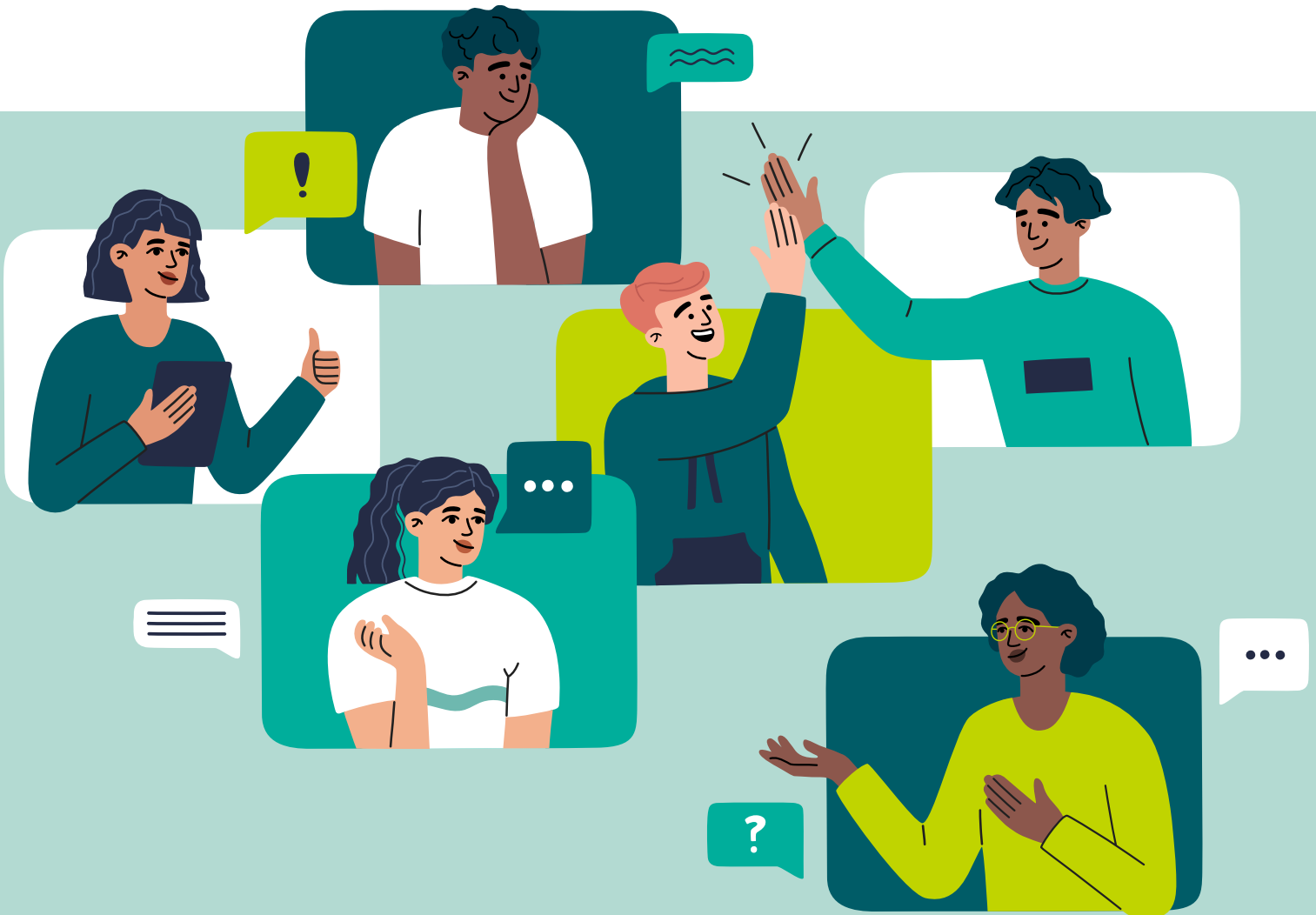education
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Effective Approaches to Reengaging Young Adults

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About Education Northwest

Founded as a nonprofit corporation in 1966, Education Northwest builds capacity in schools, families, and communities through applied research and development.

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Introduction

More than 4 million young adults in the United States have disengaged from the K–12 education system prior to earning a diploma or GED and have not yet entered the workforce. Several factors are expected to significantly increase the number of disconnected young adults in the coming years, including school closures, the shift to virtual learning, and an economic slowdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Lewis, 2022). This will result in even greater demand for high-quality reengagement efforts. Yet, while there is some evidence of successful reengagement of young adults (Aspen Institute, 2019; Bangser, 2013), the field still lacks a rigorous research base examining the implementation and effectiveness of specific reengagement programs, program models, and strategies. In a recent review of existing evidence, the Aspen Institute (2019) identified three key gaps in the literature, related to program design:

- What are the characteristics of young adults served by reengagement programs and how do they differ by program?

- How do the theories of change for different young adult reengagement program models differ?

- What are the essential, non-essential, and ineffective components of young adult reengagement programs and the key factors that impact implementation and effectiveness?

To help address these gaps in the literature, the Annie E. Casey Foundation asked Education Northwest to conduct an evaluation of young adult reengagement program models. This report provides a clearer picture of the goals, theories of change, and practices being used across a diverse sample of reengagement programs, as well as a deeper understanding of the experiences of young adults in these programs. The guiding evaluation questions were:

1. What are the specific outcomes for young adults each program seeks to achieve (e.g., how is success measured)?

2. What strategy/approach does each program deploy to reengage young adults and accomplish these outcomes?

   a. How do young adults experience the reengagement strategy of each program?

   b. How are the diverse goals of young adults addressed?

3. How have programs adapted their services and approach in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Advisory group

Education Northwest convened a panel of experts in the field of youth reengagement to provide feedback over the course of the evaluation. This advisory group included young adults who successfully reengaged and completed their high-school education, as well as researchers, program leaders, and policymakers. The group assisted with site selection, reviewed the evaluation questions and study methods at several key stages, engaged in a facilitated discussion about the challenges faced by reengagement programs and the young adults they serve, and provided feedback on this final report. This evaluation was funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Foundation.

Methods

With the support of the advisory group, the evaluation team developed criteria to select six reengagement programs for the study (table 1). Key criteria included programs that serve a diverse population, engage in either passive or active outreach/referral of young people, and represent geographic diversity across the United States. The evaluation team conducted qualitative, semi-structured interviews and focus groups with program leaders, staff members, participants, alumni, and stakeholders. These engagements were 45 to 90 minutes long, covered a range of topics (figure 1), and were conducted either virtually via Zoom or in person. The evaluation team also collected and reviewed documents provided by each of the six evaluation sites to gain a deeper understanding of their local contexts. These artifacts included, but were not limited to, the program theory of change and/or logic model, program implementation materials and manuals, and financial reports. A complete list of documents collected from each site is in appendix B.

Figure 1. Interview topics discussed

- Program design
- Strategies to reengage young adults
- COVID innovations and adjustments
- Process to develop youth and young adult goals
- Alignment of goals to program strategies

- Perceptions of young adult experiences from program leader and staff perspectives
- Young adult experiences from their own perspectives
- Program success
- Essential program elements

Table 1. Reengagement programs included in the evaluation

Program	Description and characteristics	Web address
DC ReEngagement Center (DC REC), Washington, DC	**Description:** The DC REC is a "single door" through which youth who have dropped out of secondary school can reconnect to educational options and other critical services to support their attainment of a high school diploma or GED. **Age served:** Ages 16–24 **Services:** The DC REC conducts targeted outreach to students who have dropped out, walk-ins, and referrals; assesses academic status and non-academic needs of youth and uses this information to help them develop personalized reengagement plans; identifies good-fit educational options; supports the reenrollment process; and provides ongoing support for at least one year once youth have reenrolled.	**https://osse. dc.gov/service/dc- reengagement-center**
FastForward Re-Engagement Center (FFRC), Dayton, OH	**Description:** FFRC assists youth who are out of school, not attending regularly, or are credit deficient to identify a best-fit academic option to complete their high school credential and career pathway. **Ages served:** Ages 15–24 **Services:** FFRC provides a central location in a safe space for students and families to access the resources and coaching needed to reenroll in school and get back on track to graduation.	**https://www.sinclair.edu/ academics/fast-forward- re-engagement-center/**
Opportunities for Youth (OFY), Phoenix, AZ	**Description:** OFY harnesses the power of cross-sector collaboration to create a comprehensive system of opportunity that reengages disconnected youth. **Ages served:** Varies by partner service provider **Services:** With a network of partners, OFY maintains a system of 18 reengagement centers; collaborates with education partners to reduce barriers to reenrollment; supports employers to effectively recruit, hire, and retain opportunity youth; raises awareness and builds public support of programs that help opportunity youth reengage in school and/or work; ensures opportunity youth and their unique needs are considered in education and workforce development planning; and supports a system of collaboration and alignment to avoid duplication and effectively serve as many opportunity youth as possible.	**https://oppforyouth.org/**

Program	Description and characteristics	Web address
Gateway to College, Front Range Community College (CC), Westminster, CO	**Description:** Gateway to College Front Range CC works with youth who have dropped out of high school or are behind in their high school credits for their age. **Ages served:** Ages 16–21 **Services:** Gateway to College Front Range CC aims to help students to achieve their high school diploma while creating a direct path for a successful future through the provision of dual community college credit. The program serves students from five school districts: Mapleton 1, Adams 12, Brighton 27J, Westminster, and Jefferson County. It partners with these districts to identify and enroll students who are an appropriate fit.	**https://www.frontrange. edu/programs-courses/ gateway-to-college/**
Gateway to College and Career Academy (GCCA), Riverside, CA	**Description:** GCCA is a dual enrollment public high school specializing in serving youth who are disconnected from their education and not on track to obtain their high school diplomas. **Ages served:** Up to age 21 **Services:** GCCA offers a small supportive school setting. Students get individualized attention from highly experienced, passionate, and encouraging teachers and counselors. GCCA students can attend classes at Riverside City College and have access to all support services on the college campus.	**https://riversidegcca.org/**
NXT Level Youth Opportunity Center, San Antonio, TX	**Description:** NXT Level connects youth who are not working or in school to education and career pathways. **Ages served:** Ages 16–24 **Services:** Education/career and life coaches at the center collaborate with participants to create individualized education plans and facilitate enrollment in appropriately aligned programs.	**https://nxtlevelsa.org/**

Note: Opportunities for Youth is the backbone organization for a collective of reengagement centers across the Phoenix metropolitan area. It is unique in this evaluation as it is the only program that is not a stand-alone reengagement center. Two Gateway to College programs were chosen as they each presented a unique variation of the Gateway to College program model.

Source: Authors' analysis of program websites.

DATA ANALYSIS AND MEANING MAKING

Interview and focus group data were captured in field notes and (with permission) audio or video recordings. The data were analyzed both inductively and deductively. The evaluation team deductively developed a coding framework grounded in the collective goals of the evaluation and previous literature on youth reengagement programs. We concurrently allowed for open (inductive) coding during analysis to support a grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006).

Participants

After selecting sites, the evaluation team conducted outreach to program leaders to discuss the nature of the project and request their involvement. To ensure this work was beneficial to the programs, the research team noted that each program would receive a memo detailing key findings for their specific site. While some program leaders provided contact information for their current students and alumni, others were more actively engaged in arranging interviews and focus groups. All youth were compensated with a $50 electronic gift card for their participation. Additionally, some program alumni were asked to help facilitate student interviews to help students feel more comfortable about engaging in conversation. These alumni were compensated with $150 for both their participation in interviews and support in facilitation. Eighty-two persons associated with the six reengagement sites participated in the interviews and focus groups. A count by program and role of participants is included in appendix A.

The evaluation team administered a demographic survey to the 35 program participants and alumni who took part in focus groups. The response rate to this survey was 57 percent (N = 20). The race/ethnicity and gender of respondents is shown in tables 2 and 3, respectively. Additional contextual information related to participating youth and alumni is in appendix A. As our sample of program participants was not randomly selected, these data are to be viewed as descriptive and not representative.

Table 2. Race/ethnicity of focus group program participants and alumni

Black or African American	Latina/o/x or Hispanic	White	Two or more races
30%	55%	30%	15%

Note: N = 20; results indicate only those categories that were selected.

Table 3. Gender of focus group program participants and alumni

Female	Male	Transgender	Prefer not to answer
60%	35%	5%	5%

Note: N = 20.

Key findings

Program measures of success

PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

Overwhelmingly, program participants and alumni noted their expectation in engaging with their respective reengagement program was to obtain a high school diploma or GED. However, participants in programs that are directly connected to postsecondary institutions reported this connection provided them with additional opportunities they had not initially planned to pursue. This was most prominently mentioned by participants in the two Gateway to College programs included in the study, both of which are housed on a community college campus and engage students in high school credit recovery while simultaneously offering community college credits. Participants reported that this close association to a community college and opportunity to get started on a postsecondary degree encouraged them to continue their education.

> *"Dual enrollment seemed like a dream come true; college wasn't in the picture for me until Gateway came around."*
>
> **— Gateway to College FRCC program participant**

METRICS MEASURED BY PROGRAMS

Staff members at reengagement programs reported monitoring a range of variables aligned to program success. Not surprisingly, the most frequently reported variable was the outcome of obtaining a high school diploma or GED. The two other variables most frequently reported were the number of youth enrolled in the program and various measures of persistence within the program.

> *"The name of the game is enrollment and attainment."*
>
> **— Program leader**

Program oversight varied, depending on the funder or backbone organization. For example, local Gateway to College programs are accountable to the national Gateway to College office, while Gateway to College Front Range CC is also accountable to its partner school districts. Meanwhile, GCCA functions much like an autonomous school district, with a governing board that acts much as a board of trustees would. NXT Level and FastForward receive most of their funding from the local municipalities, which concurrently oversee their progress toward outcomes. Opportunity for Youth (OFY) has recently shifted it's funding from 100 percent philanthropic to a balance of 50 percent from the local city and county and 50 percent from philanthropies. As a result, OFY programs now have dual oversight and monitoring from those respective entities.

Reengagement strategies

OUTREACH AND PATHWAYS TO REENGAGEMENT

Based on a review of program documents, most programs conducted outreach through recruitment events or information sessions in targeted communities. However, most programs also relied heavily on referrals from partner school districts or organizations to identify candidates for program enrollment. Three programs—DC REC, NXT Level, and OFY—allowed for walk-in enrollees, while the three other programs required some form of referral and screening of applicants prior to reengagement. In interviews, participants and alumni said connections frequently happened by word of mouth or a specific referral from a school district staff member. Several participants said they were connected to the reengagement program by friends or family members who had previous experience with the program.

> *"It's really about the person. It's about what you [the individual] want … if [you] don't want to learn, [you] won't go. You have to want to come to school. Now … I know better. And now I'm back in school."*
>
> **— Program participant**

Regardless of how the specific connection to the reengagement program happened, participants and alumni made clear that the decision to reengage was driven by personal motivation and not by school personnel or program advertising. Many participants mentioned that their primary motivation for reengaging was simply the realization that obtaining a high school credential would improve their ability to earn a living and raise their quality of life. Specifically, participants and alumni mentioned family reasons, such as not wanting to serve as a negative role model for their children or not wanting to be the only grandchild who did not graduate from high school.

PERSONALIZED SUPPORT

Several participants mentioned the important role a single individual had played in helping them navigate the reengagement process, and this focus on relationships and individualized support was also identified as a key support by the program personnel.[1] All the programs assign an individual support person to each participant. This person provides ongoing support throughout the reengagement journey, while also monitoring progress and letting the participant know someone cares and is paying attention. In many cases this support continues even when a young person is disengaged from the reengagement program. For example, one participant in the DC REC program commented that they stopped attending following the onset of the pandemic in March 2020 until spring 2021, but each week of the period they were away, their assigned support person reached out on Monday mornings to see if they would attend that week or if there was any support they could provide.

Going above and beyond

Another key strategy identified by program staff members was the willingness to go "above and beyond" in providing individualized support. When asked to define that term, staff members described it as providing support outside of what programs considered their typical job description and/or outside normal work hours. As a result, this strategy is heavily reliant on the willingness of individual employees to implement it, without being paid to do so. Meanwhile, program participants also overwhelmingly identified "above and beyond" support from staff members as an essential program component. Program participants and alumni provided multiple examples, including staff members who would call outside of working hours to check on them and staff members who provided baby clothes, diapers, baby formula, a mattress, housing, and food or other necessities, often at their own expense (figure 2).

> *"In high school, whatever I did, unless they called home, no one really knew about it. So, it's just my problem to deal with. So now, if you miss a class, the case manager, they'll text you like, "Hey, you missed this class. Did you catch up on the work? Do you need help with it?"*
>
> **— Program participant**

> *"The most essential component to our program's success. Most essential. It's the staff."*
>
> **— Program administrator**

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[1] The programs used different terms to describe their system of individualized support. For the purposes of this report, the advisory group suggested that "case management" had potentially negative connotations and should not be used as the umbrella term for individualized support. However, quotes from participants were not edited if "case management" or "case manager" were used as descriptors.

Figure 2. Specific quotes from program participants capturing the impact of staff members' willingness to go above and beyond

Yeah. And whenever you start slipping or whatever, trying to dodge their phone calls and whatnot, they'll keep calling you and calling you. Not back-to-back, but they'll check up with you twice a week to make sure, "Hey, are you good? Do you need to come in? What can we do for you? Is there anything that you want to work on?" And I just think it's super cool because honestly, I didn't think I was worth getting my education. When I first came here, I was still partying and stuff. I didn't even feel like I was worth being sober for my daughter. And it wasn't until I started getting my education stuff there, I was like, you know what? If I'm actually going to be someone, I really need to get sober. And because I was hooked on drugs from the age I was 13 until like 20. So, it was something hard to let go of. But I never felt I was worth being sober. It's just really cool.

When I first started, the judge told me that I had to get my GED. Well, they helped me find a GED program that I could go to. And I'm not sure if it's a free program or what, but they made sure I had a bus ticket to get there. And then they also helped me find childcare for my daughter. And they would also help me out with diapers and clothes for my daughter, and sometimes formula. I was doing parenting classes here. When I first started, Miss Miriam was my life coach. And now she's a counselor. So, I would go talk with her and she's just so supportive and all of them really are. And yeah, so they provided emotional support as well.

He got me a mattress because I was like, "I can't sleep at home." Like, I don't have anywhere to sleep. I'm sleeping on the floor. And it's like, my back freaking hurts. So, I can't get no sleep. Everybody's walking back and forth. I sleep in the living room."

There were times they were doing more for me than anybody has ever done for me.

My philosophy was: I'll put in as much work as you put in on me. So, I was like, I'm not going to give an ounce more than you're giving. And from day one, it was 100 percent effort on every single one of the persons involved. So, I was like, OK, at this moment, it's 100 percent full effort. It's not like that K–12 model where it's like some teachers are interested, some aren't. It's, they're all fully interested, and you take the leap and be fully interested in making your goals happen.

The on-call nature of this support was also noted as a key factor in staff burnout, however, which program personnel identified as a key challenge in maintaining strong programs and providing consistent staffing. Program staff members described working all hours of the day and providing whatever support program participants needed in the moment (figure 3).

Figure 3. Program staff descriptions of work hours and burnout

Black Fridays, I actually go to our students that are working that night at their jobs and go visit them. They're like, "Miss _____, you're actually here! You said you would be. I can't believe it." So, they see you in the community and say, "Yeah, I'm a person," and it's nice.

We get text messages off hours. And not only that, we also assume several psychosocial roles. So, we become kind of like indirect counselors. We become, at times, like, "You think I should go to the doctor?" Well, what you're explaining to me sounds like you may need to go to the doctor.

The accountability. This is what we always have to remind them at week eight or week seven. Coming in, they're always like, "Oh, I'm really excited that you're going to hold my feet to the fire. My attendance has been terrible. I'm scared to death about this 85 percent attendance requirement, but I understand you might come knock on my door. I got it, and I need that. I understand you're going to blow my phone up at 8:00 in the morning. I need that. I need those accountability measures." And so, they get excited. It's a different type of support that they can have that is going to push them to hit the bar.

It's a slippery slope, as to when your day ends. So, as far as burnout goes, with the nature of having whatever type of support system we want to create, which is the beauty of our program, it's also—when are you not supporting? The school day's not over at 3 o'clock and you're going home. I'm getting text messages at any time of the day from any number of students, and so are the resource specialist and whoever else. And if you want to choose to entertain that or not, it's on you. But once you start entertaining it, it's a slippery slope.

FLEXIBILITY

Program participants described flexibility as a key factor in their ability to successfully reengage. This was defined in multiple ways. For example, some participants mentioned flexible schedules, such as the ability to attend academic programs on evenings and weekends, if necessary. Others mentioned the opportunity to take extension courses in winter and summer to make up for work that was not completed in the normal fall and spring semesters.

Flexibility is also provided to students in the form of autonomy. Program participants said they often felt treated as "children" in their original school setting, but in the reengagement program they felt as if they were viewed and treated as adults. This meant being allowed to establish their own schedules and not being required to be on the school campus for eight hours a day if their program requirements (e.g., which classes they needed for credit) did not necessitate it. This was especially important for students who mentioned dealing with mental health issues. The ability to get away from the academic setting when needed was essential for these students.

Flexibility was also defined as the understanding that a person's path, once they reengage, may not be linear. Those who reengage may start and stop programs for a variety of reasons. Several participants said the willingness of a program to hold their enrollment slot, through these ups and downs, was essential to their ultimate success.

> *"I think that's what really makes students gravitate towards the school, is the flexibility of the program and then the relationships that build. And it's a natural build. So, I think [the relationships] keep them here, but the flexibility gets them in the door."*
>
> **– Program staff**

> *"That's the beauty of the program—that they don't have to be in school for eight hours. They're only in there for four hours. We have a lot of students with mental health and behavioral issues that deal with depression, anxiety—especially anxiety after COVID. We noticed that they can only tolerate being on campus for maybe two to three hours."*
>
> **– Program staff**

> *"Something we've learned is that Opportunity Youth have disengaged for a reason. There's often that situation where they're really connected and then they drop off and then they come back. For us, it's about seeing the coming back part as most important. That means we've gained their trust. When they start asking for help from their coaches, then we know that rapport is actually working.."*
>
> **– Program staff**

WRAP-AROUND SERVICES

Interviewees reported that for someone to reengage in school, the individual motivation must exist, but **desire alone is not enough to mitigate possible barriers.** These barriers can include lack of access to government benefits (e.g., SNAP), childcare, and transportation; housing instability or houselessness; lack of employment scheduling/flexibility to allow for attendance in academic courses; and mental health issues. Program leaders and participants emphasized the importance of providing **wrap-around services** to help young adults overcome these barriers. Most programs had partnerships within the community to help provide such services as stipends for transportation or a bus pass, on-site childcare, and a food bank for students to access when needed.

> *"It's the wrap-around support that Gateway to College provides—the one-on-one connections and that system of support is what the students indicate made a difference and what I see as being the biggest factor, as well. It's the ability to make a connection with a trusted adult that they can rely on when things get tough ... and then the program coming around with support also. That could be academic support, mental health support, or just that connection of social support. They've just broken up from a boyfriend or a girlfriend and school is not as important all of a sudden, and you need to keep them engaged and help them see the big picture. So, that level of wraparound support is, by far, the biggest impact on the ability of these students to stay engaged, even through difficult times."*
>
> **– Program stakeholder**

For some programs, this required a shift in thinking and approach, as it was not how they were originally conceived. FastForward program leaders noted that when the program was originally established it was a standalone center for walk-in students to gain information about reengaging, get an academic assessment, and a receive a referral to a program. It is in only in the past five years that the program has expanded its scale of services for young adults.

DC REC program leaders identified the **mitigation of barriers as the keystone to their program** and a necessary first step before assisting participants with academic reengagement. Similarly, a partner center within the OFY network is located within a YMCA facility. This connection allows the program to provide on-site childcare and assistance with financial literacy and occupational skills, in addition to the GED or diploma program.

> *"Step one, barrier mitigation prior to getting access to GED or HS diploma. How to receive benefits. Build awareness so they can navigate. Start advocating for themselves. Better quality life by obtaining primary resources."*
>
> **– DC REC Program staff**

Concurrently, OFY partners with the Phoenix Indian Center, which connects American Indian youth with a staff member who facilitates access to housing, substance abuse prevention, and mental health support. Additionally, the program connects participants to Native culture through programs such as language, storytelling, and cultural revitalization activities.

POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION SUPPORTS

All six programs included in the study identified **support for transition from a GED or high school diploma program to a postsecondary program or employment** as a key reengagement strategy. This can take many forms. For example, the OFY partner program located in a YMCA has a fully functioning T-shirt printing shop, which allows them to offer an internship that provides participants with a source of income and the opportunity to learn from a small business owner about entrepreneurship, thus opening the path for postsecondary employment.

The two Gateway to College programs and FastForward are area associated with community colleges. Leaders from these programs identified the close coordination and relationships it affords—as important elements in their ability to help young adults transition from obtaining a high school credential to enrolling in a postsecondary program. Each program facilitates direct access to community college counselors who help participants identify potential academic and career pathways.

All programs in the study provided some form of support for participants interested in pursuing further education upon completion of their high school credential. That transition support was more explicitly described by interviewees from the community college–aligned programs, but the other three programs also provided participants with an individually assigned support person to help them identify best-fit postsecondary options and then navigate

"They help find programs … like [today] I'm going to get glasses at the Haven for Hope, which is a shelter. But if I would've applied for it myself, I wouldn't have qualified for their program. But since I'm with Next Level, my life coach was just like, 'Hey, I have this participant who needs to get glasses.' And they're like, 'OK, cool. We got her an appointment.' So, that's wonderful."

— Program participant

"Eighty percent of our students continue on to a two- or four-year school, and 65 percent stay here [Front Range Community College]."

— Gateway to College FRCC staff

"I was able to do my intro to auto[motive] at community college because of Gateway. I don't think I would've gone to community college if it wasn't for Gateway, honestly … [Now], I'm out making my own career, doing my own thing, but the fact that they were able to get me into the classes that I wanted and not just the classes that I needed really made a difference for me."

— Gateway to College FRCC participant

the application, enrollment, and financial aid processes. The community college–aligned programs also provided greater options for participants to earn dual credit, which increases the likelihood that participants will transition from the associated community college to postsecondary degree obtainment.

COVID-19 adaptations

The development of **online support and delivery of educational programs** was the most common adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic discussed by interviewees. Program participants had mixed opinions about virtual attendance. Some felt it was negative—especially those whose circumstances meant they did not have a private space in their residence to listen and engage in classes. Other participants felt having a virtual option was positive, as it provided flexibility to adapt their attendance to their work schedules and eliminated long and arduous commutes. As a result of the positive feedback from participants, most reengagement programs in this study have maintained some form of a virtual option for academic programs and support.

Several programs also made **recruitment adaptations** during the peak of the pandemic, which they have subsequently maintained. One program leader said the pandemic had forced them to figure out how "to bring the reengagement centers to [the program participants]." As a result, the program has developed virtual apps that help current or prospective participants find support services. Other program leaders also acknowledged that many prospective participants would no longer be coming through the door at a brick-and-mortar location, which necessitates finding other ways to connect. Several programs mentioned taking step to increase their social media profiles, and a few began advertising on platforms such as Google and Spotify.

Finally, while it is not an adaptation, the most consistently reported pandemic-related topic was **a decrease in enrollment, compared to pre-pandemic years.**

> *"Always evolve ... we no longer need to have brick and mortar places to go. It feels like more of our participants prefer to do the virtual option. I don't' think we're ever going to go back to a true "everything-in-person" approach, but we need to look at what it will take to keep the program going and ensure it meets the needs of the people we serve."*
>
> **– Program staff member**

> *"Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we have seen a decrease in our caseload. And we've also seen an increase in disengagement from education. So, this pandemic provided us with additional data that suggests we need to be more intentional about reaching the most vulnerable populations of students and also more intentional about working with our local education agencies to identify solutions."*
>
> **– Program staff**

Recommendations

Interviewees were asked to describe variables or program elements they felt inhibited program success and to provide recommendations for program improvement. In analysis of responses from to these questions we identified three broad areas of focus for improvement of reengagement programs:

- Review and reform policies that were not designed to address the specific needs and contexts of reengagement programs and have been shown to have a negative impact on reengagement

- Design reengagement programs to facilitate "going above and beyond" support that does not staff, recognizes the nonlinear nature of the reengagement path, includes monetary support for program participants, and better incorporates program participants' voice

- Improve youth support in the K–12 system to reduce the number of youth requiring reengagement programs

Remove accountability, eligibility, and funding policy barriers

Reengagement programs typically serve as alternatives to the general K–12 system. Policies, however, are often not developed to match the uniqueness of reengagement programs and their participants. The program leads and staff members who participated in this study reported that they were often required to operate under the same policy framework as a traditional K–12 or community college system. Examples described by interviewees included performance accountability, student eligibility requirements, and funding policies. Reengagement programs associated with school districts may be held to the same **accountability** measures as general schools (e.g., attendance, student academic progress). These metrics may not align to participants' unique pathways or to the definition of success in a reengagement program. Given that the path through reengagement is not linear, program participants may experience positive outcomes (e.g., employment, stable housing, passing some but not yet all of the GED tests) along their journey that were facilitated by the reengagement program along an uneven and disrupted schedule. Traditional education performance and attainment metrics may not capture these successes.

Programs connected to a community college noted that students in reengagement programs are held to the same **eligibility** requirements as students on a traditional path. For instance, a reengaged student must maintain a 2.0 to remain in good standing with the community college. A participant may complete two semesters in a dual credit program and receive Ds in multiple classes (e.g., receive a D grade in English and math). This may mean the participant receives the high school credit but does not receive the community college credit and is placed on academic probation by the college. As noted in the findings, dual credit is a motivator for those who reengage, and policies that limit access to the credits despite participant effort are demotivating. Programs should consider integrating proficiency-based demonstrations of learning versus grades to better align with the needs of youth who are trying to reengage.

Interviewees also identified **funding** as a barrier. In K–12 school systems funding is often tied to individual students. If a student is on the verge of disengaging or has recently disengaged from school, the district will still receive the funding from that individual. If the participant then enters a reengagement program, the district will typically lose all the associated funding. As a result, program leaders and staff members say, school districts are often hesitant to recommend students for enrollment in the program for fear of losing the revenue. In one instance, a program leader noted the district was hesitant to even allow the program to conduct recruitment activities in the district for fear of losing student revenue. Additionally, funding may also limit who reengagement programs can serve. If a program is funded by a municipality or county, and a potential participant does not live within that geographic area, then the program may not be able to enroll that student. Funders and policymakers should consider providing more flexibility to reengagement programs so they can serve any interested participant and not just those who live in a designated geographic area.

> *"The way we fund our schools, the money follows the student. So, the school districts sometimes are, I just say in a nice way, reluctant to use our services because then they feel that our goal is to remove the student from the school, because if the student leaves, then they no longer get the money. So, they're going to hold onto the student as long as they can, regardless of whether it's the best place for them."*
>
> **– Program staff**

Implement program design recommendations

Reengagement programs vary greatly in their approach and contexts. However, based on the study findings, there are four recommendations that may be applicable to many reengagement programs.

First, programs should consider **developing personalized support structures** that facilitate the close relationships between program participants and program staff members and allow for around-the-clock support, while not placing the burden of support on a single staff member. The on-call nature of the staff position that provides individualized support was highlighted as a source of burnout. Programs may want to consider adapting to better facilitate multiple strong relationships between participants and staff members by having support personnel who work in shifts.

Second, programs should consider designing their services to **accommodate the nonlinear nature of reengagement.** Young adults who reengage need to know they have a spot in the program even if they disengage for some period of time, so long as they are within the age range the program supports. Knowing that a spot is still available—and no progress will be lost—not only strengthens the relationship and trust between the program and the participant but enables the participant to achieve their goals on a timeframe that matches their reality.

Third, programs may want to **incorporate monetary incentives** for participants. Staff members commented that many program participants are the providers for their immediate family and must balance their education with earning a living. Concurrently, many program participants may face situations in which they are focused on necessities (i.e., food and shelter) while trying to complete an education that they hope will provide options to remove themselves from poverty. One program participant stated, "The streets had money [dealing drugs]. This program can help with education, but how long until the payout?" Programs should consider how to provide an immediate monetary benefit that can help participants meet their basic needs as they work toward the medium- and long-term benefits of reengagement.

Finally, reengagement programs should consider how they can **include student voice into the design of their program in more meaningful and authentic ways.** While there were many similarities across the six programs included in this study, each program also had unique design elements and was operating in a unique local context. Participants can provide invaluable insight on what is working, what is not working, and how the program can better meet the needs of the local community.

Reduce the pipeline

Many study participants mentioned the important role reengagement programs play in the U.S. education system. However, many participants also mentioned the need to address problems in the general K–12 system that have contributed to the disengagement/reengagement pipeline in the first place. Several of the reengagement strategies described in this report could also be implemented—or scaled up—in the general K–12 school system, including personalized support, flexibility, wrap-around services, and transition support.

Many of the program participants we interviewed said they had disengaged from the K–12 system simply because they **did not receive basic support at a critical moment.** In many cases, these young adults described reaching out to one or more adults in the school during this crisis, only to find that no one had the time, desire, resources, or skills to help (figure 4).

Figure 4. Program participant and alumni descriptions of a lack of basic support in the K–12 setting

The last school that I went to, there weren't a lot of people who went through the same situations that I did, like being homeless or poor, not having clothes, not having food. And you know, my parents are both addicts, and nobody there understood the situations that I was going through. I talked to the teachers. I talked to counselors. I talked to the principal. It just seemed like they all kind of brushed me off.

I just ended up facing a lot of mocking from my peers, and then my teachers being like, "Oh, look who showed up today." Like, when I actually did feel good enough to go to school. When your teacher starts saying shit like that to you, it makes you consider how they really feel about you. And like you're already a teen and you're feeling really vulnerable in this new high school. And so, I was just like, you know, this isn't the place for me.

The biggest factor was my personal life went to hell, so to speak. My parents went through a nasty separation, then divorce. My dad was having health issues at the time. I was talking with one of my guidance counselors and she was wanting to know why I was missing school a lot. And I was like, "My heart's not in it, my head's not in it, my personal life is going to hell. And the people I chose to disclose this with have big mouths. And so of course, everyone around then knows all my issues.

The day I dropped out, my mom was yelling at these [administrators], being like, "Yo, you dropped the ball. You f—d this one up!" And I think to try to save their own butts, they suggested Gateway.

A second shortcoming described within K–12 settings was a lack of **differentiated instruction.** Several program participants we interviewed attributed their disengagement from high school to boredom and a lack of challenging content (figure 5).

Figure 5. Program participant and alumni descriptions of a lack of differentiated instruction in the K–12 setting

I wasn't challenged academically. I would never turn in any homework, and I'd just pass the classes with Cs. If I had an ounce of dedication, I would've been a straight A student, but I was just too bored.

It's not just academic reasons why people are here. It can be things like you weren't challenged in school or you weren't ready to deal with what life handed you at the time.

Figure 6. Program participant and alumni descriptions of a lack of connectedness to the K–12 setting

They [reengagement program staff] make you feel like you're worth it. Because a lot of people, even in educational programs, they'll just say, "Oh, just do whatever. You'll get double." And then they'll eventually give up on you. But with [name], that's not the case. They make you feel like you're worth it. They make you feel like your goals are worth having, and they make you feel like you are capable of achieving your full potential.

I would have to say that [the reengagement program] is a place that cares. People actually want to invest. For some [participants] it's their first time of hearing feedback like, "You got this," or that you're going to do good. Like, "Hey, yo, congratulations, you got a job." Or, "Hey, you've gone to school." Or, "Hey, you're the first person in your family to graduate from high school. You're changing everything up." Just a safe space. Just that comfort there. Like, man, these people are actually here for us.

I think what Gateway does really well and really differently is first of all, not making students feel bad about whatever their situation is. I mean, really understanding, you know? Everybody's had some tough circumstances, maybe they've made some bad choices along the way, and we are here to support them and move forward and help them to be successful.

Me and my friends have this running joke that it's rehab. We're just like, it's rehab for high school. You dropped out for something related, you know, to bad things. So, we all joked that we went to Rehab High. But you know, I'd like to say that it really did save me from a lot of bad things that I would've done had it not come into my life when it did.

I couldn't relate to any of the students. And they sure as hell couldn't relate to me. None of the teachers understood that I was really struggling just to be there.

The fourth recommendation for reducing the reengagement pipeline is to **increase support for the mental health of youth** within the general K–12 education system. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed a mental health crisis among youth in the United States. The U.S. surgeon general recently issued an advisory stating that the pandemic's impact on youth social-emotional/mental health "has been devastating" (Murthy 2021, p. 3). Statements from interviewees point to insufficient mental health support in schools and missed opportunities by school personnel to understand their individual situations as key factors that led them to disengage.

Given the mental health and disengagement crisis for young adults in the United States, one of the primary levers of support for reengagement programs is to do everything we can to address these issues within the general K–12 education system. It is unlikely that reengagement programs would be able to handle a massive increase in the number of students they serve. In addition to increased mental health support, K–12 school systems will need better frameworks and processes for providing all students with individualized support. This includes frameworks for ensuring all students have the opportunity to develop a strong connection with a staff member who actively monitors their progress, coordinates necessary supports, and helps the youth mitigate barriers to engaging in school. Finally, K–12 systems could benefit from more effective and coordinated collaboration with wrap-around service providers. To make this possible, funding policies will need to provide more flexibility to support students in the ways necessary.

Future investigations

This evaluation was limited in scope. To gain a deeper understanding of the reengagement landscape will require further investigation. This could include a focus on reengagement programs that operate within school districts (e.g., Baltimore, Boston, Portland), as this model was not included in this study. Additionally, our findings are similar to those in two recent studies of reengagement programs (Aspen Institute, 2019; Treskon et al., 2022). Collectively, these studies point to two key issues for future investigations related to young adult reengagement.

Identify successful program candidates within each type of program

Treskon and colleagues' (2022) review of the evidence identified a gap in knowledge about what works and for whom. Their recommendation for further study focused on what services and supports are shown to be effective with different youth profiles, especially those who experience the greatest inequalities. The work of the current study corroborated this finding, indicating additional work is needed to develop a profile of successful participants within each type of program. School district stakeholders particular, highlighted this need. In most cases, these stakeholders were allotted limited slots for their students in partner reengagement programs. The school personnel who facilitated making the youth connection stated they often felt like it "was a crapshoot" to determine who to identify as a candidate who would be successful in the program and who may not be a good fit. Reengagement programs vary in their design and in the supports they provide, and it is essential to know more about how programs can tailor their supports to specific students. However, it is also essential to know for whom a program may be a good fit and for whom it may not.

Clarify theories of change

For this study, the evaluation team requested that programs provide their logic model or theory of change. No program had such a document. This further highlights a finding from the Aspen Institute (2019) that pointed to a lack of clear theories of change for previous evaluations of reengagement programs. Several programs reported difficulty in collecting appropriate data and having data systems that align to their program model and the outcomes they wish to measure. These findings speak to the possibility of not having clear theories of change or logic models that drive the program's internal evaluation. Further work is needed to investigate and define program models to help programs clearly define their theory of change and develop a logic model that can guide their internal evaluation.

As the number of young adults who can benefit from a reengagement program increases, the need for programs to demonstrate their value to funders and stakeholders through rigorous evaluations will become more essential. This step could also help programs move away from traditional K–12 metrics to evaluate their programs and toward more program-specific metrics. Finally, a program's ability to internally evaluate, guided by a program theory of change, is a key component of continuous improvement. Given the diversity of implementation models within the field of reengagement and the dearth of research investigating reengagement practices, a program's ability to engage in internal evaluations and subsequent continuous improvement will be essential to ensure improved outcomes for participants and the necessary evolution of programs.

Phase 2 of this study: DC ReEngagement Center outcomes investigation

With support from the Annie E Casey Foundation, EdNW will conduct phase 2 of this evaluation of young adult reengagement strategies, which will focus on participant outcomes. This will entail collecting and analyzing site-specific program implementation and postsecondary enrollment and employment outcome data for the DC ReEngagement Center (DC REC) program. This evaluation will investigate the following questions:

IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONS

1. What student populations are served by DC REC?

   a. Specifically, what proportion of DC REC participants are youth in foster care, youth experiencing homelessness, youth who identify as LGBTQ+, youth who are economically disadvantaged, youth in each ward in the District of Columbia, and youth in each racial/ ethnic category?

   b. How does the DC REC population compare to the high school student population in Washington, D.C.? (Who is and who is not accessing the program?)

   c. What barriers to reengagement are presented by youth who reengage through DC REC?

   d. What resources are available through DC REC to mitigate the identified barriers?

   e. What is the rate of barrier mitigation for youth who engage with DC REC?

OUTCOME QUESTIONS

2. What are the outcomes for youth who reengage through DC REC? Specifically,

    a. Persistence/stick rate

    b. Skill gains demonstrated through Adult Basic Education Assessments (e.g., CASAS, TABE, GED subject tests) or high school credits earned

    c. High school completion (diploma or GED)

    d. Postsecondary placement (postsecondary enrollment or employment)

    e. Earnings following high school completion

3. What are the outcomes for youth who reengage but not through DC REC? Specifically,

    a. Persistence/stick rate

    a. Skill gains demonstrated through Adult Basic Education Assessments (e.g., CASAS, TABE, GED subject tests) or high school credits earned

    a. High school completion (diploma or GED)

    a. Postsecondary placement (postsecondary enrollment or employment)

    a. Earnings following high school completion

4. What are outcomes by student characteristics?

Specific methods for analysis are still being determined in collaboration with the District of Columbia's Office of the State Superintendent and DC ReEngagment leadership. This study will be completed by May 31, 2023.

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Appendix A. Interviewees

Table A1. Count by role and program of reengagement study participants

Program	Leaders	Staff	Participants	Alumni	Stakeholders	Total participants
DC Rec	2	2	6	0	0	10
FastForward	1	1	0	0	0	2
Gateway to College: Front Range	2	4	3	4	7	20
Gateway to College: Riverside	1	4	4	4	3	16
NXT Level	3	4	7	0	2	16
OFY	5	0	9	0	4	18
Cross-site total	14	15	25	10	13	82

Note: DC REC is District of Columbia Reengagement Program; OFY is Opportunity for Youth.

Table A1. Count by role and program of reengagement study participants

Survey question	Yes	No	Prefer not to answer
Do you have any dependents in your care? (Children under the age of 18)	15%	80%	5%
Do you have other family members in your care that are not dependents? (e.g., you take care of your parents or grandparents)	10%	75%	15%
Do you identify as a foster youth?	5%	95%	NA
Have you ever experienced homelessness?	10%	70%	30%
Have you ever been involved in the justice system?	10%	85%	5%
Do you have close family relatives that have been involved in the justice system?	30%	55%	15%

Note: N = 20.

Stakeholders

The research team left the determination of stakeholders to the individual program leads who organized the interviews. These interviewees represented multiple roles. The evaluation team grouped these roles into three broad categories: staff members at partner school districts; directors, board members, and others who provide program oversight; and staff members at other community programs. A list of specific position titles—as provided by the interviewees—is shown below, by category.

PARTNER SCHOOL DISTRICT STAFF MEMBERS

- Director of the student engagement office

- Dropout prevention specialist

- Principal of an alternative high school

- Executive director of schools, overseeing high schools, STEM schools, and alternative programs

- Director of postsecondary and workforce readiness

- High school counselor

- District social worker

- Student services manager

REENGAGEMENT PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

- President of board of directors

- Vice president of board of directors

- Member of board of directors "sits on board" (autonomous local LEA)

- United Way director

- CEO for Communities in Schools

CORRELATED COMMUNITY PROGRAM

- Job developer/youth development coordinator team lead

- Program manager for our workforce development at local community organization

Appendix B. Document analysis

The evaluation team requested documentation from all six programs to help answer the evaluation questions. Specific documents collected are shown in tables B1–B7. The file names were provided by the programs.

Table B1. Types of documentation provided—all programs

Types	DC Reengagement	FastForward	Gateway Front Range	Gateway Riverside	NXT Level	OFY
Total number of files	3	14	31	3	18	15
Report, data summary, other evidence summary	2	1	13	1	4	2
Data collection (intake/ referral form, application)		1	5		12	
Media/communication (such as program context, outreach, collateral)		10	9			
Infrastructure (operations, program training materials for partners, budget)		2	4	2	2	13
Other	1	0				

Note: Alphabetical by file name. FastForward included a budget in the annual report, which is counted under infrastructure.

Source: Author's analysis of program documentation.

Table B2. Itemization of documentation provided by site—DC Reengagement.

File name	Approximate file name	File type
DC REC Overview	Program overview	Overview
DC REC_AnnualReport_2021	DC Reengagement center, annual report 2021	Report
Final DC REC_Snapshots and Survey_2020	2020 DC Reengagement Center, Partner/Customer Service Satisfaction Survey Data Finding Snapshot	Other evidence/data summary

Note: Alphabetical by file name.

Source: Authors' analysis of program documentation.

Table B3. Itemization of documentation provided by site—FastForward

File name	Approximated file title	File type
2022 FFRC MCMC Virtual Summit Flyer	FastForward ReEngagement Center Virtual Summit Mentoring & Reengagement coaching re-imagined flyer	Media/Outreach/ Collateral, event
Copy 2 of 2022 ARC FEST Flyer	Celebration of Home Academic reengagement & career fest flyer	Media/Outreach/ Collateral, event
Copy of avail assistant flyer 2	Virtual learning hub assistant, volunteer opportunity	Media/Outreach/ Collateral, volunteer
Copy of Darden Education Flyer (revised 11.10.21)	Darden Education Consulting Services (DECS) Academic Preparation Programs	Media/Outreach/ Collateral, supports
Copy of DBTHS Resiliency Assessment Presentation Overview 01.10.22	FastForward ReEngagement Center Resiliency Assessment and Curriculum	Infrastructure/training for staff, partners
Copy of January 21, 2022, Community Cafe.	FastForward Re-engagement Center, Community Café, "Critical Race Theory: An Introduction"	Infrastructure/training for staff, partners
Copy of PFE Forum flyer - 2021-2022	FastForward Re-engagement Center, Sinclair College Young Scholars, Parent and Family Engagement Forums	Media/Outreach/ Collateral, event
Copy of Radio Script	Sinclair's Fast Forward ReEngagement Center radio script	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
Engagement Intake Form1	FFRC Engagement Intake Form	Data collection

File name	Approximated file title	File type
FFC_HotCard FINAL	Sinclair's Fast Forward ReEngagement Center	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context, participant quote
FFC_HotCard_MailPanel	Sinclair's Fast Forward ReEngagement Center, program context for mailing	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
FFRC_Annual _Report_Nov	Sinclair Fast Forward ReEngagement Center for Out-of-School Youth, Annual Community Report 2020 & 2021	Report
Revised version of Graphic	Sinclair's Fast Forward ReEngagement Center, program components	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
TaylorFlyer	Sinclair College Taylor Scholars, for participants who completed the Sinclair's Fast Forward ReEngagement Center, program context	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context

Note: Alphabetical by file name.

Source: Authors' analysis of program documentation.

Table B4. Itemization of documentation provided by site—Gateway to College: Front Range CC (FRCC)

File name	Approximated file title	File type
2021-FRCC-Dashboard	Achieve the Dream/Gateway to College, outcome summary for Front Range Community College, prepared fall 2022.	Other evidence/ data summary
Adams 12 - Acceptance Letter (Spring 2022)	Program acceptance letter for prospective Gateway to College student	Program communication, parent
AY18-19 NSCDashboard Front Range Community College	Achieve the Dream/Gateway to College, program result summary for Front Range Community College, using National Student Clearinghouse data, post program performance, for 2018-19	Other evidence/ data summary
AY18-19_Front Range Community College_ StudentProfile	Achieve the Dream/Gateway to College, program demographic summary of students for Front Range Community College, for 2018-19	Other evidence/ data summary
AY18-19_FrontRange_ StudentDashboards	Achieve the Dream/Gateway to College, program outcome summary of students for Front Range Community College, for 2018-19, prepared fall 2019.	Other evidence/ data summary

File name	Approximated file title	File type
FallNSS	2020 Pandemic Check In/New Student Survey Data Summary, 2020 Pandemic Check In	Other evidence/ data summary
FRCC Grad Profile	Achieve the Dream/Gateway to College, Front Range Community College 2019 - 2020 Gateway to College Graduate Student Profile	Other evidence/ data summary
FRCC Leaver Profile	Achieve the Dream/Gateway to College, Front Range Community College 2019 - 2020 Gateway to College Leaver Profile	Other evidence/ data summary
FRCC_NSS_Fall19	Overall Results to Archive New Student Survey, fall 2019	Other evidence/ data summary
Student Profile	Achieve the Dream/Gateway to College, Front Range Community College 2019 - 2020 Gateway to College Student Profile	Other evidence/ data summary
Adriana Lucero - 27J article	Alternative pathways to graduation take student on adventure of a lifetime	Media, participant voice program context
Dragon's Scholar	Gateway to College's first "Dragon's Scholar"!	Media, participant voice
Gateway to College at Westminster Campus Earns Program Excellence Award _ Front Range Community College Blog	Gateway to College at Westminster Campus Earns Program Excellence Award _ Front Range Community College Blog, posted March 13, 2017	Media
Media links	Document containing URL links to materials only available online: Gateway to College-FRCC YouTube - includes some speeches and a commercial **https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3y-34ZG4VzrXssa6nybaOg** Jeffco Grad Commercial **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89I5ksG6l7Y** Dream Scholar Press **https://achievingthedream.org/meet-the-2022-dream-scholars/** Ashley's "I Am" Poem **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISNmwBODBTY&ab_channel=atdchannel**	

File name	Approximated file title	File type
Gateway to College - brochure	Gateway to College: A Second Chance for High School Students	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
Gateway to College application Checklist	Gateway to College: Application Checklist	Data collection
Gateway to College dashboard	Achieve the Dream/ Gateway to College, program outcome summary of students for Front Range Community College, for multi-years, prepared fall 2020.	Other evidence/ data summary
Gateway to College interview follow-up	Gateway to College Student Interview Follow-up	Data collection
Gateway to College interview questions	Gateway to College Student Interview Questions	Data collection
Info session, fall 2022 (in person)	Gateway to College info session	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
Info Session Registration email	Info Session Registration email	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
Parent Orientation Spring 2022	Spring 2022 Gateway to College Family/ Support Orientation	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
Adams 12 Crosswalk updated 2019	FRCC Gateway to College/Adams 12 Curriculum Crosswalk	Infrastructure/course credit alignment
Gateway to College Key Driver Document (1)	Gateway to College Key Driver Document: SMART TARGET: By spring 2020, Gateway to College will increase one-year persistence of transition students from 67 percent to 72 percent.	Evidence context for outcomes
Gateway to College Partnership description	Gateway to College – K–12 Partnership Breakdown: How do we partner?	Infrastructure/partners
Gateway to College Process Map rev. 12.14.18	Gateway to College Process Map	Evidence context for outcomes
Gateway to College Service Model recent	Gateway to College General Information/Data Sheet	Program context, other evidence/data summary
Gateway to College Student qualifications and admissions	Gateway to College Qualifications and Admissions process for student and School District	Data collection

File name	Approximated file title	File type
MidMester Outreach Letter (Spring 2022)	Gateway to College communication to partner regarding MidMester [experience week]	Infrastructure/partners communication
MOU Adams 12(Gateway to College) DRAFT 050219	Gateway to College agreement	Data collection
Spring 2022 PLC and study groups	Spring 2022 PLC and study groups, excel file documenting attendance, instructor list, interventions	Infrastructure, supports

Note: Alphabetical by file name.

Source: Authors' analysis of program documentation.

Table B5. Itemization of documentation provided by site—Gateway to College: Riverside

File name	Approximated file title	File type
2021 Gateway Brochure-Partners.pdf	Counselor/Teacher Guide: Gateway College and Career Academy	Infrastructure/partners communication
GCCA Charter Renewal Petition 2018-2023 FINAL	Riverside County Charter High School: Gateway College and Career Academy Countywide Benefit Charter Renewal Petition	Infrastructure
VC-Report-Gateway March 2017	Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of School and Colleges, California State Department of Education for Gateway College and Career Academy, Self-Study Visiting Committee Report	Report

Note: Alphabetical by file name.

Source: Authors' analysis of program documentation.

Table B6. Itemization of documentation provided by site—NXT Level

File name	Approximated file title	File type
4A-NXT LEVEL Operation Standards_v5	NXT LEVEL Youth Opportunity Center Operation Standards	Infrastructure
4C-NXT LEVEL budget Overview FY 2021	NXT LEVEL Youth Opportunity Center Operation Budget Overview	Infrastructure
4D-2021 NXT Level Harold FINAL PRINT	What is your NXT Level? Flyer (program)	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
4D-NXT Level Flyer	What is your NXT Level? Flyer (services)	Media/Outreach/Collateral, program context
4D-NXT Level Presentation 2020	NXT Level Presentation (program)	Other evidence/ data summary
4E-Empowering Youth- An Opportunity Youth Voice Report	Empowering Youth to be the Writers of Their Future: An Opportunity Youth Voice Report (Prepared by the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services, October 21, 2020)	Report
4E-Opportunity-Youth-Report_Final-1	Where am I going to sleep? What am I going to eat? The Lived Experiences of San Antonio-Bexar County Opportunity Youth	Report
4F-02.15.2019 The Rivard Report - City to Provide _Disconnected Youth_ With Opportunity Pipeline at New Center	City to Provide `Disconnected Youth' With Opportunity Pipeline at New Center	Media
4F-02.16.2019 Spectrum News - Youth Center Established after Six-Month Renovation	Youth Center Established after Six-Month Renovation	Media
4F-02.22.2019 SA Express News - City of San Antonio invests in opportunity youth with new West Side center	City of San Antonio invests in opportunity youth with new West Side center	Media
4F-02.22.2019 SA Express News - City, partners open center to assist jobless youths	City, partners open center to assist jobless youths	Media
4F-03.14.2019 KSAT 12 News - Texas lawmaker files bill to repeal juvenile curfew ordinances	Texas lawmaker files bill to repeal juvenile curfew ordinances	Media
4F-03.25.2019 NPR - Finding Opportunities for San Antonio's Disconnected Youth	Finding Opportunities for San Antonio's Disconnected Youth	Media

File name	Approximated file title	File type
4F-06.09.2018 mySA Express-News - Center will provide second chance to young people adrift	Center will provide second chance to young people adrift	Media
4F-06.14.2019 SA Business Journal - GOOD WORKS SA Nonprofits collaborate to support opportunity youth	GOOD WORKS SA Nonprofits collaborate to support opportunity youth	Media
4F-08.27.2019 The SA Observer - Poorest zip code in San Antonio goes to the NXT Level	Poorest zip code in San Antonio goes to the NXT Level	Media
4F-11.04.2019 SA Express News - Center addresses need for San Antonio youth to _re-engage_ with school, work	Center addresses need for San Antonio youth to _re-engage_ with school, work	Media
4G-Scorecard	Joint NXT Level Scorecard, performance measure descriptions and targets	Evidence context for outcomes

Note: Alphabetical by file name.

Source: Authors' analysis of program documentation.

Table B7. Itemization of documentation provided by site—Opportunities for Youth

File name	Approximated file title	File type
Mapping a Youths Journey to Reengagement Report	Mapping a Youth's Journey to Reengagement Youth Focus Group Results	Other evidence/data summary
OFY Reengagement Process Flow - Updated	OFY Reengagement Process Flow	Infrastructure, reference for staff
OFY Youth Referral Process	OFY Youth Referral Process	Infrastructure, reference for staff
RC Asset Map Packet	Reengagement Center Asset Map packet	Infrastructure, reference for staff, data collection
RC Commitment Letter _ Application	Reengagement Center Commitment Letter & Application	Infrastructure, partner communication
RC Model Bullseye	Opportunities for Youth Reengagement Center pathway	Infrastructure, strategic approach
RC Outcome Data Report.2020_3.26.21	Reengagement Center Outcome Data Report, from 2020 data collection	Other evidence/data summary

File name	Approximated file title	File type
RC Professional Development Training Opportunities	Reengagement Center Professional Development Training Opportunities From 2018–2021	Infrastructure, partner training
RC Quality Standards Assessment Packet	Reengagement Center Quality Standards Assessment Packet	Infrastructure, operational
Standard Six	Standard Six: Outcome analysis	Infrastructure, operational
Standard Five	Standard Five: Career	Infrastructure, operational
Standard Four	Standard Four: Educational Momentum	Infrastructure, operational
Standard One	Standard One: Outreach	Infrastructure, operational
Standard Three	Standard Three: Planning	Infrastructure, operational
Standard Two	Standard Two: Readiness	Infrastructure, operational

Note: Alphabetical by file name.

Source: Authors' analysis of program documentation.