-ACES students averaged 2.6 out of 5 on their AP tests compared to 2.3 for ACES students.

SAT and ACT Participation and Performance. For college-bound students, taking an SAT or ACT exam is an important milestone to enrollment, especially at the four-year level.

- **Participation.** Among the 2018 cohort, ACES students took the SAT and/or ACT exams at much higher rates than non-ACES students in almost all categories. Eighty-eight percent of ACES students took at least one of the two exams compared to 69 percent of non-ACES students.
- **SAT Outcomes.** ACES and non-ACES students scored at almost identical rates on the SAT and ACT, with a 996 combined SAT score for ACES students compared to 995 for non-ACES students (out of 1600), and a 20 ACT for ACES students compared to 21 for non-ACES students (out of 36).

High school graduation. ACES students received their high school diploma at significantly higher rates than non-ACES students. For the 2018 Grade 11 cohort, ACES students recorded a 97 percent graduation rate compared to 87 percent for non-ACES students.

Matriculation to college. Our analysis focused on immediate matriculation to postsecondary education after high school graduation.

- **Matriculation to postsecondary institution.** Seventy-five percent of the 2018 ACES entering (11th grade) cohort of students and 57 percent of non-ACES

students matriculated to college immediately following high school graduation.

- **Matriculation to Montgomery College.** Thirty-nine percent of ACES students in the 2018 Grade 11 cohort, matriculated to Montgomery College immediately after graduating from high school compared to 21 percent of non-ACES students.
- **Matriculation to a two-year institution.** Forty-four percent of 2018 ACES students matriculated to a two-year college compared to 26 percent of non-ACES students.
- **Matriculation to a four-year institution.** Thirty-two percent of 2018 ACES students matriculated to a four-year institution out of high school compared to 31 percent of non-ACES students.

Persistence in College. Once students get to college, it is important for them to persist from semester-to-semester, year-to-year, until they earn their degrees. Of students from the 2015 cohort who enrolled in college, almost 9 of 10 (88 percent) of ACES and non-ACES students persisted to their second year, a reasonably high persistence rate.

College Completion. The ultimate goal of going to college is measured by completion of a certificate, diploma, or degree. Of 2015 cohort students who went to college, 17 percent of ACES students earned one or more degrees during this time, compared to 12 percent of non-ACES students. Thirteen percent of ACES students earned an associate degree compared to 8 percent of non-ACES students.

Exhibit 37. Summary information based on 100 11th grade ACES and non-ACES students in fall 2014 by their academic progression and outcomes in 2020.*

			All Students	Received High School Diploma	Matriculation (2-year)	Matriculation (4-year)	Matriculation to PSE	Earned a degree	AA	BA
Total		ACES	100	97	42	41	82	14	11	2
		Non-ACES	100	92	32	34	67	8	6	2
Gender	Male	ACES	100	95	43	36	80	8	7	0
		Non-ACES	100	90	36	27	63	8	6	1
	Female	ACES	100	97	40	43	84	18	13	3
		Non-ACES	100	94	30	39	69	9	6	2
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	100	92	41	36	77	23	14	9
		Non-ACES	100	100	23	70	93	13	10	3
	Black	ACES	100	97	32	54	87	10	7	2
		Non-ACES	100	93	28	47	75	6	3	2
	Hispanic/Latino	ACES	100	95	52	24	76	17	15	1
		Non-ACES	100	88	36	13	49	9	8	0
	Asian	ACES	100	100	54	33	88	23	17	0
		Non-ACES	100	98	49	23	72	15	10	5
Special Populations	FARMS	ACES	100	96	46	35	81	16	13	1
		Non-ACES	100	97	36	27	62	8	6	1
	ESOL	ACES	100	96	52	26	78	18	15	1
		Non-ACES	100	91	42	17	59	9	7	1

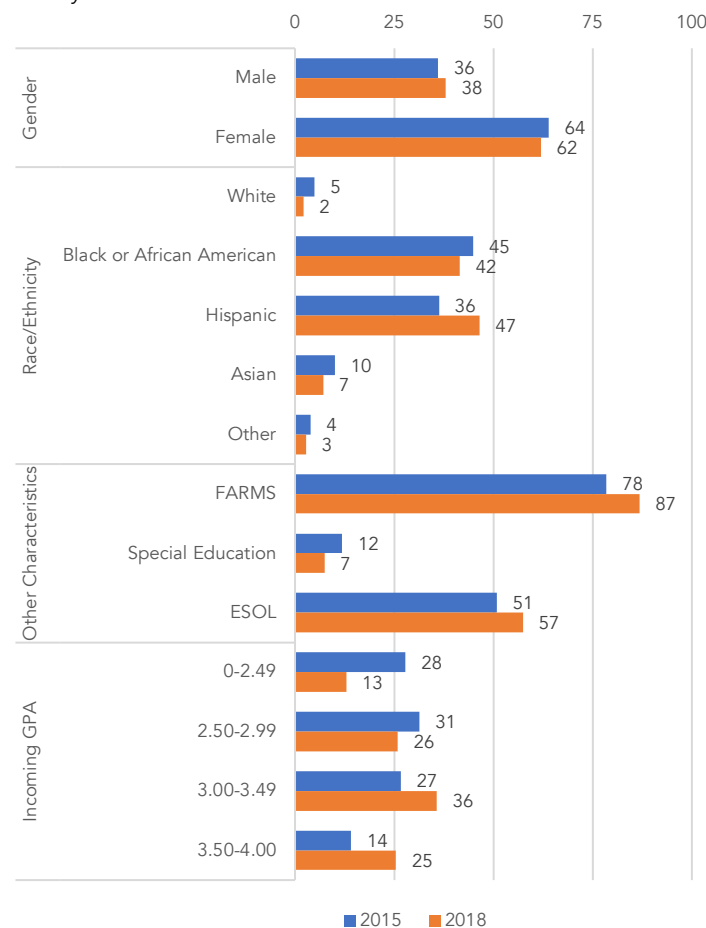
*Some outcome data were not available in the dataset as of the timing of this report. Therefore, the degree earned rates are likely lower than possible. Future studies will be able to provide updated information on these outcomes.

Student Background and Characteristics

Background characteristics of ACES and non-ACES students for the 2015 and 2018 Grade 11 cohorts are provided in tabular and graphic form on the following pages. Of the 2015 cohort, ACES students were two thirds female (64 percent) and one third male (36 percent). Forty-five percent of students were Black, 36 percent Hispanic/Latino, 10 percent Asian, and 5 percent White. Seventy-eight percent of ACES students were FARMS (Free and Reduced Meals)⁵, 12 percent special education, and 51 percent ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). In addition, 28 percent of ACES students had a GPA below 2.5, 31 percent between 2.5 and 2.99, 27 percent between 3.0 and 3.49, and 14 percent 3.5 and above. The 2018 cohort is very similar albeit with slight variations. For instance, the number and percentage of Hispanic/Latinos increased dramatically for both ACES and non-ACES groups (10 and 15 percent respectively) from approximately one third of the cohorts to one half. The percent of FARMS students increased 8 and 11 percent for ACES and non-ACES students, respectively, to 87 percent of the cohort populations. Special education students decreased slightly (5 percent and 2 percent respectively). The percent of ESOL students increased between 2015 and 2018, 51 and 46 percent, respectively, to 57 percent for ACES and non-ACES students.

Of interest is that the 2018 cohort of students had higher GPAs at entrance to the program than those from the 2015 cohort. The percent of ACES students who had a GPA above 3.0 increased 20 percent from 41 to 61 percent of the entire cohort. Conversely, the percent of those with a sub-2.5 GPA decreased from 28 to 13 percent of the entire cohort. Thus, recruitment to the program for the 2018 cohort resulted in an ACES cohort with a higher entering GPA than in the 2015 cohort.

Exhibit 38. Background and characteristics of 2015 & 2018 ACES and comparative cohorts, by selected characteristics



⁵ We consider FARMS students on whether they were ever FARMS, not if they are only at the time of program entrance.

Exhibit 39. Background and characteristics for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

			2015		2018		Δ
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	N	%	N	%	
		ACES	488	100	660	100	—
		Non-ACES	488	100	660	100	—
Gender	Male	ACES	176	36	251	38	2.0
		Non-ACES	192	39	287	43	4.1
	Female	ACES	312	64	409	62	-2.0
		Non-ACES	296	61	373	57	-4.1
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	24	5	14	2	-2.8
		Non-ACES	31	6	19	3	-3.5
	Black or African American	ACES	219	45	274	42	-3.4
		Non-ACES	218	45	240	36	-8.3
	Hispanic	ACES	177	36	307	47	10.3
		Non-ACES	179	37	341	52	15.0
	Asian	ACES	49	10	47	7	-2.9
		Non-ACES	42	9	51	8	-0.9
	Other	ACES	19	4	18	3	-1.2
		Non-ACES	17	3	9	1	-2.1
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	383	78	573	87	8.3
		Non-ACES	370	76	571	87	10.7
	Not FARMS	ACES	105	22	87	13	-8.3
		Non-ACES	118	24	89	13	-10.7
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	58	12	49	7	-4.5
		Non-ACES	34	7	32	5	-2.1
	Not Special Education	ACES	430	88	611	93	4.5
		Non-ACES	454	93	628	95	2.1
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	248	51	379	57	6.6
		Non-ACES	223	46	377	57	11.4
	Not ESOL	ACES	240	49	281	43	-6.3
		Non-ACES	265	54	283	43	-11.7
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	136	28	85	13	-15.0
		Non-ACES	142	29	121	18	-10.8
	2.50-2.99	ACES	153	31	171	26	-5.4
		Non-ACES	143	29	164	25	-4.5
	3.00-3.49	ACES	130	27	236	36	9.1
		Non-ACES	126	26	190	29	3.0
	3.50-4.00	ACES	69	14	168	25	11.3
		Non-ACES	77	16	185	28	12.3

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

High School Progression and Outcomes

There are many pieces to the discussion of academic performance, progression, and outcomes. These topics are covered in an order that follows, as much as possible, the pathway through high school and to and through college.

Promotion⁶ to the 12th grade. For both the 2015 and 2018 cohorts, approximately 90 percent of 11th grade ACES students were promoted to the 12th grade. There was no significant difference between ACES students and non-ACES students in 2015, but in 2018 there was a six-point difference, with a 90 percent promotion rate for ACES students and 84 percent for non-ACES students.

In 2015, 94 percent of female ACES students were promoted to the 12th grade compared to 90 percent of non-ACES students. In 2018, the rates were 92 and 88, respectively. Male ACES students had an 85 percent promotion rate in 2015 compared to 89 percent of their non-ACES counterparts. In 2018, the percentage for ACES males bumped up to 87 percent and non-ACES males fell to 80 percent.

Approximately 90 percent of Black ACES and non-ACES students were promoted in both 2015 and 2018. Hispanic/Latino ACES students were promoted at a higher rate than non-ACES students, with a 90 versus 85 percent rate in 2015 and 88 versus 78 percent rate in 2018.

ACES FARMS students were promoted to the 12th grade at a 90 percent rate in the 2015 cohort compared to 87 for non-ACES students. The 2018 cohort rate was the same for ACES FARMS students, while non-ACES students dropped to 83 percent.

In 2018, ACES ESOL students had a 90 percent promotion rate compared to 81 percent for non-ACES ESOL students. Within ACES students, there was no real difference between the promotion rates for ESOL versus non-ESOL students.

Our analysis by GPA illustrates that promotion rate increase consistently by GPA. That is, students with higher entering GPA were promoted to the 12th grade at higher rates than students with lower entering GPAs. Students with GPAs < 2.5 were promoted at a 76-77 percent rate. Comparatively, students who scored above 2.5 were promoted at 90 percent or higher, and students with 3.5 or higher rates were promoted at a 98

⁶ In MCPS, students who earn the requisite combination of the total number of credits and credits in specific subject areas at the end of Grade 11 are promoted to Grade 12. Grade 11 students can earn any "missing" requisite credits in total credits or specific content area credits during the summer prior to the start of the school year or at the end of

the first or second semester and be "promoted" to Grade 12 and graduate on time. For example, a student needs three credits in English to be promoted to Grade 12, where the fourth credit in English is earned. Without three English credits, a student is not promoted to Grade 12 until that full credit is earned.

percent rate, on average. The promotion rates of ACES and non-ACES students were similar at the high GPA levels, although ACES students had higher promotion rates at the lower GPA levels than their non-ACES counterparts. Because GPA was a factor in identification of the comparison group, the similarity of ACES and non-ACES students might be expected.

Exhibit 40. Promotion rates of 11th to 12th grade for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

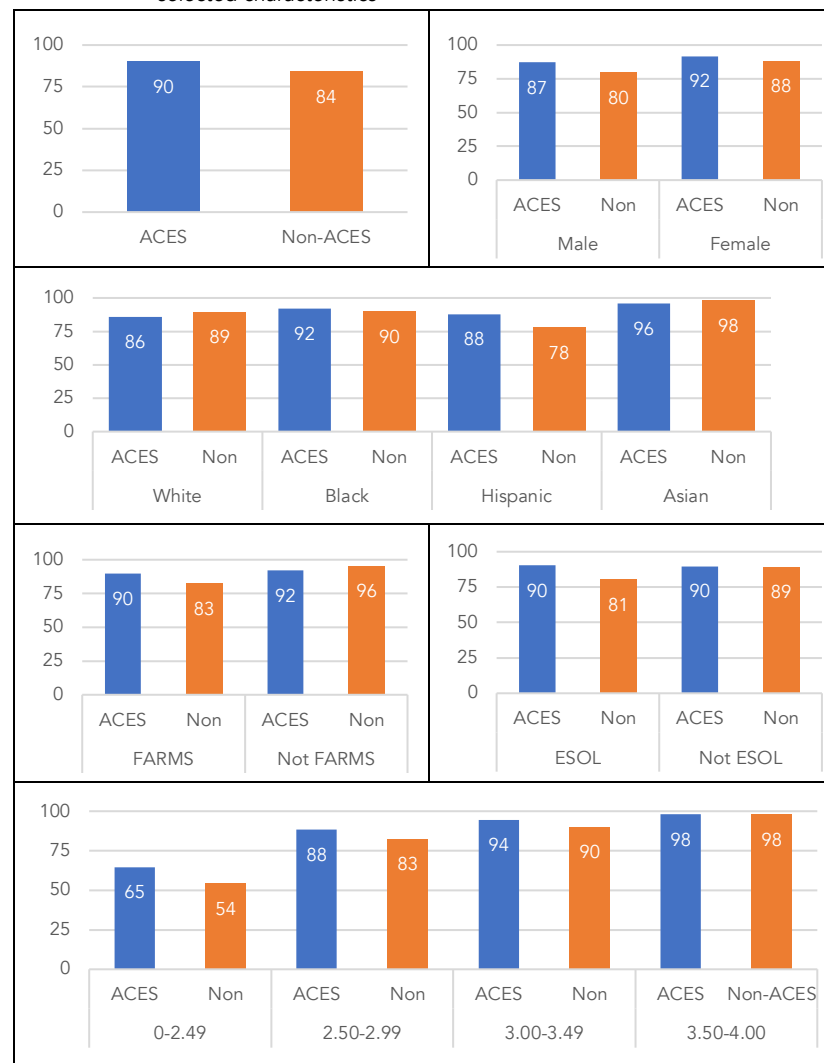


Exhibit 41. Promotion rates of 11th to 12th grade for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

Grand Variable			Promotion to 12th Grade		
			2015 %	2018 %	Δ
Total		ACES	91	90	-1.0
		Non-ACES	89	84	-4.7
Gender	Male	ACES	85	87	2.0
		Non-ACES	89	80	-8.8
	Female	ACES	94	92	-2.5
		Non-ACES	90	88	-1.5
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	92	86	-6.0
		Non-ACES	100	89	-10.5
	Black or African American	ACES	91	92	1.1
		Non-ACES	89	90	0.9
	Hispanic	ACES	90	88	-1.9
		Non-ACES	85	78	-7.5
	Asian	ACES	96	96	-0.2
		Non-ACES	93	98	5.2
Other	Other	ACES	89	83	-6.1
		Non-ACES	100	78	-22.2
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	90	90	-0.4
		Non-ACES	87	83	-4.7
	Not FARMS	ACES	94	92	-2.3
		Non-ACES	95	96	0.6
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	91	88	-3.6
		Non-ACES	94	88	-6.6
	Not Special Education	ACES	91	90	-0.8
		Non-ACES	89	84	-4.5
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	91	90	-0.5
		Non-ACES	87	81	-6.0
	Not ESOL	ACES	91	90	-1.6
		Non-ACES	91	89	-2.0
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	76	65	-11.0
		Non-ACES	77	54	-23.2
	2.50-2.99	ACES	95	88	-6.5
		Non-ACES	92	83	-9.8
	3.00-3.49	ACES	98	94	-3.2
		Non-ACES	94	90	-4.7
	3.50-4.00	ACES	100	98	-1.8
		Non-ACES	96	98	1.7

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Unexcused absences. ACES students are much less likely to have unexcused absences than non-ACES students. Eleventh-grade ACES students, on average, had 3 unexcused absences in 2015 and 8 in 2018, compared to 6 and 13, respectively, for non-ACES students. Thus, ACES students recorded half the unexcused absences than non-ACES students. These ratios basically repeated by gender, FARMS, and ESOL students.

Hispanic/Latino ACES students had higher unexcused absences in 2018 than other racial/ethnic groups, but still recorded half the absences of non-ACES students (10 versus 21 days). Black ACES students had 5 absences, while Asian ACES students had the lowest number of unexcused absences (3 days).

Students with low GPAs had much higher unexcused absences. For instance, in 2018, ACES students with a GPA below 2.5 had 17 days unexcused compared to 33 days for non-ACES students. However, students who recorded high GPAs had single-digit unexcused absences. For example, ACES students with a 3.5 GPA or higher had only 3 unexcused days on average, compared to 5 for non-ACES students.

Exhibit 42. Excused absences for 11th grade 2018 ACES and non-ACES students, by selected characteristics



Exhibit 43. Total and unexcused days absent for 11th grade 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	Days Absent: Total			Days Absent: Unexcused		
			2015 Mean	2018 Mean	Δ	2015 Mean	2018 Mean	Δ
Total		ACES	8	13	5.6	3	8	4.2
		Non-ACES	11	19	7.4	6	13	7.5
Gender	Male	ACES	6	12	6.0	3	8	5.0
		Non-ACES	11	19	7.7	7	15	7.9
	Female	ACES	9	14	5.4	4	7	3.7
		Non-ACES	11	19	7.3	5	13	7.2
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	9	24	14.4	4	13	9.4
		Non-ACES	8	15	6.7	2	5	3.3
	Black or African American	ACES	6	9	2.8	3	5	2.0
		Non-ACES	9	10	0.8	5	6	1.1
	Hispanic	ACES	10	17	7.5	5	10	5.9
		Non-ACES	15	27	12.1	9	21	12.4
	Asian	ACES	5	9	3.5	1	3	2.2
		Non-ACES	10	7	-3.0	4	2	-1.3
Other	Other	ACES	10	15	4.8	4	5	1.0
		Non-ACES	7	12	4.8	3	6	3.0
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	8	14	5.8	4	8	4.3
		Non-ACES	12	20	8.1	7	15	8.3
	Not FARMS	ACES	7	10	3.1	2	4	1.9
		Non-ACES	8	9	0.4	3	3	0.0
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	7	14	7.4	3	9	6.1
		Non-ACES	15	14	-0.8	9	7	-2.1
	Not Special Education	ACES	8	13	5.4	4	7	4.0
		Non-ACES	11	19	7.9	6	14	8.1
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	8	14	6.0	3	8	4.7
		Non-ACES	12	22	9.8	7	17	10.5
	Not ESOL	ACES	8	13	5.0	3	7	3.4
		Non-ACES	10	14	3.8	5	8	3.1
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	11	23	11.9	6	17	11.0
		Non-ACES	18	38	20.0	12	33	20.9
	2.50-2.99	ACES	7	14	7.1	3	9	5.6
		Non-ACES	10	21	11.0	5	15	9.8
	3.00-3.49	ACES	6	12	5.8	2	7	4.2
		Non-ACES	8	14	5.8	3	8	5.4
	3.50-4.00	ACES	4	8	4.5	1	3	2.3
		Non-ACES	6	9	2.7	1	5	3.7

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

High School GPA. The grade point averages (GPA) for students was observed in both the 11th and 12th grades for each cohort. Our data described herein focuses on the 11th grade GPAs between ACES and non-ACES groups in 2018. There was no discernable difference between the two scores for students either by ACES/non-ACES or by sub-grouping. ACES students had an average GPA of 3.1 compared to 3.2 for non-ACES students. The GPAs by gender, race/ethnicity, FARMS, and ESOL were very similar by subgroup and by ACES/non-ACES. As noted, GPA was a primary factor in identifying students for the comparison group, so similarity in GPAs is anticipated.

Exhibit 44. Average GPA for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

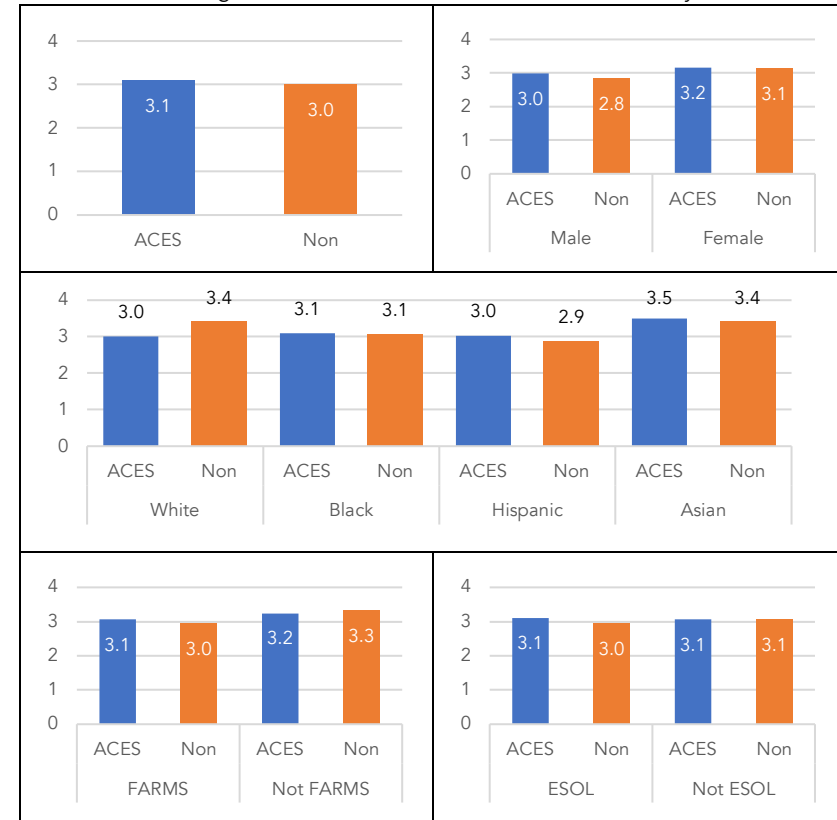


Exhibit 45. Average GPA for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts (two annual scores per cohort), by selected characteristics

			Average GPA							
			2015	2016	Δ	2018	2019	Δ	Δ 2018 versus 2015	Δ 2019 versus 2016
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	GPA	GPA		GPA	GPA			
Total		ACES	2.83	2.84	0.0	3.09	3.06	0.0	0.26	0.22
		Non-ACES	2.81	2.81	0.0	3.00	2.97	0.0	0.19	0.16
Gender	Male	ACES	2.69	2.68	0.0	2.98	2.92	-0.1	0.29	0.24
		Non-ACES	2.71	2.71	0.0	2.83	2.79	0.0	0.12	0.08
	Female	ACES	2.92	2.93	0.0	3.16	3.14	0.0	0.24	0.21
		Non-ACES	2.87	2.88	0.0	3.13	3.10	0.0	0.26	0.22
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	2.94	2.94	0.0	3.01	3.01	0.0	0.07	0.07
		Non-ACES	3.27	3.28	0.0	3.42	3.44	0.0	0.15	0.16
	Black or African American	ACES	2.80	2.82	0.0	3.10	3.07	0.0	0.30	0.25
		Non-ACES	2.77	2.79	0.0	3.06	3.06	0.0	0.29	0.27
	Hispanic	ACES	2.79	2.78	0.0	3.03	2.99	0.0	0.24	0.21
		Non-ACES	2.70	2.68	0.0	2.87	2.82	-0.1	0.17	0.14
	Asian	ACES	3.16	3.15	0.0	3.50	3.49	0.0	0.34	0.34
		Non-ACES	3.14	3.11	0.0	3.42	3.36	-0.1	0.28	0.25
	Other	ACES	2.63	2.65	0.0	3.08	3.05	0.0	0.45	0.40
		Non-ACES	2.89	2.91	0.0	3.00	2.97	0.0	0.11	0.06
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS		2.80	2.79	0.0	3.07	3.04	0.0	0.27	0.25
		Non-ACES	2.73	2.73	0.0	2.95	2.92	0.0	0.22	0.19
	Not FARMS	ACES	2.97	2.99	0.0	3.24	3.21	0.0	0.27	0.22
		Non-ACES	3.07	3.07	0.0	3.32	3.28	0.0	0.25	0.21
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	2.57	2.63	0.1	2.82	2.81	0.0	0.25	0.18
		Non-ACES	2.75	2.80	0.0	3.08	3.08	0.0	0.33	0.28
	Not Special Education	ACES	2.87	2.86	0.0	3.12	3.08	0.0	0.25	0.22
		Non-ACES	2.82	2.81	0.0	2.99	2.96	0.0	0.17	0.15
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	2.87	2.86	0.0	3.11	3.07	0.0	0.24	0.21
		Non-ACES	2.77	2.75	0.0	2.95	2.90	-0.1	0.18	0.15
	Not ESOL	ACES	2.80	2.81	0.0	3.07	3.05	0.0	0.27	0.24
		Non-ACES	2.84	2.86	0.0	3.06	3.06	0.0	0.22	0.20
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	2.17	2.22	0.1	2.21	2.23	0.0	0.04	0.01
		Non-ACES	2.11	2.16	0.1	2.00	2.01	0.0	-0.11	-0.15
	2.50-2.99	ACES	2.73	2.72	0.0	2.78	2.74	0.0	0.05	0.02
		Non-ACES	2.70	2.68	0.0	2.74	2.68	-0.1	0.04	0.00
	3.00-3.49	ACES	3.20	3.18	0.0	3.23	3.19	0.0	0.03	0.01
		Non-ACES	3.18	3.15	0.0	3.20	3.13	-0.1	0.02	-0.02
	3.50-4.00	ACES	3.68	3.66	0.0	3.67	3.62	0.0	-0.01	-0.04
		Non-ACES	3.70	3.66	0.0	3.68	3.62	-0.1	-0.02	-0.04

BOLD = p < 0.05; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Advanced Placement. Advanced Placement is a college-level academic program designed by the College Board to give students not only college-level opportunities, but also credit if they test above a certain level on the norm-referenced AP tests. Both participation rates and test scores provide a proxy for college readiness of students, in both intention and action.

There are three separate indicators for review: AP course participation; AP exams taken; and AP exam scores.

- **AP course participation.** ACES students participate in AP courses at higher rates than non-ACES students. Overall, 73 percent of the 2018 cohort of ACES students took at least one AP course compared to 63 percent of non-ACES students. Both male and female ACES students participated in AP at higher rates (63 to 56 for men and 78 to 69 percent for women) as did Black and Hispanic/Latino students (75 to 69 percent for Blacks and 69 to 57 percent for Hispanic/Latinos).

As well, FARMS students had a much higher AP participation rate, with 71 percent of ACES FARMS students taking at least one course compared to 60 percent of non-ACES FARMS students. Interestingly, there was no difference between ACES and non-ACES students on AP participation who were not FARMS students (84 and 85 percent, respectively). Similarly, ESOL students showed similar trends, with ACES ESOL students participating at a 69 percent rate compared to 54 percent for non-ACES ESOL students, and no difference for non-ESOL students between the groups.

As anticipated, participation in AP increased dramatically for those with higher entering GPAs. Less than half (46 percent of ACES and 37 percent of non-ACES students) of students with an entering GPA below 2.5 participated in AP. Comparatively, students with an entering GPA between 3.0 and 3.49 had a 78 percent participation rate for ACES students and 68 percent rate for non-ACES students. At the highest level (3.5 and above), 89 percent of ACES students participated at least one AP course compared to 82 percent for non-ACES students. At each GPA quartile, including the lowest and highest, ACES students had higher AP participation rates than non-ACES students.

- **AP exams taken.** While we illustrated that ACES students are more likely to take one or more AP courses than non-ACES students, the latter group had a higher average number of exams taken score than ACES students, albeit a

marginal difference. On average, ACES students take 3.4 exams compared to 3.6 for non-ACES students.

Black students had a similar average number of exams taken (3.6 ACES versus 3.7 non-ACES), but Hispanic/Latino ACES students were much more likely to take AP exams than non-ACES students, by a margin of 3.1 versus 2.6.

ACES and non-ACES FARMS students both took an average of 3.3 exams taken, which was significantly less than non-FARMS students (4.0 ACES and 4.6 non-ACES). ACES ESOL students had a higher average than non-ACES ESOL students (3.3 versus 2.9) but was lower than the non-ESOL students (3.6 ACES and 4.2 non-ACES).

ACES and non-ACES students had a similar average number of exams taken within our GPA brackets. However, the average number of exams taken increased dramatically by entering GPA score, with an average of approximately 2.1 exams taken for ACES students with an entering GPA between 2.5 and 2.99, while those 3.5 and higher had an average number of tests of 4.7.

- AP exam scores.** ACES students averaged 2.3 out of 5 on their AP tests compared to 2.6 for non-ACES students. This comparison held by gender, race/ethnicity, FARMS, and ESOL. There was no significant difference by men or women and Hispanic/Latinos scored slightly higher than Black students (2.3 versus 2.1). Students with higher entering GPAs recorded higher average AP exam scores than students with lower GPAs. For instance, ACES students who had an entering GPA of 3.5 or higher scored 2.7 on average on their AP tests, compared to 1.9 for students between a 2.5 and 2.99.

Exhibit 46. AP participation rates for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

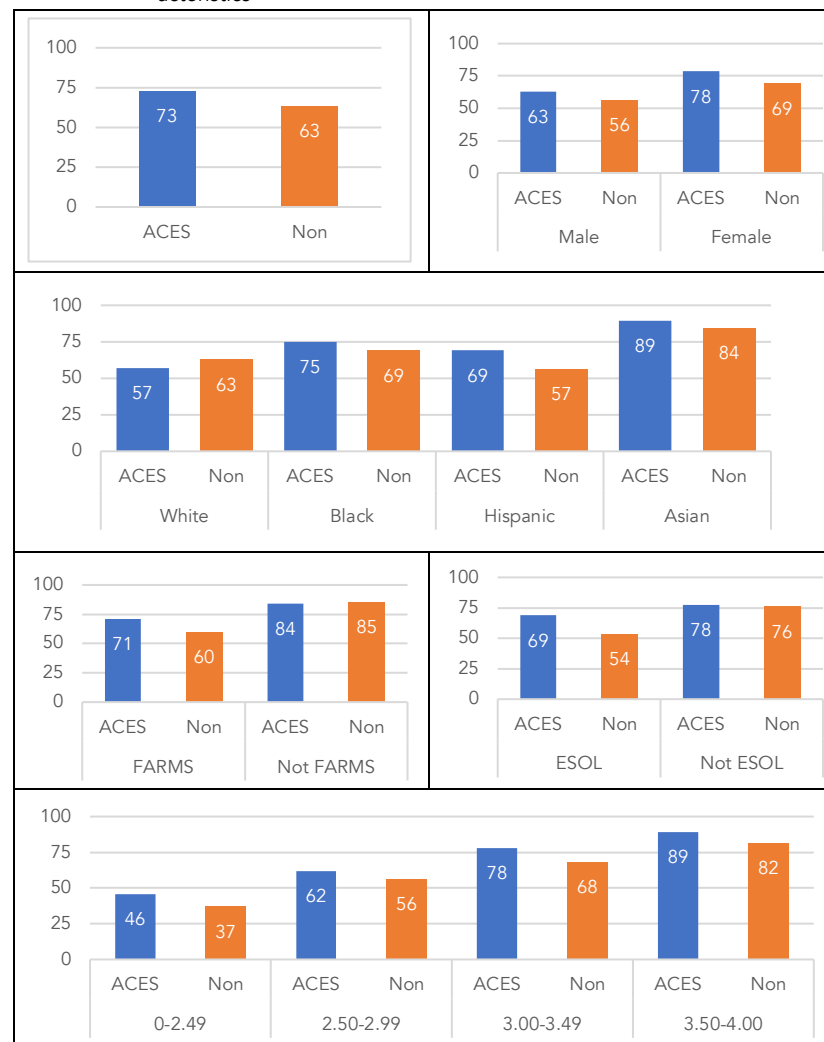


Exhibit 47. Average number of AP exams taken for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

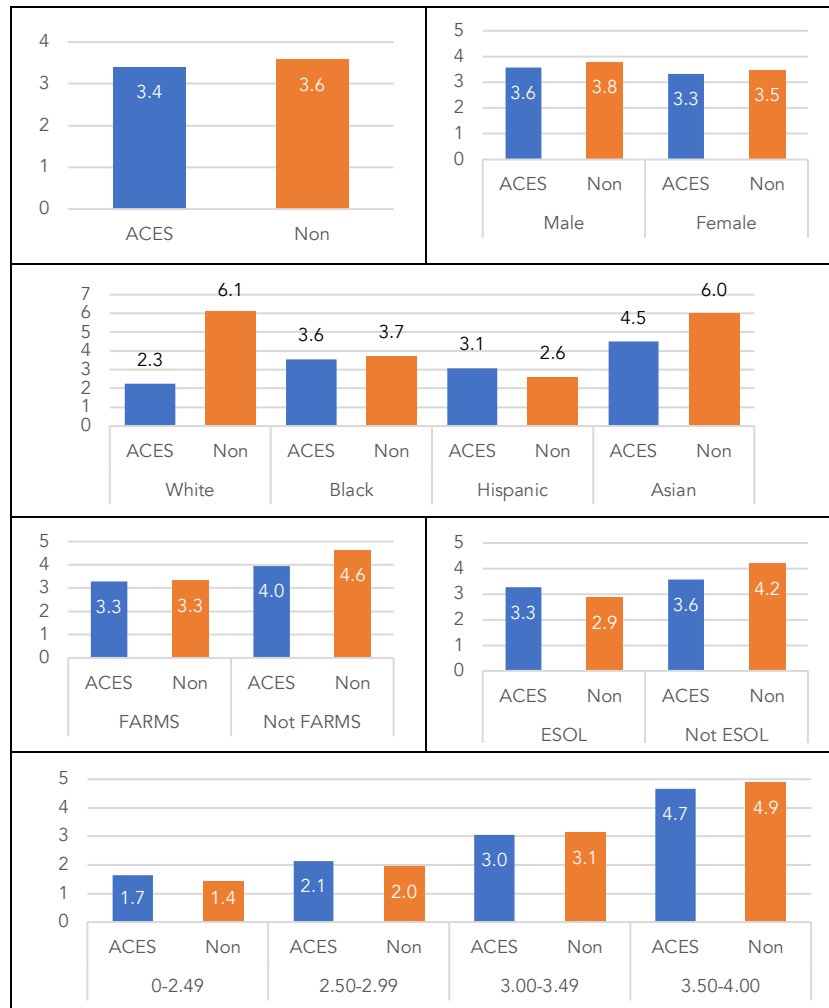


Exhibit 48. Average AP exam scores for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics



Exhibit 49. AP participation rates and average number of AP exams taken for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

			Took 1 or >More AP Courses			Exams		
			2015	2018	Δ	2015	2018	Δ
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	%	%		Mean	Mean	
Total		ACES	73	73	-0.4	1.9	3.4	1.5
		Non-ACES	63	63	0.4	1.9	3.6	1.7
Gender	Male	ACES	64	63	-1.3	1.5	3.6	2.1
		Non-ACES	53	56	3.0	1.5	3.8	2.3
	Female	ACES	78	78	0.6	2.2	3.3	1.1
		Non-ACES	69	69	-0.4	2.1	3.5	1.4
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	79	57	-22.0	2.5	2.3	-0.3
		Non-ACES	94	63	-30.4	3.5	6.1	2.6
	Black or African American	ACES	71	75	4.0	2.0	3.6	1.5
		Non-ACES	61	69	8.2	1.8	3.7	2.0
	Hispanic	ACES	73	69	-4.4	1.8	3.1	1.3
		Non-ACES	58	57	-1.5	1.4	2.6	1.2
	Asian	ACES	88	89	1.6	2.1	4.5	2.4
		Non-ACES	62	84	22.4	2.8	6.0	3.2
	Other	ACES	47	67	19.3	0.8	3.1	2.3
		Non-ACES	82	44	-37.9	2.1	3.8	1.7
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	71	71	-0.4	1.8	3.3	1.5
		Non-ACES	58	60	2.3	1.5	3.3	1.9
	Not FARMS	ACES	79	84	4.9	2.4	4.0	1.6
		Non-ACES	80	85	5.7	3.0	4.6	1.6
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	41	35	-6.7	1.2	2.5	1.2
		Non-ACES	15	19	4.0	0.4	2.8	2.4
	Not Special Education	ACES	77	76	-1.6	2.0	3.4	1.4
		Non-ACES	67	66	-0.9	2.0	3.6	1.6
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	74	69	-4.9	1.9	3.3	1.3
		Non-ACES	56	54	-2.5	1.4	2.9	1.5
	Not ESOL	ACES	72	78	5.5	2.0	3.6	1.6
		Non-ACES	69	76	7.6	2.2	4.2	2.0
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	41	46	4.7	0.5	1.7	1.2
		Non-ACES	38	37	-0.8	0.5	1.4	0.9
	2.50-2.99	ACES	72	62	-9.9	1.5	2.1	0.7
		Non-ACES	60	56	-4.0	1.0	2.0	0.9
	3.00-3.49	ACES	94	78	-15.9	2.9	3.0	0.2
		Non-ACES	83	68	-14.9	2.7	3.1	0.4
	3.50-4.00	ACES	99	89	-9.3	4.1	4.7	0.5
		Non-ACES	81	82	1.1	4.4	4.9	0.5

BOLD = p < 0.05; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Exhibit 50. AP exam scores for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

			One or More 3 on AP			Average AP Score		
			2015	2018	Δ	2015	2018	Δ
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	%	%		Mean	Mean	
Total		ACES	57	60	3.3	2.3	2.3	0.0
		Non-ACES	61	66	4.9	2.5	2.6	0.2
Gender	Male	ACES	57	56	-1.6	2.5	2.2	-0.2
		Non-ACES	62	63	0.5	2.5	2.5	0.1
	Female	ACES	57	62	5.5	2.2	2.3	0.1
		Non-ACES	61	68	7.1	2.5	2.7	0.2
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	93	75	-17.9	2.9	2.5	-0.4
		Non-ACES	83	73	-10.6	3.2	3.1	0.0
	Black or African American	ACES	45	48	2.5	2.1	2.1	0.0
		Non-ACES	51	59	7.2	2.2	2.3	0.1
	Hispanic	ACES	68	68	-0.2	2.5	2.3	-0.2
		Non-ACES	70	70	-0.1	2.6	2.9	0.3
	Asian	ACES	49	76	27.5	2.1	2.7	0.6
		Non-ACES	62	76	14.4	2.8	2.8	0.0
	Other	ACES	57	60	2.9	2.3	2.2	-0.1
		Non-ACES	46	75	28.9	2.4	2.6	0.2
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	56	61	5.1	2.3	2.3	0.0
		Non-ACES	58	66	8.6	2.3	2.6	0.4
	Not FARMS	ACES	61	57	-4.2	2.5	2.2	-0.2
		Non-ACES	70	67	-3.3	2.9	2.5	-0.3
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	56	36	-19.2	2.2	1.7	-0.5
		Non-ACES	67	25	-41.7	2.3	2.0	-0.4
	Not Special Education	ACES	57	61	3.9	2.3	2.3	0.0
		Non-ACES	61	67	5.5	2.5	2.6	0.2
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	60	65	4.9	2.4	2.3	-0.1
		Non-ACES	72	72	-0.9	2.6	2.8	0.2
	Not ESOL	ACES	53	54	0.9	2.2	2.2	0.0
		Non-ACES	54	62	8.0	2.4	2.4	0.1
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	30	24	-6.5	1.8	1.7	0.0
		Non-ACES	46	47	1.0	2.1	2.2	0.2
	2.50-2.99	ACES	39	44	5.9	1.9	1.9	0.0
		Non-ACES	42	43	1.5	2.0	2.2	0.2
	3.00-3.49	ACES	66	50	-16.1	2.4	2.1	-0.3
		Non-ACES	65	60	-5.0	2.4	2.4	0.0
	3.50-4.00	ACES	84	84	0.6	3.0	2.7	-0.3
		Non-ACES	88	83	-5.0	3.4	3.0	-0.4

BOLD = p < 0.05; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

SAT and SAT Participation and Performance. Taking a college entrance exam is an important step for future college students, especially those that aim at a four-year degree and higher. The following exhibits illustrate the percentage of ACES and non-ACES students who took the SAT, ACT, or took one or the other (combined variable). The charts provide comparisons of the 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohort of students who took either exam.

- **Participation.** As illustrated, ACES students take the SAT and/or ACT at much higher rates than non-ACES students in almost all categories. Almost 9 of 10 ACES students (88 percent) took either exam, compared to 69 percent of non-ACES students, and 19 percent differential. This differential represents the largest practical effect in the entire evaluation (see Exhibit 141 for practical significance of other variables, captured by effect size). A higher percentage of Female ACES students took the exam (90 percent) compared to men (84 percent), and more Black ACES students participated than Hispanic/Latino students (94 versus 82 percent). ACES Black, and Hispanic/Latino students all participated in an entrance exam at higher rates than their non-ACES peers. Interestingly, only 50 percent of non-ACES Hispanic/Latinos took an exam.

FARMS students did not take the entrance exams at the same high rates of non-FARMS students, but ACES FARMS students did participate at a much higher level than non-ACES students (86 versus 64 percent). ESOL participation was almost identical to that of FARMS.

Students with higher entering GPAs took the tests at higher rates than those with lower GPAs, and in each level ACES students scored higher than non-ACES students. For instance, even for students who scored below a 2.5 GPA, 73 percent of ACES students took an exam compared to 35 percent of non-ACES students. ACES students with an entering GPA between 3.0 and 3.49 had a 91 percent participation rate, compared to 96 percent of students with a GPA above 3.5. In each case, non-ACES student participation rates were 10 to 15 percent lower than ACES students.

- **SAT Outcomes.** Our analysis focuses on the 2018 11th grade cohort who used the 2016 revised version of the exam. Our data tables provide SAT math and writing scores, with analysis focusing on the highest combined average SAT for students.

Overall, ACES and non-ACES students scored at almost identical rates, with a 996 combined score for ACES students and 995 for non-ACES students. In

consideration that a much higher percentage of ACES students took the SAT, this is an interesting finding that ACES students did as well as a more selective set of non-ACES students.

Across categories, ACES and non-ACES students posted similar test scores, regardless of sub-category or group. We can see that non-FARMS students scored better on average than FARMS students; non-ESOL students better than ESOL students; and students with lower entering GPAs lesser than students with higher entering GPAs.

- **ACT outcomes.** Our data regarding student test scores on the ACT exam largely mirror those of the SAT, as one might generally expect. The average ACT score (out of 36) for ACES students in 2018 was 20 compared to 21 for non-ACES students. There was no discernable difference between male or female students or Black and Hispanic/Latino students. FARMS students scored slightly less than non-FARMS students, ESOL slightly less than non-ESOL, and lower entering GPA students lower than higher entering GPAs.

Exhibit 51. SAT and ACT test-taking rates of 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

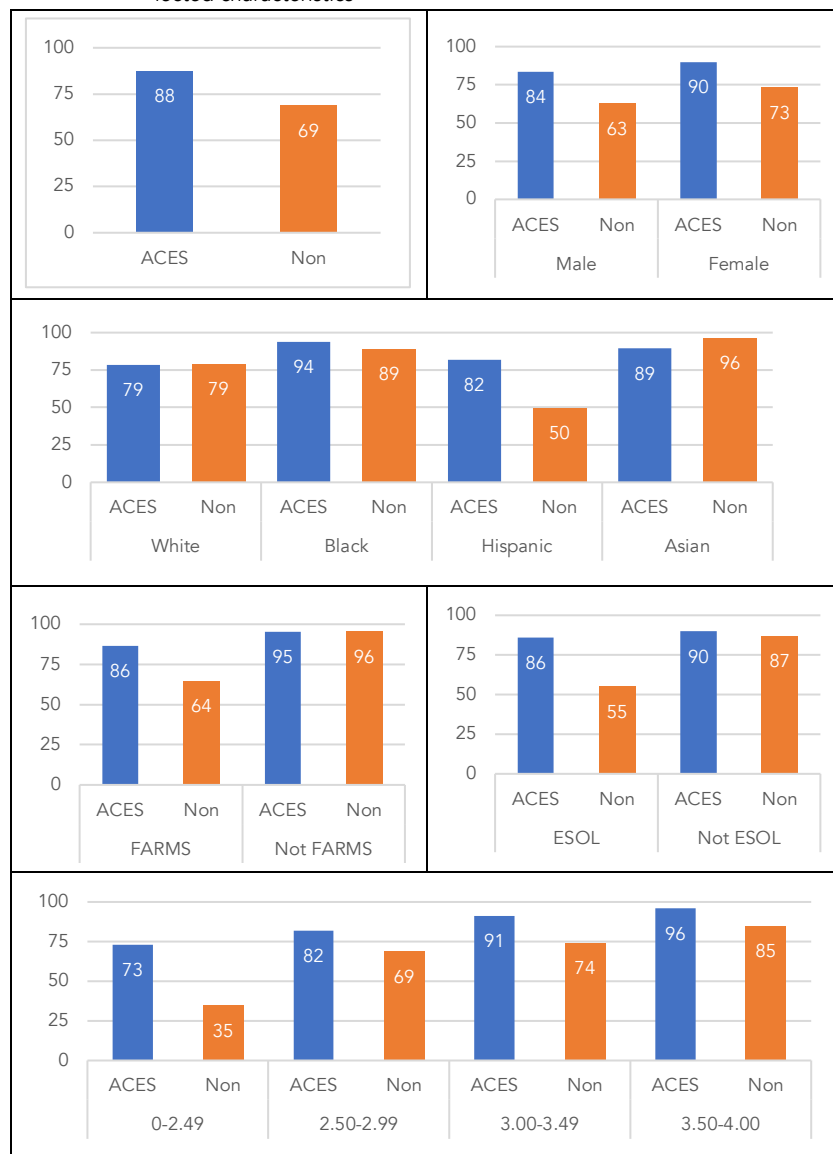


Exhibit 52. SAT and ACT test-taking rates for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	Took SAT			Took ACT			Took SAT or ACT		
			2015	2018	Δ	2015	2018	Δ	2015	2018	Δ
Total		ACES	71	85	13.7	42	20	-21.9	83	88	4.4
		Non-ACES	56	66	10.2	25	15	-9.3	65	69	3.7
Gender	Male	ACES	65	81	15.9	38	15	-22.4	78	84	5.3
		Non-ACES	47	62	14.3	26	9	-17.3	56	63	6.5
	Female	ACES	74	87	12.5	45	23	-21.3	86	90	4.1
		Non-ACES	61	69	8.1	22	20	-2.0	71	73	2.6
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	75	71	-3.6	46	14	-31.5	88	79	-8.9
		Non-ACES	81	79	-1.7	32	21	-11.2	90	79	-11.4
	Black or African American	ACES	77	92	14.4	47	25	-22.3	89	94	4.8
		Non-ACES	62	85	23.0	30	23	-7.4	75	89	14.4
	Hispanic	ACES	58	78	20.6	34	14	-19.9	73	82	8.9
		Non-ACES	41	48	7.0	14	8	-6.1	45	50	4.6
	Asian	ACES	88	85	-2.7	51	28	-23.4	96	89	-6.6
		Non-ACES	60	90	30.7	26	25	-0.7	71	96	24.7
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	74	94	20.8	26	33	7.0	74	94	20.8
		Non-ACES	71	56	-15.0	41	22	-19.0	82	56	-26.8
	Not FARMS	ACES	68	83	15.4	41	19	-21.9	81	86	5.5
		Non-ACES	51	62	11.5	21	13	-8.1	59	64	5.5
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	82	93	11.2	47	29	-17.9	91	95	4.0
		Non-ACES	71	90	18.7	36	30	-5.3	84	96	11.6
	Not Special Education	ACES	53	71	18.0	31	18	-12.7	67	80	12.4
		Non-ACES	24	34	10.9	18	6	-11.4	35	41	5.3
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	73	86	12.3	43	20	-23.2	85	88	2.9
		Non-ACES	58	67	9.4	25	16	-9.4	67	70	2.9
	Not ESOL	ACES	63	83	20.6	39	13	-25.3	77	86	8.3
		Non-ACES	43	53	10.3	19	9	-10.0	52	55	3.3
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	80	86	6.9	45	29	-16.2	89	90	0.9
		Non-ACES	66	82	16.3	29	23	-5.7	76	87	10.7
	2.50-2.99	ACES	52	66	13.7	32	15	-16.3	66	73	6.8
		Non-ACES	30	34	4.3	13	5	-8.4	39	35	-4.7
	3.00-3.49	ACES	72	80	7.6	41	10	-31.2	86	82	-3.8
		Non-ACES	58	68	9.6	24	7	-16.5	66	69	2.5
	3.50-4.00	ACES	81	88	7.4	45	24	-21.7	92	91	-0.4
		Non-ACES	72	71	-1.7	37	15	-21.3	83	74	-9.1

BOLD = p < 0.05; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Exhibit 53. Average SAT Scores for students who took pre-2016 version of the SAT for ACES and non-ACES cohorts (2015 only), by selected characteristics

			Scores (pre-2016 version)			
			SAT Verbal (pre-2016 version)	SAT Writing (pre-2016 version)	SAT Math (pre-2016 version)	Highest SAT Total in One Admin
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Total		ACES	468	468	473	1409
		Non-ACES	495	490	487	1472
Gender	Male	ACES	470	467	499	1436
		Non-ACES	501	481	508	1489
	Female	ACES	467	469	461	1396
		Non-ACES	492	495	476	1463
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	524	526	536	1586
		Non-ACES	618	599	580	1797
	Black or African American	ACES	465	461	464	1390
		Non-ACES	479	472	468	1419
	Hispanic	ACES	458	463	455	1376
		Non-ACES	468	471	458	1397
	Asian	ACES	478	485	524	1486
		Non-ACES	506	505	552	1562
	Other	ACES	458	470	481	1409
		Non-ACES	546	532	529	1607
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS		457	455	458	1370
		Non-ACES	459	458	459	1375
	Not FARMS	ACES	501	508	518	1527
		Non-ACES	572	559	547	1679
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	431	437	447	1315
		Non-ACES	456	478	426	1360
	Not Special Education	ACES	471	471	476	1418
		Non-ACES	496	490	489	1475
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	449	453	457	1359
		Non-ACES	434	439	443	1315
	Not ESOL	ACES	483	481	486	1449
		Non-ACES	528	517	511	1556
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	402	404	402	1208
		Non-ACES	419	427	407	1254
	2.50-2.99	ACES	443	443	442	1327
		Non-ACES	456	442	445	1343
	3.00-3.49	ACES	492	486	499	1477
		Non-ACES	497	493	493	1483
	3.50-4.00	ACES	546	560	569	1674
		Non-ACES	598	595	592	1786

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Exhibit 54. Averaged combined SAT scores for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

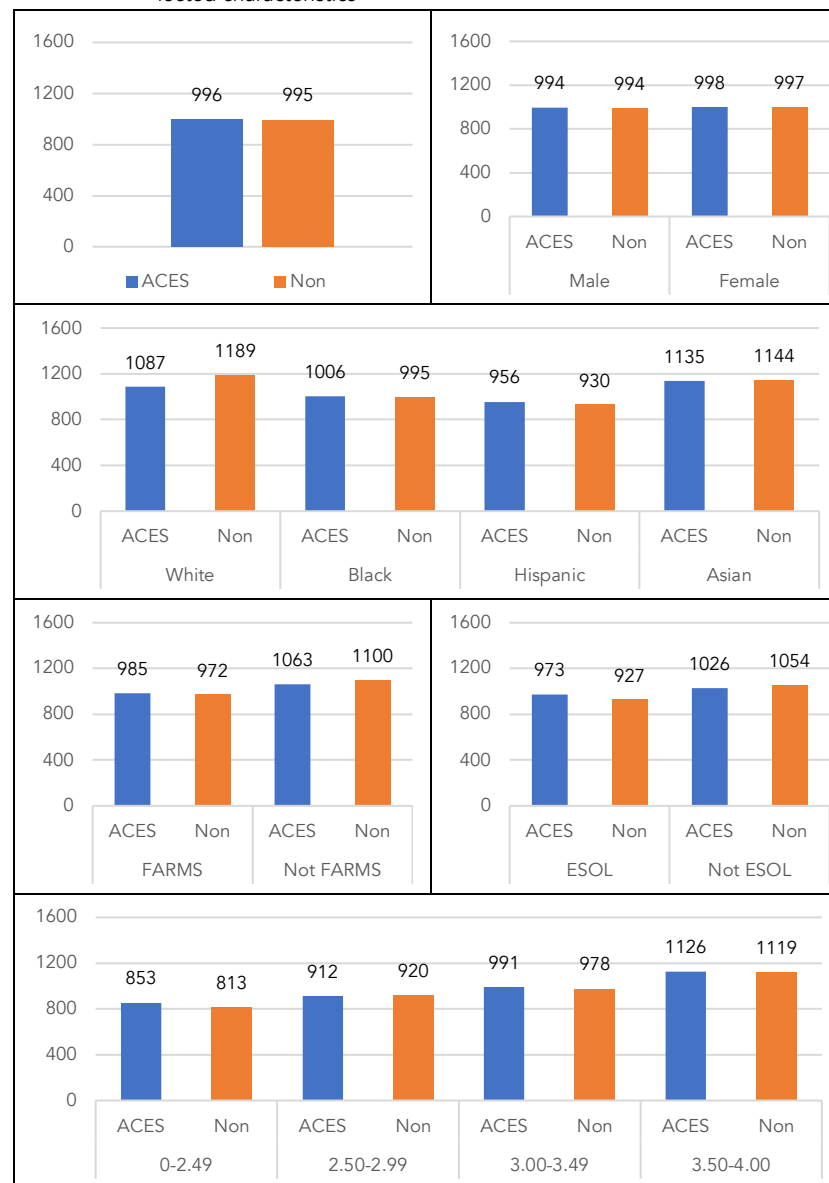


Exhibit 55. Average SAT Scores for students who took new SAT for ACES and non-ACES cohorts (2018 only), by selected characteristics

			SAT Scores 2018		
			SAT Writing Mean	SAT Math Mean	Highest SAT Total in One Admin Mean
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group			
Total		ACES	508	489	996
		Non-ACES	508	488	995
Gender	Male	ACES	498	496	994
		Non-ACES	503	491	994
	Female	ACES	513	484	998
		Non-ACES	511	486	997
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	564	523	1087
		Non-ACES	616	573	1189
	Black or African American	ACES	514	493	1006
		Non-ACES	510	485	995
	Hispanic	ACES	488	468	956
		Non-ACES	475	456	930
	Asian	ACES	569	566	1135
		Non-ACES	570	574	1144
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	502	483	985
		Non-ACES	495	477	972
	Not FARMS	ACES	541	522	1063
		Non-ACES	565	535	1100
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	412	405	817
		Non-ACES	444	463	906
	Not Special Education	ACES	514	494	1008
		Non-ACES	509	488	998
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	495	479	973
		Non-ACES	467	460	927
	Not ESOL	ACES	525	501	1026
		Non-ACES	543	512	1054
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	431	422	853
		Non-ACES	420	393	813
	2.50-2.99	ACES	466	446	912
		Non-ACES	472	448	920
	3.00-3.49	ACES	506	485	991
		Non-ACES	496	482	978
	3.50-4.00	ACES	573	554	1126
		Non-ACES	569	549	1119

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Exhibit 56. Average ACT composite scores for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics



Exhibit 57. Average ACT composite scores for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	Highest ACT Composite		
			2015 Mean	2018 Mean	Δ
Total		ACES	20	20	0.6
		Non-ACES	21	21	0.4
Gender	Male	ACES	20	21	1.1
		Non-ACES	21	21	-0.2
	Female	ACES	20	20	0.4
		Non-ACES	21	21	0.7
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	21	16	-5.5
		Non-ACES	26	29	2.6
	Black or African American	ACES	20	20	0.7
		Non-ACES	20	20	-0.1
	Hispanic	ACES	19	19	0.9
		Non-ACES	19	20	1.7
	Asian	ACES	22	25	3.2
		Non-ACES	25	25	0.4
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	23	20	-3.6
		Non-ACES	22	27	5.4
	Not FARMS	ACES	19	20	1.4
		Non-ACES	19	21	1.2
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	23	22	-1.5
		Non-ACES	24	23	-0.5
	Not Special Education	ACES	19	14	-5.1
		Non-ACES	17	17	-0.7
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	20	21	1.0
		Non-ACES	21	21	0.3
	Not ESOL	ACES	19	20	0.9
		Non-ACES	20	20	0.4
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	21	21	0.2
		Non-ACES	22	22	0.4
	2.50-2.99	ACES	16	15	-0.4
		Non-ACES	16	17	1.2
	3.00-3.49	ACES	19	19	0.0
		Non-ACES	18	17	-1.1
	3.50-4.00	ACES	21	20	-0.8
		Non-ACES	22	18	-3.6
		ACES	25	23	-1.3
		Non-ACES	27	24	-2.7

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not a cross years.

High school graduation. ACES students received their high school diploma at significantly higher rates than non-ACES students in both the 2015 and 2018 Grade 11 cohorts. Ninety-seven percent of ACES students received their diploma from the 2015 cohort, compared to 92 percent of the non-ACES cohort. In 2018, ACES students recorded a 97 percent graduation rate, while the rate for non-ACES students dropped to 87 percent.

Female ACES students had slightly higher graduation rates than men (98 versus 95 percent) with similar numbers in both cohort years (2015 and 2018). Non-ACES students graduated at lower levels, with an 88 percent graduation rate for women and 86 percent for men in 2018. These rates were down from 2015 for non-ACES students.

Graduation rates by race/ethnic group was static in 2018, all around the 93 to 98 percent level, with the exception of non-ACES Hispanic/Latino students, who posted an 80 percent graduation rate.

ACES FARMS students graduated at higher rates than non-ACES FARMS students (97 versus 83 percent), while ACES non-FARMS and non-ACES non-FARMS students both graduated at 98 percent rates. ACES ESOL students graduated at a 90 percent rate in 2018 compared to 81 percent of non-ACES ESOL students.

At each entering GPA level, ACES students graduated at a higher rate than their non-ACES peers. For students with an entering GPA less than 2.5, ACES students graduated at an 88 percent rate compared to 64 percent for non-ACES students. For ACES students who earned above a 3.0 GPA, their graduation rates were above 98 percent.

ACES students also graduated with merit⁷ at higher rates than non-ACES students. In 2018, almost half of ACES students graduated with merit (48 percent) compared to 39 percent of non-ACES students. Male ACES students were more likely to graduate with merit than non-Male ACES students (34 versus 29 percent) as were women (56 versus 47 percent).

Both FARMS and ESOL ACES students had a higher graduation with merit rate than non-ACES students, with 46 and 45 percent ACES students with merit compared to 34 and 27 percent for non-ACES, with respect to FARMS and ESOL. With regard to

⁷ MCPS provides a "merit" diploma for students who earn a 3.0 GPA, complete Algebra 2, and earn at least 12 credits of "advanced" courses.

entering GPA, 86 percent of ACES students with GPAs above 3.5 graduated with merit compared to 72 percent of non-ACES students.

Exhibit 58. High school graduation rates for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

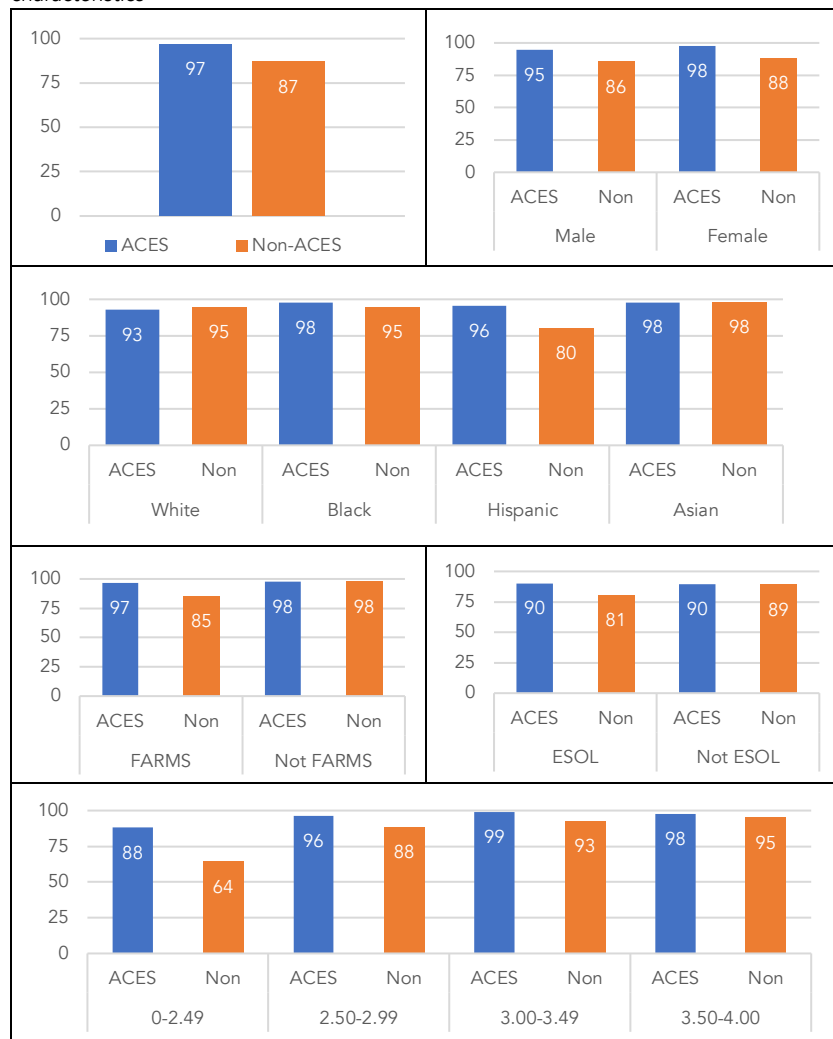


Exhibit 59. High school graduation with merit rates for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics



Exhibit 60. High school graduation rates for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES Grade 11 cohorts, by selected characteristics

			Received High School Diploma			Graduated with Merit (amongst graduates)		
			2015	2018	Δ	2015	2018	Δ
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	%	%		%	%	
Total		ACES	97	97	0.2	34	48	13.9
		Non-ACES	92	87	-5.0	30	39	9.2
Gender	Male	ACES	95	95	-0.1	25	34	8.5
		Non-ACES	90	86	-3.9	23	29	6.2
	Female	ACES	97	98	0.4	38	56	17.5
		Non-ACES	94	88	-5.7	34	47	12.3
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	92	93	1.2	59	46	-12.9
		Non-ACES	100	95	-5.3	61	61	-0.2
	Black or African American	ACES	97	98	0.5	30	48	18.1
		Non-ACES	93	95	1.9	30	47	16.5
	Hispanic	ACES	95	96	0.3	30	42	11.9
		Non-ACES	88	80	-7.9	22	25	3.7
	Asian	ACES	100	98	-2.1	55	76	21.0
		Non-ACES	98	98	0.4	32	70	38.3
	Other	ACES	95	94	-0.3	28	71	42.8
		Non-ACES	100	67	-33.3	41	50	8.8
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	96	97	0.2	30	46	15.7
		Non-ACES	97	85	-12.0	22	34	12.0
	Not FARMS	ACES	97	98	0.6	47	60	12.9
		Non-ACES	97	98	0.3	51	64	13.1
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	95	96	1.1	15	13	-1.8
		Non-ACES	68	66	-2.0	9	10	0.8
	Not Special Education	ACES	87	97	10.0	36	50	14.1
		Non-ACES	94	88	-5.8	31	40	9.2
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	96	96	-0.2	32	45	13.0
		Non-ACES	91	82	-8.3	22	27	5.6
	Not ESOL	ACES	97	98	0.8	36	51	15.7
		Non-ACES	94	94	0.1	36	52	16.2
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	91	88	-2.9	0	0	0.0
		Non-ACES	85	64	-20.1	1	1	0.5
	2.50-2.99	ACES	98	96	-1.6	11	10	-1.6
		Non-ACES	97	88	-8.8	9	9	0.3
	3.00-3.49	ACES	98	99	0.7	68	63	-5.2
		Non-ACES	97	93	-4.2	57	47	-9.4
	3.50-4.00	ACES	100	98	-2.4	80	86	6.3
		Non-ACES	90	95	5.5	75	72	-3.2

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Postsecondary Participation and Outcomes

To compare how ACES and non-ACES students fare in the postsecondary world, our analysis focuses on matriculation rates to college immediately following high school graduation, persistence rates during college, and degree attainment rates.

Matriculation to College

Matriculation to any postsecondary institution. In the 2018 ACES entering (11th grade) cohort, three out of four (75 percent) of ACES students and 57 percent for non-ACES students matriculated to college immediately following high school graduation. This is down slightly from the 2015 cohort when 82 percent of ACES students matriculated compared to 67 percent of non-ACES students. Both groups experienced decreases in 2018.

Female ACES students matriculated at higher rates than men (78 versus 70 percent) among the 2018 cohort. Non-ACES males, in particular, matriculated at much lower rates, with only 48 percent of that group heading to college following high school graduation.

In every race/ethnic category, ACES students enrolled at higher rates than their non-ACES peers. In 2018, 84 percent of ACES Black and 64 percent of Hispanic/Latino students matriculated to postsecondary studies. Hispanic/Latinos, in particular, had much higher rates than their non-ACES peers, who matriculated at a 38 percent rate. These matriculation rates were slightly lower than in 2015 cohort.

ACES FARMS and ESOL students participated in postsecondary at rates similar to the overall average (74 and 72 percent, respectively) in 2018, with slightly lower rates in 2015. In each case, ACES FARMS students matriculated at higher rates than non-ACES FARMS students.

Regardless of entering GPA, ACES students enrolled in postsecondary education at much higher rates than non-ACES students in both 2015 and 2018 cohorts. In 2018, 80 percent of ACES students with an entering GPA between 3.0 and 3.49 matriculated to college, and those above 3.5 matriculated at an 87 percent rate. Comparatively, non-ACES students at those levels matriculated at 61 and 71 percent, respectively.

Sixty-two percent of ACES students with entering GPAs below 2.5 matriculated to college compared to 27 percent rate for non-ACES students.

Matriculation to a two-year institution. Overall, 43 percent of 2018 ACES cohort students matriculated to a two-year college compared to 26 percent of non-ACES students. Male ACES students and women both enrolled at a two-year institution at approximately the same rate (41 and 45 percent, respectively), and both more than their non-ACES peers, with similar results in 2015.

ACES Hispanic/Latinos were much more likely than any other group to enroll in a two-year institution, with half of ACES Hispanic/Latino students (52 percent) matriculating compared to 36 percent of non-ACES Hispanic/Latinos. Matriculation to a two-year college dropped slightly for Hispanic/Latinos in 2018 cohort to 46 percent and 23 percent for non-ACES students, while enrollment for Blacks increased to 37 percent for ACES students compared to 29 percent for non-ACES students.

Forty-three percent of ACES FARMS students matriculated to a two-year institution compared to 28 percent of non-ACES FARMS students. Interestingly, 44 percent of ACES non-FARMS students matriculated compared to only 16 percent of non-ACES, non-FARMS students. Similarly, 48 percent of ACES ESOL students matriculated compared to 24 percent of their non-ACES peers.

Matriculation to a two-year institution vacillated by entering GPA and resulted in outcomes opposite of what we've seen in other analysis. For instance, while ACES students with a < 2.5 GPA had a 51 percent matriculation rate to a two-year college, only 46 percent of upper GPA (3.0 to 3.49) and 36 percent of high GPA (3.5 and higher) matriculated to a two-year college. This is due, in probability, because higher GPA students elect to matriculate to a four-year institution (see following section). At each GPA level, ACES students matriculated to a two-year college at much higher rates than non-ACES students.

Matriculation to a four-year institution. ACES and non-ACES students matriculated to a four-year institution directly out of high school at almost identical rates, with 32 percent of ACES students and 31 percent of non-ACES students matriculating for the 2018 cohort. Male ACES students matriculated at a higher rate than non-ACES males (29 versus 23 percent) while Female ACES students were less likely than their non-ACES peers to enroll at the four-year level (33 versus 37 percent).

Black students matriculated to the four-year level at much higher rates than Hispanic/Latino students. While ACES Black students enrolled at a 47 percent rate compared to 44 percent for non-ACES students, only 18 percent of ACES Hispanic/Latino students enrolled at a four-year institution compared to 15 percent of non-ACES Hispanic/Latino students. Thus, Hispanic/Latino students were much more likely to enroll

at the two-year than the four-year level, and Blacks were more likely to enroll at the four-year rather than the two-year level.

Thirty percent of ACES FARMS students matriculated to a four-year institution compared to 26 percent non-ACES students, while 38 percent of ACES non-FARMS students did the same. Fifty-nine percent of non-ACES, non-FARMS students matriculated to a four-year institution.

Similar-but-smaller patterns were evident for ESOL students. Twenty-four percent of ACES ESOL students matriculated to a four-year institution compared to 17 percent of non-ACES students, while 42 percent of ACES non-ESOL students matriculated and 47 percent of non-ACES, Non-ESOL students.

Differently than with the two-year directed students, matriculation to a four-year institution was definitely correlated with entering GPA. Opposite of what we saw at the two-year level, as entering GPA increases, so do four-year enrollment rates. Only a small percentage of low GPA students (11 percent of ACES < 2.5), ACES and non-ACES, enrolled at the four-year level, while approximately half of those with a GPA of 3.5 and higher matriculated to the four-year level.

Matriculation to Montgomery College. For the 2018 cohort, 39 percent of ACES students matriculated to Montgomery College immediately after graduating from high school compared to 21 percent of non-ACES students. This is a slight decrease from 2015 for ACES students, when 42 percent of ACES students matriculated to MC compared to 31 percent of non-ACES students.

Men and women matriculated to MC at the same rates as the total cohorts, with 37 percent of men and 41 percent of women matriculating directly to MC compared to 20 and 23 percent of non-ACES males and women, respectively. A higher rate of Hispanic/Latinos matriculated to MC than Black students (41 versus 33 percent), although ACES students still matriculated at higher rates than non-ACES students.

Both FARMS and ESOL students had similar matriculation rates to MC, although ACES ESOL students matriculated to MC at a much higher rate than non-ACES ESOL students (44 versus 19 percent).

ACES students with lower entering GPA scores matriculated to MC at higher rates as opposed to those with higher entering GPAs. For instance, 41 percent of ACES students with entering GPAs below 2.5 matriculated to MC compared to 32 percent of those above 3.5.

Exhibit 61. Matriculation rates immediately following high school graduation to any postsecondary institution for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

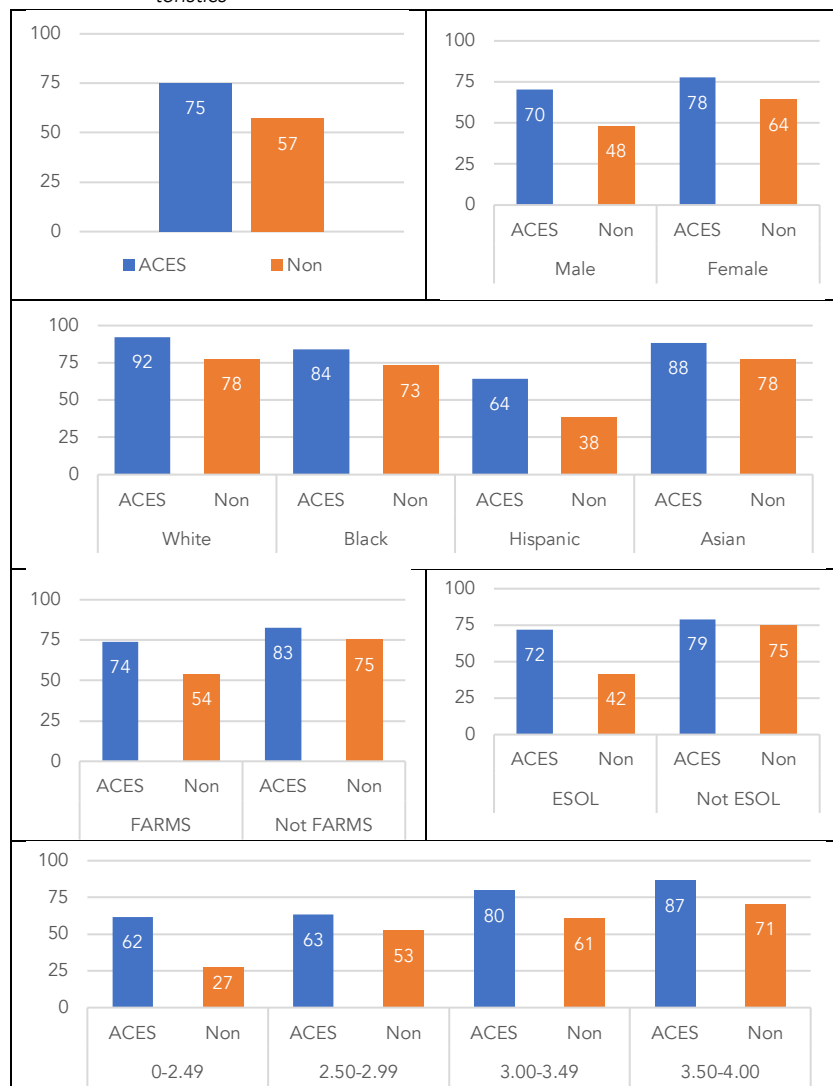


Exhibit 62. Matriculation numbers and rates immediately following high school graduation to any postsecondary education institution for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

			Matriculation (any postsecondary)				Δ (%)
			2015		2018		
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	#	%	#	%	
Total		ACES	378	82	464	75	-7
		Non-ACES	299	67	314	57	-10
Gender	Male	ACES	132	80	164	70	-9
		Non-ACES	109	63	113	48	-15
	Female	ACES	246	84	300	78	-6
		Non-ACES	190	69	201	64	-5
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	17	77	12	92	15
		Non-ACES	28	93	14	78	-16
	Black or African American	ACES	180	87	218	84	-2
		Non-ACES	153	75	161	73	-2
	Hispanic	ACES	125	76	184	64	-12
		Non-ACES	78	49	98	38	-11
	Asian	ACES	42	88	38	88	1
		Non-ACES	28	72	38	78	6
	Other	ACES	14	82	12	71	-12
		Non-ACES	11	73	3	50	-23
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS		292	81	397	74	-7
		Non-ACES	208	62	250	54	-8
	Not FARMS	ACES	86	86	67	83	-3
		Non-ACES	91	81	64	75	-6
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	39	71	23	51	-20
		Non-ACES	11	38	13	65	27
	Not Special Education	ACES	339	84	441	77	-7
		Non-ACES	288	69	301	57	-12
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	181	78	253	72	-6
		Non-ACES	117	59	121	42	-17
	Not ESOL	ACES	197	86	211	79	-7
		Non-ACES	182	73	193	75	1
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	92	77	45	62	-15
		Non-ACES	58	49	20	27	-22
	2.50-2.99	ACES	117	80	104	63	-16
		Non-ACES	90	67	73	53	-15
	3.00-3.49	ACES	111	89	180	80	-9
		Non-ACES	95	78	101	61	-17
	3.50-4.00	ACES	58	85	135	87	1
		Non-ACES	56	77	120	71	-6

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Exhibit 63. Matriculation rates immediately following high school graduation to a two-year institution for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

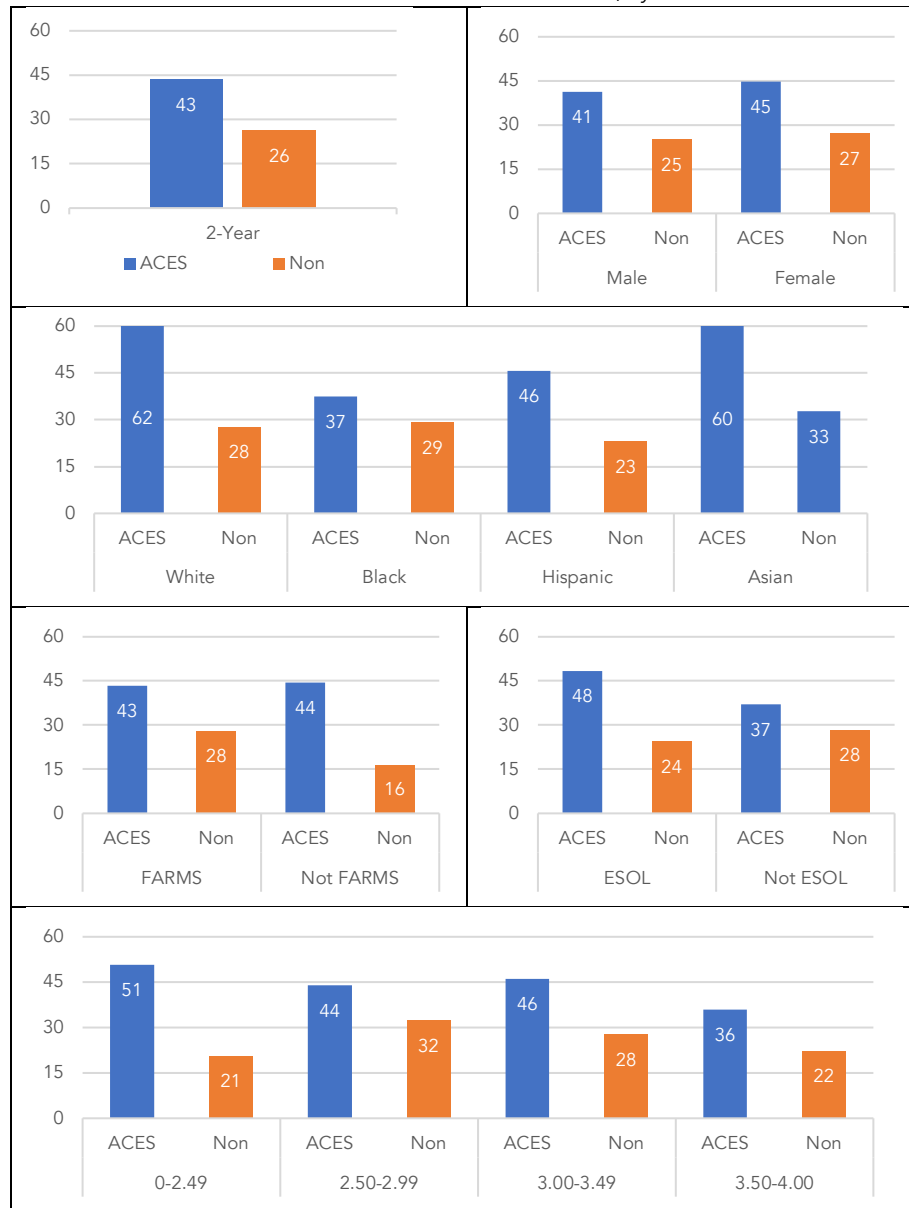


Exhibit 64. Matriculation rates immediately following high school graduation to a four-year institution for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

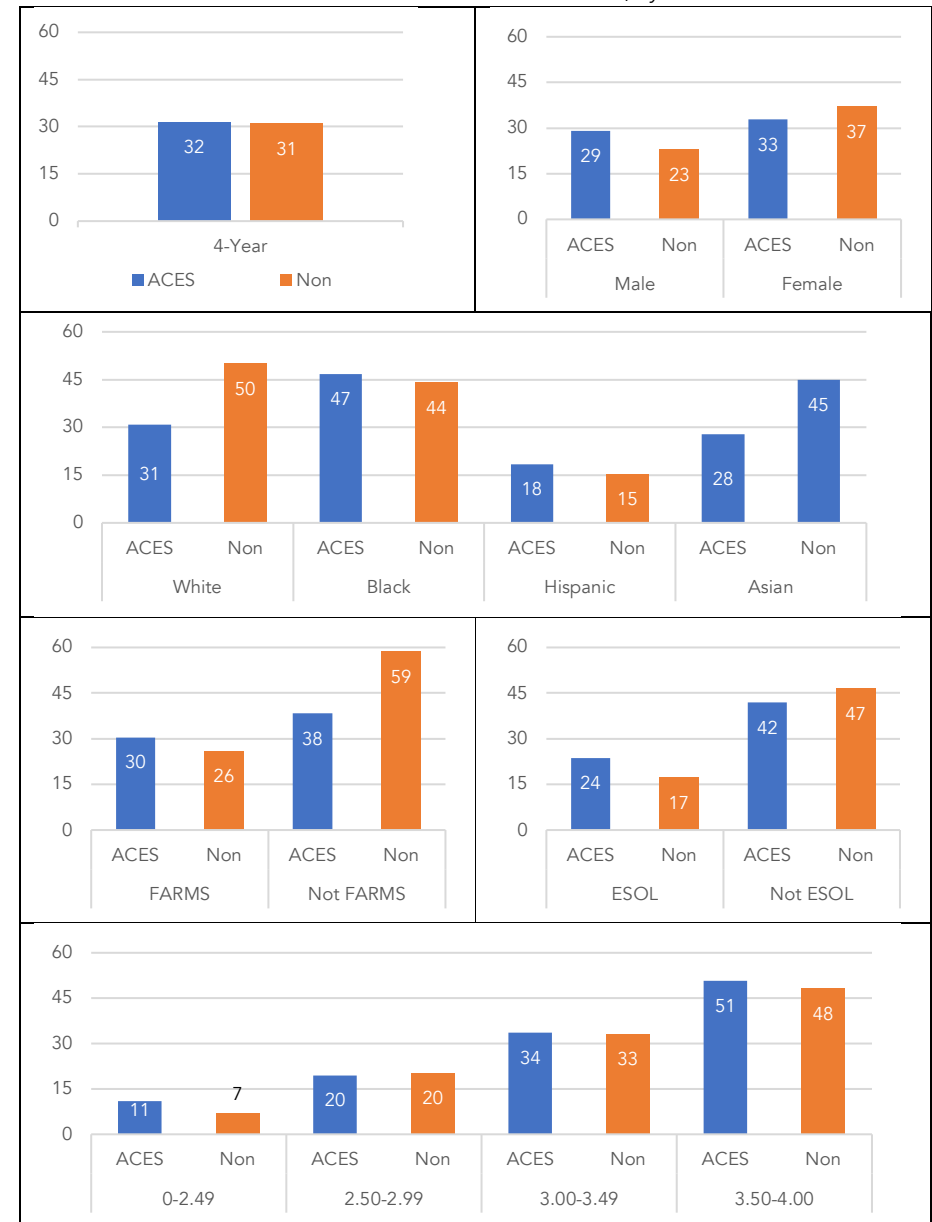


Exhibit 65. Matriculation numbers and rates immediately following high school graduation to a two-year college for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

		Matriculation (2-year)					
		2015		2018		Δ (%)	
		#	%	#	%		
Total	ACES	191	42	269	43	2	
	Non-ACES	145	32	144	26	-6	
Gender	Male	ACES	72	43	96	41	-2
		Non-ACES	63	36	59	25	-11
	Female	ACES	119	40	173	45	4
		Non-ACES	82	30	85	27	-3
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	9	41	8	62	21
		Non-ACES	7	23	5	28	4
	Black or African American	ACES	67	32	97	37	5
		Non-ACES	58	28	64	29	1
	Hispanic	ACES	86	52	131	46	-6
		Non-ACES	57	36	59	23	-13
	Asian	ACES	26	54	26	60	6
		Non-ACES	19	49	16	33	-16
	Other	ACES	3	18	7	41	24
		Non-ACES	4	27	0	0	-27
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	165	46	233	43	-3
		Non-ACES	119	36	130	28	-7
	Not FARMS	ACES	26	26	36	44	18
		Non-ACES	26	23	14	16	-7
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	26	47	20	44	-3
		Non-ACES	7	24	9	45	21
	Not Special Education	ACES	165	41	249	43	3
		Non-ACES	138	33	135	26	-7
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	120	52	170	48	-3
		Non-ACES	83	42	71	24	-17
	Not ESOL	ACES	71	31	99	37	6
		Non-ACES	62	25	73	28	3
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	65	54	37	51	-3
		Non-ACES	44	37	15	21	-17
	2.50-2.99	ACES	67	46	72	44	-2
		Non-ACES	51	38	45	32	-6
	3.00-3.49	ACES	46	37	104	46	9
		Non-ACES	39	32	46	28	-4
	3.50-4.00	ACES	13	19	56	36	17
		Non-ACES	11	15	38	22	7

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Exhibit 66. Matriculation numbers and rates immediately following high school graduation to a four-year college for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

		Matriculation (4-year)					
		2015		2018		Δ (%)	
		#	%	#	%		
Total	ACES	187	41	195	32	-9	
	Non-ACES	154	34	170	31	-3	
Gender	Male	ACES	60	36	68	29	-7
		Non-ACES	46	27	54	23	-4
	Female	ACES	127	43	127	33	-10
		Non-ACES	108	39	116	37	-2
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	8	36	4	31	-6
		Non-ACES	21	70	9	50	-20
	Black or African American	ACES	113	54	121	47	-8
		Non-ACES	95	47	97	44	-2
	Hispanic	ACES	39	24	53	18	-5
		Non-ACES	21	13	39	15	2
	Asian	ACES	16	33	12	28	-5
		Non-ACES	9	23	22	45	22
	Other	ACES	11	65	3	29	-35
		Non-ACES	7	47	5	50	3
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	127	35	164	30	-5
		Non-ACES	89	27	120	26	-1
	Not FARMS	ACES	60	60	31	38	-22
		Non-ACES	65	58	50	59	1
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	13	24	3	7	-17
		Non-ACES	4	14	4	20	6
	Not Special Education	ACES	174	43	192	33	-10
		Non-ACES	150	36	166	31	-4
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	61	26	83	24	-3
		Non-ACES	34	17	50	17	0
	Not ESOL	ACES	126	55	112	42	-13
		Non-ACES	120	48	120	47	-2
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	27	23	8	11	-12
		Non-ACES	14	12	5	7	-5
	2.50-2.99	ACES	50	34	32	20	-15
		Non-ACES	39	29	28	20	-9
	3.00-3.49	ACES	65	52	76	34	-18
		Non-ACES	56	46	55	33	-13
	3.50-4.00	ACES	45	66	79	51	-16
		Non-ACES	45	62	82	48	-13

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Exhibit 67. Matriculation rates immediately following high school graduation to Montgomery College for 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics



Exhibit 68. Matriculation numbers and rates immediately following high school graduation to Montgomery College for 2015 & 2018 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

			Matriculated to MC				
			2015		2018		Δ (%)
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	#	%	#	%	
Total		ACES	203	42	258	39	-3
		Non-ACES	153	31	140	21	-10
Gender	Male	ACES	76	43	92	37	-7
		Non-ACES	65	34	56	20	-14
	Female	ACES	127	41	166	41	0
		Non-ACES	88	30	84	23	-7
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	10	42	7	50	8
		Non-ACES	6	19	5	26	7
	Black or African American	ACES	69	32	91	33	2
		Non-ACES	59	27	63	26	-1
	Hispanic	ACES	95	54	127	41	-12
		Non-ACES	67	37	56	16	-21
	Asian	ACES	26	53	25	53	0
		Non-ACES	18	43	16	31	-11
Other	ACES	3	16	8	44	29	
	Non-ACES	3	18	0	0	-18	
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS		176	46	222	39	-7
		Non-ACES	130	35	126	22	-13
	Not FARMS	ACES	27	26	36	41	16
		Non-ACES	23	19	14	16	-4
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	28	48	20	41	-7
		Non-ACES	7	21	9	28	8
	Not Special Education	ACES	175	41	238	39	-2
		Non-ACES	146	32	131	21	-11
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	125	50	165	44	-7
		Non-ACES	93	42	71	19	-23
	Not ESOL	ACES	78	33	93	33	1
		Non-ACES	60	23	69	24	2
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	72	53	35	41	-12
		Non-ACES	46	32	13	11	-22
	2.50-2.99	ACES	69	45	69	40	-5
		Non-ACES	53	37	43	26	-11
	3.00-3.49	ACES	50	38	101	43	4
		Non-ACES	41	33	46	24	-8
3.50-4.00	ACES	12	17	53	32	14	
	Non-ACES	13	17	38	21	4	

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

Persistence in College

Once students get to college, it is important for them to persist from semester-to-semester and year-to-year until they earn their degree. Our 2015 cohort provides us with a unique perspective on postsecondary persistence for college-going students.

Of students from the 2015 cohort who enrolled in college, almost 9 of 10 (88 percent) of ACES and non-ACES students persisted to their second year, a reasonably high persistence rate for any student. Male ACES students were less likely to persist than non-ACES males (83 versus 87 percent), while Female ACES students were more likely to persist than their non-ACES peers (91 versus 88 percent).

The variation by our other categories, including race/ethnicity, FARMS, and ESOL, were also similarly clustered around the mean for all students, with marginal difference between ACES and non-ACES students as well as by sub-groups.

The largest variation was by entering GPA. Even so, low GPA students (<2.5) still persisted at a 73 and 76 percent rate for ACES and non-ACES students, respectively. For all other groups the persistence level was high. ACES students who earned a 3.0 to 3.49 GPA persisted at a 97 percent rate compared to 92 of non-ACES students, and those with a 3.5 or higher persisted at a 98 and 95 percent for ACES and non-ACES students, respectively.

Exhibit 69. Persistence to second year for college-going 2015 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

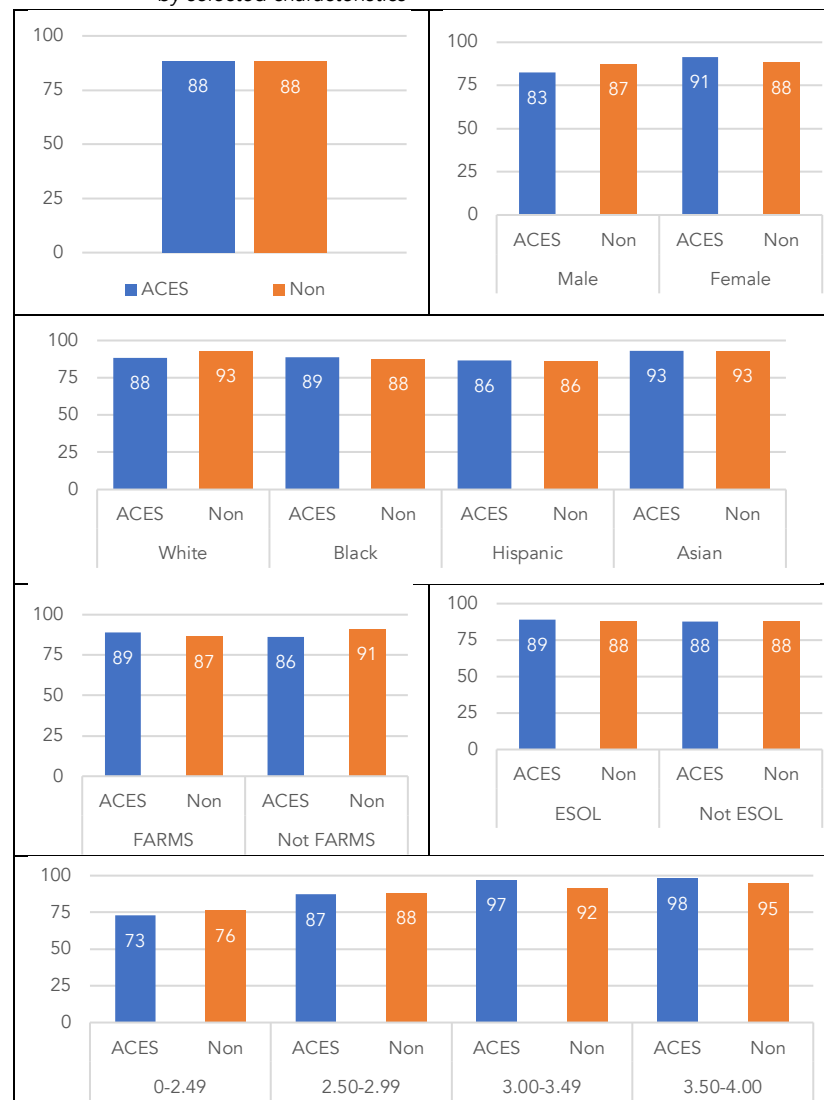


Exhibit 70. Persistence to second year for college-going 2015 ACES and non-ACES cohorts, by selected characteristics

			Persistence to 2nd Year (any postsecondary, amongst entrants)	
			#	%
Total		ACES	334	88
		Non-ACES	265	88
Gender	Male	ACES	109	83
		Non-ACES	97	87
	Female	ACES	225	91
		Non-ACES	168	88
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	15	88
		Non-ACES	26	93
	Black or African American	ACES	160	89
		Non-ACES	135	88
	Hispanic	ACES	108	86
		Non-ACES	68	86
	Asian	ACES	39	93
		Non-ACES	26	93
FARMS (now or ever)	Other	ACES	12	86
		Non-ACES	10	91
	FARMS	ACES	260	89
		Non-ACES	182	87
	Not FARMS	ACES	74	86
		Non-ACES	83	91
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	33	85
		Non-ACES	10	83
	Not Special Education	ACES	301	89
		Non-ACES	255	83
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	161	89
		Non-ACES	104	88
	Not ESOL	ACES	173	88
		Non-ACES	161	88
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	67	73
		Non-ACES	45	76
	2.50-2.99	ACES	102	87
		Non-ACES	80	88
	3.00-3.49	ACES	108	97
		Non-ACES	87	92
	3.50-4.00	ACES	57	98
		Non-ACES	53	95

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

College Completion

The ultimate goal of going to college is measured by completion of a certificate, diploma, or degree. The credential is essential to gainful employment and success in the workforce. For this analysis we will use our 2015 cohort, which is composed of 11th grade students in fall 2014. The 2019-20 academic year marked the fourth year of potential postsecondary study by ACES students. Our outcome analysis of MC students is fairly complete. However, students who started at a four-year institution or potentially transferred to USG, would, at best, by graduating on time. Hampering our discussing is that we did not have access to their spring 2020 data from colleges and universities for this analysis. Thus, we are left with outcome data by the third year of postsecondary studies via the National Student Clearinghouse. This analysis does not focus specifically on the ACES pathway, but the entire postsecondary pathway.

Thus, the 2015 cohort offered us up to four years of postsecondary studies for students. Understanding that many of first-generation students have a longer time-to-degree period, it would be expected that graduation rates would increase with another year or two of data (available in fall 2021 and 2022). This issue should be kept in mind while reviewing the associated data. It is our hope that future studies will provide us with the opportunity to reveal the longer-term outcomes. Having Clearinghouse data that include Spring 2020 graduation/college completion data will improve the results.

Of the 2015 cohort students who went to college, 17 percent of ACES students earned one or more degrees during this time, compared to 12 percent of non-ACES students. Thirteen percent of ACES students earned an associate degree compared to 8 percent of non-ACES students. Two percent of both groups earned a bachelor's degree during this timeline. Clearinghouse data that reflected Spring 2020 graduates was not available at the time of analysis, as noted above. As well, it is possible that the pandemic may have had a negative impact on degree completion for students on the cusp.

One-in-five female (21 percent) ACES students earned one or more degrees, compared to 12 percent of non-Female ACES students, 11 percent of male ACES students, and 13 percent of non-ACES males.

Both ACES Hispanic/Latino and Black students earned one or more degrees at higher rates than their non-ACES peers. Twenty-two percent of Hispanic/Latino ACES students earned at least one degree compared to 19 percent of non-ACES Hispanic/Latino students, and 11 percent of ACES Black students earned a degree or more compared to 8 percent of their non-ACES peers.

Nineteen percent of ACES FARMS students earned one or more degrees compared to 13 percent of non-ACES students. Non-FARMS students earned fewer degrees. Twelve percent of ACES non-FARMSs students earned at least one degree, as did 10 percent of non-ACES, non-FARMS students.

Twenty-three percent of ACES ESOL students earned one degree or more, compared to 15 percent of non-ACES students. And both of these groups out earned their non-ESOL peers by significant margins.

By entering GPA, one quarter (25 percent) of ACES students with an entering GPA between 3.0 and 3.49 earned one or more degrees, compared to 15 percent of non-ACES students. And while those earning a 3.5 GPA or higher earned at a lesser rate (19 percent for ACES students), those with lower GPAs earned much less. Only 8 percent of ACES students with an entering GPA less than 2.5 earned one degree or more, compared to 10 percent of non-ACES students.

Exhibit 71. Percentage of ACES and non-ACES students from the 2015 cohort who completed one or more degrees, by selected characteristics

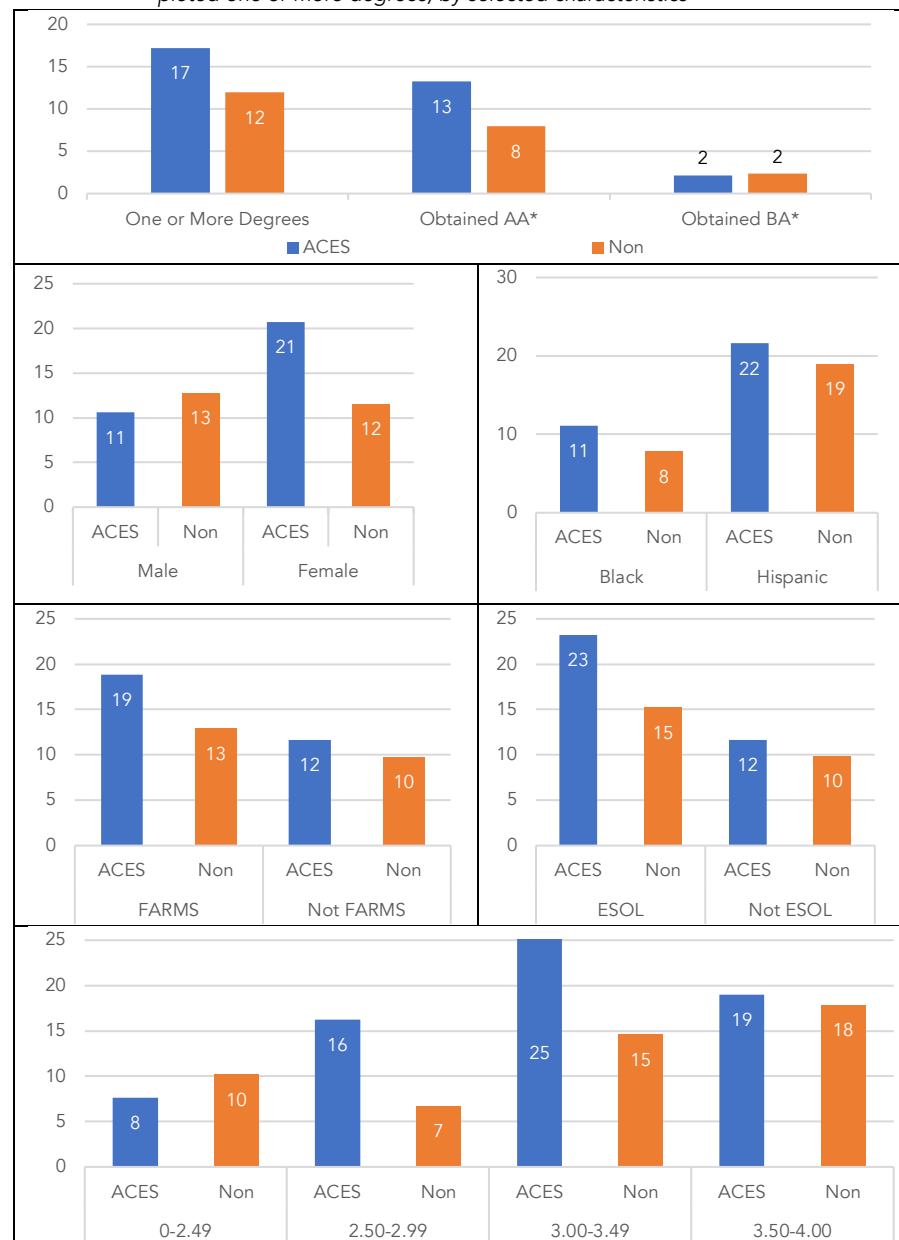


Exhibit 72. Percentage of ACES and non-ACES students from the 2015 cohort who completed one or more degrees, by selected characteristics

			Amongst College Entrants					
			One or More Degrees		Obtained AA*		Obtained BA*	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
Total		ACES	65	17	50	13	8	2
		Non-ACES	36	12	24	8	7	2
Gender	Male	ACES	14	11	11	8	0	0
		Non-ACES	14	13	10	9	2	2
	Female	ACES	51	21	39	16	8	3
		Non-ACES	22	12	14	7	5	3
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	5	29	3	18	2	12
		Non-ACES	3	11	2	7	1	4
	Black or African American	ACES	29	11	14	8	4	2
		Non-ACES	12	8	6	4	4	3
	Hispanic	ACES	27	22	24	19	1	1
		Non-ACES	15	19	12	15	0	0
	Asian	ACES	11	26	8	19	0	0
		Non-ACES	6	21	4	14	2	7
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	2	14	1	7	1	7
		Non-ACES	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Not FARMS	ACES	55	19	45	15	4	1
		Non-ACES	27	13	20	10	3	1
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	10	12	5	6	4	5
		Non-ACES	9	10	4	4	4	4
	Not Special Education	ACES	4	10	4	10	0	0
		Non-ACES	1	9	1	9	0	0
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	61	18	46	14	8	2
		Non-ACES	35	12	23	8	7	2
	Not ESOL	ACES	42	23	34	19	3	2
		Non-ACES	18	15	14	12	2	2
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	23	12	16	8	5	3
		Non-ACES	18	10	10	5	5	3
	2.50-2.99	ACES	7	8	5	5	0	0
		Non-ACES	6	10	4	7	1	2
	3.00-3.49	ACES	19	16	13	11	2	2
		Non-ACES	6	7	5	6	0	0
	3.50-4.00	ACES	28	25	24	22	3	3
		Non-ACES	14	15	9	9	2	2

BOLD = $p < 0.05$; RED = small sample size

NOTE: Statistical analysis is within year between ACES and non-ACES groups; not across years.

*Degrees within 150 percent of time.

PART IV — STUDENT SURVEYS

Introduction

In 2013, the Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) Program was developed through a collaboration of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Montgomery College (MC), and the Universities at Shady Grove (USG). As this report is published, ACES enters its eighth academic year providing services to thousands of MCPS students who then, in many cases, follow along their “ACES Pathway” to MC and then to USG for completion of a bachelor’s degree.

This section report provides summary information from student surveys that were designed by EPI in collaboration with the evaluation working team from ACES, inclusive of personnel from all three organizations. The surveys were administered to students at MCPS, MC, and USG between July 22, 2020, and August 11, 2020, via SurveyMonkey. The report is written in a summary manner with bullets and brief descriptions. The raw data accompanied this original report for further review by the interested parties.

Montgomery County Public Schools

This section provides a summary of findings from the MCPS survey. Provided within are bullet summaries of key background and information from the survey along with representative charts.

Background Information

- The survey was completed by 406 MCPS ACES students between July 22 and August 11, 2020. This is approximately one quarter of the MCPS ACES population of 1,660 in 2019-20.
- The highest completions came from Paint Branch (12.4 percent), John F. Kennedy (11.4 percent), and Clarksburg (9.9 percent). All 14 schools were represented with at least 14 surveys at the lowest school and 50 surveys at Paint Branch.
- Seventy-eight percent of respondents were first generation status for college.
- Three quarters (74 percent) of respondents were female.
- Over 55 percent (55.3 percent) of students were in the 11th grade during the 2019-20 academic year, 37.2 percent in the 12th grade, and 7.4 percent in the 10th grade.
- Forty-four percent of students were Hispanic/Latino, 35 percent Black, 12 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 5 percent White.
- Eighty-seven percent of students reported a GPA over 3.0; 44 percent between 3.6 and 4.0, and 17 percent above 4.1.
- Thirty-eight percent of students graduated in spring 2020. (Six 11th grade students said they graduated in spring 2020)

About ACES

- The top three ways that students learned about ACES were “during a class” (41.3 percent), “another student” (38.9 percent), and “the ACES Coach” (35.9 percent).
- The top-rated reason why students applied to ACES was for assistance with applying to college (80.7 percent), followed by wanting support preparing for college, including SAT support, study skills, etc. (72.5 percent), liking the opportunities that ACES offered (70.2 percent), and wanting assistance applying for financial aid (69.7 percent) and scholarships (68.5 percent).
- Students were asked to respond to a variety of questions about ACES. All items garnered high responses (weighted averages above 3.0 on a 4.0 scale). These include recommending ACES to other students (3.7), the ease of the ACES application (3.6), looking forward to ACES activities (3.5), the motivational aspect of

ACES (3.5), ACES assistance with exploring college (3.4), workshop topics (3.4), and several others.

- ACES Students were asked about their coaches. Rated highest included “My ACES coach cares about me” (3.6), “My ACES coach provided me with helpful information and guidance” (3.6), and “I have a good relationship with my ACES coach” (3.6), and “My coach was available to meet if I needed any assistance.” (3.6).
- Similarly, ACES students rated the activities and opportunities provided through ACES very positively, with little differentiation between topic area. Students rated field trips and information about colleges and universities 3.6, and information about scholarships and financial aid and information about ACES Pathways 3.5 on the four-point scale.
- Asked about challenges faced in ACES, 43.9 percent of respondents said there were no challenges. Others identified workshop scheduling as an issue (31.2 percent), which ACES or non-ACES person to connect with for certain situations (19.3 percent), and the challenge of motivating oneself to participate in ACES (18.8 percent).

College and Their Future

- When asked about their plans for college, 45.4 percent planned to attend a different (not MC or USG) two- or four-year college or university, 20.8 percent planned to attend MC and transfer to a non-USG institution; 14.0 percent planned to attend MC and transfer to USG, and 10 percent planned to attend MC. Only 8.5 percent stated that they were undecided.
- COVID-19 impacted everyone’s year in 2020 and will again in 2021. When asked how COVID-19 impacted their decision-making about college, over four-of-five ACES students (83.4 percent) said that it did not have an impact on their decisions for fall 2020, and only 8.6 percent changed their college this fall due to the pandemic. Only two percent decided not to go to college this fall due to COVID-19 and 4.0 percent stated that they decided to take fewer courses.

Survey Commentary

Students offered open-ended comments throughout the survey. Here is a summary of their comments with some verbatim quotes (in blue italics).

WORKSHOPS

- Alter the times of workshops so more students could participate due to sports and other extracurricular activities as well as after-school employment;
- Provide workshops more than once per year/semester for students who were unable to participate during the first session;
- Provide workshops in a large enough space for participants;
- Make workshops more participatory and interactive rather than didactic;
- Providing more workshops with more content, including scholarship information, career exploration, college essay writing, and college life;
- Focus on all postsecondary education options, not just Montgomery College;
- Include parents in workshops;
- Market the workshops better to increase participation.

Having more workshops because a lot of the times people couldn't attend whether it was because of sports or other extracurriculars, so different time frames would help with that a lot.

I believe ACES can be improved upon could be a far deeper analysis of different universities, and Montgomery College. In addition, some workshops should be dedicated to college life, and how much college is different compared to high school.

I think that everything is pretty great already, but one thing ACES could improve on is having maybe one or a few workshops about college life if that's possible so once we're done doing everything, we can start getting a feel about how being in college would be like.

I wish we had an essay writing workshop closer to the end of our junior year. It would have been useful going through the common supplemental essays. It would have also given an opportunity to peer review our essays

Make 4-year college actually seem like an option? A lot of the workshops came off as MC propaganda, which was very off-putting for those who don't see themselves attending a 2-year institution.

More scheduled workshops I feel like it takes longer then 30 minutes to help us get ready for our future, Coordination between our ACES coach, college and career guide and counselor

The topics in workshops could be more tailored to students and more outside the bubble of ACES and meeting new people. Another way the group could improve is the way we go about networking with other ACES students. It feels like every grade is their own cohort; in reality, we are all in the same group and we should be able to easily access each other for questions.

I was not a large fan of the ACES virtual experience about tuition because it seemed incredibly biased to the ACES pathway. I understand the need to advertise, but it didn't feel like the student's interest was in mind. There are so many other options besides MC that are financially feasible like finding schools that meet need or schools that offer loads of scholarships.

I think we should have conferences with parents to allow them to know more about aces, because some parents may know about aces but not all the way fully and I'm sure parents want to be involved with how they can help their children successfully be academic.

SUMMER PROGRAM

- Expand the summer program;
- Consider multiple summer dates to give students options;
- Add more college tours;
- Provide clarification on college application process and help with essay writing.

ACES MEETINGS

- Provide meeting times that are more accessible to students, schedule-wise;
- Provide more opportunities and longer times to meet with students;
- Encourage students to attend more meetings and trips;
- Provide more one-on-one meetings;
- Make more mandatory meetings.

MARKETING/RECRUITMENT

- Explain the difference between ACES and CollegeTracks to students;
- Market the program to more Hispanic/Latinos, including ads in Spanish.

SAT/ACT TESTING

- Provide more tips and practices for SAT/ACT;
- Provide SAT/ACT support earlier in the year and after school.

SCHOLARSHIPS

- Provide more information on scholarships;
- Provide more scholarship opportunities that are not focused on people of color;
- Include more information on financial aid along with scholarships;
- Hold a workshop on how to apply for scholarships;
- Provide one-on-one assistance with the scholarship application process.

COVID-19

Many students commented about the difficulties related to online classes and COVID-19. Some had internet and technology issues. Others missed being with their friends and ACES colleagues. For others, they said that they were able to participate in workshops more because of online availability. Still others commented that ACES did a good job with the pandemic. "I was able to connect more with my coach because everything was online," said one student.

I don't like online learning in general; however, I know we have to get used to it. Regarding to the ACES support, I think they all did a very good job when keeping students in touch while quarantined.

My experience is that it is hard for times like this, but the good thing is that we don't give up fighting and knowing that it is important to be there for others in time like this.

I think the aces coordinators did a great job at reaching out to students virtually and letting them know about changes in deadlines and keeping them updating on the latest.

My virtual experience is amazing with my coach, he lets us know everything we need to and it's very easy to reach out to him and zoom meetings are really fun and productive.

My virtual experience with ACES has been amazing. My counselor always made sure I had a backup plan for everything because she knew a lot of things could change due to covid-19

There was no virtual experience with aces. As far as I'm aware, we didn't have any workshops or meetings. I think there should be more workshops and that coaches should reach out to us individually, especially since we will need to do the college application process entirely from home and don't know how to.

OTHER

Well, I have a suggestion! I feel that ACES has to advertise the program more! Especially starting in high school! I think showcasing what the program has to offer would help encourage students to join the program! I feel like that would help kids who want to join but don't know what to expect an easier decision. Other important thing I've NOTICED is the students who get in the program don't really participate or attend the workshops/meetings and only there for the food! I feel that that's not right and it should be more about taking advantage of the great information being offered from the program as a whole so those students who don't keep up with the program and really invested should be either kicked out of the program or make it mandatory to meet the requirements! Also keep in mind the student's schedules because I know some students who are busy so the meeting/workshops should be flexible! The program should also keep in mind the ESOL students who join the program! ACES should have like a backup person to help the non-English speaking community whenever they don't understand or need assistance with future academic planes!!! I feel that the program as a whole should also bring awareness to the program and try to help the most vulnerable communities at public schools!!! Recruiting more male students of all backgrounds to join the program because there are very few males taking advantage of this amazing program!!!!!! One more thing! Please make an emphasis about the program not being one of minorities and low-income students because the main thing I saw when I joined the program was that there were only minorities and that's a great no problem to that, but I don't think the white community should see the ACES as just being for minorities!!!!!! So a shout out to all ethnicities and races!!!!

ACES has helped many students. But, for me it wasn't that helpful. One thing I would change about the program AS A WHOLE is the exposure ACES students get regarding other institutions rather than the ACES pathway. While this pathway helps some students, I know that not ALL ACES members plan on going to community college. While community college is a great resource for others, there are some disadvantages that go with attending a community college. The biggest would be the overall campus life experience. While I think the pathway is something very important to some students, ACES cannot neglect students who want to go to a 4-year institution right after high school. While ACES provides a lot of tools and resources and even scholarships for those who take the pathway, there isn't that same support for students who don't plan on doing the pathway. There is also a lack of representation of majors, out of state institutions, and just overall "college life". What I mean is, through ACES we don't learn how to prepare for college, the types of loans we can take out when going to a 4-year college.

Exhibit 73. Distribution of survey respondents by MCPS school

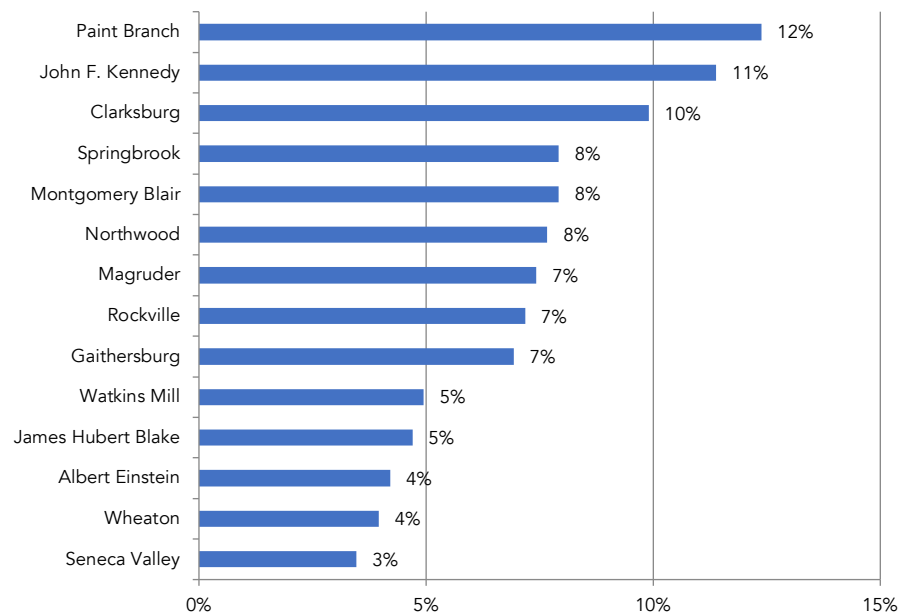


Exhibit 74. Distribution of survey respondents by grade level

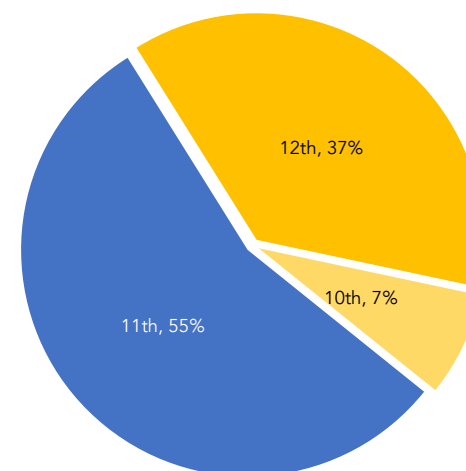


Exhibit 75. Race/Ethnic distribution of survey participants

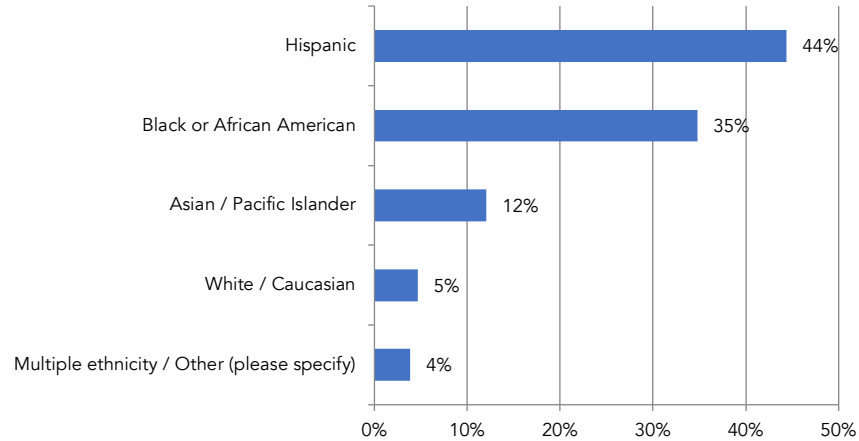


Exhibit 76. Grade Point Averages of ACES students

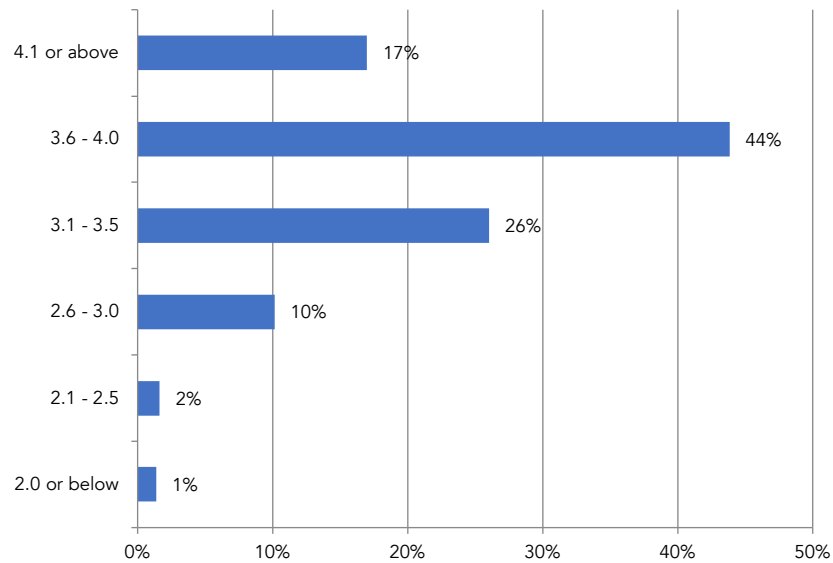


Exhibit 77. How did you first learn about ACES?

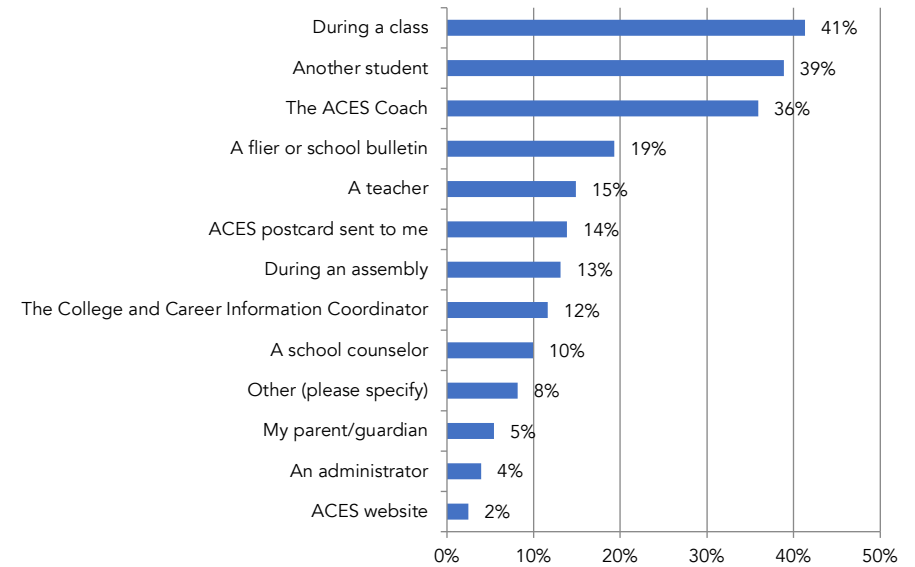


Exhibit 78. Why did you apply to ACES?

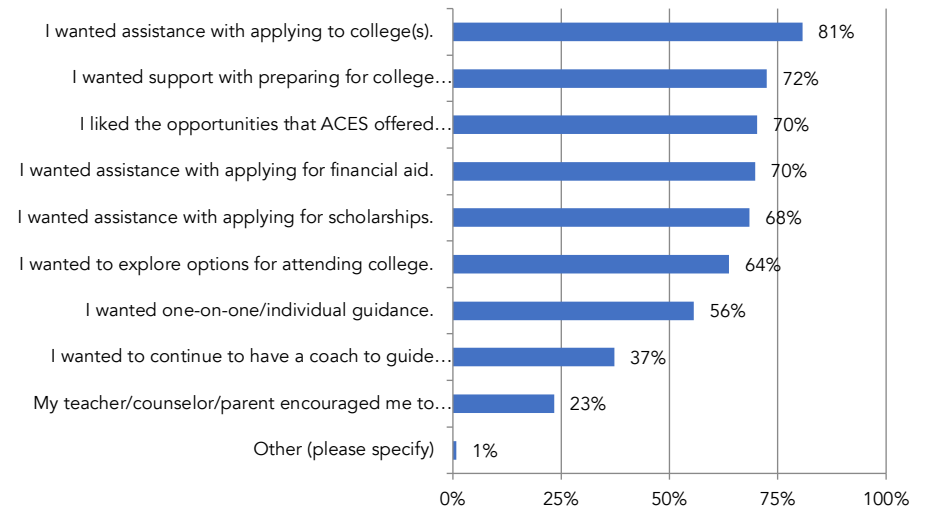


Exhibit 79. Student responses to the ACES program

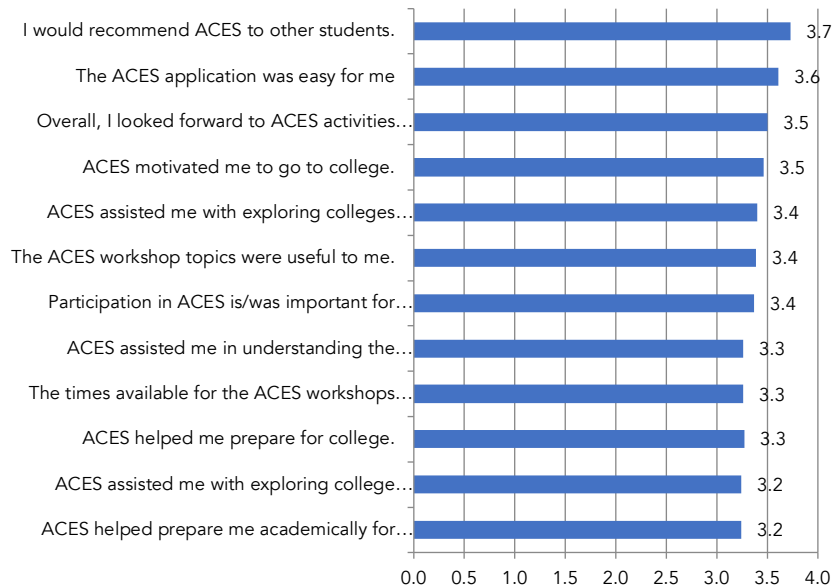


Exhibit 80. Student responses about ACES Coaches

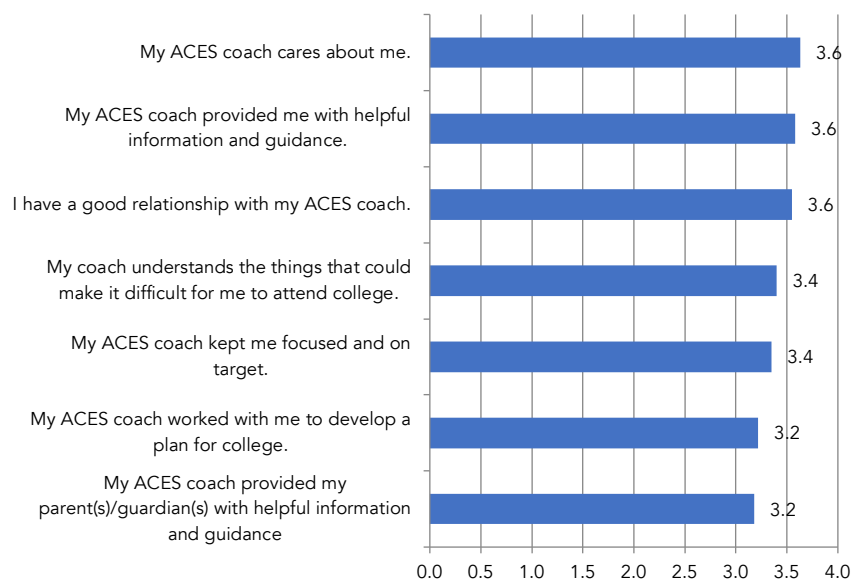


Exhibit 81. Student responses about ACES Coaches II



Exhibit 82. How helpful were the following items?

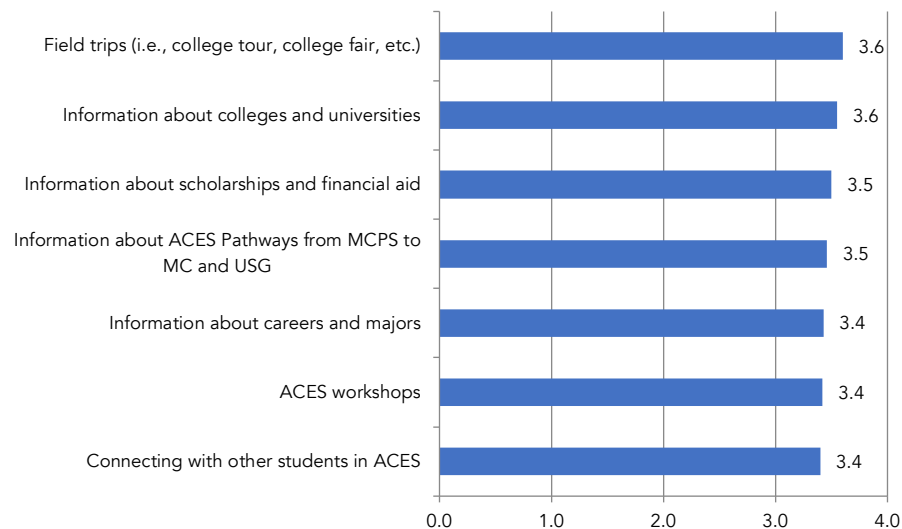


Exhibit 83. What were some of the challenges you faced in ACES?

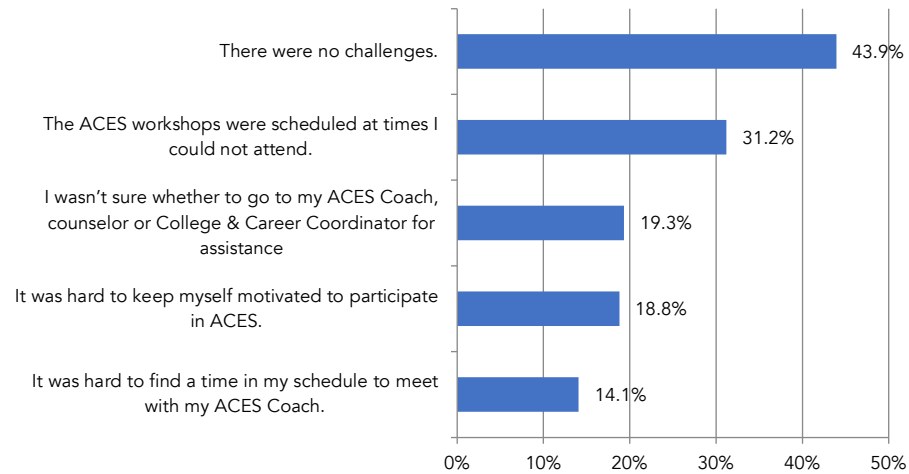


Exhibit 84. Plans for College

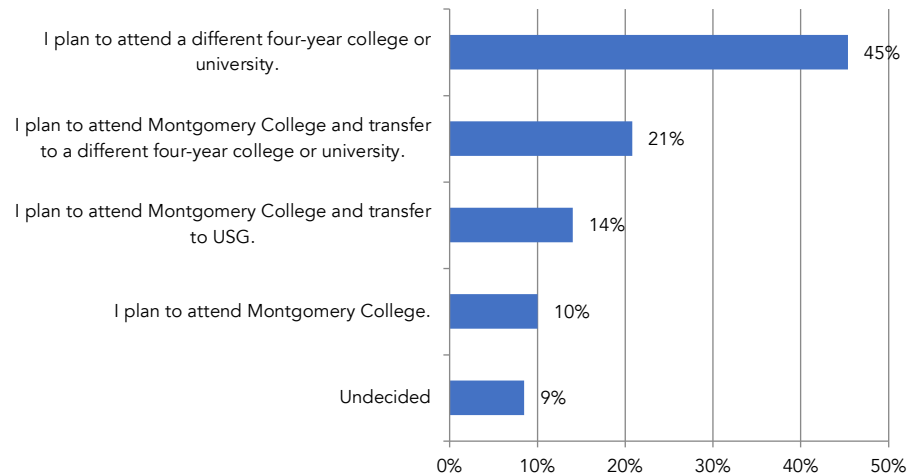
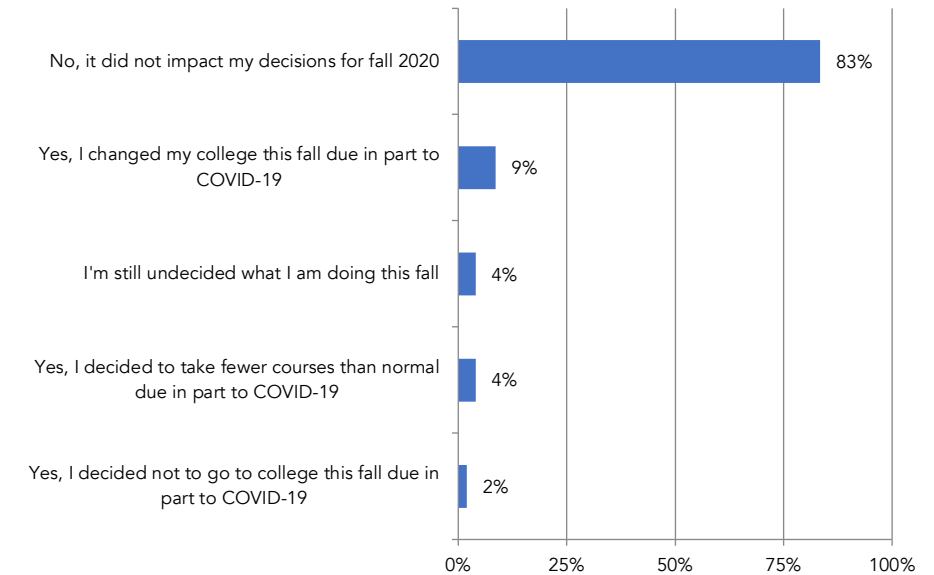


Exhibit 85. Impact of COVID-19



Montgomery College

This section provides a summary of findings from the Montgomery College survey. Provided within are bullet summaries of key background and information from the survey along with representative charts.

Background Information

- The survey was completed by 166 Montgomery College students between July 22 and August 11, 2020.
- Thirty-seven percent of respondents were first-year students and 63 percent second-year students.
- Most surveys were from students attending the Rockville Campus (102; 62 percent), followed by Takoma Park (52; 31 percent) and Germantown (12; 7 percent).
- Forty-three percent of students also took classes at a second campus: 20 percent also took classes at Rockville, 15 percent at Takoma Park, and 8 percent at Germantown.
- Two thirds (67.7 percent) of respondents were full-time students in 2019-20: 20 percent were part-time, and 13 percent varied by semester.
- Half of ACES students at MC were Hispanic/Latino, 27 percent Black, 16 percent Asian/Pacific Islander. Less than one percent were White.
- A third (35.5 percent) of respondents stated that their college GPA was between 3.1 to 3.5; 22 percent were above that mark and 33 percent below.
- Forty-seven percent of MC students graduated from MCPS in 2019, another 32 percent in 2018, 12 percent in 2017, and 7 percent prior to 2017.
- Eighty-six percent of students were first-generation college students. Put differently, only one-in-seven students had a parent with college experience.
- Twenty-one percent of students surveyed received their associate degree at the end of the 2019-20 year.

COVID-19 and the Future

- Eighty-seven percent of respondents planned on attending college in fall 2020.
- Seventy-seven percent of respondents plan to be back at Montgomery College in fall 2020; 17 percent were matriculating to USG, and 6 percent to a different college.
- Most students planned to obtain an associate degree (3.7) and a bachelor's degree (3.6). In fact, 81 percent of students were "Very Likely" to complete an AA and 72 percent "Very Likely" to complete a BA. When added to "Somewhat

Likely," those percentages increase to 93 percent for both AAs and BAs. Seventy-nine percent of students planned to transfer to a four-year college in the Maryland system.

About ACES

- Participation in workshops for first-year MC students ranged from 47 percent ("Welcome!") to 63 percent ("Personal Finance").
- First-year students rated the workshops very highly (1 – Very Poor to 5 – Excellent), with "Brain Training" and "Welcome!" rated the highest (4.2) and "Personal Finance" the lowest but still highly rated at 3.9. On average, 78 percent of students rated the workshops "Excellent" or "Good."
- Participation in workshops for second-year MC students was much higher than first-year students, ranging from 67 percent ("Sourcing Internships") to 78 percent ("Resume Development," "Interviewing Skills," "Welcome Back!", and "Networking").
- Second-year students rated the workshops very highly (1 – Very Poor to 5 – Excellent), with "Welcome Back!" and "Interviewing Skills" rated the highest (4.1), closely followed by "Resume Development," "Networking," "Psychology of Thriving," and "Diplomacy Matters" (4.0). On average, three-quarters (74 percent) of students rated the workshops "Excellent" or "Good."
- Seventy-two percent of ACES students reported meeting with their ACES coach during the fall 2019 semester and 60 percent in the spring 2021 semester.
- Forty-one percent of ACES students attended the USG transfer fair and 38 percent attended the USG visits to MC. Approximately one-third of students participated in the "Make Your Move" summer program (38 percent), visited a four-year college (non-USG) (31 percent), visited with a USG representative (31 percent), and participated in the ACES Registration Lab (30 percent). Students rated the ACES activities very highly, ranging from a low of 4.2 out of 5 for the four-year college visits to 4.7 for ACES coaches' meetings.
- Eighty-eight percent of students said they spoke with their coach about academic planning during one-on-one meetings; 56 percent said they discussed transfer planning, completing a transfer application (24 percent), and mental health support (12 percent).
- We asked ACES students about certain experiences with the ACES program. In total, we asked about 17 items on a four-point scale, with 1 for Strongly Disagree and 4 for Strongly agree. The weighted-average scores were all 3.0 or higher, with most at 3.5 and higher. In fact, all but four items received "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" ratings above 90 percent. The highest weighted reviews included helping

find financial aid and scholarships (3.7), helping complete financial aid and scholarship forms (3.6), receiving helpful information and guidance from the ACES Coach (3.6), and receiving support in selecting and registering for courses (3.6).

- When asked if anything prevented them from being successful during the 2019-20 academic year, 36 percent of respondents noted COVID-19 and another third (34 percent) said they had no issues. Mental health (31 percent), family obligations (28 percent), finances (26 percent), challenging course work (24 percent), and job obligations (23 percent) were also noted.
- Montgomery College students highly recommended the ACES program to other students (3.7); 97 percent of students selected Strongly Agree or Agree for recommending the ACES program. In addition, they also rated highly their overall ACES experience (3.5), that the program helped get them through their first year of college (3.5), and that it motivated them to stay in college (3.5).
- Forty-five percent of students said that the scheduling of ACES workshops was a challenge and staying motivated to participate in ACES (26 percent). Over 40 percent (41.4 percent) didn't have a problem.

Two Favorite Things

We asked students to provide their "two favorite things" about the ACES program. Over a hundred (105) students responded with these five themes:

- The support and assistance of the ACES Coach;
- Having a program that provided support for minorities and other students;
- Help in focusing and motivation to achieve;
- The ACES workshops;
- The friendliness and welcoming environment.

Here are some of their verbatim comments:

I like that the program is focused on long term success. When I became a member in high school, I would not have thought that they would still be working with me into my third year in university.

The helpful coaches and workshops available.

My coach's availability and assistance

When I needed to get in touch with my ACES coach the response time was very impressive and the accessibility was wonderful

Willingness to help minorities achieve their goals. Very understanding of a student's circumstances.

I like that the coaches always have availability to schedule appointments. I like the resources and events they offer. Also, how friendly and understanding the coaches are.

ACES coach are the best. They are approachable, welcoming and helpful. ACES provided me, financially, to continue my school and motivated me to be the best I can be and be excited of who I will become

I enjoy the connections I've made with other students and how much information I was able to obtain from the program.

Primarily, the coaches. ACES coaches offer a sense of familiarity during a time of change. My ACES coach was the one of the strongest source of support available to me which I really appreciated.

Secondly, the opportunities. As a high school student, I had the opportunity to write an undergraduate research paper as an eleventh grade student and in college, I was able to be a part of the ACES Ambassador's program through which I was able to attend the USG ribbon-cutting event, learn leadership skills, speak on behalf of ACES, and get to know a variety of people, information, and resources.

The multitude of resources available and that the information about the program or things that might help were sent to all my known emails so that I can access that information at any place.

The helped to have a smoother transition from HS to college. The encouragement to continue with my education in college. Second, all the knowledge that the coaches share in the one on one sessions.

I love having always somebody to ask information about college, I love the fact that they are willing to help

Areas for Improvement

When asked about areas for improvement, ideas were disproportionately focused on workshop scheduling. Many students commented that they could not always make workshops or wish that they could be provided more than once so they could attend. Similar was the scheduling of meetings with ACES Coaches, which was problematic for some students (and was mentioned in one of the quotes below). Apparently, coaches were not always available in their office when students showed up.

In addition, there were suggestions for monthly check-ins with students and additional assistance with academic planning. Here are some of the verbatim comments from ACES students at Montgomery College:

ACES coach has favorites, the amount of effort put into students determine with the relationship. Change in coaches, without being notified. The advice given with class schedule actually delayed in the earning of my degree.

I do not know who my ACES coach is.

I was not even aware that I had an ACES coach.

The workshops after the first two weeks schedules at not the best times which didn't work for my schedule and I could not meet them. And if those could be placed in an easier way to see what had gone on online. I know they are of black board, but it too seems confusing.

Some students, like myself, perhaps can't make it to the workshops that ACES offer due to scheduling or other things happening in life even though we really want to. And we probably missed out on some valuable key points/lessons that could possibly benefit us in the long run. So a suggestion that I think might benefit those students is perhaps send an email summary of what happened and key points that are good to remember from the workshops. That way both student groups are benefitted. Those who attended could review the important key points and those who didn't cannot get a broad view of what happened.

I would like to be more involved in ACES but I'm not sure exactly how to that. I am unable to attend the workshops on Fridays because I work but I would love to attend if they were on a different day.

1.) providing more opportunities to volunteer; 2.) I particularly wish I could have felt like I could transfer to a four-year school but as of right now with my status as a DACA student, I particularly feel like I won't be able to financially as well. So in other words, providing more consultation time for just DACA STUDENTS.

One way to improve ACES would be to maintain a strong alumni network from the get-go. I am graduating this summer, but I wish I had the opportunity to know some ACES graduates. I know ACES is relatively new, but it would still be great to stay relevant in the lives of the recent graduates.

Another way to improve ACES would be to have events (that are not workshops) that promote greater camaraderie between ACES members. Either a tutoring program and/or community events that allow students to find a community, either simply at MC or with USG as well, that fosters a support system among the members.

Email reminders would be nice about upcoming ACES shops as well as a monthly check in with students to reply to any ACES coaches or through a google form to see how students are doing and to better pinpoint their struggles that ACES could somehow alleviate.

I tried to contact ACES coach and never received a response back. Please have a better system so any Student can contact you and not feel lost. Also the times workshops are done are very challenging to attend.

COVID-19

We asked ACES students about their experience during COVID-19. Some students responded that the ACES experience wasn't that different; for others, they felt that there wasn't any ACES experience once COVID-19 hit. Thus, there is a dichotomy of experiences depending likely on students, locations, and coaches.

Of all responses, only 2.5 percent of respondents said they decided not to attend college in fall 2020 due to COVID-19. Seventy-seven percent said it did not impact their plans at all, 20 percent decided to take fewer classes as a result. In addition, 29 percent of students said that COVID-19 did impact their ability to complete the 2020 spring semester.

Here are some of their comments:

It has been definitely hard, but I was able to finish strong.

I was unaware that ACES providing virtual support.

My virtual experience with Aces was amazing. it helped me go through my courses.

I haven't tried virtual meeting but I'm sure they do a good job!

The ACES counselor at Xxxxxxxx is amazing. Mx. Xxxxxxxx was hard to approach and did not replied to my emails so I was scared of falling out of the program, but the new counselor has amazing communication skills.

My virtual ACES experience has been incredible. I've gotten to speak with my ACES coach when s/he is available.

So far, I personally haven't tried setting up an appointment with ACES virtually, but I have with my other professors via Zoom. I think this a very convenient tool to use even when the pandemic is over because this could benefit students who are outside of the state/country at the moment and need assistance can set up a virtual appointment with an ACES coach without physically going to campus.

I haven't had any communication with anyone in ACES

Besides completing ACES Workshops online, I didn't really have much virtual experience with ACES. Thus, I don't have enough experience to really say what needs to be improved.

My virtual experience with my ACES coach is through emails and exchanging emails goes well. I don't wait very long to receive a reply back.

I haven't really utilized the virtual ACES and when I do check in onto blackboard in the ACES community, I end up forgetting about it and focusing on my classes, so it would've been nice to have email check ins for students to remind them about any workshops and such that's on the ACES community blackboard.

I wanted to contact a Coach so I could get help with transferring to USG this fall, and I did not get the help. Thankfully I was able to transfer without your help but was very challenging.

My experience virtually was overall good. I had trouble scheduling appointments on starfish, but it was dealt with afterwards.

it was good i didn't have a problem other than having to use zoom. I know that zoom was there at the right time for everyone to use but i would rather use discord to talk

There isn't much to improve since the experience is similar to meeting with a counselor in person.

Exhibit 86. What term best describes you during the 2019-20 academic year?

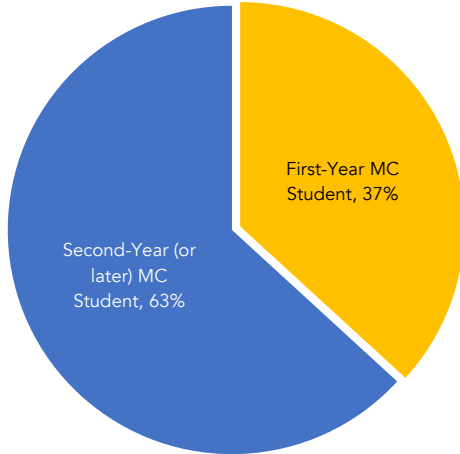


Exhibit 87. What was your primary campus location in 2019-20?

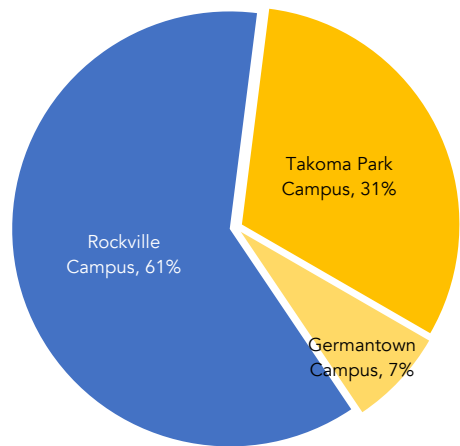


Exhibit 88. Did you take classes at a second campus during the 2019-20 academic year?

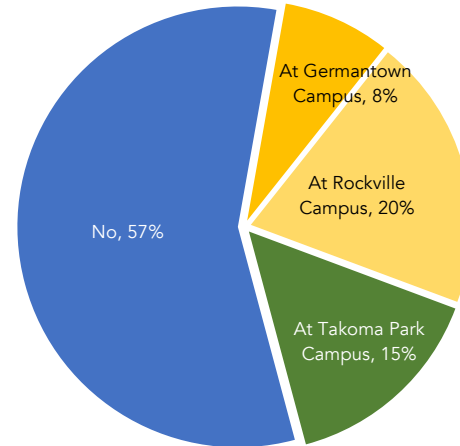


Exhibit 89. During the 2019-20 academic year, were you a full-time or part-time student?

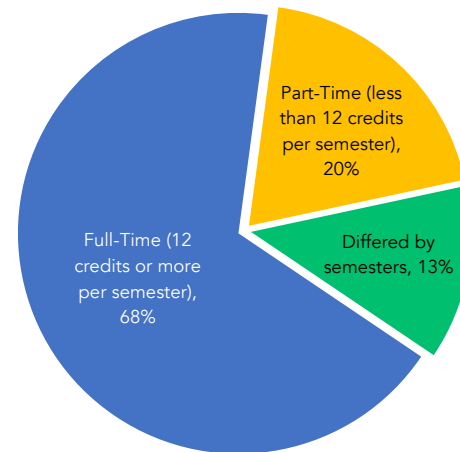


Exhibit 90. Which race/ethnicity best describes you?

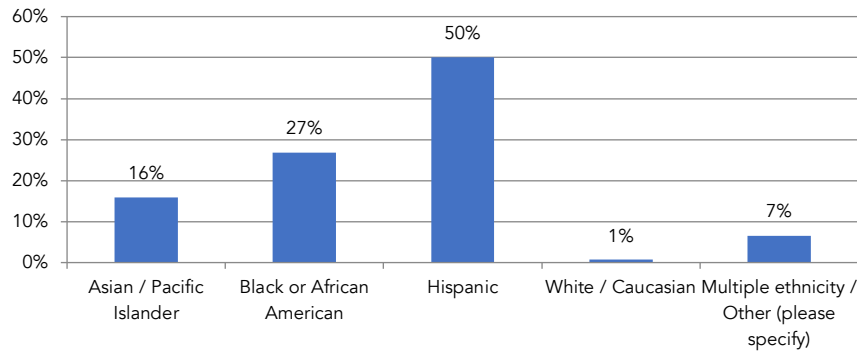


Exhibit 91. What is your current college GPA?

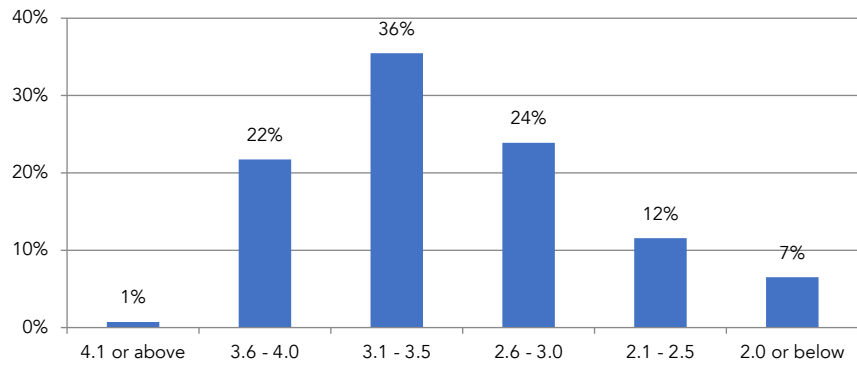


Exhibit 92. What year did you graduate from MCPS?

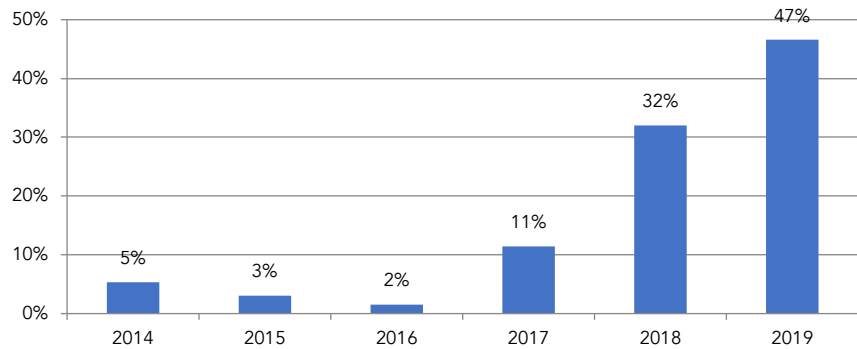


Exhibit 93. Do you have at least one parent/legal guardian who graduated from college in the United States?

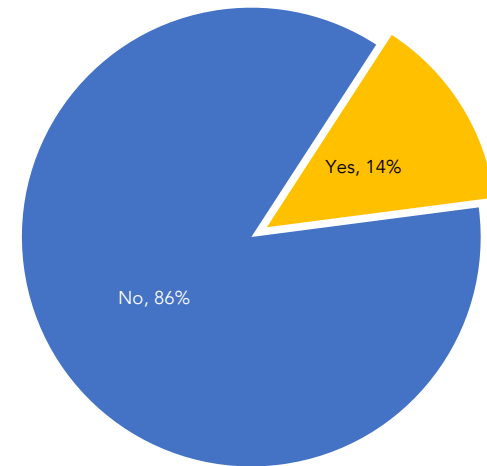


Exhibit 94. During the 2019-20 academic year, did you receive any degree from MC?

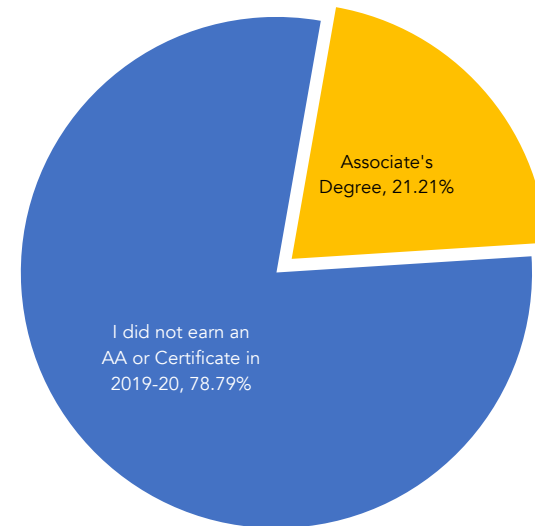


Exhibit 95. Do you plan on attending college this fall?

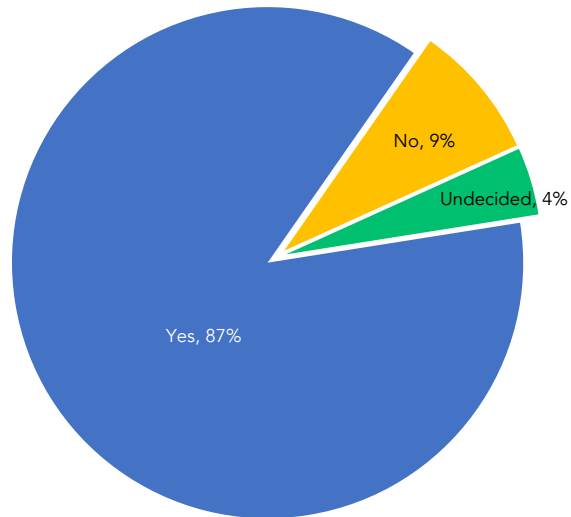


Exhibit 96. Did COVID-19 alter your plans for college this fall?

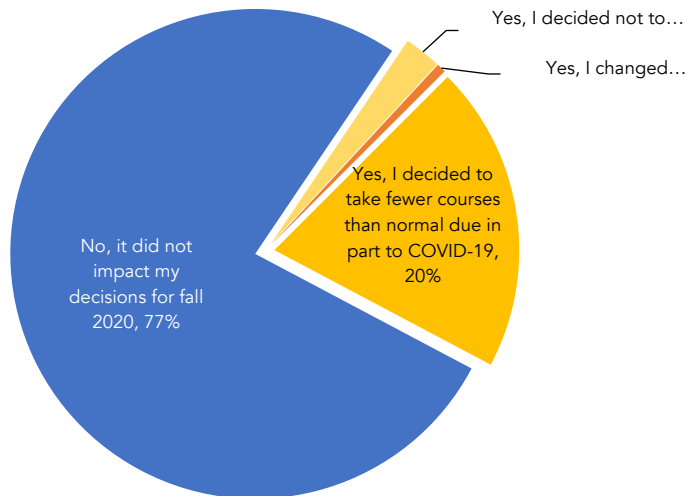


Exhibit 97. Did COVID-19 impact your ability to complete your school year in spring 2020?

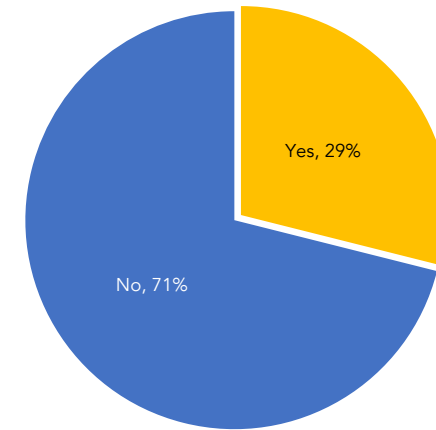


Exhibit 98. Where will you be attending this fall?

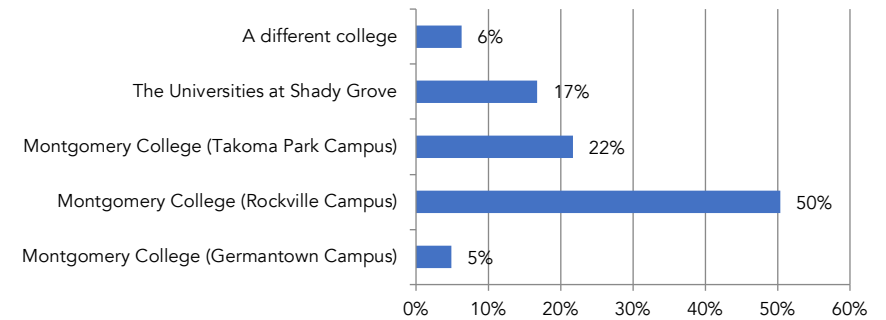


Exhibit 99. How likely are you to do each of the following?

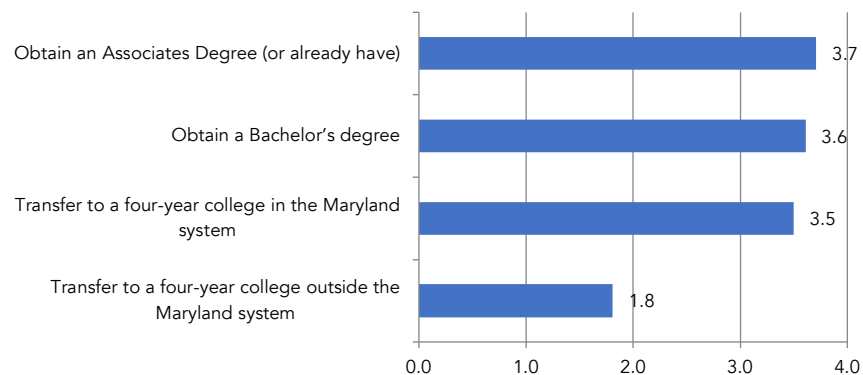


Exhibit 100. Workshop participation rates of first-year ACES students, 2019-20

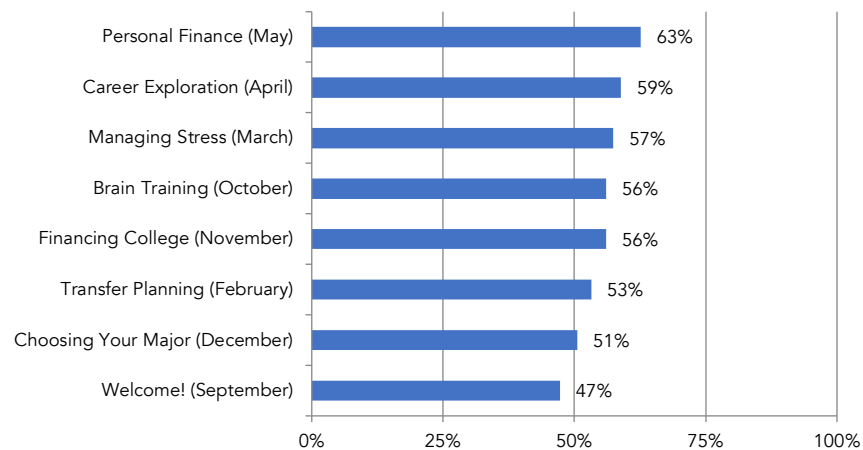


Exhibit 101. Workshop ratings by first-year ACES students, 2019-20

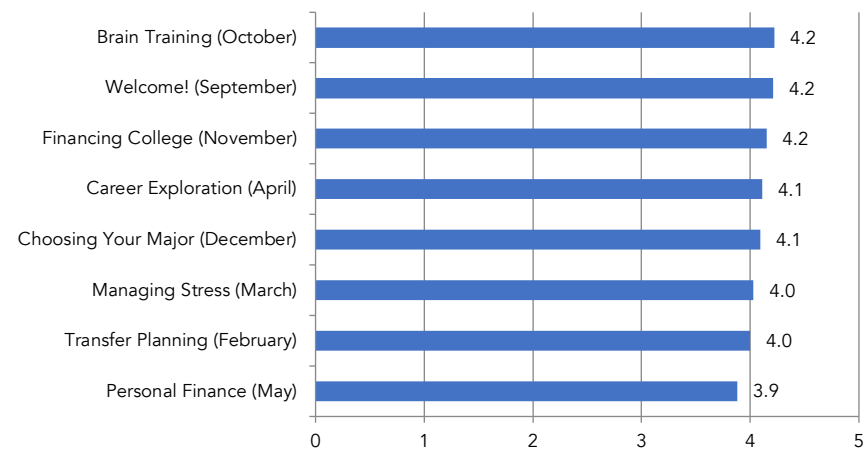


Exhibit 102. Workshop participation rates of second-year ACES students, 2019-20

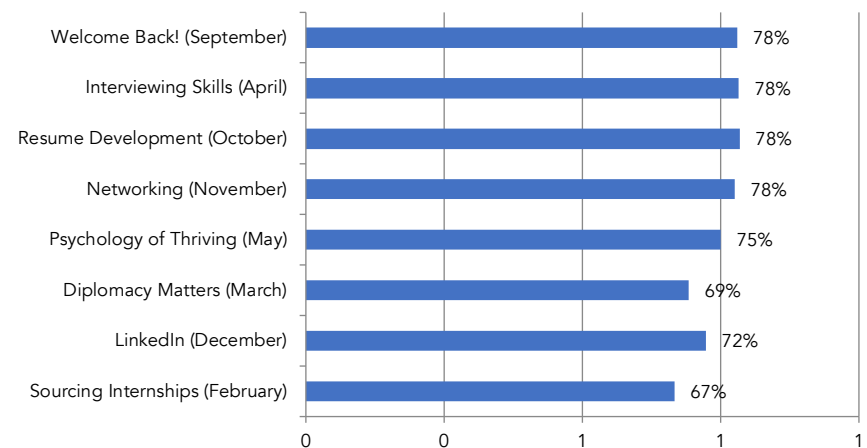


Exhibit 103. Workshop ratings by second-year ACES students, 2019-20

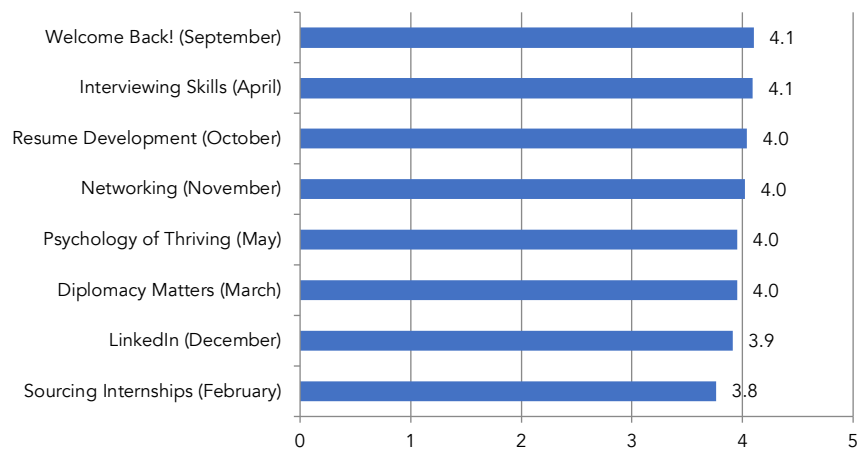


Exhibit 104. Percent of respondents' participation in ACES activities during the 2019-20 academic year.

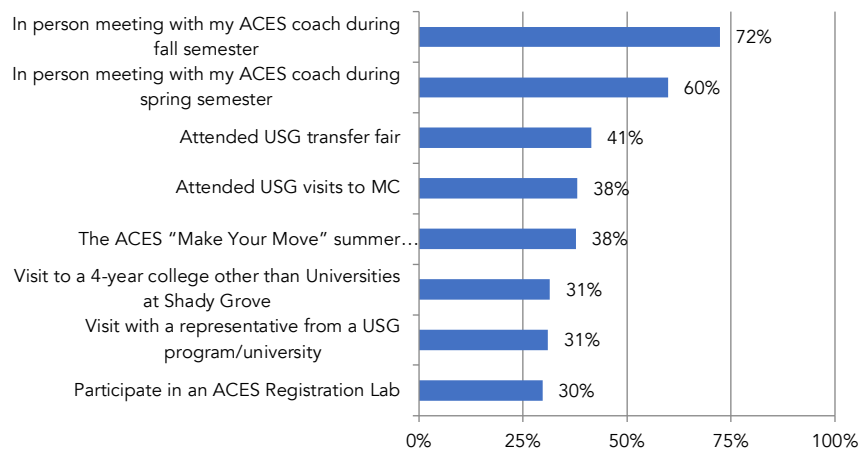


Exhibit 105. Ratings of respondents' participation in ACES activities during the 2019-20 academic year.

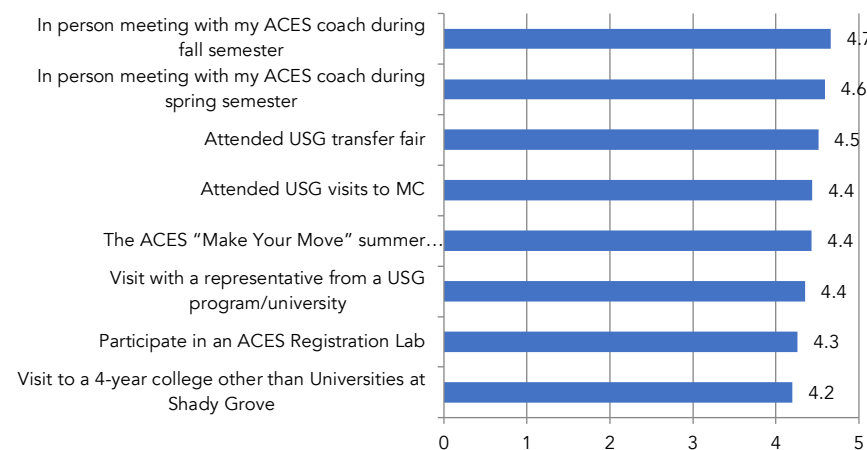


Exhibit 106. Which of the following topics were discussed during one-on-one meetings with your Academic coach either in person or via Zoom? (Check all that apply)

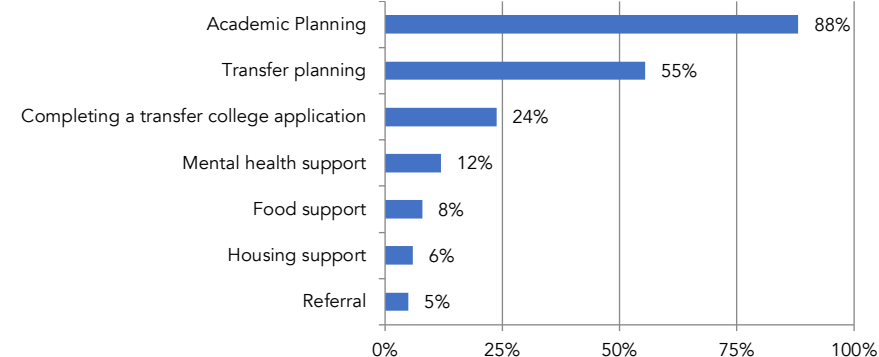


Exhibit 107. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your experience with ACES at Montgomery College in 2019-20.

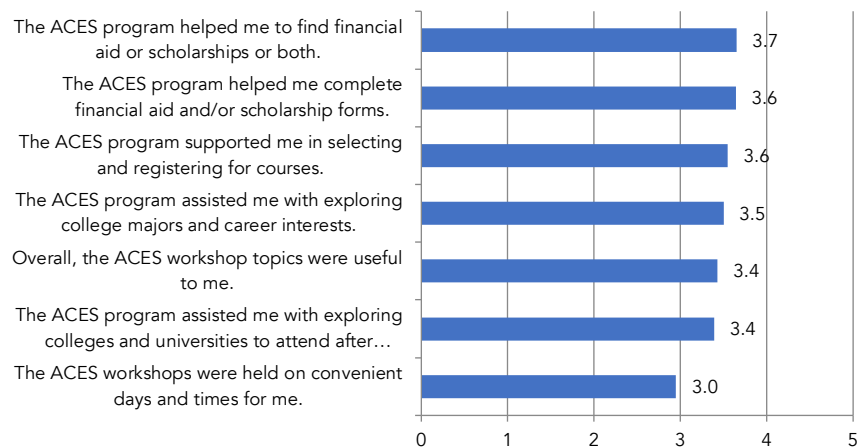


Exhibit 108. Did any of the following prevent you from staying or being successful in college during the 2019-20 academic year?

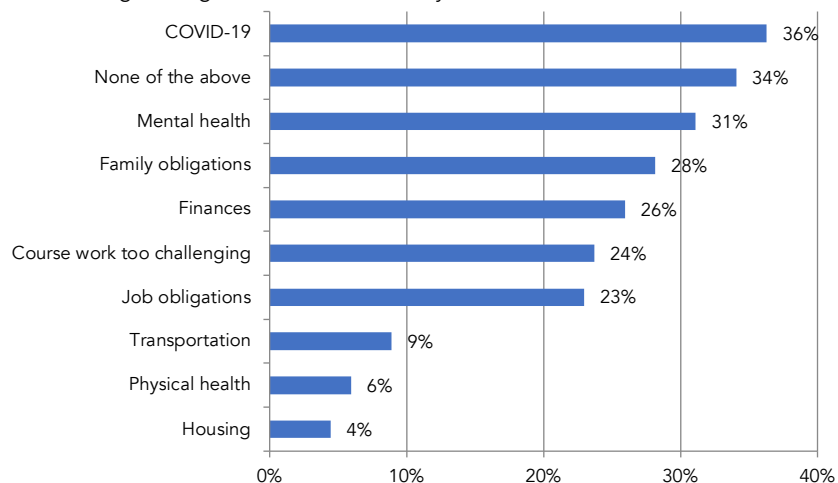


Exhibit 109. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your experience at Montgomery College in 2019-20.

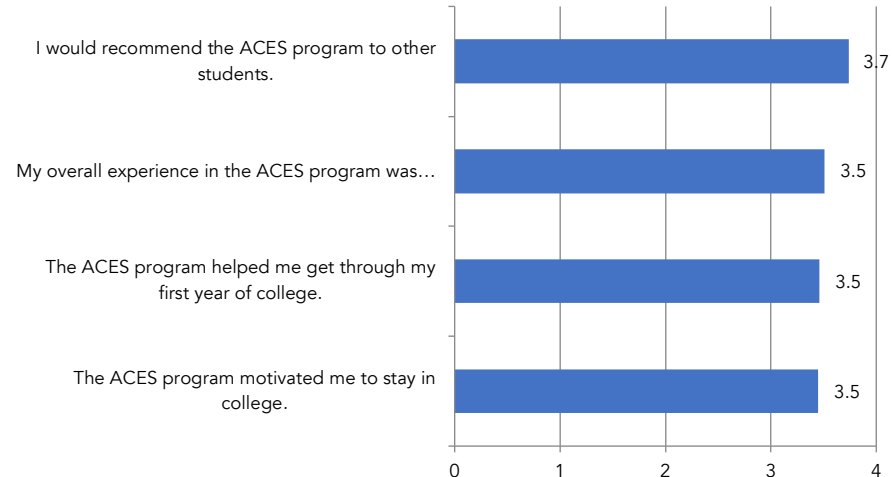
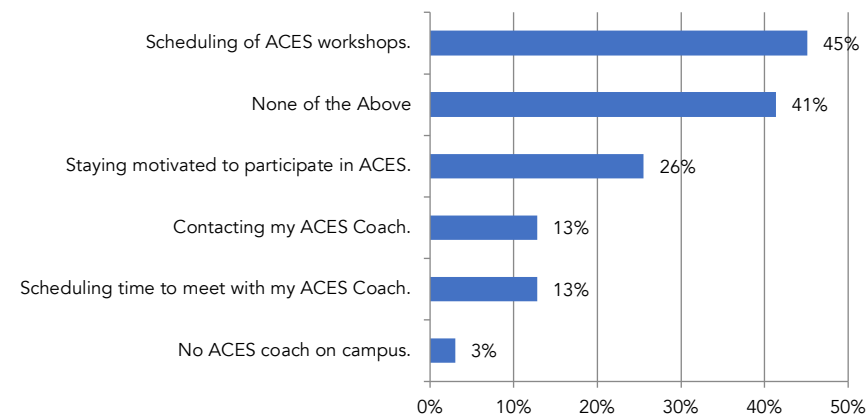


Exhibit 110. What challenges, if any, did you face in the ACES program? (Check all that apply)



The Universities at Shady Grove

This section provides a summary of findings from the USG survey. Provided within are bullet summaries of key background and information from the survey along with representative charts.

Background Information

- The survey was completed by 36 USG students between July 22 and August 11, 2020.
- Eighty-two percent of the respondents were female; 18 percent male.
- Sixty-four percent of respondents were Hispanic/Latino, 24 percent Black, 9 percent Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 3 percent White.
- Eighty-two percent of respondents were first-generation college students.
- Forty-two percent of respondents reported an earned GPA of 3.6 to 4.0 during the 2019-20 academic year. One third (33 percent) earned a 3.1 to 3.5 GPA, and 21 percent between a 2.6 and 3.0. Only three percent earned a GPA below that level.
- The survey respondents were enrolled at 7 of USG's 9 institutions, with the majority of students (44 percent) enrolled at UMCP, 22 percent at UMBC, 11 percent at UMB, 8 percent at UMGC, 6 percent each at TU and SU and 3 percent at the UB.
- One out of five (19 percent) of respondents completed classes at a second campus.
- Almost all respondents (94 percent) attended full-time in 2019-20.
- One quarter (25 percent) of respondents completed their bachelor's degree during the 2019-20 academic year.

COVID-19 and the Future

- Seventy-eight percent of respondents said that COVID-19 did not impact their spring 2020 semester. One-out-of-five students (22 percent) felt they were impacted by issues related to the pandemic.
- COVID-19 had a limited impact on the decisions of students for fall 2020. In fact, 89 percent of students said it had no impact on their fall 2020 plans for college.
- Three quarters (75 percent) of students planned on attending USG in fall 2020 and 8 percent planned on attending a different college.
- Most USG students still planned to complete their bachelor's degree, with a 4.0 out of 4.0 rating and 97 percent rating this issue "very likely." Eighty-two percent

of students said it was "very likely" or "somewhat likely" that they obtain a master's degree.

- Of all potential barriers to college during the 2019-20 academic year, COVID-19 was the most pressing, with 49 percent of students selecting it as a barrier. However, one third of students (36 percent) said there were no barriers to their success. Other barriers included mental health (36 percent), finances (27 percent), challenging coursework (24 percent), and family obligations (18 percent).

ACES Activities and Experiences

- We asked ACES students at USG to rate 13 ACES activities during the 2019-20 year on a five-point scale where 1 was "Very Poor" and 5 was "Excellent." Using a weighted average out of 5.0, students responded extremely positively about all items. The top items included in person meetings (4.9), Summer Bridge Program (4.8), Professional Pathways Expo (4.8), Open Lab (4.8), One on One Meetings with the ACES Success Coordinator (4.8), and several others.
- All respondents stated they would recommend ACES to other students.
- Students RATED the workshops (3.8 out of 4.0), assistance with financial aid and scholarships (3.7), and motivation via ACES (3.6) as very helpful.
- Regarding the ACES Success Coordinator, students were very receptive and positive about their experiences. Of the 10 items posted, the lowest rate of success was 3.5 on the four-point scale. The highest-rated items included the ability of the ACES Success Coordinator to provide information and guidance (3.8), the relationship (3.7), development of a plan (3.7), ability to refer to other people (3.7), and the ability to reduce or remove barriers (3.7).
- We asked students about their challenges in the ACES program. Approximately half (55 percent) of students listed the scheduling/timing of workshops, followed by scheduling meetings with the ACES Success Coordinator (30 percent), and knowing who to go to for support (25 percent).
- Overall, 79 percent of students said that their ACES experience was "Excellent" and an additional 15 percent "Good." Only six percent rated it "Average."

Two Favorite Things

We asked students to provide their "two favorite things" about the ACES program. Here are some of their comments:

- Financial, academic, and mental support; "Never ending academic and social support."

- Workshops for professional and academic growth; “Amazing Workshops.”
- The support of the ACES Success Coordinators;
- Financial support and scholarships;
- Motivation; “My favorite things about ACES is how it motivates you to keep succeeding and how the coach’s will help you with anything you need. I like knowing I can go to the coaches when I need help.”
- Financial literacy.

“It gives a handful of opportunities to minorities that may not have access to resources or information that others do. It gives us a chance to shine and allows us to develop skills that will be useful for our selected major.”

Areas for Improvement

When asked about areas for improvement, ideas were disproportionately focused on workshop scheduling. Many students commented that they could not always make workshops or wish that they could be provided more than one opportunity to attend. One student suggested virtual meetings for those who cannot make weekend meetings. A solution provided was perhaps to create a buddy system for support and information.

Students also suggested more volunteer and work opportunities in the high school or at Montgomery College, as well as additional internship opportunities.

Some students asked for their ACES Success Coordinators to be more responsive and to expand information about career choices post-USG. Of course, some students were fine with it as it is. One responded: “You are perfect.”

Exhibit 111. Survey respondents' gender

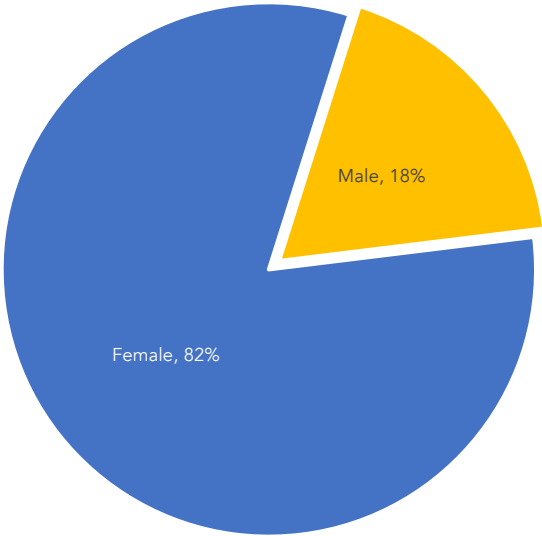


Exhibit 112. Survey respondents' race/ethnicity

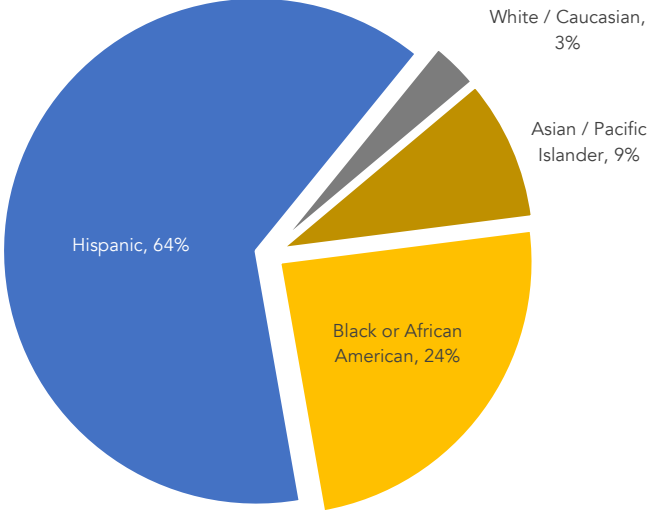


Exhibit 113. Do you have at least one parent/legal guardian who graduated from college in the United States?

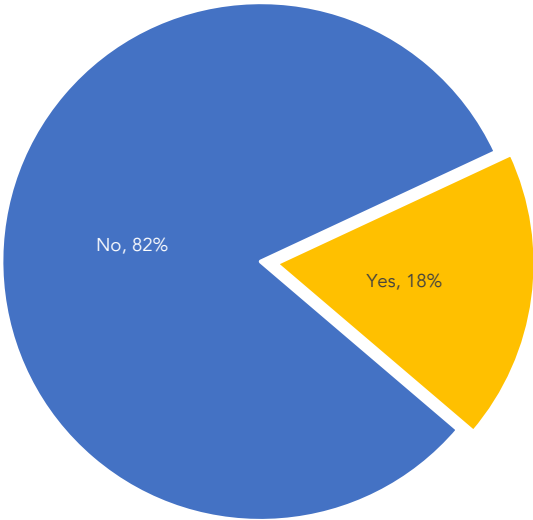


Exhibit 114. What is your current college GPA?

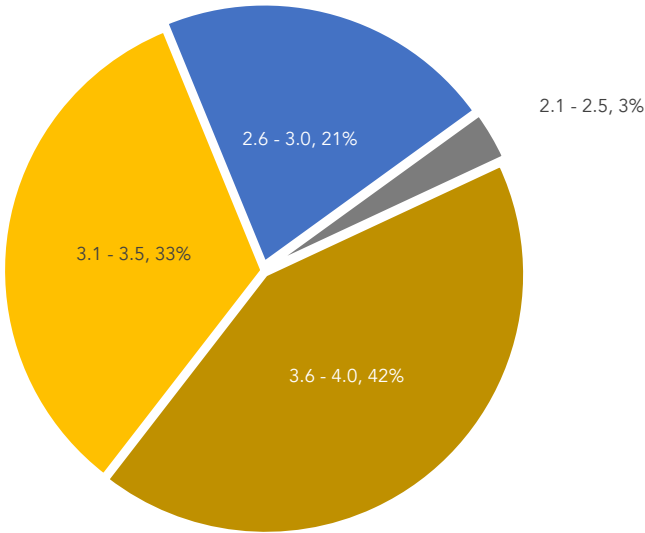


Exhibit 115. USG students' home institution

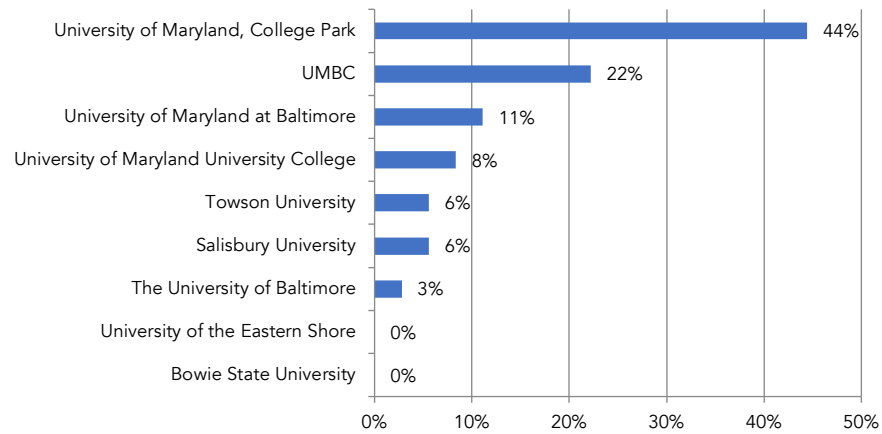


Exhibit 116. Did you take classes at a second (non-USG) campus?

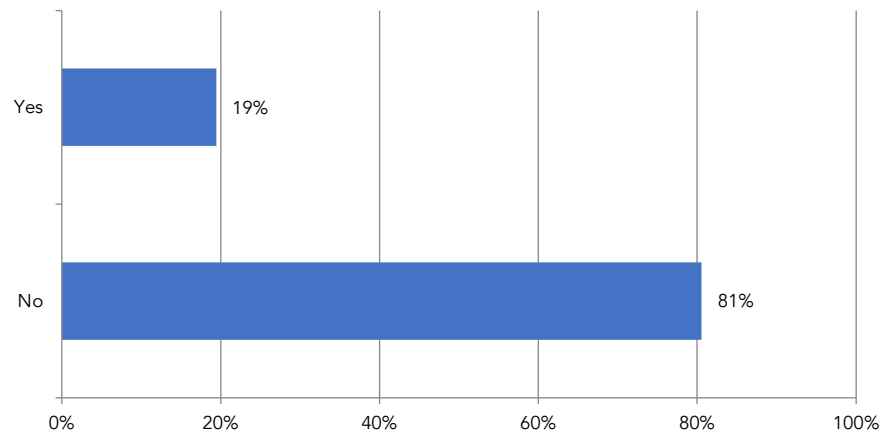


Exhibit 117. Were you a full-time or part-time student in 2019-20?

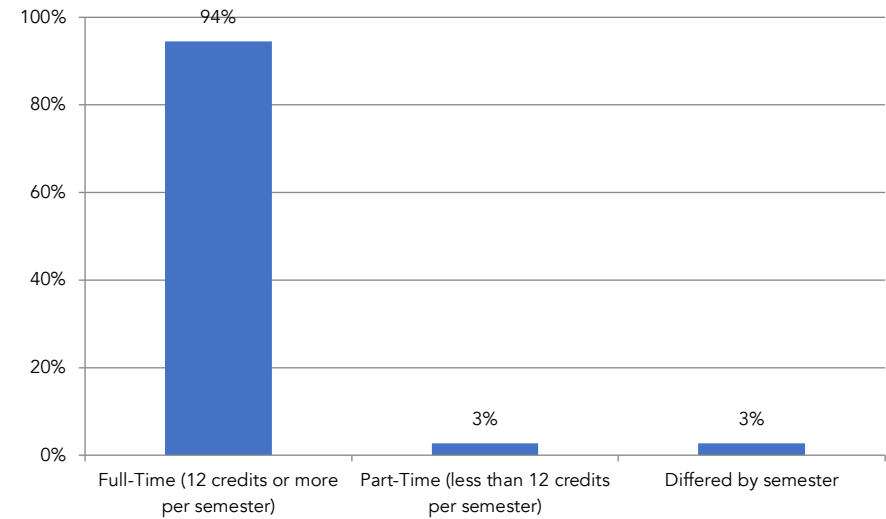


Exhibit 118. Did you finish your USG degree during the 2019-20 academic year?

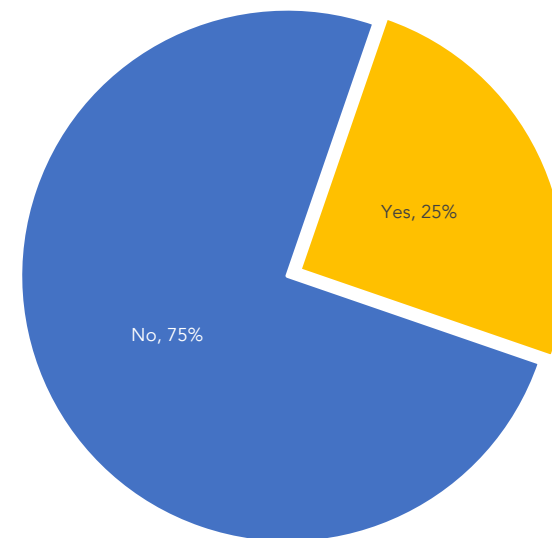


Exhibit 119. Did COVID-19 impact your ability to complete your school year in spring 2020?

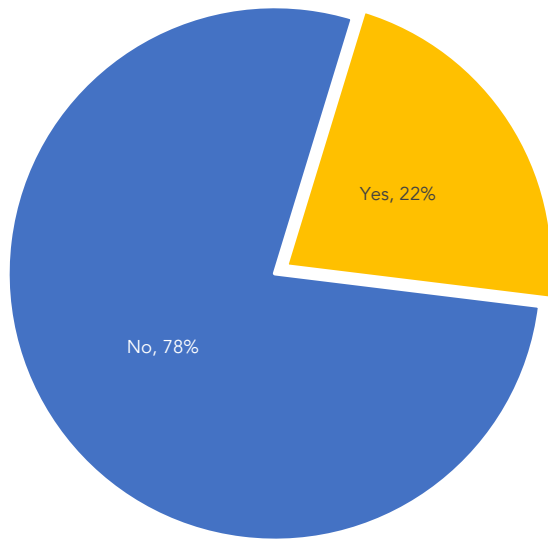


Exhibit 120. Did COVID-19 alter your plans for college this coming fall?

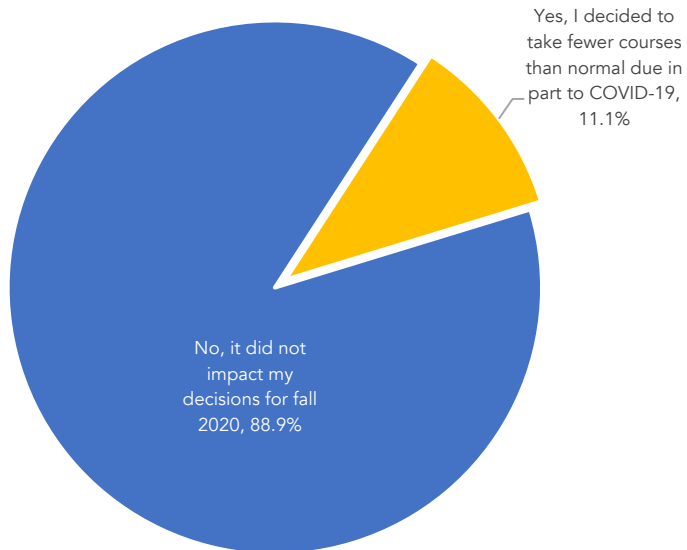


Exhibit 121. Do you plan on attending USG this fall?

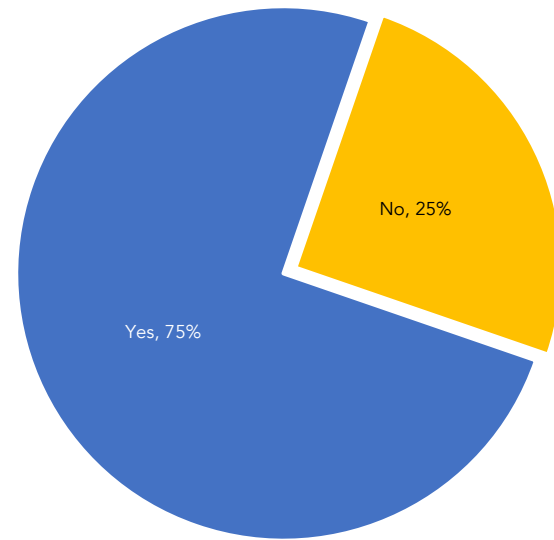


Exhibit 122. Do you plan on attending another college this fall?

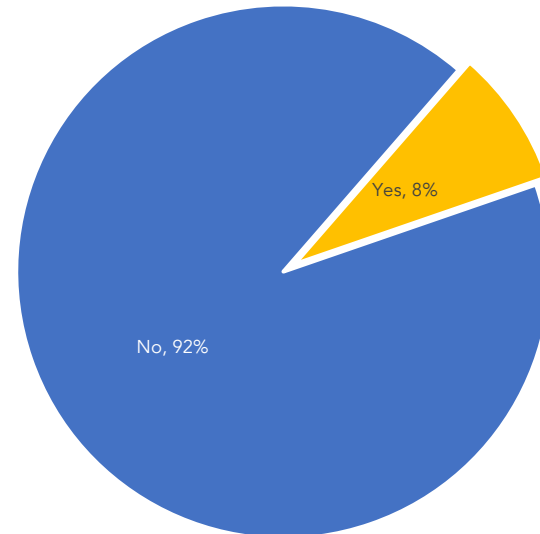


Exhibit 123. How likely are you to do the following?

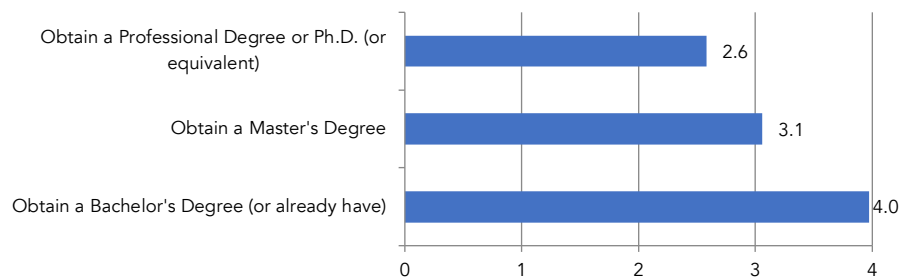


Exhibit 124. Did any of the following prevent you from staying or being successful in college during the 2019-20 academic year?

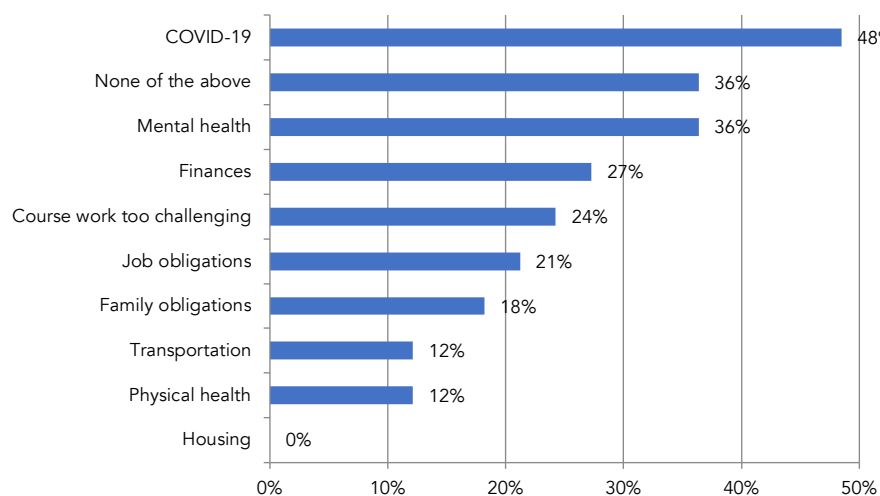


Exhibit 125. Please rate the following ACES activities during 2019-20.

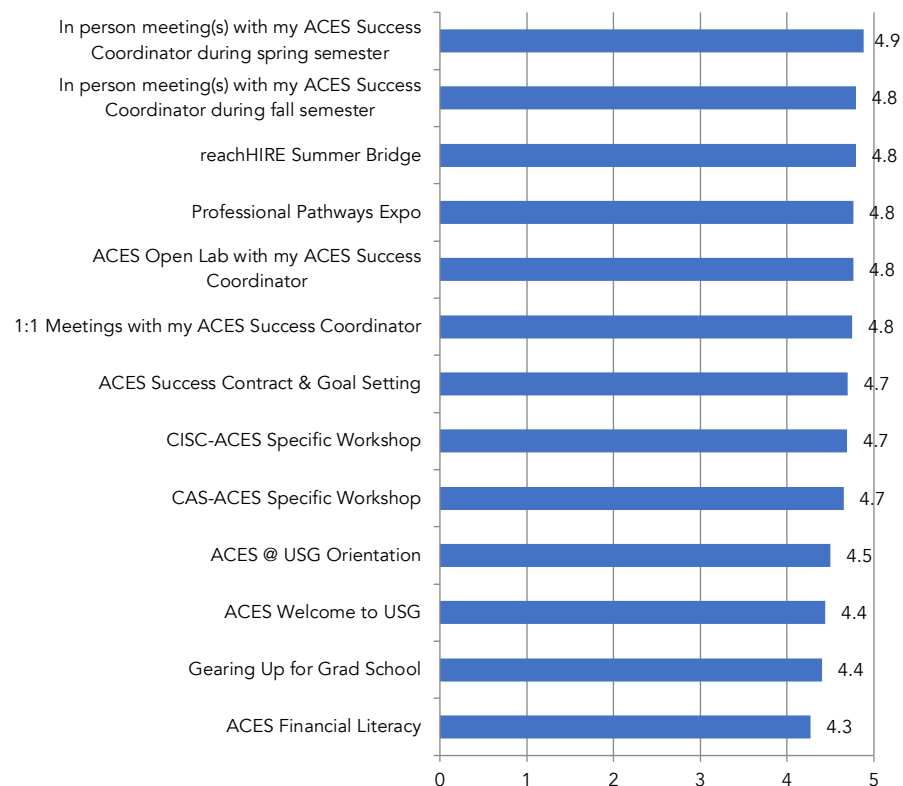


Exhibit 126. Please rate the following ACES activities during 2019-20.

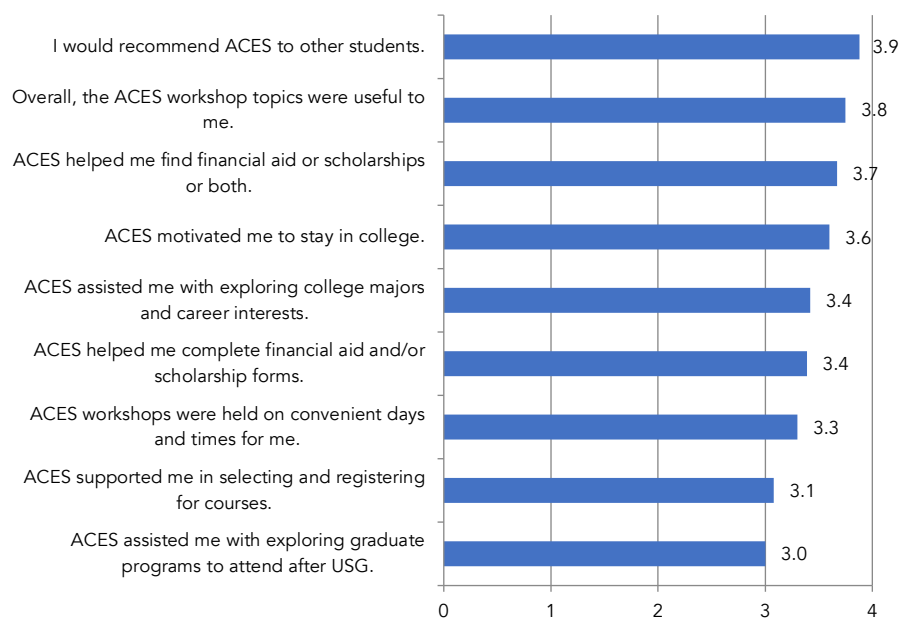


Exhibit 127. Please rate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding your experience at USG in 2019-20.



Exhibit 128. What were some of the challenges you faced in the ACES program?

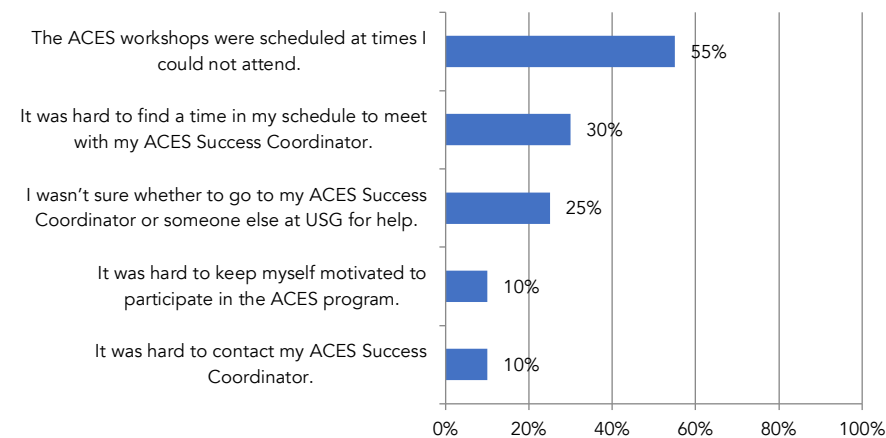
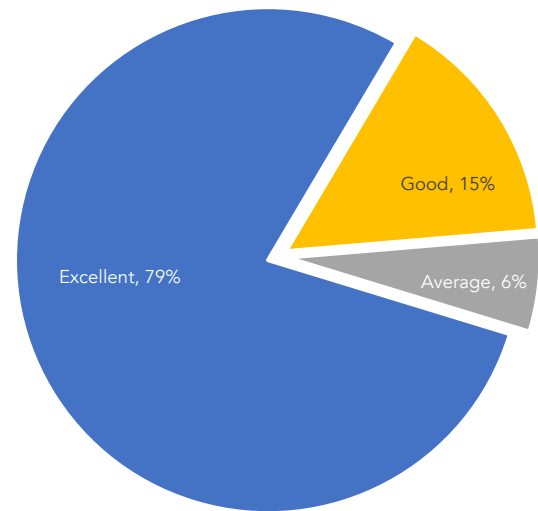


Exhibit 129. Please mark the choice that best represents your overall experience in the ACES program in 2019-20.



PART V — DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

The ACES (Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success) program was created in 2013 as a joint venture between Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Montgomery College (MC), and the Universities at Shady Grove (USG). A former Executive Director of USG was introduced to the President of George Mason University to learn more about GMU's "[Pathway to the Baccalaureate](#)" Program, a partnership between GMU and Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA). The Pathways program at those two schools was designed to help high school students think and prepare for a transition to postsecondary education, inclusive of one-on-one meetings with a pathway counselor, regular workshops on key transition issues, personalized assistance with financial aid applications, placement testing, and comprehensive summer orientation programs. The GMU Pathways program, which started in the late 00s, remains in operation today.

The then-executive director at USG proposed the idea of a Pathway project for MCPS, MC, and USG. Over the course of a year, all three organizations learned more about the GMU/NOVA program and put in place an agreement, complete with core funding to kick-start the program. Key influence from the then-superintendent at MCPS, the then-new President at MC, and the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland, which oversees USG, brought the project to fruition. Ultimately, a major investment of \$1 million from MC was seminal in pushing the partnership forward.

In terms of financial support, the ACES project cost approximately \$3.3 million to operate in FY2018. A majority of program support (92 percent) came from MC, with 5 percent from USG and 3 percent from MCPS. MCPS allocated funds to support "more ACES" students in grades 9 and 10, and for specific projects such as transportation to summer programs at MC and USG. Of this funding, 63 percent, approximately \$2.1 million, is earmarked for staffing. Three-fourths of the budget for staffing is used to position ACES coaches at the 14 participating MCPS high schools. The 2020-21 budget was set at \$4.3 million, or a 30 percent increase over FY2018.

Exhibit 130. FY2018 ACES budget by source

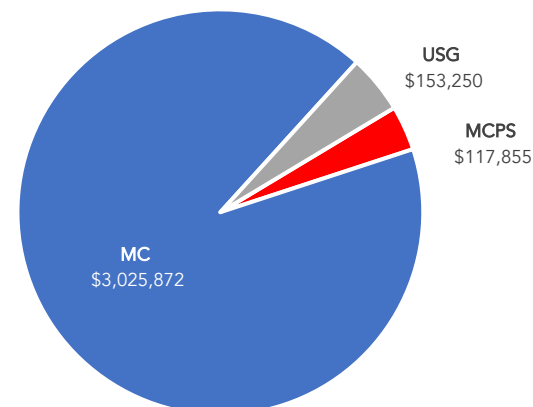
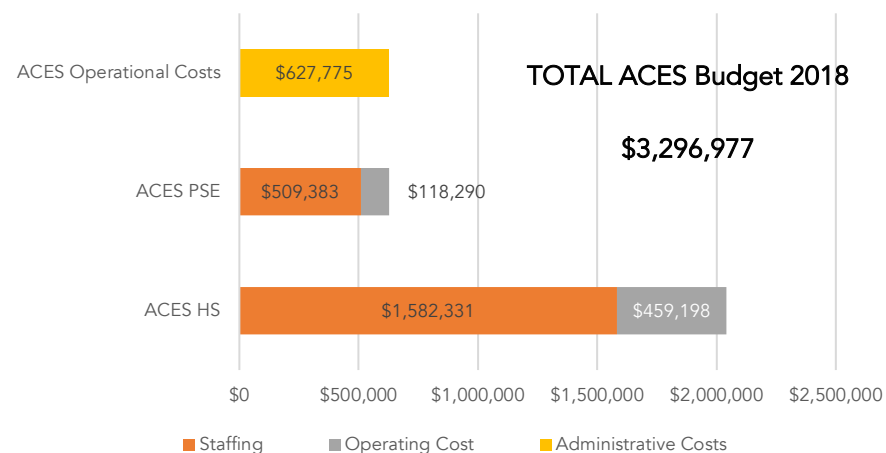


Exhibit 131. FY2018 ACES budget by source



The ACES program began with a double cohort of 11th and 12th grade students in fall 2013, providing immediate services to over 900 students that first year. The premise of ACES is that students who are less likely to prepare and go to college, including those from low-income backgrounds, under-represented in higher education, English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL), and undocumented students, are less likely to have the “college knowledge” to gain a foothold into the postsecondary experience. As eminent college access researcher Laura Rendon stated, many of these students begin to drop out of college in grade school.⁸

Getting students who are, by their various background characteristics, historically underrepresented in higher education, is a difficult and complex undertaking. ACES students have less human capital from their families and social circles to adequately prepare for college, let alone think about the possibility. This is where the ACES program helps bridge gaps in knowledge, expectations, and actions. ACES provides a safety net for students while they develop the requisite skills and abilities for future success, so that they, too, can prepare, apply, enroll, and succeed in the postsecondary arena. This is what ACES does for its students.

“But it’s much easier to do when you have, you know, traditional supports at home or someone in your family went to college prior to prior to you and a lot of these students are first gen, they don’t necessarily have immediate access to those types of connections. But the ACES program really helps to fill in the gaps in making sure that they are connected again, across a variety of different realms and that they sort of know the institutional structure and sort of the bumps along the way that they might run into whether that’s from a financial standpoint, an academic standpoint, and of course, for transfer students. It can be tricky.”

Not only do ACES-type students not always have the necessary information or support, but they do not always know what questions to ask. ACES coaches help bridge that gap by providing information to ask the questions that they may be unwilling to ask. “They (ACES students) sometimes do not always know the questions that they need to be asking. I think the ACES coaches do a great job in moving them through the thought processes.” Another stakeholder buttressed this suggestion: “Generally, my experience has been that because of the question asking and exposure that they’ve

had to, again, counselors along the way, and resources, they (ACES students) are much more apt to ask the questions to ask for the help.”

If one is to read the ACES program materials, it is clear that the program provides high school students with support for planning and preparation for college. Coaches help students with support for their academic courses, prepare for college entrance exams, complete FAFSA and other important pieces necessary to gain admission to a college. At MC and USG, coaches help students choose the best pathway and find academic and social support systems as needed. The program has effectively derived the GMU Pathways program, and arguably, taken it further.

Less seen in the materials is the important non-cognitive and other social supports that coaches provide to students at all three organizations. In their own words, the coaches talk about “holistic support services,” meaning to provide support for the whole student, not just the academic student. Academic research is abundantly clear that, while academic wherewithal is critical to college going and college completion, so is the social preparation and readiness for a postsecondary experience that is qualitatively different than high school. Given the high numbers of students who are first generation college students, ESOL, and even those who carry an undocumented status, these “holistic” pieces are the real foundation of what ACES provides to students.

“Basically, what we do is provide a caring adult along the pathway of a child’s education. And the way in which we provide support is probably the critical piece to our program. It’s not just that we provide support from high school Throughout the whole baccalaureate degree program, but we provide what we consider holistic support services.”

At all three levels, ACES provides focused and direct services to students that build on the services advising and counseling services provided by the schools and colleges. ACES students, by definition, need far more than average services due to their college knowledge deficits. It is the “extra” services that get these students to the next level. As mentioned by more than one person, ACES is seen as a “one-stop shop” for college-going services, including, and perhaps especially, the non-cognitive issues that these students deal with.

⁸ Rendón, L. I. (1997). *Access in a democracy: Narrowing the opportunity gap*. Unpublished paper presented at the Policy Panel on Access, National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, Sept. 9, 1997.

Our offices are kind of like a one stop for them, and also serves as a safe place for a lot of students. We have students who come in between classes might spend some time there, and maybe they're having a little difficulty navigating campus, or they're not feeling comfortable around, you know, just being new to college, so to speak. You have plenty of students who will just come in—they're having a tough day—they just need a minute to talk, or they just need a minute to get away. We provide snacks for students, because we do realize that this is an issue in Montgomery County in terms of food insecurity. So, we have that there available to students as well. We're just they're pretty much to help them with whatever they need help with.

We're connectors, we are teachers, counselors, and friends. We are 'Mamas' sometimes, pretty much trying to figure out how to get our students successful. Right? So, whatever it takes. Of course, there's the core of it, where we're providing workshops and we're doing one-on-one meetings and meeting with parents and meeting with teachers and counselors. But then there's the crying student in the office because something happened at home or you're trying to find out outside resources for students because there are issues here or there, or 'I broke up with my boyfriend.' So, that's when I think about my job—it's everything. It's multitasking. It's just being there to support.

I would say, for lack of a better term, we're quite intrusive when we work with our students. And I think that is very helpful in working with the population that we work with, you kind of have to be that way with the population that we work with. The fact that we're kind of intrusive like that if there's a student who I haven't heard from him quite some time, I call him. And if I don't hear from them after I've called and left a message, I will keep calling them and messages, whatever it is that I need to do—sending text messages—that's their thing. This generation seems to be heavy on text messaging.

If we're not building relationships, we're really not doing anything. So a lot of our time is focused on building those relationships through whether it's academic intervention, and most of the times it's a psycho-social-emotional type of intervention, making sure that they're okay at home, making sure that they're making it to class, making sure that those other needs are met so that we can actually move on to those pieces that why I have my job, right, making sure that you're completing high school, and that you have a plan to move on to higher ed.

ACES Recruitment

ACES recruits students in the 10th grade for the 11th grade cohorts. There are a smattering of 9th and 10th graders in the program who were likely behind on credits (not allowing them to officially rise to 11th grade) but they are there because they were either ahead in their course credits or perhaps were chosen because there was both need and fit. Still, in 2019-20, 97 percent of ACES students were in the 11th or 12th grade, with 47 percent in the 11th and 50 percent in the 12th grade.

ACES does not consider GPA as a recruitment criterion. Rather, it focuses on the specific needs of students, who must apply for the program. The criteria for enrolment include various factors, including first generation to go to college, under-represented in higher education, eligibility for the Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS), a proxy for low-income, and ESOL. Over the years, application numbers compare similarly to enrollment numbers in most cases. In 2019-20, the rate of acceptance into the program was 94 percent across the 14 schools. There is some concern that recruitment processes/criteria vary too much across the schools and that it should be the same regardless of school. The impact of variable recruitment criteria could have an impact on the ability of coaches and other personnel to use their time appropriately:

I think we need to do a better job at student selection in the sense of really understanding the limitations to our support and making sure that we are serving those students that we can actually support. We need to be more sustainable from the standpoint of consistent services to a consistent group of students that will truly benefit from all the things that we can offer, and that we don't use time, energy, and support to students that we don't have the capacity to help.

Once enrolled in the program, school-based coaches conduct intake assessments to identify the particular needs of each student. As one coach told us, they feel like they

have a toolkit of 20 things but not all students need all 20. This process helps identify which tools can best help students.

ACES Services

One of the greatest challenges of the ACES program is the close articulation and program management across MCPS, MC, and USG. As imagined, the bureaucracies of the organizations can sometimes get in the way of smooth and seamless operations. Rules and regulations from one organization do not always align with those of another. Even within MCPS, there are local expectations that can make things challenging. When we spoke with a sample of ACES coaches at the various schools, a key complaint was in the variation between schools regarding expectations and support. Several coaches who have worked in a number of schools over the years spoke clearly about the variance in mindset by different administrations and guidance officials. There are challenges when school support is less than expected and coaches are left to trying to make the best of their particular situation. As one coach told EPI, coaches shouldn't have to feel like they are asking for favors to do what they are supposed to do, or that they have to plead to receive student information that should be provided to them without asking. But this happens. Many coaches told stories about lack of office and meeting space for coaches and students.

When ACES started, school-based principals were to establish a school-based team that would constitute the "ACES Team." There were team expectations to meet regularly and discuss critical issues, providing a leverage for the coaches to get things done. Over time, this expectation drifted. Given the regular churn of principals and other leadership staff at MCPS schools, the ACES team makes an effort to provide an orientation for new administrative staff that would indoctrinate them into the ACES process and provide information about the expectations for and of the coach. This "onboarding" process helps to create a level of conformity from administration-to-administration. In fact, there is an ACES Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place at each of the schools. However, the current MOUs does not necessarily cover all the needs of coaches and students.

It should be in the MOU that these are standard things for this program. We are not bringing outside students or your kids. We are literally providing a service for your students. So, I don't know why some schools ... treat people differently.

I shouldn't be the only one in the building that's pushing this program, especially since it is a partnership. We're not like a nonprofit outside entity coming into the school to do this work, right?

We're a community partnership with MC, MCPS, and Universities at Shady Grove. However, at the MCPS level, there presents different challenges because every high school operates differently. And so there can be some roadblocks for some ACES coaches in their respective high schools in terms of access to software, for instance, that can be kind of a challenge where some high schools will have full access and other high school coaches may not have any access. So that can kind of present a challenge where the program doesn't always look the same on every single high school.

These challenges were noted in the MCPS system due to the site-based leadership that MCPS allows for in the schools. But these issues bleed over to the colleges, where there are complaints of data transfer for students:

I think one of the things she mentioned some transcripts like that sometimes can be difficult to get that for students because we don't have control over, you know, when the high school sends it, nor do we have control or when records and registration might process it. It can be a little difficult. Sometimes if the high school counselor doesn't have certain information, it's a little bit difficult even for a student, quite frankly, at their high school to get information.

Curriculum and Programming

Each of the 14 MCPS schools participating in ACES has a dedicated coach on staff plus the ongoing support of ACES coaches from MC and USG on a regular basis. Coaches get together regularly to share information and inform each other of what works and doesn't at their particular schools. They share information amongst each other, including PowerPoints and other learning tools. By and large, ACES coaches do mostly the same types of things at their respective schools. However, we heard strongly that there remains too much variability in ACES programming school-by-school.

The creation of standardized practice, materials, pedagogy, and tools for ACES will go a long way in securing the ACES experience for students, regardless of where they

go to school. Having such standardization would allow ACES coaches the opportunity to compare and prepare collaboratively rather than in an isolated fashion. We have heard that there has been positive movement in this area, but there still does not exist a central curriculum to be used by coaches. As one stakeholder told us, someone should be able to pick up the ACES package and implement it at any school in MCPS.

Additionally, ACES would benefit from more fidelity at the time of school-based implementation to help align the activities and scope of the program so that all the schools are in alignment. A consistent annual schedule of programming would also benefit the programs and students.

We've been told that the materials have been created. It's fairly consistent. Maybe 'curriculum' is a wrong word but a program to ensure the consistency across the schools. It needs to be branded and like, created. I mean, it's created, but... it needs to be put into that platform and streamlined that that way. But we spent the past year really working to make sure that we had a cohesive curriculum, one that was that made sense in succession. So, it goes from us to the MC level to the USG level. And so, the curriculum is semi-ready in that regard, but again, is being branded as we speak.

The ACES coaches at all levels provide regular workshops for students in a variety of issues, including study skills, financial aid, and college life. These help students prepare accordingly and fill in the blanks where they have limited knowledge. A lot of time is spent counseling or serving students on a one-on-one basis. While providing individualized time with students is time consuming, the ACES program affords a 1:120 student ratio, far less than the typical ratios in most high schools where the national average is 1:430 students.⁹

I think our programming overall, like the work that we do with our students, works the best from our different workshops that we provide to the students to our one-on-one meetings with the students. As mentioned, we take that student and work with them holistically. I think the approach that we take is ultimately what really helps us to better serve that student. There's no like catch all for one individual students. So, we literally go through and develop an individualized based plan.

If we're not building relationships, we're really not doing anything. So, a lot of our time is focused on building those relationships through whether it's academic intervention, and most of the times it's a psychosocial emotional type of intervention, making sure that they're okay at home, making sure that they're making it to class, making sure that those other needs are met so that we can actually move on to those pieces that why I have my job, right, making sure that you're completing high school, and that you have a plan to move on to higher ed.

Coaches and Staffing

As mentioned, the ACES program provides a site-based coach at each of the ACES high schools. The coaches are employees of MC but are based at MCPS. The ACES Program also employs two academic coaches at each of the three Montgomery College campuses and three staff members at USG. In addition, MC provides other ACES leadership staffing.

The MC coaches are charged with helping MCPS ACES students transition to one of the three MC campuses and then support them while on campus through academic and other supports. The coaches work closely with MCPS school-based coaches to prepare ACES students for matriculation during the following summer. This includes helping students understand the pathway and processes in college, understanding what it is like being a college student, and how to transition to the college student role. The MC coaches start working with MCPS students as early as the first month of their high school senior year to prepare them for transitions. During the senior year, MC coaches provide monthly workshops for high school students, conducted in partnership with the school-based ACES coach. Transition workshops focus on MC applications, financial aid (including FAFSA), placement assessments, focus on majors, academic supports, and assistance with internships and job shadowing. In addition, MC coaches hold individual meetings with students on these and related issues.

When students are at MC, the coaches essentially show them what they need to do to be successful by helping them get over roadblocks and educate them about how to move towards their goals and beyond. MC coaches conduct 7-8 workshops each year. Initial information augments orientation information to help students transition to the college environment and structure, and ultimately helps navigate students through the college experience, including practical skill development as well as personal focus ar-

⁹ https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Press%20releases/PR_18-19Student-to-SC-Ratios.pdf.

eas, such as managing stress and personal finance. Attendance at MC ACES workshops in 2018-19 was approximately 315 students (down from 440 the previous year due to COVID) in addition to 2,684 one-on-one meetings. Topic areas for the meetings included some of the topics already discussed, as well as immigration status/issues, food insecurity, transfer planning, and employment referrals.

This is done through workshops, one-on-one meetings, and generally facilitating most of the needs of students on an as-needed basis. Coaches also make sure that their students' courses are available and assist with securing financial aid, including completion and submission of all financial aid paperwork. Upon graduation, they then help them transition to USG or other four-year institutions. As with the MCPS-based coaches, MC coaches also realize that they are "guests" in the high schools:

And again, we are not MCPS. We are, how do you call, we're not visitors, but we're guests in their home, right? So, as much as it's hard to navigate all of our MC duties because that's who we're employed by, we also have to be pretty nice and be very friendly with MCPS and make sure that we are balancing everything. So, it's a juggling act on every single day.

When students are at MC, the academic coaches work to make sure that students are on track, similar to the services provided for ACES students at MCPS in many respects, but reflected for the types of courses and programs that ACES students are engaged in at MC. The coaches track students as necessary.

We receive a DFW¹⁰ report every semester around midterms to see how our students are doing and again at the end of the semester. That tells us specifically about our students, and we employ interventions when we can to help them improve their grades.

The USG coaches work with students at MCPS and at MC, particularly with MC students who are transitioning to USG. As with MC coaches at MCPS, the USG coaches meet with prospective students and provide them with information about being a student at USG.

ACES staff are exceedingly dedicated and diligent about their work. In fact, the current COVID-19 pandemic has, for many, increased workloads through the need to reach out to all students virtually by text, phone, and virtual platforms such as Zoom. . In normal times, ACES coaches at all three institutions work very closely with students.

ACES coaches incorporate a holistic approach that considers all issues—academic, social and financial—that may impact each student and potentially hinder their academic progress. Some coaches may experience a sense of burnout from the excess efforts involved in dealing with student family and social issues.

I'm worried about workload, in particular on coaches, because if you want to have a successful program and providing substantial personal interaction, that's hard to do with the type of workload we're looking at particularly.

Sometimes it can be challenging to keep up with our caseload numbers, mainly because we are intrusive. And because we are so comprehensive and particular during the busiest of times, like the current time that we're dealing with, which is the beginning of a semester. We usually see it in the beginning of both semesters, it can be challenging sometimes just to keep up with it all because they are a high-needs pocket population. So, I would say that as well as the complexity of their situation sometimes it does again require a lot of legwork a lot of time.

We're jugglers, like we're throwing 1,000 balls in the air. And our day-to-day is different, because one ball can fall on Monday, and then three balls can fall on Tuesday. And then Wednesday is 100. So, it's every single day. We tackle what's in front of us, obviously. We have our agendas and our workshops and things that are organized and routines. But we were hired for our job to be able to be adaptable.

There are nights when I can't sleep. There's when we went first went on quarantine. I think we all almost had a nervous breakdown. Because I'm like, I got kids who are homeless.

¹⁰ "DFW" reports are reports generated that identify students who earned a "D," "F", or "Withdrew" from a course.

We don't ever get a break. We are 12 months. We do not have summers off like everybody else does. We do not get a week off for spring break like everybody like MCPS does pandemic hit; we did not get a break at all. We have been moving nonstop since March 13.

And we usually have about a month when we can take leave in the summer, but all of our summer programming got shifted to that month.

It was mentioned that ACES staff have little room for promotion. Coaches tend to only be able to serve as coaches:

I would like to see more opportunity for growth within the staff. So right now there not, I guess how do I say it, there's no ability to grow or move up into a different position within it. Maybe more opportunities for leadership advancement for employees or for staff?

I think people stay coming to a job for two years in higher ed. And I typically looking for the next thing. There's not a lot of growth in ACES. So, there's nowhere to go. We have one assistant director position who was our supervisor, which is a new position about two years new. So, the person who got the job first was a former ACES coach, got it and then left. Another former ACES coach, who was on the campus, now has it. So, there's a little bit of possibility to shift laterally.

Space

Space at the 14 ACES schools continues to be a challenge for many ACES coaches. Although space is specified in the MOU, not all schools provide adequate space for ACES coaches to work, let alone have a set place to conduct their meetings and workshops.

And at the bare minimum, there should be discussions about what should be on par for every single school space recruitment, access to computers, access to the swipe cards. It shouldn't be something that it will take six months to get. So little things like that. And we're in the seventh year, and not continue to go through things where it'll make my life a lot easier if I know these, these fundamental things will be there.

Space. Space is a huge deal. I've been in [several] schools but I've been in very different spaces. ACES space should be allocated in the MOU. How can I do my work if I don't have a space that is clearly defined in that way. Nobody can come and say, 'Well, you know, there's no space for you. Sorry, we're going to end up putting you here.' That's not right.

You have people who are really truly passionate about what they do they care about their students. So, at the end of the day, okay, great big deal. You know, I worked until six o'clock or I worked in a room that the air conditioner was leaking or there is no air conditioning, but I still got my job done, right? You choose and pick your battles. But on a leader level, I think there has to be some other type of push towards. Let me take care of the people that are working for me.

Organizational Matters

Without doubt, the collective partnership of MCPS, MC, and USG is one of the essential and impressive pieces of the ACES programs. It is difficult to run such an ambitious program in one entity but tack on a large school district running the program with 14 schools and school administrations; a large community college with three campuses; and a four-year conglomerate of nine separate institutions, and one realizes what an undertaking this is. There is good reason that key stakeholders are proud of their partnership. A major reason that ACES is successful is because of the cross-level dialogue and the joint ownership of the program at the leadership level.

Some stakeholders questioned whether ACES, as a program, was visible enough to the community, such that students look up to the program. This is not to say that ACES students do not. In fact, we heard often about how proud ACES students were and

their positive attitude. However, further branding of the program across the district and county could certainly benefit ACES, especially in terms of future fundraising.

A strategic plan was created in 2018 to outline the future growth of the ACES program. The three central tenets of the plan including program expansion, the development/expansion of a career readiness component, and enhancements in data metrics, communications, and fundraising.

Several components of the ACES Strategic Plan were implemented, including a Logic Model and implementation of the career readiness component of ACES at MCPS and MC, in alignment with the plan. Another major task was the identification of a set of metrics to measure progress along the ACES Pathway and the completion of this external evaluation.

The ACES Leadership Team includes representatives from each institution. Each institution identifies an executive staff member as one of the three “lead conveners”. Several ACES Leadership Team members also are the leads for the committees charged with moving the program forward and monitoring implementation. Annual priorities are established by the team, and align with the ACES Strategic Plan, as well as the day-to-day needs. For example, providing the ACES Summer Bridge programs in a virtual environment in August 2020 or offering supports to ACES staff through the counseling department at USG. It was mentioned to EPI that there is still a deficit in terms of annual planning. Overall, we’ve talked about curricular structure and flattening the variation across ACES schools. But there is apparently still some concern about shared accountability and a clear and shared focus on what should be done in a particular year, let alone along a longer-term strategic plan.

It’s just a way to hold people accountable for what’s going to be done when and we don’t have that for ACES or other parts of the college. But when you don’t write it down, you don’t have any way to hold people accountable or know what you’re really doing. We just kind of just talk about what we’re gonna do.

There’s no market segmentation for the recruitment. It’s ‘put coaches in there.’ It’s never been shared of how we go about how we market segment how we communicate.

All of these things can impact the ability of the ACES program to generate necessary funds for scholarships and operations. MCPS, MC, USG, and their respective foundations have generated millions of dollars to operate the program. Funding comes from earmarked funds from the three entities, in-kind contributions, and funds raised from the private sector through fundraising by their respective foundations, as well as grant funds. This has posed a certain problem due, in part, of the three separate entities. For instance, according to college and foundation policies, the Montgomery College Foundation cannot fundraise directly for MCPS or for USG, but it can raise funds for ACES transfer scholarships for MC students to USG. This can be problematic for potential donors who want to invest in ACES across the programmatic spectrum but get stifled at the fundraising gateway.

One central piece of funding came from a scholarship fundraiser held in honor of a former county executive, as he was leaving elected office after 12 years. These funds eventually morphed into a scholarship program at both MC and USG, spearheaded by a large fundraiser upon his retirement that generated \$1.6 million in funds in 2018.

There is concern that by as early as 2022 there could be challenges in meeting the scholarship expectations of the ACES program, particularly as the number of students attending MC and USG increases and as the current fiscal crisis impacts institutional budgets and the financial needs of students. In 2013, the leaders set a goal of \$25 million in philanthropy to be raised by 2023 with a plan for the amounts needed in current use and endowed scholarships and program for short-term needs and long-term financial sustainability. However, only \$5.6 million of the \$13 million for Montgomery College was raised, and less at the other organizations. Thus, the fundraising is significantly behind schedule. As time goes on, there is concern that other programs will become the new “shiny object” in comparison to ACES, and priorities will shift, making it more difficult to raise much-needed funds for the program.

Recommendations for Consideration

The Educational Policy Institute was asked to generate recommendations for consideration with regard to improving the ACES program. Certainly, our ability to identify core issues and provide substantive suggestions that make sense of MCPS, MC, and USG is limited to a degree by our inability to spend time on the ground (due to COVID-19) and the amount of time vested in this project, although still considerable.

The 2018 strategic plan did a thorough job of looking to the future. Our recommendations do not focus on those issues, as they have been considered. The recommendations that follow focus on what we heard, read, and analyzed. They are to be taken for consideration, but not as a directive. Perhaps these become discussion points for future internal meetings and strategic planning efforts.

Standardize processes across the 14 MCPS schools, including standardized calendars and curricula, where programs and practices happen seamlessly across the district.

It was clear that there is more to do to standardize the ACES program across all 14 high schools. Consideration could be made to conduct common workshops with common content in all schools. It is possible to allow coaches to share their specific expertise in an area (e.g., financial literacy) across the schools, either by sharing pre-generated PowerPoints and materials or by literally presenting workshops at each of the schools. This would certainly take creative scheduling, but it is a possibility. We understand that ACES has worked diligently to standardize the ACES program, but more needs to be done. The need to work in the virtual learning environment has contributed to the completion of common “modules” that can be used by multiple staff members and made available at a broader range of times.

Reassess the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ACES and MCPS schools to ensure that it covers the basics necessary to operate the program effectively, efficiently, and in tandem.

This is a significant issue that should be reconsidered in the near future. Building on the first recommendation, standardization of the program requires coaches and schools to subscribe to consistent methods, procedures, and information. There is no justification for program variation at MCPS schools behind simple cultural issues that a particular school may have. While principals and assistants will change, the MOU should more clearly articulate the necessary space and procedures that schools must regard if they are to be an ACES schools.

As previously reported, this is a problem for ACES students and staff at some schools. Given that the schools directly benefit from being an ‘ACES school, situations where

there is not adequate space for an ACES coach should be the rare exception. This is not to say there cannot be variation on how certain things are provided. Many schools have space issues. But certainly a concerted effort to collaboratively resolve space issues should. Similarly, the interaction between staff and ACES coaches and the sharing of information and data must be more clearly delineated. The coaches can only be as successful as the information, tools, and training they are provided. The model envisions ACES coaches from MC and USG as extended school staff members. They are a part of the school. In schools where ACES operates most effectively, ACES coaches are included in the school counseling team, regularly participating in department meetings and collaborating with other staff focused on college readiness. These issues are critical to a successful ACES program. The MOU, plus its consistent expectations and implementation, sets up the expectations for all stakeholders.

Expand the Branding of ACES.

It seems that the branding of ACES can possibly be improved. We think of the branding of programs such as AVID and other nationalized programs, where large banners are placed on the front of the school and in school hallways. This isn’t to suggest that ACES do these things, specifically, but the possible expansion of ACES may be supported by a marketing and branding push by the program.

Schools who participate in ACES receive a benefit from doing so: they receive additional services for at-risk students at no direct cost. In turn, they should take part by helping elevate and celebrating the program. ACES should be seen as a badge of honor, and it should be identified that way.

Improve professional development and support for ACES coaches and staff.

When we think of the strength of the ACES program, two things come to mind: (a) the joint ownership of the program across three educational organizations; and (b) the staff that make it all happen. In the end, coaches and ancillary ACES staff at MCPS, MC, and USG are the heart and soul of the program. While we have written about the importance of standardized information and curriculum, that only factors into program success if the coaches and staff are trained accordingly.

This past year, COVID-19 flipped schools and colleges upside down. MCPS closed their schools starting March 16, 2020, with the hope of opening them in April. Unfortunately, this did not happen. As of publication of this report, the Board has extended the opening date to March 15, 2021.

The pressure on MCPS educators was enormous to move immediately to virtual instruction. For ACES coaches, the undertaking was no less, and perhaps to some degree, greater than some of the teachers and other school-based staff. We heard from coaches who were burned out from working continually for month-after month, with little or no spring and limited summer break. As this report is released, the county and the country find themselves in the midst of the most difficult time of the pandemic. The workload will not likely ease until spring or summer 2021 at the earliest.

The pandemic provided a laser focus beam on how hard ACES staff work to implement the program and meet the needs of students and, even families. Program leaders need to consider this workload obligations in terms of not just professional development, but the entire support system across the program. Coaches expressed their concerns about the burnout factors impacting their work. While some of this is COVID-related, coaches remarked that it is the “intensive” and “intrusive” work they do with students that can burn them out. Consideration must be given to the word demands in favor of these hard-working individuals.

In addition, given that coaches are the central piece of the program, retaining coaches needs to be a priority. For those looking for vertical employment opportunities in ACES, we heard that these opportunities are extremely limited, which may have an impact on coach retainment. Coaches may look at non-ACES employment opportunities within the three entities in order to progress.

Expand focus on the end product: college success.

Our analysis clearly shows that ACES students either out-participated or out-performed non-ACES students along the education pathway. They graduated at higher rates, matriculated at higher rates, and earned AAs and other degrees at higher rates.

Still, there is room for improvement. Doing better than a comparison group is a good indicator, but it is not sufficient. As noted, the Clearinghouse data used for this analysis did not include Spring 2020 graduates because of the timing of the report. In addition, not all students give permission to share their data with the Clearinghouse. Given these factors, the analysis tells us that 82 percent of students who entered ACES in 11th grade matriculated to a postsecondary institution immediately after high school. Of that group, 88 percent persisted to their second year of study. However, four years after entering postsecondary, 17 percent of all ACES students had earned a postsecondary credential.¹¹ True, this is significantly higher than non-ACES students (12 percent), but in consideration of the large percentage of students that went to college

and persisted to their second year, a higher number might be expected, or at least warranted, given the considerable ACES resources provided. Additional analysis is warranted for the future to gain a more complete picture of college completion results at the end of four years, as well as at the end of six years.

At some point after returning for their second year of postsecondary study, many ACES students, as well as their non-ACES peers, leave the college pathway. For the 40 percent of ACES students that matriculate to a four-year institution, we know that may be quite possibly still in school and progressing towards a degree. For the 42 percent of ACES students that matriculated to MC, 13 percent earned a credential within three years (150 percent of time).

Our analysis on college outcomes is hampered by the limited amount of time some students have potentially been in postsecondary education (e.g., our 2015 cohort of 11th grade students who entered ACES in fall 2014 would have had, at maximum, four years of postsecondary education by the time of this analysis and reporting; as well, the Clearinghouse data did not provide us with Spring 2020 data, knocking off another year). In addition to the timing issue, there were variables missing from our dataset that would have provided us with critical insight into the credits earned and classes dropped or failed by postsecondary students, all of which are important milestones to degree progression. Future data analysis, given our ability to collect these data, will shed important light on the pathway from 11th grade through the baccalaureate degree for ACES students. The acquisition of these data will provide critical data to better adjust ACES services that positively impact student outcomes.

For programmatic purposes, what we do know is that for students who have any at-risk attributes, time can be the enemy. The longer that students take to complete a degree gives rise to other issues interfering when ‘life’ intervenes. For at-risk students, expansive time has more potential to invoke negative consequences than on other students. It is part of the risk. A focus on getting ACES students through at least the two-year level on time would help students graduate at much higher rates.

Sharpen the fundraising effort to ensure that the program can continue in the future and perhaps serve more students and more schools.

There is considerable worry about future fundraising for ACES. While the program has done well in raising funds externally and earmarking funds internally, it has not done enough to create an endowment for the future. Demographic trends in Montgomery County will create an even greater need for ACES-type programs—not

¹¹ Important to remember is that EPI did not possess spring 2020 postsecondary outcome data at the time of analysis and reporting. These numbers would likely have been higher.

lesser. The three entities must make a concerted effort to sustain the program by creating a fundraising plan to be executed over the next several years. Fundraising must be sustained for the program, especially as school and college fundraising tightens up in the COVID and post-COVID years.

Improve ACES Research, Evaluation, and Data Collection

While this recommendation suggests improving the research and analysis of ACES data, it is not to diminish the excellent work that has been done by MCPS staff from the outset of the program. The initial research reports conducted between 2014 and 2016 were at the highest level of statistical acuity. The semester “Snapshots” and the Annual Report provided by the ACES data and evaluation committee, provide excellent resources to help understand the program and we hope and trust they will continue.

Studies like this one help utilize program data to determine efficacy and impact of the program. This is a different lift than the snapshots. Even after the effort conducted in this study, we still find gaps in our knowledge that can be remedied in the future. Here are our suggestions for improving the research end of the ACES program:

- Build a better data system that incorporates regular updates from all three organizations.** In the end, our analysis did not contain certain academic data from Montgomery College and limited data from USG. USG is a peculiar issue simply because their numbers are too small to gain statistical significance in a comparison study. In addition, pulling data from MCPS demanded significant time from their logistics support specialist. We want to be clear: this comment has no bearing on the individuals involved. We understand this is a trying time for all education personnel. In fact, the stakeholders from MCPS, MC, and USG provided significant support and interest in this project. Still, the missing data would have been useful in our comparative analysis (Part III) and perhaps helped to explain some of the student outcomes. In the future, having a steadfast way of collecting information into a centralized system would be beneficial internally as well as externally to other researchers.
- Build an ACES visual analytics portal.** In response to above, building a visual analytics portal would help to ensure the creation of a centralized repository for student unit-record data. Not only would this help regulate the collection process from the three entities, but it would also allow stakeholders to visualize updated data in live views online via Tableau or other similar software packages.
- Conduct annual surveys of all ACES students.** The survey we conducted as part of this project was an update from a prior survey done several years ago. Input from students is always critical from a program improvement perspective, if not just for having a better handle on what students think or believe. The survey has been created and it is very simple to administer. Make completion of the survey—at all levels—a mandatory part of being in the ACES program. The universe of students in the survey can be 100 percent of the program.
- Conduct detailed exit interviews with ACES students.** Hearing from students at MCPS, MC, and USG can help us to better understand the program. This isn't to focus only on those students who succeed, but for those who do not succeed. We can learn what didn't work from these students, while also learning about the better parts of the programs. This information is critical to tweaking the program.
- Continue a schedule of annual research on ACES.** This study provides a good foundation for future efforts by MCPS, MC, and USG. Over the course of the last six months, we have had the opportunity to learn greatly about ACES and their partners. We hope, when COVID-19 clears, that we can have the opportunity to learn more on site and in person. There is much more to learn that can have a bearing on future strategies and interventions.

PART VI — TECHNICAL APPENDICES

Technical Notes

The comparative evaluation compares ACES students with non-ACES students. To ensure an appropriate comparison, a counterfactual (comparison) group of non-ACES students is identified for statistical comparison to ACES students. To do this, a propensity score match was conducted based on data of students entering 11th grade (the start of the ACES program) in both fall 2014 and fall 2017. This permitted comparisons across 11th and 12th grade as well as entrance, persistence, and completion of postsecondary (when possible). This quasi-experimental approach provided us with the information necessary to evaluate the overall efficacy of the program in terms of preparing students for college and the success through college as compared to non-ACES students. Propensity score matching is a quasi-experimental technique. Similar to experimental techniques, our hypothesis was that ACES students will have better numbers than those in the counterfactual.

This section proceeds by first describing the cohorts under investigation, primary research questions, and data, which is followed by a more technical discussion of the methods applied in the analysis.

Cohorts

Exhibit 132 outlines the seven (7) ACES high school cohorts between 2013-14 and 2019-20. For the purposes of this study, we analyze two cohorts of students: Cohort 5, which entered 11th grade in fall of 2017 (AY 2017-18) and Cohort 2, which entered 11th grade in fall of 2014 (AY 2014-15).

Exhibit 132. ACES Cohort Progression by Year

Project Year	AY	HS GRADE		PSE Year					
		11	12	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
Year 1	2013-14	C1	C1b						
Year 2	2014-15	C2	C1	C1b					
Year 3	2015-16	C3	C2	C1	C1b				
Year 4	2016-17	C4	C3	C2	C1	C1b			
Year 5	2017-18	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1	C1b		
Year 6	2018-19	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1	C1b	
Year 7	2019-20	C7	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1	C1b

Year 8	2020-21	C8	C7	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2	C1
Year 9	2021-22	C9	C8	C7	C6	C5	C4	C3	C2
Year 10	2022-23	C10	C9	C8	C7	C6	C5	C4	C3

MCPS Cohort 5 (2017-18 11th grade entering cohort).

This group provides information on the most recent cohort that did not have their secondary graduation or transition to postsecondary interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This recent look at ACES students permits analysis at the secondary level and matriculation to first year of postsecondary.

MCPS Cohort 2 (2014-15 11th grade entering cohort).

This group provides information on an earlier cohort. This cohort would be on-time graduates from four-year postsecondary institutes in spring 2020, permitting analysis as the secondary level, as well as matriculation, persistence, and on-time completion of postsecondary. The multiple results from Cohort 2 and Cohort 5 allows us to look at changes in the ACES effect as the program matured in its structures and services.

Primary Research Questions

The primary research questions address both secondary and postsecondary outcomes:

Secondary Participation and Outcomes

- What are the differences in grade *promotion* and high school *graduation* rates between ACES and non-ACES students?
- What are the differences in participation rate between ACES and non-ACES students?
 - Absences
 - AP course enrollment
 - AP exam attempt
 - SAT/ACT attempt
- What are the differences in academic performance outcomes between ACES and non-ACES students?
 - End of 11th and 12th grade GPA
 - AP scores
 - SAT/ACT scores
 - Unexcused absences

Postsecondary Participation and Outcomes

- What are the differences in *matriculation* to postsecondary and *persistence* to second year rates between ACES and non-ACES students?

5. What are the differences in academic outcomes between ACES and non-ACES students?
 - 5.1. *Obtained AA*
 - 5.2. *Obtained Bachelors*
 - 5.3. *Obtained one or more degree*

Data

Data for secondary level analysis is provided by MCPS and the ACES program. Post-secondary data is provided by the National Student Clearinghouse, with pseudo identifications provided to merge postsecondary data with secondary and demographic information.

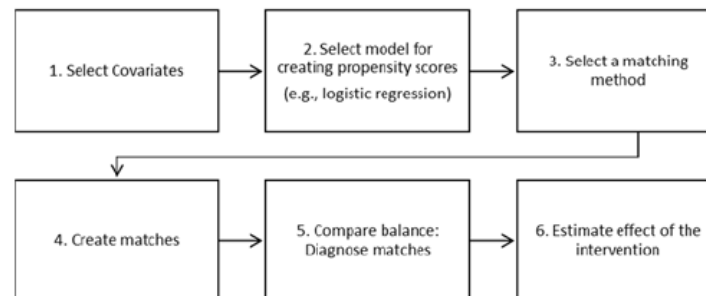
Analytic Approach

To provide an appropriate counterfactual (comparison) group of non-ACES students this evaluation uses propensity score matching. Propensity score matching is a statistical matching technique used when random assignment is not possible. It creates statistically equivalent groups, necessary to address the potential self-selection of participants in the intervention (ACES) group. Matches in this evaluation were drawn from across the 13 evaluated ACES high schools (Magruder High School did not become an ACES school until the 2018-19 academic year). Sampling within ACES schools simplified the data collection process and reduced the need to identify equivalent schools. Given that there are approximately 120 ACES students in each school and that ACES students represent only 14 percent of total 11th and 12th grade students across the 14 total ACES high schools, there are adequate numbers of students who are similar to ACES students with regard to academic and social measures/groupings.

Student-Level Matching Process

The student-level matching process followed the six steps (see figure 2) of propensity score matching laid out in Harris & Horst (2016).

Exhibit 133. Typical steps involved in the propensity score matching process



Step 1: Covariate Selection

Covariate selection should include those related to the likelihood of being included in the intervention (ACES) group and to the short-term outcomes as detailed in the ACES logic model. For matching purposes covariates should be available prior to the start of the ACES program. Selected covariates for matching therefore included:

- GPA prior to grade 11
- Sex
- Race
- Whether the student ever participated in FARMS
- Whether the student is currently in special education
- Whether the student ever participated in ESOL

Step 2: Model Selection

Logistic regression is used to calculate the probability that an individual is included in the ACES group given the covariates listed in step 1. Logistic regression using nearest neighbor matching (see step 3) is the suggested approach by Stone & Tang (2013) for using propensity scores for matching as, compared to other options, it better approximates a randomized design and provides results that are easier to communicate. Only students with a non-zero probability were included in the modeling.

Step 3 & 4: Selection of Matching Method and Creating Matches

To mirror the approach of the prior ACES assessment (Modarresi et al., 2016) one-to-one matching was used. One-on-one matching was based on the nearest neighbor

with caliper adjustment used to identify the case in the comparison group that will be matched with the case in the ACES group. Nearest neighbor matching searches for the best match out of the pool of matches. Once a match is identified that case is removed from the pool. The caliper adjustment sets the distance within which matches are appropriate. Distance is set at a fraction of a standard deviation (SD) of the propensity score. As setting the caliper reduces the sample size 0.1 SD, 0.2 SD, 0.25 SD, and 0.3 SD caliper matches were calculated. Representation of key demographic groups were then checked following caliper matching to ensure the reduction in sample size does not result in key exclusions. The final caliper used for the nearest neighbor one on one match was 0.25SD.

Step 5: Comparing Balance

Comparing balance included both numeric and visual examinations to ensure the distribution of the propensity scores across the comparison group is sufficiently similar to those in the ACES group. If balance is not reached inferences may be biased. Chi-square and independent sample t-tests were conducted to identify significant differences between the ACES and non-ACES group in propensity score and included covariates. Histograms of covariates by group were used to visually inspect balance between groups.

No statistically significant difference was found for propensity score between groups (see Exhibit 137). For Cohort 5, there is a statistically significant difference in gender by group (chi-square=4.0662, $p<.05$). For Cohort 2, there is a statistically significant difference in special education rate by group (chi-square=6.9125, $p<.01$). However, with a standard deviation differences between groups less than 0.25 for each covariate, the mean differences do not indicate a lack of balance across groups (Ho et al., 2007). To examine how the inclusion of sex (for Cohort 5) and special education (for Cohort 2) changes the main effects a sensitivity analysis was ran in which the respective covariate was included as a control variable (Exhibit 138).

Step 6: Estimating the Effect

Similar to the approach of the prior ACES assessment (Modarresi et al., 2016), simple linear or logistic regression was used to identify differences between ACES and non-ACES students for continuous and categorical outcomes, respectively. Statistical significance was set at $p<.05$. Following Pirracchio and colleagues (2012), a sample size of 40 or above was deemed sufficient to identify a statistically significant result. Overall mean differences and mean differences by demographic group (see covariates in step 1) were calculated to explore how the ACES effect varies across groups by outcome.

In addition to statistically significant differences, practical differences in mean averages or mean frequencies were identified through the calculation of Cohen's d (Borenstein et al., 2009). This effect size represents the average treatment effect for the treated (ATT) providing an average effect for those that would assign themselves or be assigned to the intervention/treatment group (Guo & Fraser, 2010). Effect size considered small if d is between 0.2 and 0.49, medium if between 0.5 and 0.79 and large if greater than 0.8 (Cohen, 1988). Effect size tables for key outcome variables for Cohort 5 and Cohort 2 can be found in Exhibit 139 and Exhibit 140.

Comparing across cohorts

Given the multi-cohort comparison, statistical and practical significance can be compared across at least two time periods. This can provide insights into aggregate effect over time and learnings relative to program attrition. Exhibit 134 identifies the cohorts included in the results by education level (see Exhibit 132 for more cohort information). The shaded cells include results from cohort 1 from the prior ACES assessment (Modarresi et al., 2016). Where possible, these results are extracted from the prior ACES assessment to provide an additional point of comparison. Bar charts are used to graphically compare changes in effect size over time can be found in Exhibit 141.

Exhibit 134. Cohort Analysis Structure

	MCPS 11 th Grade	MCPS 12 th Grade	Postsec- ondary (En- try)	Postsec- ondary (On Time Com- pletion)
Cohort 1	2013-14	2014-15		
Cohort 2	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2019-2020
Cohort 5	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	

Limitations

This analysis is limited by the data available. In addition to limited within program participation information (discussed above), postsecondary outcomes were only available through the national clearinghouse. This made it impossible to clearly map the postsecondary trajectories of ACES students, especially through the designed path to Montgomery College and the University of Shady Grove. As more ACES students reach the postsecondary level, additional information will be needed to examine the long-term effect of the program. In addition, the downloaded National Clearinghouse Data utilized for this study (from early April 2020) did not include spring 2020 college graduates, limiting the graduation analyses.

The balance between ACES and non-ACES students for Cohort 5 and Cohort 2, although sufficient for the main analysis, still suffers from some differences in a single covariate (sex for Cohort 5 and special education for Cohort 2). To examine how covariate differences affect the main ACES effect the relevant covariates are included in a sensitivity analysis (see Exhibit 138). However, in evaluating the sensitivity analysis it is clear that lack of balance by gender in cohort 5 does not alter the direction or the significance level of the main findings. In cohort 2, the lack of balance in special education largely does not affect the main findings, with two noticeable exceptions. The sensitivity analysis suggests that ACES advantages in graduation rate and matriculation to a four-year post-secondary institution may be statistically significant. Future matching should focus on this group to verify this finding. In the main analysis of this report, overall mean differences, as well as mean differences by demographic group, makes clear how the ACES effect differs by sex, special education, and other demographic groups.

First generation status may have an important impact on many outcomes, especially at the post-secondary level. Unfortunately, due to lack of information available to identify non-ACES students as first-generation students, this demographic group was not included in the analysis. In the future, analyses would benefit by disaggregating outcomes by first generation status, when possible, and including first generation status in the propensity score matching process.

In MCPS, ACES is one of a few college pathways programs (e.g., CollegeTracks, Collegiate Directions, AVID). This study is unable to distinguish whether the non-ACES students participated in a different college pathway offered at the same MCPS schools. Although the number of ACES students participating in other programs is quite small, it comingles intervention effects which could impact the outcomes. Thus, we cannot assume that all effects are attributed solely to ACES and not to other college pathways programs.

Finally, this analysis was unable to capture differences in motivation. As group membership in ACES is completed through a voluntary application process those that apply may not have the equivalent motivation for those that do not apply. This can lead to inflated estimates of program effectiveness, increasing Type I error (Coalition for Evidence Based Policy, 2014)

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References

Master Tables for Comparative Analysis

Exhibit 135. Master table for 2015 cohort

Educational Outcomes of 2015 Cohorts

					Promotion		2015						2016				
			TOTAL		Promotion to 12th Grade		Days Absent Total	Days Absent Unexcused	Days Absent 0-2	Days Absent 3-5	Days Absent 6-10	Days Absent >10	Days Absent Total	Day Absent Unexcused	Days Absent 0-2	Days Absent 3-5	Days Absent 6-10
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	#	%	#	%	Mean	Mean	%	%	%	%	Mean	Mean	%	%	%
Total		ACES	488	100.0	444	91.0	7.7	3.4	32.3	19.5	20.7	24.6	12.8	6.6	12.3	15.4	30.7
		Non-ACES	488	100.0	435	89.1	11.2	5.9	23.8	17.6	24.6	34.0	16.1	9.1	9.6	10.5	25.6
Gender	Male	ACES	176	36.1	150	85.2	6.1	2.7	39.2	21.0	18.8	21.0	10.7	6.1	15.9	20.5	29.6
		Non-ACES	192	39.3	170	88.5	11.0	6.7	20.6	18.8	21.4	31.3	14.9	8.7	12.5	10.9	25.5
	Female	ACES	312	63.9	294	94.2	8.6	3.8	33.0	18.6	21.8	26.6	14.0	6.9	10.3	12.5	31.4
		Non-ACES	296	60.7	265	89.5	11.3	5.5	28.7	16.9	26.7	35.8	16.8	9.4	7.8	10.1	25.7
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	24	4.9	22	91.7	9.2	3.5	25.0	12.5	29.2	33.3	13.5	6.0	12.5	8.3	37.5
		Non-ACES	31	6.4	31	100.0	8.0	1.8	19.4	6.5	48.4	25.8	11.6	2.7	9.7	3.2	29.0
	Black or African American	ACES	219	44.9	199	90.9	6.1	2.9	42.9	14.6	22.8	19.6	11.3	5.9	12.8	20.6	29.7
		Non-ACES	218	44.7	194	89.0	9.5	5.1	31.2	22.9	17.9	27.9	13.7	7.8	14.2	13.3	27.5
	Hispanic	ACES	177	36.3	159	89.8	9.8	4.5	24.9	26.0	17.5	31.6	15.0	8.0	9.6	11.3	29.9
		Non-ACES	179	36.7	153	85.5	14.5	8.5	16.8	12.9	24.6	45.8	20.3	13.1	5.6	8.4	20.7
	Asian	ACES	49	10.0	47	95.9	5.3	1.1	44.9	24.5	18.4	12.2	8.7	3.6	20.4	14.3	36.7
		Non-ACES	42	8.6	39	92.9	9.8	3.6	14.3	26.2	33.3	26.2	15.0	5.8	2.4	9.5	33.3
	Other	ACES	19	3.9	17	89.5	9.9	4.0	31.6	10.5	21.1	36.8	20.7	11.8	10.5	5.3	26.3
		Non-ACES	17	3.5	17	100.0	6.8	3.0	35.3	0.0	41.2	23.5	12.9	5.1	11.8	11.8	29.4
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	383	78.5	345	90.1	8.0	3.9	34.7	19.6	20.1	25.6	13.8	7.6	11.8	14.9	29.2
		Non-ACES	370	75.8	323	87.3	12.1	6.8	24.1	17.3	21.1	37.6	17.3	10.5	9.7	9.2	23.8
	Not FARMS	ACES	105	21.5	99	94.3	6.6	1.7	37.1	19.1	22.9	21.0	9.5	3.2	14.3	17.1	36.2
		Non-ACES	118	24.2	112	94.9	8.4	3.2	22.9	18.6	35.6	22.9	12.3	5.1	9.3	14.4	31.4
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	58	11.9	53	91.4	6.9	2.5	36.2	15.5	29.3	19.0	10.9	5.4	10.3	17.2	32.8
		Non-ACES	34	7.0	32	94.1	14.6	8.6	11.8	20.6	23.5	44.1	21.1	11.2	8.8	11.8	14.7
	Not Special Education	ACES	430	88.1	391	90.9	7.8	3.5	35.1	20.0	19.5	25.4	13.1	6.8	12.6	15.1	30.5
		Non-ACES	454	93.0	403	88.8	10.9	5.7	24.7	17.4	24.7	33.3	15.7	9.0	9.7	10.4	26.4
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	248	50.8	225	90.7	7.8	3.4	37.5	21.4	18.2	23.0	13.6	7.0	12.1	14.9	27.8
		Non-ACES	223	45.7	193	86.6	12.3	6.9	25.6	17.9	21.5	35.0	17.3	10.6	8.5	9.9	25.1
	Not ESOL	ACES	240	49.2	219	91.3	7.6	3.4	32.9	17.5	23.3	26.3	12.1	6.3	12.5	15.8	33.8
		Non-ACES	265	54.3	242	91.3	10.2	5.1	22.3	17.4	27.2	33.2	15.1	7.9	10.6	10.9	26.0
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	136	27.9	103	75.7	11.4	6.1	23.5	11.8	27.2	37.5	15.2	9.3	7.4	13.2	30.2
		Non-ACES	142	29.1	110	77.5	18.3	12.2	9.9	11.3	19.7	59.2	22.7	16.0	4.9	5.6	20.4
	2.50-2.99	ACES	153	31.4	145	94.8	7.3	3.0	36.0	19.0	22.2	22.9	14.0	7.3	11.1	17.7	26.8
		Non-ACES	143	29.3	132	92.3	9.5	5.1	28.0	22.4	23.1	26.6	15.9	9.7	8.4	13.3	23.1
	3.00-3.49	ACES	130	26.6	127	97.7	6.5	2.4	35.4	26.9	15.4	22.3	11.4	5.3	13.1	14.6	33.9
		Non-ACES	126	25.8	119	94.4	8.0	2.6	31.0	15.9	28.6	24.6	11.9	5.2	15.1	11.9	32.5
	3.50-4.00	ACES	69	14.1	69	100.0	3.8	0.9	56.5	21.7	14.5	7.3	8.5	2.6	23.2	15.9	34.8
		Non-ACES	77	15.8	74	96.1	6.2	1.5	29.9	22.4	29.9	16.9	11.7	2.7	11.7	11.7	28.6

BOLD = $p < 0.05$ RED = small sample size

Exhibit 134. Master table for 2015 cohort (continued)

Educational Outcomes of 2015 Cohort

			Days Absent >10	HS Graduation				HS GPA (2015)					HS GPA (2016)				
				Received High School Diploma		Graduated with Merit (amongst graduates)		HS GPA	3.5-4.0	3.0-3.49	2.5-2.99	0.0-2.49	HS GPA	3.5-4.0	3.0-3.49	2.5-2.99	0.0-2.49
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	%	#	%	#	%	Mean	%	%	%	%	Mean	%	%	%	%
Total		ACES	41.6	471.0	96.5	159.0	33.8	2.8	13.9	25.2	35.0	25.8	2.8	13.3	24.8	35.7	26.2
		Non-ACES	54.3	450.0	92.2	134.0	29.8	2.8	13.1	26.0	30.9	29.9	2.8	14.3	24.6	30.3	30.7
Gender	Male	ACES	34.1	167.0	94.9	42.0	25.2	2.7	10.2	19.9	36.4	33.5	2.7	9.1	16.5	37.5	36.9
		Non-ACES	51.0	172.0	89.6	39.0	22.7	2.7	9.9	21.4	28.7	34.4	2.7	10.9	20.3	32.3	36.5
	Female	ACES	45.8	304.0	97.4	117.0	38.5	2.9	16.0	28.2	34.3	21.5	2.9	15.7	29.5	34.6	20.2
		Non-ACES	56.4	278.0	93.9	95.0	34.2	2.9	15.2	29.1	34.4	27.0	2.9	16.6	27.4	29.1	27.0
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	41.7	22.0	91.7	13.0	59.1	2.9	20.8	33.3	20.8	25.0	2.9	20.8	33.3	16.67	29.2
		Non-ACES	58.1	31.0	100.0	19.0	61.3	3.3	38.7	32.3	19.4	9.7	3.3	38.7	32.3	19.4	9.7
	Black or African American	ACES	37.0	213.0	97.3	64.0	30.1	2.8	12.3	23.3	37.9	26.5	2.8	12.3	22.8	36.5	28.3
		Non-ACES	45.0	202.0	92.7	61.0	30.2	2.8	11.5	26.2	31.2	31.2	2.8	12.4	24.3	32.6	30.7
	Hispanic	ACES	49.2	169.0	95.5	50.0	29.6	2.8	9.6	27.7	35.6	27.1	2.8	9.0	25.4	39.6	26.0
		Non-ACES	65.4	158.0	88.3	34.0	21.5	2.7	6.2	23.5	33.0	37.4	2.7	9.5	21.2	30.2	39.1
	Asian	ACES	28.6	49.0	100.0	27.0	55.1	3.2	32.7	28.6	26.5	12.2	3.2	28.6	34.7	24.5	12.2
		Non-ACES	54.8	41.0	97.6	13.0	31.7	3.1	35.7	23.8	28.6	11.9	3.1	31.0	28.6	26.2	14.3
	Other	ACES	57.9	18.0	94.7	5.0	27.8	2.6	15.8	5.3	36.8	42.1	2.7	15.8	5.3	42.1	36.8
		Non-ACES	47.1	17.0	100.0	7.0	41.2	2.9	5.9	41.2	35.3	17.7	2.9	5.9	35.3	35.3	23.5
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	44.1	369.0	96.3	111.0	30.1	2.8	11.2	24.8	37.3	26.6	2.8	10.7	23.8	38.1	27.4
		Non-ACES	57.3	335.0	97.5	75.0	22.4	2.7	8.9	24.1	32.7	34.3	2.7	10.3	23.2	31.1	35.4
	Not FARMS	ACES	32.4	102.0	97.1	48.0	47.1	3.0	23.8	26.7	26.7	22.9	3.0	22.9	28.6	26.7	21.9
		Non-ACES	44.9	115.0	97.5	59.0	51.3	3.1	26.3	32.2	25.4	16.1	3.1	27.1	28.8	28.0	16.1
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	39.7	55.0	94.8	8.0	14.6	2.6	5.2	10.3	44.8	39.7	2.6	5.2	12.1	48.3	34.5
		Non-ACES	64.7	23.0	67.7	2.0	8.7	2.8	26.5	5.9	23.5	44.1	2.8	20.9	14.7	26.5	38.2
	Not Special Education	ACES	41.9	416.0	86.7	151.0	36.3	2.9	15.1	27.2	33.7	24.0	2.9	14.4	26.5	34.0	25.1
		Non-ACES	53.5	427.0	94.1	132.0	30.9	2.8	12.1	27.5	31.5	28.9	2.8	13.9	25.3	30.6	30.2
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	45.2	238.0	96.0	76.0	31.9	2.9	14.5	28.6	32.3	24.6	2.9	13.3	27.4	35.5	23.8
		Non-ACES	56.5	202.0	90.6	44.0	21.8	2.8	10.8	26.0	30.9	32.3	2.8	13.5	22.4	30.5	33.6
	Not ESOL	ACES	37.9	233.0	97.1	83.0	35.6	2.8	13.3	21.7	37.9	27.1	2.8	13.3	22.1	35.8	28.8
		Non-ACES	52.5	248.0	93.6	90.0	36.3	2.8	15.1	26.0	30.9	27.9	2.9	15.1	26.4	30.2	28.3
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	49.3	124.0	91.2	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0	18.4	81.6	2.2	0.7	0.0	23.5	75.7
		Non-ACES	69.0	120.0	84.5	1.0	0.8	2.1	0.0	0.0	9.2	90.9	2.2	4.2	0.0	16.2	79.6
	2.50-2.99	ACES	44.4	150.0	98.0	17.0	11.3	2.7	0.0	5.9	84.3	9.8	2.7	0.0	7.2	77.1	15.7
		Non-ACES	55.2	139.0	97.2	12.0	8.6	2.7	0.0	7.7	80.4	11.9	2.7	0.0	9.8	65.7	24.5
	3.00-3.49	ACES	38.5	128.0	98.5	87.0	68.0	3.2	6.2	80.8	13.1	0.0	3.2	3.9	76.9	18.5	0.8
		Non-ACES	40.5	122.0	96.8	69.0	56.6	3.2	3.2	78.6	18.3	0.0	3.2	6.4	68.3	23.8	1.6
	3.50-4.00	ACES	26.1	69.0	100.0	55.0	79.7	3.7	87.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	3.7	85.5	14.5	0.0	0.0
		Non-ACES	48.1	69.0	89.6	52.0	75.4	3.7	77.9	22.1	0.0	0.0	3.7	72.7	26.0	1.3	0.0

BOLD = $p < 0.05$ RED = small sample size

Exhibit 134. Master table for 2015 cohort (continued)

Educational Outcomes of 2015 Cohort

Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	Advanced Placement				SAT/ACT						
			Took 1 or More AP Courses	Average Number of AP Exams	One or More 3 on AP	Average AP Score	Took SAT (pre or post 2016)	SAT Verbal (pre-2016)	SAT Writing (pre-2016)	SAT Mathematics (pre-2016)	Highest SAT Total in One Administration	Took ACT	Highest ACT Composite
			%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	%	Mean
Total		ACES	73.0	1.9	56.8	2.3	70.9	468	468	473	1409	42.0	20
		Non-ACES	62.9	1.9	61.4	2.5	55.5	495	490	487	1472	24.6	21
Gender	Male	ACES	64.2	1.5	57.3	2.5	65.3	470	467	499	1436	37.5	20
		Non-ACES	53.1	1.5	62.3	2.5	47.4	501	481	508	1489	26.0	21
	Female	ACES	77.9	2.2	56.6	2.2	74.0	467	469	461	1396	44.6	20
		Non-ACES	69.3	2.1	61.0	2.5	60.8	492	495	476	1463	22.4	21
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	79.2	2.5	92.9	2.9	75.0	524	526	536	1586	45.8	21
		Non-ACES	93.6	3.5	83.3	3.2	80.7	618	599	580	1797	32.3	26
	Black or African American	ACES	70.8	2.0	45.1	2.1	77.2	465	461	464	1390	47.5	20
		Non-ACES	61.0	1.8	51.4	2.2	62.4	479	472	468	1419	30.3	20
	Hispanic	ACES	73.5	1.8	68.0	2.5	57.6	458	463	455	1376	33.9	19
		Non-ACES	58.1	1.4	70.2	2.6	40.8	468	471	458	1397	14.0	19
	Asian	ACES	87.8	2.1	48.8	2.1	87.8	478	485	524	1486	51.0	22
		Non-ACES	61.9	2.8	61.9	2.8	59.5	506	505	552	1562	26.2	25
	Other	ACES	47.4	0.8	57.1	2.3	73.7	458	470	481	1409	26.3	23
		Non-ACES	82.4	2.1	46.2	2.4	70.6	546	532	529	1607	41.2	22
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	71.3	1.8	55.5	2.3	67.9	457	455	458	1370	40.7	19
		Non-ACES	57.6	1.5	57.6	2.3	50.5	459	458	459	1375	21.1	19
	Not FARMS	ACES	79.1	2.4	61.1	2.5	81.9	501	508	518	1527	46.7	23
		Non-ACES	79.7	3.0	70.0	2.9	71.2	572	559	547	1679	35.6	24
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	41.4	1.2	55.6	2.2	53.5	431	437	447	1315	31.0	19
		Non-ACES	14.7	0.4	66.7	2.3	23.5	456	478	426	1360	17.7	17
	Not Special Education	ACES	77.2	2.0	56.9	2.3	73.3	471	471	476	1418	43.5	20
		Non-ACES	66.5	2.0	61.2	2.5	57.9	496	490	489	1475	25.1	21
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	73.8	1.9	59.9	2.4	62.5	449	453	457	1359	38.7	19
		Non-ACES	56.1	1.4	72.5	2.6	43.1	434	439	443	1315	19.3	20
	Not ESOL	ACES	72.1	2.0	53.1	2.2	79.6	483	481	486	1449	45.4	21
		Non-ACES	68.7	2.2	53.6	2.4	66.0	528	517	511	1556	29.1	22
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	41.2	0.5	30.0	1.8	52.2	402	404	402	1208	31.6	16
		Non-ACES	38.0	0.5	46.3	2.1	29.6	419	427	407	1254	13.4	16
	2.50-2.99	ACES	71.9	1.5	38.5	1.9	71.9	443	443	442	1327	41.2	19
		Non-ACES	60.1	1.0	41.8	2.0	58.0	456	442	445	1343	23.8	18
	3.00-3.49	ACES	93.9	2.9	65.8	2.4	80.8	492	486	499	1477	45.4	21
		Non-ACES	83.3	2.7	64.6	2.4	72.2	497	493	493	1483	36.5	22
	3.50-4.00	ACES	98.6	4.1	83.6	3.0	87.0	546	560	569	1674	58.0	25
		Non-ACES	80.5	4.4	88.3	3.4	71.4	598	595	592	1786	27.3	27

BOLD = $p < 0.05$ RED = small sample size

Exhibit 134. Master table for 2015 cohort (continued)

Educational Outcomes of 2015 Cohorts				Montgomery College					Matriculation to PSE					
			Took SAT or ACT	Matriculated to Montgomery College		Persistence to 2nd Year	One or More Degrees	Obtained AA (within 3 years)	Matriculation (any postsecondary)		Matriculation (2-year)		Matriculation (4-year)	
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	%	#	%	%	%	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total		ACES	83.2	203	41.6	82.8	26.6	21.67	378	82.2	191	41.5	187	40.7
		Non-ACES	65.0	153	31.4	87.4	17.65	15.03	299	66.9	145	32.4	154	34.5
Gender	Male	ACES	78.4	76	43.18	78.87	15.79	11.84	132	79.5	72	43.4	60	36.1
		Non-ACES	56.3	65	33.85	87.72	15.38	12.31	109	63.0	63	36.4	46	26.6
	Female	ACES	85.9	127	40.71	85.22	33.07	27.56	246	83.7	119	40.5	127	43.2
		Non-ACES	70.6	88	29.73	87.14	19.32	17.05	190	69.3	82	29.9	108	39.4
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	87.5	10	41.67	77.78	30	30	17	77.3	9	40.9	8	36.4
		Non-ACES	90.3	6	19.35	100	33.33	33.33	28	93.3	7	23.3	21	70.0
	Black or African American	ACES	89.0	69	31.51	79.37	20.29	15.94	180	86.5	67	32.2	113	54.3
		Non-ACES	74.8	59	27.06	80.85	11.86	8.47	153	75.0	58	28.4	95	46.6
	Hispanic	ACES	72.9	95	53.67	82.56	27.37	17.91	125	75.8	86	52.1	39	23.6
		Non-ACES	45.3	67	37.43	90.74	20.9	15.19	78	49.4	57	36.1	21	13.3
	Asian	ACES	95.9	26	53.06	92	42.31	30.77	42	87.5	26	54.2	16	33.3
		Non-ACES	71.4	18	42.86	88.24	22.22	22.22	28	71.8	19	48.7	9	23.1
	Other	ACES	73.7	3	15.79	100	0	0	14	82.4	3	17.7	11	64.7
		Non-ACES	82.4	3	17.65	100	0	0	11	73.3	4	26.7	7	46.7
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	80.9	176	45.95	83.23	27.84	22.73	292	81.1	165	45.8	127	35.3
		Non-ACES	58.9	130	35.14	88.79	16.92	14.62	208	62.1	119	35.5	89	26.6
	Not FARMS	ACES	91.4	27	25.71	80	18.52	14.81	86	86.0	26	26.0	60	60.0
		Non-ACES	83.9	23	19.49	80	21.74	17.39	91	81.3	26	23.2	65	58.0
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	67.2	28	48.28	84	10.71	10.71	39	70.9	26	47.3	13	23.6
		Non-ACES	35.3	7	20.59	80	14.29	14.29	11	37.9	7	24.1	4	13.8
	Not Special Education	ACES	85.4	175	40.7	82.61	29.14	23.43	339	83.7	165	40.7	174	43.0
		Non-ACES	67.2	146	32.16	87.7	17.81	15.07	288	68.9	138	33.0	150	35.9
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	77.4	125	50.4	85.47	31.2	26.4	181	78.0	120	51.7	61	26.3
		Non-ACES	51.6	93	41.7	88.75	16.13	15.05	117	58.8	83	41.7	34	17.1
	Not ESOL	ACES	89.2	78	32.5	78.26	19.23	14.1	197	86.4	71	31.1	126	55.3
		Non-ACES	76.2	60	22.64	85.11	20	15	182	73.4	62	25.0	120	48.4
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	66.2	72	52.94	73.02	8.33	5.56	92	76.7	65	54.2	27	22.5
		Non-ACES	39.4	46	32.39	82.86	6.52	6.52	58	49.2	44	37.3	14	11.9
	2.50-2.99	ACES	85.6	69	45.1	78.46	24.64	15.94	117	79.6	67	45.6	50	34.0
		Non-ACES	66.4	53	37.06	88.64	9.43	7.55	90	67.2	51	38.1	39	29.1
	3.00-3.49	ACES	91.5	50	38.46	97.83	48	44	111	88.8	46	36.8	65	52.0
		Non-ACES	83.3	41	32.54	86.84	29.27	21.95	95	77.9	39	32.0	56	45.9
	3.50-4.00	ACES	95.7	12	17.39	100	58.33	58.33	58	85.3	13	19.1	45	66.2
		Non-ACES	79.2	13	16.88	100	53.85	53.85	56	76.7	11	15.1	45	61.6

BOLD = $p < 0.05$ RED = small sample size

Exhibit 134. Master table for 2015 cohort (continued)

Educational Outcomes of 2015 Cohort

			Persistence/Outcomes Amongst College Entrants								Outcomes Amongst Entire Sample					
			Persistence to 2nd Year		One or More Degrees		Obtained AA (within 3 years)		Obtained BA (within 6 years)		One or More Degrees		Obtained AA (within 3 years)		Obtained BA (within 6 years)	
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total		ACES	334	88.4	65	17.2	50	13.2	8	2.1	66	14.4	50	10.9	8	1.7
		Non-ACES	265	88.0	36	12.0	24	8.0	7	2.3	38	8.5	26	5.8	7	1.6
Gender	Male	ACES	109	82.6	14	10.6	11	8.3	0	0.0	14	8.4	11	6.6	0	0.0
		Non-ACES	97	87.4	14	12.7	10	9.1	2	1.8	14	8.1	10	5.8	2	1.2
	Female	ACES	225	91.5	51	20.7	39	15.9	8	3.3	52	17.7	39	13.3	8	2.7
		Non-ACES	168	88.4	22	11.5	14	7.3	5	2.6	24	8.7	16	5.8	5	1.8
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	15	88.2	5	29.4	3	17.7	2	11.8	5	22.7	3	13.6	2	9.1
		Non-ACES	26	92.9	3	10.7	2	7.1	1	3.6	4	13.3	3	10.0	1	3.3
	Black or African American	ACES	160	88.9	29	11.1	14	7.8	4	2.2	20	9.6	14	6.7	4	1.9
		Non-ACES	135	87.7	12	7.8	6	3.9	4	2.6	13	6.4	7	3.4	4	2.0
	Hispanic	ACES	108	86.4	27	21.6	24	19.2	1	0.8	28	17.0	24	14.6	1	0.6
		Non-ACES	68	86.1	15	19.0	12	15.2	0	0.0	15	9.4	12	7.6	0	0.0
	Asian	ACES	39	92.9	11	26.2	8	19.1	0	0.0	11	22.9	8	16.7	0	0.0
		Non-ACES	26	92.9	6	21.4	4	14.3	2	7.1	6	15.4	4	10.3	2	5.1
	Other	ACES	12	85.7	2	14.3	1	7.1	1	7.1	2	11.8	1	5.9	1	5.9
		Non-ACES	10	90.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	260	89.0	55	18.8	45	15.4	4	1.4	56	15.6	45	12.5	4	1.1
		Non-ACES	182	86.7	27	12.9	20	9.6	3	1.4	28	8.3	21	6.3	3	0.9
	Not FARMS	ACES	74	86.1	10	11.6	5	5.8	4	4.7	10	10.0	5	5.0	4	4.0
		Non-ACES	83	91.2	9	9.8	4	4.4	4	4.4	10	8.9	5	4.4	4	3.5
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	33	84.6	4	10.3	4	10.3	0	0.0	4	7.3	4	7.3	0	0.0
		Non-ACES	10	83.3	1	9.1	1	9.1	0	0.0	2	6.9	2	6.9	0	0.0
	Not Special Education	ACES	301	88.8	61	18.0	46	13.6	8	2.4	62	15.3	46	11.4	8	2.0
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	161	89.0	42	23.2	34	18.8	3	1.7	42	18.1	34	14.7	3	1.3
		Non-ACES	104	88.1	18	15.3	14	11.9	2	1.7	18	9.0	14	7.0	2	1.0
	Not ESOL	ACES	173	87.8	23	11.7	16	8.1	5	2.5	24	10.5	16	7.0	5	2.2
		Non-ACES	161	88.0	18	9.8	10	5.5	5	2.7	20	8.0	12	4.8	5	2.0
		ACES	67	72.8	7	7.6	5	5.4	0	0.0	7	5.8	5	4.2	0	0.0
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	Non-ACES	45	76.3	6	10.2	4	6.8	1	1.7	6	5.0	4	3.4	1	0.8
		ACES	102	87.2	19	16.2	13	11.1	2	1.7	20	13.6	13	8.8	2	1.4
	2.50-2.99	Non-ACES	80	87.9	6	6.7	5	5.6	0	0.0	6	4.5	5	3.7	0	0.0
		ACES	108	97.3	28	25.2	24	21.6	3	2.7	28	22.4	24	19.2	3	2.4
	3.00-3.49	Non-ACES	87	91.6	14	14.6	9	9.4	2	2.1	14	11.4	9	7.3	2	1.6
		ACES	57	98.3	11	19.0	8	13.8	3	5.2	11	16.2	8	11.8	3	4.4
	3.50-4.00	Non-ACES	53	94.6	10	17.9	6	10.7	4	7.1	12	16.4	8	11.0	4	5.5
		ACES														

BOLD = p < 0.05 RED = small sample size

Exhibit 136. Master table for 2018 cohort

Educational Outcomes of 2018 Cohort

			TOTAL		Promotion		2018						2019				
							Promotion to 12th Grade		Days Absent: Total	Days Absent: Unexcused	Days Absent: 0-2	Days Absent: 3-5	Days Absent: 6-10	Days Absent: >10	Days Absent: Total	Days Absent: Unexcused	Days Absent: 0-2
					Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	#	%	#	%	Mean	Mean	%	%	%	%
Total		ACES	660	100	594.0	90.0	13.3	7.6	17.3	15.2	22.6	45.0	21.0	12.0	9.6	9.6	17.9
		Non-ACES	660	100	536.0	84.4	18.6	13.5	18.5	15.8	19.1	46.7	23.0	15.1	9.9	11.8	14.2
Gender	Male	ACES	251	38.03	219.0	87.3	12.1	7.7	24.7	17.5	16.7	41.0	21.8	14.7	7.8	12.8	18.7
		Non-ACES	287	43.48	221.0	79.8	18.6	14.5	19.9	15.0	20.6	44.6	23.3	16.9	8.9	10.8	13.9
	Female	ACES	409	61.97	375.0	91.7	14.0	7.5	12.7	13.7	26.2	47.4	20.4	10.4	12.4	7.6	17.4
		Non-ACES	373	56.52	315.0	88.0	18.6	12.7	17.4	16.4	18.0	48.3	22.7	13.8	11.2	12.6	14.5
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	14	2.12	12.0	85.7	23.5	12.9	0.0	7.1	35.7	57.1	29.2	16.7	0.0	14.3	14.3
		Non-ACES	19	2.88	17.0	89.5	14.6	5.1	15.8	10.5	10.5	63.2	16.7	5.3	0.0	15.8	15.8
	Black or African American	ACES	274	41.52	252.0	92.0	8.9	4.9	23.4	23.0	23.4	30.3	15.9	8.4	14.6	10.6	20.4
		Non-ACES	240	36.36	214.0	89.9	10.3	6.1	30.0	20.0	21.3	28.8	14.7	7.5	17.9	15.8	18.8
	Hispanic	ACES	307	46.52	270.0	88.0	17.3	10.5	10.1	7.5	22.5	59.9	26.2	16.1	4.6	6.8	14.7
		Non-ACES	341	51.67	248.0	78.0	26.6	21.0	9.7	12.3	16.1	61.9	31.0	23.4	5.3	8.5	10.3
	Asian	ACES	47	7.12	45.0	95.7	8.8	3.4	34.0	21.3	19.2	25.5	14.4	6.4	14.9	21.3	23.4
		Non-ACES	51	7.73	50.0	98.0	6.8	2.3	23.5	21.6	31.4	23.5	14.0	3.6	5.9	15.7	19.6
Other	ACES	18	2.73	15.0	83.3	14.7	5.0	16.7	16.7	11.1	55.6	19.0	7.2	11.1	5.6	22.2	
	Non-ACES	9	1.36	7.0	77.8	11.6	5.9	22.2	11.1	22.2	44.4	22.2	12.6	11.1	0.0	11.1	
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	573	86.82	514.0	89.7	13.8	8.2	16.4	14.3	22.2	47.1	22.1	13.2	8.9	9.1	16.4
		Non-ACES	571	86.52	451.0	82.6	20.1	15.1	18.7	13.8	18.0	49.4	24.2	16.7	9.5	12.3	13.0
	Not FARMS	ACES	87	13.18	80.0	92.0	9.7	3.6	23.0	20.7	25.3	31.0	13.6	4.5	13.8	12.6	27.6
		Non-ACES	89	13.48	85.0	95.5	8.8	3.3	16.9	28.1	25.8	29.2	15.3	5.8	12.4	9.0	22.5
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	49	7.42	43.0	87.8	14.3	8.6	16.3	18.4	14.3	51.0	21.6	14.0	16.3	10.2	8.2
		Non-ACES	32	4.85	28.0	87.5	13.8	6.5	18.8	18.8	12.5	50.0	14.2	7.3	15.6	18.8	18.8
	Not Special Education	ACES	611	92.58	551.0	90.2	13.2	7.5	17.4	14.9	23.2	44.5	20.9	11.9	9.0	9.5	18.7
		Non-ACES	628	95.15	508.0	84.3	18.8	13.8	18.5	15.6	19.4	46.5	23.4	15.6	9.6	11.5	14.0
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	379	57.42	342.0	90.2	13.7	8.1	17.4	13.7	23.8	45.1	21.8	12.7	9.2	9.8	14.0
		Non-ACES	377	57.12%	286.0	80.6	22.1	17.5	17.0	14.3	17.0	51.7	26.5	19.5	7.4	12.2	11.4
	Not ESOL	ACES	281	42.88	252.0	89.7	12.6	6.8	17.1	17.1	21.0	44.8	19.9	11.1	10.0	9.3	23.1
		Non-ACES	283	42.58	250.0	89.3	14.0	8.1	20.5	17.7	21.9	39.9	18.5	9.7	13.1	11.3	18.0
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	85	12.88	55.0	64.7	23.3	17.0	10.6	4.7	10.6	74.1	31.6	23.6	8.2	8.2	4.7
		Non-ACES	121	18.33	57.0	54.3	38.3	33.1	5.8	6.6	10.7	76.9	36.8	29.3	5.0	4.1	6.6
	2.50-2.99	ACES	171	25.91	151.0	88.3	14.4	8.6	14.6	11.7	25.7	48.0	23.6	14.3	8.8	9.9	14.0
		Non-ACES	164	24.85	132.0	82.5	20.5	14.9	14.0	17.1	17.7	51.2	25.8	18.3	8.5	8.5	16.5
	3.00-3.49	ACES	236	35.76	223.0	94.5	12.3	6.5	13.6	16.1	24.2	46.2	19.5	10.8	9.3	6.8	20.8
		Non-ACES	190	28.79	167.0	89.8	13.8	8.0	21.6	14.2	21.6	42.6	21.0	12.7	11.6	15.3	13.7
	3.50-4.00	ACES	168	25.45	165.0	98.2	8.3	3.1	28.6	22.6	23.2	25.6	14.9	5.6	11.3	13.7	24.4
		Non-ACES	185	28.03	180.0	97.8	9.0	5.1	27.6	22.2	23.2	27.0	15.0	7.3	12.4	16.2	17.8

BOLD = $p < 0.05$ RED = small sample size

Exhibit 22. Master table for 2018 cohort (continued)

Educational Outcomes of 2018 Cohort

			Days Absent: >10	HS Graduation				HS GPA (2018)					HS GPA (2019)				
				Received High School Diploma		Graduated with Merit (amongst graduates)		HS GPA	3.5-4.0	3.0-3.49	2.5-2.99	0.0-2.49	HS GPA	3.5-4.0	3.0-3.49	2.5-2.99	0.0-2.49
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	%	#	%	#	%	Mean	%	%	%	%	Mean	%	%	%	%
Total		ACES	63.0	638	96.7	304	47.7	3.1	24.6	37.6	25.3	12.6	3.1	22.4	36.5	28.2	12.9
		Non-ACES	64.1	575	87.2	224	39.0	3.0	26.1	29.2	23.6	21.1	3.0	26.4	28.0	23.6	22.0
Gender	Male	ACES	56.2	238	94.8	80	33.6	3.0	17.5	34.7	33.1	14.7	2.9	13.6	34.3	35.9	16.3
		Non-ACES	64.1	246	85.7	71	28.9	2.8	18.5	25.1	27.9	28.6	2.8	18.1	23.0	28.6	30.3
	Female	ACES	67.2	400	97.8	224	56.0	3.2	28.9	39.4	20.5	11.3	3.1	27.9	37.9	23.5	10.8
		Non-ACES	64.1	329	88.2	153	46.5	3.1	31.9	32.4	20.4	15.3	3.1	32.7	31.9	19.8	15.6
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	71.4	13	92.9	6	46.2	3.0	21.4	35.7	35.7	7.1	3.0	21.4	28.6	42.9	7.1
		Non-ACES	68.4	18	94.7	11	61.1	3.4	57.9	21.1	15.8	5.3	3.4	47.4	31.6	21.1	0.0
	Black or African American	ACES	54.4	268	97.8	129	48.1	3.1	21.9	40.5	27.7	9.9	3.1	18.6	42.0	27.7	11.7
		Non-ACES	47.5	227	94.6	106	46.7	3.1	22.9	37.9	24.2	15.0	3.1	22.1	37.9	24.2	15.8
	Hispanic	ACES	73.9	294	95.8	122	41.5	3.0	21.2	36.2	26.7	16.0	3.0	20.5	32.3	31.3	16.0
		Non-ACES	76.0	274	80.4	69	25.2	2.9	22.3	24.3	24.6	28.7	2.8	25.2	20.5	24.6	29.6
	Asian	ACES	40.4	46	97.9	35	76.1	3.5	61.7	29.8	4.3	4.3	3.5	55.3	36.2	8.5	0.0
		Non-ACES	58.8	50	98.0	35	70.0	3.4	52.9	23.5	19.6	3.9	3.4	45.1	29.4	19.6	5.9
	Other	ACES	61.1	17	94.4	12	70.6	3.1	27.8	38.9	11.1	22.2	3.1	27.8	33.3	22.2	16.7
		Non-ACES	77.8	6	66.7	3	50.0	3.0	33.3	33.3	11.1	22.2	3.0	33.3	33.3	0.0	33.3
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	65.6	553	96.5	253	45.8	3.1	22.5	38.4	25.5	13.6	3.0	20.6	36.7	28.8	14.0
		Non-ACES	65.3	488	85.5	168	34.4	3.0	23.6	28.4	24.5	23.5	2.9	24.9	26.4	24.5	24.2
	Not FARMS	ACES	46.0	85	97.7	51	60.0	3.2	37.9	32.2	24.1	5.8	3.2	34.5	35.6	24.1	5.8
		Non-ACES	56.2	87	97.8	56	64.4	3.3	41.6	34.8	18.0	5.6	3.3	36.0	38.2	18.0	7.9
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	65.3	47	95.9	6	12.8	2.8	8.2	30.6	34.7	26.5	2.8	8.2	28.6	42.9	20.4
		Non-ACES	46.9	21	65.6	2	9.5	3.1	21.9	34.4	31.3	12.5	3.1	21.9	37.5	28.1	12.5
	Not Special Education	ACES	62.9	591	96.7	298	50.4	3.1	25.9	38.1	24.6	11.5	3.1	23.6	37.2	27.0	12.3
		Non-ACES	65.0	554	88.2	222	40.1	3.0	26.3	29.0	23.3	21.5	3.0	26.6	27.6	23.4	22.5
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	67.0	363	95.8	163	44.9	3.1	25.6	38.8	24.0	11.6	3.1	22.7	36.4	29.8	11.1
		Non-ACES	69.0	310	82.2	85	27.4	3.0	25.7	26.0	22.3	26.0	2.9	26.8	23.6	23.1	26.5
	Not ESOL	ACES	57.7	275	97.9	141	51.3	3.1	23.1	35.9	27.1	13.9	3.1	22.1	36.7	26.0	15.3
		Non-ACES	57.6	265	93.6	139	52.5	3.1	26.5	33.6	25.4	14.5	3.1	25.8	33.9	24.4	15.9
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	78.8	75	88.2	0	0.0	2.2	0.0	1.2	20.0	78.8	2.2	0.0	1.2	29.4	69.4
		Non-ACES	84.3	78	64.5	1	1.3	2.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	91.7	2.0	11.6	0.0	14.1	74.4
	2.50-2.99	ACES	67.3	165	96.5	16	9.7	2.8	0.0	17.0	73.7	9.4	2.7	0.0	17.5	70.2	12.3
		Non-ACES	66.5	145	88.4	13	9.0	2.7	0.0	16.5	68.3	15.2	2.7	1.2	16.5	54.9	27.4
	3.00-3.49	ACES	63.1	234	99.2	147	62.8	3.2	7.6	82.6	9.8	0.0	3.2	7.6	73.7	17.0	1.7
		Non-ACES	59.5	176	92.6	83	47.2	3.2	7.4	73.7	17.4	1.6	3.1	12.1	58.4	24.7	4.7
	3.50-4.00	ACES	50.6	164	97.6	141	86.0	3.7	85.7	13.7	0.6	0.0	3.6	77.4	21.4	0.6	0.6
		Non-ACES	53.5	176	95.1	127	72.2	3.7	85.4	14.1	0.5	0.0	3.6	73.0	25.4	1.1	0.5

BOLD = $p < 0.05$ RED = small sample size

Exhibit 22. Master table for 2018 cohort (continued)

Educational Outcomes of 2018 Cohort

			Advanced Placement				SAT/ACT						
			Took 1 or More AP Courses	Average Number of AP Exams	One or More 3 on AP	Average AP Score	Took SAT	SAT Writing	SAT Mathematics	Highest SAT Total in One Administration	Took ACT	Highest ACT Composite	Took SAT or ACT
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	Mean	Mean	%	Mean	%
Total		ACES	72.6	3.4	60.1	2.3	84.6	508	489	996	20	20	87.6
		Non-ACES	63.3	3.6	66.3	2.6	65.8	508	488	995	15	21	68.6
Gender	Male	ACES	63.0	3.6	55.7	2.2	81.3	498	496	994	15	21	83.7
		Non-ACES	56.1	3.8	62.8	2.5	61.7	503	491	994	9	21	62.7
	Female	ACES	78.5	3.3	62.0	2.3	86.6	513	484	998	23	20	90.0
		Non-ACES	68.9	3.5	68.0	2.7	68.9	511	486	997	20	21	73.2
	White	ACES	57.1	2.3	75.0	2.5	71.4	564	523	1087	14	16	78.6
		Non-ACES	63.2	6.1	72.7	3.1	79.0	616	573	1189	21	29	79.0
Race/Ethnicity	Black or African American	ACES	74.8	3.6	47.7	2.1	91.6	514	493	1006	25	20	93.8
		Non-ACES	69.2	3.7	58.5	2.3	85.4	510	485	995	23	20	89.2
	Hispanic	ACES	69.1	3.1	67.8	2.3	78.2	488	468	956	14	19	81.8
		Non-ACES	56.6	2.6	70.1	2.9	47.8	475	456	930	8	20	49.9
	Asian	ACES	89.4	4.5	76.3	2.7	85.1	569	566	1135	28	25	89.4
		Non-ACES	84.3	6.0	76.3	2.8	90.2	570	574	1144	25	25	96.1
	Other	ACES	66.7	3.1	60.0	2.2	94.4	526	516	1042	33	20	94.4
		Non-ACES	44.4	3.8	75.0	2.6	55.6	604	588	1192	22	27	55.6
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	70.9	3.3	60.7	2.3	83.3	502	483	985	19	20	86.4
		Non-ACES	59.9	3.3	66.2	2.6	62.0	495	477	972	13	21	64.5
	Not FARMS	ACES	83.9	4.0	56.9	2.2	93.1	541	522	1063	29	22	95.4
		Non-ACES	85.4	4.6	66.7	2.5	89.9	565	535	1100	30	23	95.5
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	34.7	2.5	36.4	1.7	71.4	412	405	817	18	14	79.6
		Non-ACES	18.8	2.8	25.0	2.0	34.4	444	463	906	6	17	40.6
	Not Special Education	ACES	75.6	3.4	60.7	2.3	85.6	514	494	1008	20	21	88.2
		Non-ACES	65.6	3.6	66.8	2.6	67.4	509	488	998	16	21	70.1
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	68.9	3.3	64.8	2.3	83.1	495	479	973	13	20	85.8
		Non-ACES	53.6	2.9	71.6	2.8	53.3	467	460	927	9	20	54.9
	Not ESOL	ACES	77.6	3.6	54.0	2.2	86.5	525	501	1026	29	21	90.0
		Non-ACES	76.3	4.2	61.6	2.4	82.3	543	512	1054	23	22	86.9
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	45.9	1.7	23.5	1.7	65.9	431	422	853	15	15	72.9
		Non-ACES	37.2	1.4	47.4	2.2	33.9	420	393	813	5	17	34.7
	2.50-2.99	ACES	62.0	2.1	44.4	1.9	79.5	466	446	912	10	19	81.9
		Non-ACES	56.1	2.0	43.3	2.2	67.7	472	448	920	7	17	68.9
	3.00-3.49	ACES	78.0	3.0	49.7	2.1	88.1	506	485	991	24	20	91.1
		Non-ACES	68.4	3.1	59.6	2.4	70.5	496	482	978	15	18	74.2
	3.50-4.00	ACES	89.3	4.7	84.1	2.7	94.1	573	554	1126	28	23	95.8
		Non-ACES	81.6	4.9	83.3	3.0	80.0	569	549	1119	29	24	84.9

BOLD = p < 0.05 RED = small sample size

Exhibit 22. Master table for 2018 cohort (continued)

Educational Outcomes of 2018 Cohort

			Matriculation to PSE							
			Matriculated to Montgomery College		Matriculation (any postsecondary)		Matriculation (2-year)		Matriculation (4-year)	
Grand Variable	Sub-Variable	Group	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total		ACES	258	39.09	464	75.0	269	43.5	195	31.5
		Non-ACES	140	21.21	314	57.3	144	26.3	170	31.0
Gender	Male	ACES	92	36.65	164	70.4	96	41.2	68	29.2
		Non-ACES	56	19.51	113	48.1	59	25.1	54	23.0
	Female	ACES	166	40.59	300	77.7	173	44.8	127	32.9
		Non-ACES	84	22.52	201	64.2	85	27.2	116	37.1
Race/Ethnicity	White	ACES	7	50	12	92.3	8	61.5	4	30.8
		Non-ACES	5	26.32	14	77.8	5	27.8	9	50.0
	Black or African American	ACES	91	33.21	218	84.2	97	37.5	121	46.7
		Non-ACES	63	26.25	161	73.2	64	29.1	97	44.1
	Hispanic	ACES	127	41.37	184	64.1	131	45.6	53	18.5
		Non-ACES	56	16.42	98	38.4	59	23.1	39	15.3
	Asian	ACES	25	53.19	38	88.4	26	60.5	12	27.9
		Non-ACES	16	31.37	38	77.6	16	32.7	22	44.9
	Other	ACES	8	44.44	12	70.6	7	41.2	3	29.4
		Non-ACES	0	0	3	50.0	0	0.0	5	50.0
FARMS (now or ever)	FARMS	ACES	222	38.74	397	73.8	233	43.3	164	30.5
		Non-ACES	126	22.07	250	54.0	130	28.1	120	25.9
	Not FARMS	ACES	36	41.38	67	82.7	36	44.4	31	38.3
		Non-ACES	14	15.73	64	75.3	14	16.5	50	58.8
Special Education (current)	Special Education	ACES	20	40.82	23	51.1	20	44.4	3	6.7
		Non-ACES	9	28.13	13	65.0	9	45.0	4	20.0
	Not Special Education	ACES	238	38.95	441	76.8	249	43.4	192	33.5
		Non-ACES	131	20.86	301	57.0	135	25.6	166	31.4
English as a Second Language (ESOL, now or ever)	ESOL	ACES	165	43.54	253	71.9	170	48.3	83	23.6
		Non-ACES	71	18.83	121	41.7	71	24.5	50	17.2
	Not ESOL	ACES	93	33.1	211	79.0	99	37.1	112	42.0
		Non-ACES	69	24.38	193	74.8	73	28.3	120	46.5
GPA at Entrance	0-2.49	ACES	35	41.18	45	61.6	37	50.7	8	11.0
		Non-ACES	13	10.74	20	27.4	15	20.6	5	6.9
	2.50-2.99	ACES	69	40.35	104	63.4	72	43.9	32	19.5
		Non-ACES	43	26.22	73	52.5	45	32.4	28	20.1
	3.00-3.49	ACES	101	42.8	180	79.7	104	46.0	76	33.6
		Non-ACES	46	24.21	101	60.8	46	27.7	55	33.1
	3.50-4.00	ACES	53	31.55	135	86.5	56	35.9	79	50.6
		Non-ACES	38	20.54	120	70.6	38	22.4	82	48.2

BOLD = p < 0.05 RED = small sample size

Exhibit 137. Propensity Score Matching Table for 2015 and 2018 cohorts

2015 Cohort				2018 Cohort			
Matching Variable	ACES Students	Comparison Group	Difference (+/-)	Matching Variable	ACES Students	Comparison Group	Difference (+/-)
Propensity Score	0.243	0.236	0.007	Propensity Score	0.231	0.22	0.011
Prior GPA	2.84	2.848	-0.008	Prior GPA	3.094	3.043	0.051
Female	63.93%	60.66%	3.27%	Female	61.97%	56.52%	5.45%
Male	36.07%	39.34%	-3.27%	Male	38.03%	43.48%	-5.45%
White	4.92%	6.35%	-1.42%	White	2.12%	2.88%	-0.76%
Black or African American	44.88%	44.67%	0.21%	Black or African American	41.52%	36.36%	5.16%
Hispanic/Latino	36.27%	36.68%	-0.41%	Hispanic/Latino	46.52%	51.67%	-5.15%
Asian	10.04%	8.61%	1.43%	Asian	7.12%	7.73%	-0.61%
Other	3.89%	3.68%	0.21%	Other	2.73%	1.36%	1.37%
FARMS (ever)	78.48%	75.82%	2.66%	FARMS (ever)	86.82%	86.52%	0.30%
FARMS (never)	21.52%	24.18%	-2.66%	FARMS (never)	13.18%	13.48%	-0.30%
Special Education (current)	11.89%	6.97%	4.92%	Special Education (current)	7.42%	4.85%	2.57%
Special Education (not currently)	88.11%	93.03%	-4.92%	Special Education (not currently)	92.58%	95.15%	-2.57%
ESOL (ever)	50.82%	45.70%	5.12%	ESOL (ever)	57.42%	57.12%	0.30%
ESOL (never)	49.18%	54.30%	-5.12%	ESOL (never)	42.58%	42.88%	-0.30%

Exhibit 138. Sensitivity Analysis for 2015 and 2018 cohorts

2018 Cohort (controlling for gender)				2015 Cohort (controlling for special education)			
Dependent Variable	Coefficient or Log Odds Ratio	Standard Error	Significance Level	Dependent Variable	Coefficient or Log Odds Ratio	Standard Error	Significance Level
End of Grade 11				End of Grade 11			
GPA	0.0822	0.0318	p<.05	GPA	0.0347	0.0373	p=.352
Total Absences	-5.3821	1.0751	p<.001	Total Absences	-3.5381	0.777	p<.001
Unexcused Absences	-5.8668	0.9885	p<.001	Unexcused Absences	-2.5745	0.5883	p<.001
Promotion	0.4804	0.1706	p<.01	Promotion	0.1937	0.2155	p=.369
End of Grade 12				End of Grade 12			
GPA	0.0757	0.0318	p<.05	GPA	0.0315	0.0367	p=.391
Total Absences	-1.9424	1.2408	p=.118	Total Absences	-3.2591	0.9484	p<.01
Unexcused Absences	-2.919	1.1102	p<.01	Unexcused Absences	-2.4763	0.8007	p<.01
Graduated	1.4383	0.2464	p<.001	Graduated	0.9885	0.3068	p<.01
Graduated with Merit	0.3228	0.119	p<.01	Graduated with Merit	0.2526	0.1437	p=.079
One or More AP Course	0.3999	0.1203	p<.01	One or More AP Course	0.604	0.1457	p<.001
# AP Exams	-0.1694	0.2111	p=.423	# AP Exams	0.1461	0.1646	p=.375
Score 3 or Higher	-0.2767	0.1547	p=.074	Score 3 or Higher	-0.1902	0.1704	p=.264
Average AP Score	-0.3423	0.0757	p<.001	Average AP Score	-0.1598	0.0896	p=.075
Took SAT or ACT	1.1535	0.1455	p<.001	Took SAT or ACT	1.0805	0.1588	p<.001
Highest SAT Total	0.7359	11.7731	p=.950	Highest SAT Total	-56.5599	23.9631	p<.05
Highest ACT Total	-0.7881	0.668	p=.239	Highest ACT Total	-0.9497	0.5842	p=.105
Post-secondary				Post-secondary			
Matriculated (Post-secondary)	0.7862	0.1277	p<.001	Matriculated (Post-secondary)	0.9032	0.1617	p<.001
Matriculated (2-year)	0.7623	0.1266	p<.001	Matriculated (2-year)	0.3889	0.139	p<.01
Matriculated (4-year)	0.1112	0.1273	p=.993	Matriculated (4-year)	0.3161	0.1391	p<.05
				Persistence to 2nd Yr. (among entrants)	0.0576	0.2417	p=.812
				Earned One or More College Degrees (among entrants)	0.4578	0.2253	p<.05
				Earned AA w/in 3 yrs (among entrants)	0.5794	0.263	p<.05
				Earned Bachelors w/in 6 yrs (among entrants)	-0.0231	0.5238	p=.965

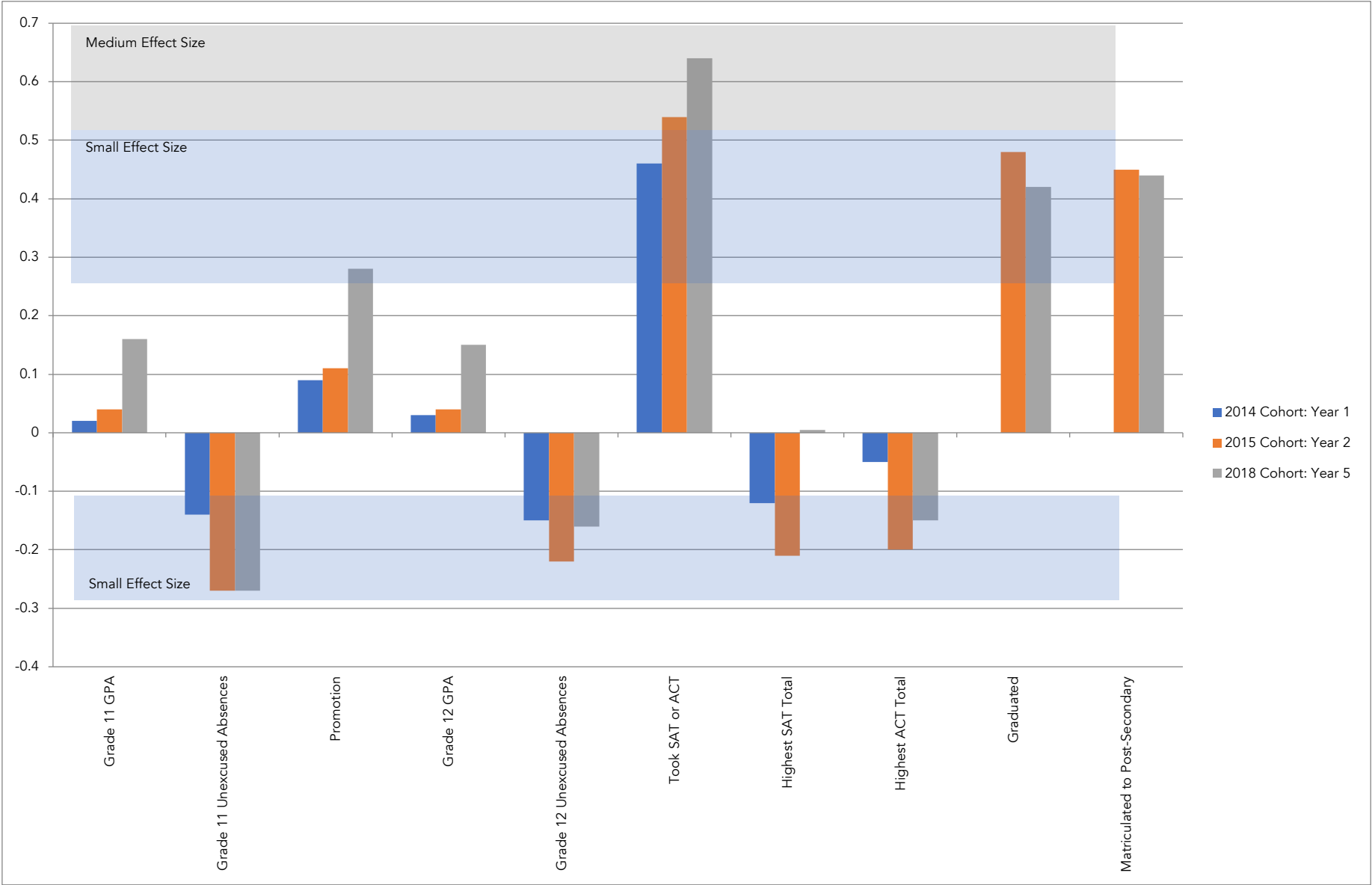
Exhibit 139. Effect Size Table (Cohen's d) for 2015 Cohort

Dependent Variable	Overall Effect Size (ES)	Female ES	Male ES	White	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	Other	Now or Prior FARMS	Never FARMS	Current Special Education	Not Current Special Education	Now or Prior ESOL	Never ESOL	GPA (0-2.49)	GPA (2.5-2.99)
GRADE 11																
GPA	0.0415	0.0796	-0.045	-0.5628	0.0665	0.1707	0.0284	---	0.1211	-0.1566	-0.2841	0.0972	0.1721	-0.073	0.1827	0.152
Total Absences	-0.2862	-0.2231	-0.4063	0.1854	-0.3124	-0.3191	-0.4756	---	-0.3138	-0.2058	-0.5738	-0.2594	-0.3354	-0.243	-0.4198	-0.207
Unexcused Absences	-0.2672	-0.19	-0.4082	0.416	-0.2693	-0.3427	-0.4921	---	-0.2946	-0.2859	-0.6516	-0.2421	-0.3489	-0.2059	-0.4399	-0.2788
Promotion	0.1139	0.357	-0.1611	---	0.1146	0.224	0.3264	---	0.1535	-0.068	-0.227	0.1312	0.2311	-0.0049	-0.0532	0.227
GRADE 12																
GPA	0.0423	0.0837	-0.0499	-0.5843	0.0554	0.1836	0.0688	---	0.1182	-0.132	-0.2807	0.0905	0.187	-0.0782	0.1667	0.178
Total Absences	-0.2196	-0.1759	-0.3289	0.2073	-0.1829	-0.3104	-0.642	---	-0.2296	-0.2463	-0.681	-0.1764	-0.2482	-0.2077	-0.4015	-0.132
Unexcused Absences	-0.1999	-0.1829	-0.2416	0.4794	-0.1753	-0.3461	-0.3155	---	-0.2215	-0.1898	-0.5009	-0.1727	-0.2961	-0.1292	-0.3861	-0.204
Graduated	0.4809	1.2607	0.0688	---	0.6349	0.7009	---	---	0.659	-0.0448	0.7042	0.5124	0.4726	0.5063	0.3522	0.200
Graduated with Merit	0.1013	0.1029	0.075	-0.0506	-0.004	0.2353	0.5359	---	0.2204	-0.0937	0.3202	0.1333	0.2875	-0.016	---	0.166
One or More AP Course	0.2557	0.2463	0.2531	-0.7383	0.2408	0.3807	0.8181	---	0.3329	-0.0206	0.7774	0.2942	0.4365	0.0901	0.0726	0.291
# AP Exams	0.0358	0.0523	-0.0125	-0.2995	0.1018	0.185	-0.2043	---	0.1542	-0.1976	0.3778	0.0297	0.2379	-0.1007	-0.0541	0.26
Score 3 or Higher	-0.1045	-0.1002	-0.1158	---	-0.1379	-0.0563	-0.2946	---	-0.0471	-0.2179	---	-0.1	-0.3129	-0.0099	-0.3863	-0.074
Average AP Score	-0.1545	-0.2219	-0.0075	---	-0.2388	-0.036	-0.568	---	-0.0348	-0.3826	---	-0.148	-0.1996	-0.1627	-0.3146	-0.042
Took SAT or ACT	0.5416	0.513	0.5725	-0.1586	0.556	0.6501	1.2354	---	0.5985	0.395	0.7305	0.5766	0.6447	0.5197	0.6066	0.607
Highest SAT Total	-0.214	-0.2308	-0.1789	-0.6703	-0.1034	-0.0952	-0.1954	---	-0.0213	-0.4731	---	-0.1962	0.1662	-0.3656	-0.215	-0.076
Highest ACT Total	-0.1966	-0.1813	-0.2137	---	-0.0768	-0.0424	---	---	-0.1348	-0.0761	---	-0.2288	-0.1567	-0.156	-0.0936	0.105
POSTSECONDARY																
Matriculated (Post-secondary)	0.4548	0.4509	0.4543	-0.7802	0.4202	0.6422	0.5577	---	0.5314	0.1924	0.7627	0.4636	0.5024	0.4603	0.6746	0.355
Matriculated (2-year)	0.2157	0.2564	0.1603	0.4531	0.0987	0.3622	0.1204	---	0.2366	0.0829	0.5711	0.1835	0.2226	0.1682	0.3787	0.170
Matriculated (4-year)	0.146	0.086	0.2462	-0.7757	0.1715	0.3784	0.2816	---	0.2259	0.0448	0.3638	0.1637	0.3026	0.1521	0.4238	0.125
Persistence to 2nd Yr. (among entrants)	0.0169	0.1867	-0.2094	-0.3032	0.0654	0.0151	---	---	0.123	-0.2868	0.0525	0.0301	0.0443	-0.0083	-0.1002	-0.037
Earned One or More College Degrees (among entrants)	0.234	0.3847	-0.1137	0.6863	0.2119	0.0892	0.1451	---	0.2467	0.1067	0.0736	0.2587	0.2856	0.1059	-0.1754	0.550
Earned AA w/in 3 yrs (among entrants)	0.3115	0.4785	-0.0525	0.5648	0.4001	0.1559	0.1901	---	0.2995	0.1687	0.0736	0.3309	0.2984	0.2342	-0.1298	0.415
Earned Bachelors w/in 6 yrs (among entrants)	-0.0531	0.1232	---	0.7062	-0.0918	---	---	---	-0.0261	0.0389	---	-0.0127	-0.0125	-0.0417	---	---

Exhibit 140. Effect Size Table (Cohen's d) for 2018 Cohort

	Statistical Significance			Practical Significance														
Dependent Variable	Log Odds Ratio	Standard Error	Significance Level	ACES (Percentage)	Comparison (Percentage)	Overall Effect Size (ES)	Female ES	Male ES	White	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	Other	Now or Prior FARMS	Never FARMS	Current Special Education	Not Current Special Education	Current ESOL
GRADE 11																		
Promotion	0.5082	0.1697	p<.01	90.00%	84.41%	0.2802	0.2256	0.3035	---	0.1381	0.3984	-0.4402	---	0.3347	-0.3419	0.013	0.2982	0.3745
GRADE 12																		
Graduated	0.7632	0.3232	p<.05	97.70%	95.20%	0.4208	0.7134	0.2218	---	0.8558	0.2789	-0.046	---	0.4131	---	1.3315	0.2448	-0.172
Graduated with Merit	0.355	0.1166	p<.01	47.65%	38.96%	0.1957	0.2102	0.1221	---	0.0318	0.411	0.1712	---	0.2613	-0.1025	0.1817	0.2312	1.407
One or More AP Course	0.4267	0.1189	p<.001	72.58%	63.33%	0.2353	0.2749	0.1571	---	0.1549	0.2962	0.2462	---	0.2687	-0.0631	0.4597	0.2679	0.0134
Score 3 or Higher	-0.2676	0.1543	p=.083	60.05%	66.27%	-0.1475	-0.1464	-0.1644	---	-0.2416	-0.0604	---	---	-0.1312	-0.2285	---	-0.1447	-1.326
Took SAT or ACT	1.1697	0.1448	p<.001	87.58%	68.64%	0.6449	0.6562	0.6139	---	0.3352	0.8303	-0.5921	---	0.6908	-0.0131	0.9596	0.641	0.588

Exhibit 141. Comparing Effect Sizes (Cohen's d) Across Cohorts



Workshop Participation by Year

2017-18	Attended		Total	
Workshop/Event	No	Yes	Total Participation	% Participation
Art & Culture Career Workshops	450	40	490	8%
Campus Coach Visit	725	490	1215	40%
Career Assessment Tools	34	23	57	40%
Career Workshop	649	268	917	29%
College Application Workshop	511	673	1184	57%
College Field Trip	3215	1005	4220	24%
College Greenlight	274	359	633	57%
College Selection Workshop	348	389	737	53%
Cultural Events	3	3	6	50%
Essay Writing	562	250	812	31%
Financial Aid Workshop	728	565	1293	44%
Financial Literacy Workshop	626	299	925	32%
Goal Setting Workshop	355	98	453	22%
Grade Level Orientation (pre Orientation)	818	1497	2315	65%
Interpersonal Skill	179	113	292	39%
Job Shadowing	42	14	56	25%
Kick-Off Event (pre Kick-Off)	1014	435	1449	30%
Other	1272	734	2006	37%
Referral to Community Organization	2	4	6	67%
Resume Workshop	477	305	782	39%
SAT/ACT Prep	3973	867	4840	18%
Saturday School	3	41	44	93%
Scholarship Workshop	603	594	1197	50%
SHMOOP (new)	96	7	103	7%
Study Skills (pre Study Sessions)	407	383	790	48%
Summer Bridge (Rising 11th) (rename)	702	552	1254	44%
Summer Bridge (Rising 12th/USG)	584	375	959	39%
Time Management (pre in Personal/Social)	292	246	538	46%
TOTAL	18944	10629	29573	36%

2018-19	Attended		Total	
Workshop/Event	No	Yes	Total Participa- tion	% Participation
Art & Culture Career Workshops	115	27	142	19%
Campus Coach Visit	615	671	1286	52%
Career Exploration Workshop	656	409	1065	38%
Career Panel/Guest Speaker	0	45	45	100%
Career Workshop	112	243	355	68%
College Application Workshop	577	646	1223	53%
College Field Trip	1333	672	2005	34%
College Greenlight	233	497	730	68%
College Selection Workshop	340	548	888	62%
Communication Skills	23	29	52	56%
Cultural Events	214	51	265	19%
ESOL Support (new)	2	14	16	88%
Essay Writing	422	636	1058	60%
Financial Aid Workshop	446	548	994	55%
Financial Literacy Workshop	509	365	874	42%
Grade Level Orientation (pre Orientation)	792	1671	2463	68%
Kick-Off Event (pre Kick-Off)	504	495	999	50%
Oral Communication Workshop	180	102	282	36%
Other	556	668	1224	55%
Resume Workshop	411	438	849	52%
SAT/ACT Prep	84	225	309	73%
Saturday School	34	27	61	44%
Scholarship Workshop	397	536	933	57%
Service Learning	64	24	88	27%
Study Skills (pre Study Sessions)	221	460	681	68%
Summer Bridge (Rising 11th) (rename)	321	407	728	56%
Summer Bridge (Rising 12th/USG)	422	440	862	51%
Time Management (pre in Personal/Social)	76	156	232	67%
TOTAL	9659	11050	20709	53%

2019-20	Attended		Total	
Workshop/Event	No	Yes	Total Participa- tion	% Participation
ACE Your Career Overview	1146	751	1897	40%
Art & Culture Career Workshops	347	61	408	15%
Campus Coach Visit	403	461	864	53%
Career Exploration Workshop	417	435	852	51%
Career Immersion Trip	947	97	1044	9%
Career Panel/Guest Speaker	176	61	237	26%
Career Workshop	15	85	100	85%
College Application Workshop	570	621	1191	52%
College Field Trip	1404	641	2045	31%
College Greenlight	270	336	606	55%
College Selection Workshop	304	664	968	69%
Cultural Events	101	28	129	22%
Essay Writing	240	335	575	58%
Financial Aid Workshop	416	417	833	50%
Financial Literacy Workshop	259	472	731	65%
Grade Level Orientation (pre Orientation)	621	1259	1880	67%
Interpersonal Skill	17	41	58	71%
Interview Skills Workshop	486	278	764	36%
Kick-Off Event (pre Kick-Off)	89	24	113	21%
Oral Communication Workshop	118	66	184	36%
Other	1062	1001	2063	49%
Professional Pathways Expo	528	284	812	35%
Professionalism Workshop	281	106	387	27%
reachHire Summer Bridge	885	682	1567	44%
Resume Workshop	245	307	552	56%
SAT/ACT Prep	625	199	824	24%
Saturday School	213	33	246	13%
Scholarship Workshop	391	576	967	60%
Service Learning	659	41	700	6%
Small Group Career Coaching	0	103	103	100%
STEM Event	1080	37	1117	3%
Study Skills (pre Study Sessions)	318	550	868	63%
Summer Bridge (Rising 11th) (rename)	776	838	1614	52%
Summer Bridge (Rising 12th/USG)	73	175	248	71%
Time Management (pre in Personal/Social)	31	36	67	54%
TOTAL	15513	12101	27614	44%

MCPS Survey

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (MCPS)

Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey regarding your experience during the 2019-20 school year with ACES. Your confidential feedback will help us improve the program. Given COVID-19, we ask you to consider your answers to these questions in the time period before the shutdown. Thank you for your help!

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (MCPS)

1. What school did you attend in 2019-20?

2. What grade were you in during the 2019-20 school year?

3. Did you graduate from high school this year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. How did you first learn about ACES? (Check all that apply)

☐ During a class

☐ A teacher

☐ During an assembly

☐ A flier or school bulletin

☐ A school counselor

☐ Another student

☐ The ACES Coach

☐ My parent/guardian

☐ The College and Career Information Coordinator

☐ ACES postcard sent to me

☐ An administrator

☐ ACES website

☐ Other (please specify)

5. Why did you apply to ACES? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ I wanted to explore options for attending college. | ☐ I wanted one-on-one/individual guidance. |
| ☐ I wanted support with preparing for college (such as: grades, SAT/ACT, ACCUPLACER, study skills, course selection, etc.). | ☐ I wanted to continue to have a coach to guide me after high school (i.e, ACES coaches at Montgomery College and the Universities at Shady Grove). |
| ☐ I wanted assistance with applying to college(s). | ☐ I liked the opportunities that ACES offered students. |
| ☐ I wanted assistance with applying for financial aid. | ☐ My teacher/counselor/parent encouraged me to apply. |
| ☐ I wanted assistance with applying for scholarships. | |
| ☐ Other (please specify) | |

6. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The ACES application was easy for me	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES motivated me to go to college.	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES helped prepare me academically for the college application process (i.e. high school course selection, grades, taking the SAT/ACT/ACCUPLACER, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES assisted me with exploring colleges and universities to which I might want to apply.	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES assisted me with exploring college majors and career interests.	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES assisted me in understanding the college application process.	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES helped me prepare for college.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ACES workshop topics were useful to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The times available for the ACES workshops were convenient for me. (pre-COVID shutdown)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participation in ACES is/was important for me to achieve my future goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall, I looked forward to ACES activities such as the workshops, meeting with coach, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would recommend ACES to other students.	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My ACES coach provided me with helpful information and guidance.	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach provided my parent(s)/guardian(s) with helpful information and guidance	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach worked with me to develop a plan for college.	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach kept me focused and on target.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have a good relationship with my ACES coach.	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach cares about me.	☐	☐	☐	☐
My coach understands the things that could make it difficult for me to attend college.	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
ACES assisted me in understanding how to apply for financial aid.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES assisted me in understanding how to apply for scholarships.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My coach helps remove or reduce any barriers between me and attending college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I need help (like tutoring that my coach can't give), my coach refers me to someone who can help me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My coach was available to meet if I needed any assistance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. What is your current college plan upon high school graduation? (Select the most appropriate answer)

- ☐ I plan to attend Montgomery College. ☐ I do not plan to go to college immediately after high school.
- ☐ I plan to attend Montgomery College and transfer to USG. ☐ I plan to attend a trade school.
- ☐ I plan to attend Montgomery College and transfer to a different four-year college or university. ☐ I plan to join the military.
- ☐ I plan to attend a two-year college other than Montgomery College. ☐ Undecided
- ☐ I plan to attend a different four-year college or university.

Other

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (MCPS)

10. Did COVID-19 alter your plans for college this fall?

- ☐ Yes, I decided not to go to college this fall due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ Yes, I changed my college this fall due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ Yes, I decided to take fewer courses than normal due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ No, it did not impact my decisions for fall 2020
- ☐ I'm still undecided what I am doing this fall

If yes, please describe how your decision was changed.

11. If you changed colleges due to COVID-19, which college did you change to?

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (MCPS)

12. How helpful were the following items?

	Very helpful	Helpful	Not that helpful	Not at all helpful	N/A
ACES workshops	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information about careers and majors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information about colleges and universities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information about scholarships and financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information about ACES Pathways from MCPS to MC and USG	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Field trips (i.e., college tour, college fair, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Connecting with other students in ACES	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. What were some of the challenges you faced in ACES? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ The ACES workshops were scheduled at times I could not attend.
- ☐ I wasn't sure whether to go to my ACES Coach, counselor or College & Career Coordinator for assistance
- ☐ It was hard to find a time in my schedule to meet with my ACES Coach.
- ☐ There were no challenges.
- ☐ It was hard to keep myself motivated to participate in ACES.

Other (please specify)

14. Tell us two or more of your favorite things about ACES.

15. Tell us two or more ways we could improve ACES.

16. With the closing of schools due to COVID-19, ACES started providing virtual support to students. Please describe your virtual experience with ACES and offer any suggestions for improvement.

17. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other (specify)

18. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian / Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ White / Caucasian
- ☐ Multiple ethnicity / Other (please specify)

19. What is your high school GPA?

- ☐ 4.1 or above
- ☐ 3.6 - 4.0
- ☐ 3.1 - 3.5
- ☐ 2.6 - 3.0
- ☐ 2.1 - 2.5
- ☐ 2.0 or below

20. Do you have at least one parent/legal guardian who graduated from college in the United States?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

21. Please provide any additional comments about your experience with ACES.

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (MCPS)

Thank you for your help with this survey! Your input is important to us!

Montgomery College Survey

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (Montgomery College)

Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey regarding your experience during the 2019-20 school year with ACES. Your confidential feedback will help us improve the program. Given COVID-19, we ask you to consider your answers to these questions in the time period before the shutdown. Thank you for your help!

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (Montgomery College)

1. What was your primary campus location in 2019-20?

2. Did you take classes at a second campus during the 2019-20 academic year?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, at Germantown Campus
- ☐ Yes, at Rockville Campus
- ☐ Yes, at Takoma Park Campus

3. During the 2019-20 academic year, were you a full-time or part-time student?

- ☐ Full-Time (12 credits or more per semester)
- ☐ Part-Time (less than 12 credits per semester)
- ☐ Differed by semesters

4. Did COVID-19 impact your ability to complete your school year in spring 2020?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ If yes, please explain.

5. During the 2019-20 academic year, did you earn any of the following?

- ☐ Associate's Degree
- ☐ Certificate
- ☐ I did not earn an AA or Certificate in 2019-20

6. Do you plan on attending college (anywhere) this fall?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Undecided

7. Did COVID-19 alter your plans for college this fall?

- ☐ Yes, I decided not to attend college this fall due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ Yes, I changed colleges this fall due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ Yes, I decided to take fewer courses than normal due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ No, it did not impact my decisions for fall 2020

8. If you answered yes to the prior question, please elaborate.

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (Montgomery College)

9. Where will you be attending this fall?

- ☐ Montgomery College (Germantown Campus)
- ☐ Montgomery College (Rockville Campus)
- ☐ Montgomery College (Takoma Park Campus)
- ☐ The Universities at Shady Grove
- ☐ A different college
- ☐ If a different college, which one?

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (Montgomery College)

10. How likely are you to do each of the following?

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
Obtain an Associates Degree (or already have)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transfer to a four-year college in the Maryland system	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transfer to a four-year college outside the Maryland system	☐	☐	☐	☐
Obtain a Bachelor's degree	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. What term best describes you during the 2019-20 academic year?

- ☐ First-Year MC Student
- ☐ Second-Year (or later) MC Student

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (Montgomery College)

12. This question is only for first-year MC students in 2019-20 (Skip otherwise). Please rate the following workshops. (Select N/A if you did not participate in the particular workshop).

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
Welcome! (September)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brain Training (October)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Financing College (November)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Choosing Your Major (December)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transfer Planning (February)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Managing Stress (March)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Career Exploration (April)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal Finance (May)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (Montgomery College)

13. This question is for second-year (or more) MC students in 2019-20. First-year students skip this question. Please rate the following workshops. (Select N/A if you did not participate in the particular workshop).

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
Welcome Back! (September)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Resume Development (October)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Networking (November)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
LinkedIn (December)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sourcing Internships (February)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Diplomacy Matters (March)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interviewing Skills (April)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Psychology of Thriving (May)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. Which of the following ACES activities did you participate in during the 2019-20 academic year? (Select N/A if you did not participate in the particular workshop)

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
The ACES "Make Your Move" summer program at MC during summer 2019	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attended USG visits to MC	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Attended USG transfer fair	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visit to a 4-year college other than Universities at Shady Grove	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In person meeting with my ACES coach during fall semester	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In person meeting with my ACES coach during spring semester	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participate in an ACES Registration Lab	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visit with a representative from a USG program/university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. Which of the following topics were discussed during one on one meetings with your Academic coach either in person or via Zoom? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Academic Planning
- ☐ Transfer planning
- ☐ Completing a transfer college application
- ☐ Housing support
- ☐ Food support
- ☐ Mental health support
- ☐ Referral

Other (please explain)

16. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your experience with ACES at Montgomery College in 2019-20.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
The ACES program supported me in selecting and registering for courses.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ACES program assisted me with exploring college majors and career interests.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ACES program helped me to find financial aid or scholarships or both.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ACES program helped me complete financial aid and/or scholarship forms.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ACES program assisted me with exploring colleges and universities to attend after Montgomery College.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ACES workshops were held on convenient days and times for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall, the ACES workshop topics were useful to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your experience with ACES at Montgomery College in 2019-20.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
My ACES coach provided me with helpful information and guidance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach worked with me to develop a plan for the 2019-20 year.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach kept track of my academic progress at Montgomery College.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have a good relationship with my ACES coach.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach helped remove/reduce any barriers between me and my success at college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I need help (like tutoring) that my ACES coach can't give, he/she referred me to someone who can help me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When things happen that might affect my success at college, my ACES coach had suggestions for what to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach understood the things that could make it difficult for me to succeed at college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach was available when I needed any assistance or information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES coach regularly communicated with me through texts, emails, or phone calls.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. Did any of the following prevent you from staying or being successful in college during the 2019-20 academic year?

- ☐ Course work too challenging
- ☐ Family obligations
- ☐ Finances
- ☐ Mental health
- ☐ Physical health
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Job obligations
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ COVID-19
- ☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

19. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your experience at Montgomery College in 2019-20.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The ACES program motivated me to stay in college.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The ACES program helped me get through my first year of college.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would recommend the ACES program to other students.	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. Please mark the choice that best represents your overall experience in the ACES program in 2019-20.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
My overall experience in the ACES program was...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. What challenges, if any, did you face in the ACES program? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Scheduling of ACES workshops.
- ☐ Scheduling time to meet with my ACES Coach.
- ☐ Contacting my ACES Coach.
- ☐ No ACES coach on campus.
- ☐ Staying motivated to participate in ACES.
- ☐ None of the Above

Other (please specify)

22. Please tell us two of your favorite things about ACES.

23. Please tell us two ways we could improve ACES to better meet your needs.

24. With the closing of colleges due to COVID-19, ACES started providing virtual support to students. Please describe your virtual experience with ACES and offer any suggestions for improvement.

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (Montgomery College)

25. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other (specify)

26. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian / Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ White / Caucasian
- ☐ Multiple ethnicity / Other (please specify)

27. What is your current or final college GPA?

- ☐ 4.1 or above
- ☐ 3.6 - 4.0
- ☐ 3.1 - 3.5
- ☐ 2.6 - 3.0
- ☐ 2.1 - 2.5
- ☐ 2.0 or below

28. What year did you graduate from MCPS?

29. Do you have at least one parent/legal guardian who graduated from college in the United States?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (Montgomery College)

Thank you for your help with this survey! Your input is important to us!

Universities at Shady Grove Survey

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (The Universities at Shady Grove)

Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey regarding your experience during the 2019-20 school year with ACES. Your confidential feedback will help us improve the program. Given COVID-19, we ask you to consider your answers to these questions in the time period before the shutdown. Thank you for your help!

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (The Universities at Shady Grove)

1. What home institution were you associated with in 2019-20?

2. Did you take classes at a second (non-USG) campus during the 2019-20 academic year?

☐ No

☐ Yes

☐ If yes, where?

3. During the 2019-20 academic year, were you a full-time or part-time student?

☐ Full-Time (12 credits or more per semester)

☐ Part-Time (less than 12 credits per semester)

☐ Differed by semester

4. Did COVID-19 impact your ability to complete your school year in spring 2020?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ If yes, please explain.

5. Did you finish your USG degree during the 2019-20 academic year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. Do you plan on attending USG this fall?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Undecided

7. Do you plan on attending another college this fall?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Undecided

8. If yes, which one?

9. Did COVID-19 alter your plans for college this coming fall?

- ☐ Yes, I decided not to attend college this fall due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ Yes, I changed colleges this fall due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ Yes, I decided to take fewer courses than normal due in part to COVID-19
- ☐ No, it did not impact my decisions for fall 2020

10. If you answered yes to the previous question, please elaborate.

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (The Universities at Shady Grove)

11. How likely are you to do each of the following?

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
Obtain a Bachelor's Degree (or already have)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Obtain a Master's Degree	☐	☐	☐	☐
Obtain a Professional Degree or Ph.D. (or equivalent)	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Please rate the following activities from 2019-20. (Select N/A if you did not participate in that activity)

[illegible]

13. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your experience at USG in 2019-20.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
ACES supported me in selecting and registering for courses.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES assisted me with exploring college majors and career interests.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES helped me find financial aid or scholarships or both.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES helped me complete financial aid and/or scholarship forms.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES assisted me with exploring graduate programs to attend after USG.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES workshops were held on convenient days and times for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall, the ACES workshop topics were useful to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ACES motivated me to stay in college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would recommend ACES to other students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your experience at USG in 2019-20.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
My ACES Success Coordinator provided me with helpful information and guidance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES Success Coordinator worked with me to develop a plan for the 2019-20 year.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES Success Coordinator kept track of my academic progress at USG.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
I have a good relationship with my ACES Success Coordinator.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES Success Coordinator helped remove/reduce any barriers between me and my success at college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I need help (like tutoring) that my ACES Success Coordinator can't give, he/she referred me to someone who can help me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When things happen that might affect my success at college, my ACES Success Coordinator had suggestions for what to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES Success Coordinator understood the things that could make it difficult for me to succeed at college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES Success Coordinator was available when I needed any assistance or information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My ACES Success Coordinator regularly communicated with me through e-mails or phone calls.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. Did any of the following prevent you from staying or being successful in college during the 2019-20 academic year?

- ☐ Course work too challenging
- ☐ Family obligations
- ☐ Finances
- ☐ Mental health
- ☐ Physical health
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Job obligations
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ COVID-19
- ☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

16. Please mark the choice that best represents your overall experience in the ACES program in 2019-20.

Excellent

Good

Average

Poor

Very Poor

My overall experience in
the ACES program
was...

☐☐☐☐☐

17. What were some of the challenges you faced in the ACES program? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ The ACES workshops were scheduled at times I could not attend.
- ☐ It was hard to find a time in my schedule to meet with my ACES Success Coordinator.
- ☐ It was hard to contact my ACES Success Coordinator.
- ☐ It was hard to keep myself motivated to participate in the ACES program.
- ☐ I wasn't sure whether to go to my ACES Success Coordinator or someone else at USG for help.

Other (please specify)

18. Please tell us two of your favorite things about ACES?

19. Please tell us two ways we could improve ACES to better meet your needs?

20. With the closing of colleges due to COVID-19, ACES started providing virtual support to students. Please describe your virtual experience with ACES and offer any suggestions for improvement.

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (The Universities at Shady Grove)

21. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other (specify)

22. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian / Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ White / Caucasian
- ☐ Multiple ethnicity / Other (please specify)

23. What was your GPA in 2019-20?

- ☐ 4.1 or above
- ☐ 3.6 - 4.0
- ☐ 3.1 - 3.5
- ☐ 2.6 - 3.0
- ☐ 2.1 - 2.5
- ☐ 2.0 or below

24. Do you have at least one parent/legal guardian who graduated from college in the United States?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2019-20 ACES Student Survey (The Universities at Shady Grove)

Thank you for your help with this survey! Your input is important to us!



2020